

A GLANCE
AT THE
HISTORY AND MYSTERY
OF
Christadelphianism:

BY
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The arrival of Dr. Thomas in this country, for the third time, A.D. 1869, led to the publication of a pamphlet, corrective of his misrepresentations, then publicly made and entitled, "A Glance at the History and Mystery of Thomasism." Its re-publication having been frequently called for, during the several years it has been out of print, its general contents, with additions, will be found in these pages.

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"Christadelphian"

THE term *Christadelphian*, like the faith of those who adopt it, was constructed by John Thomas, M.D. Consequently, before the latter part of his life none was ever called by that name. It was appropriate that he abandoned the old name *Christian*, which had been honored by the apostles and borne by saints and martyrs along the centuries. By inventing another name, which neither prophet nor apostle ever heard, he left the God-honored designation for those entitled to it. It was late in his life that he originated this new name. Before that his followers were generally known as *Thomasites*; and properly so, because, though not accepted by them, thus was expressed their relation to him, as no one ever embraced his doctrines who did not, either directly or indirectly, obtain them from him. Accordingly, his tombstone is inscribed: "He demonstrated the unscriptural character of popular Christianity, and made manifest the long lost faith of the apostles, and at his death left behind him, as a result of his labors, a body of people in different parts of the world, known as *Christadelphians*." He died in March, 1871.

It was under a sort of political necessity, during the American civil war, that "*Christadelphian*" was coined. The object was that of claiming exemption from military service, which could not be accomplished without some distinctive cognomen. Dr. Thomas says, "Something had to be done to save the brethren from being seized upon by the devil and Satan and hurled into the bottomless pit, now engulfing with the voraciousness of death and *Hades* the sinners of the ungodly nation. I did not know a better denomination that could be given to such a class of believers, than '*Brethren of Christ*.' This declares the true status, and as officials prefer words to phrases, the same fact is expressed by the term *Christadelphian*."

But some *Thomasites*, both in this country and in America, refused to adopt the new-fangled term. It was repudiated by the organ of one of the Thomasite sections, published here, thus -

"They have assumed the name '*Christadelphians*,' said to mean '*Christ's Brethren*.' They hold that this name is scriptural and

apostolic Neither the name nor the *Greek expression* from which it is derived occurs in Scripture. Can it then be scriptural? The apostles never used it; can it then be apostolic? Indeed the assertion is sufficiently refuted by the acknowledged fact that 'the name was first adopted in Illinois, during the civil war.' The roots of the Greek words *christou adelphoi*, according to the analogy of *telegraph*, *epitaph*, *photograph*, etc., give christadelphs. The word '*Christadelphians*' contains another element; the affix *an*, which materially modifies the meaning. This affix sometimes denotes a *doer*, as in tragedi-an. More frequently, especially with names of places, it denotes *of*, or *pertaining to*, as Europe-an, belonging to Europe. With the names of persons it denotes a *follower*, as Wesley-an, a follower of Wesley; Christi-an, a follower of Christ. Hence '*Christadelphians*' properly signifies *not* the brethren of Christ themselves, but *followers* of the brethren of Christ."

Thus, then, the pedantry of Dr. Thomas (his writings mostly bear foreign names, as *Elpus Israel*, *Eureka*, *Phanerosis*, *Anatolia*) led him to a faulty construction, so that instead of naming his followers "*Brethren of Christ*" he really named them "*Followers of Brethren of Christ*," which is a widely different thing, for some of Christ's brethren wander very far from the truth. But be that as it may it is certain that the *Brethren of Christ*, the *Church of God*, have not been left nameless these eighteen hundred years; nor is it less certain that Dr. Thomas was neither commissioned nor competent to invent a name for them.

Christadelphian, however, was not the first name concocted for his followers. Formerly he named them *The Antipas*, which he said was "a symbolical name, representing all in every place who hold fast the Spirit's name, bestowed upon the faithful because they were uncompromisingly opposed to all names and faiths which are not identical with those delivered once for all to the saints, by the Apostles of Christ." But it was a strange freak to give his followers names, that were never given to Christians, as a reward for their refusing *all* names not of apostolic origin.

Dr. Thomas left our shores, for America, A.D. 1832. He was then destitute of any settled theological faith. There were at that time in America a widely spreading Christian people, pleading a complete return to the faith and order of the apostolic churches, as found in the

New Testament. Consequently, they took no denominational designation, calling themselves only by Scripture names, as Disciples, Brethren, Christians. Mr. Thomas Campbell and his son Alexander were prominent advocates of this restoration of apostolic ways. Among other earnest and active spirits in this work was Mr. Walter Scott, whose acquaintance Dr. Thomas made soon after his arrival, the result being that he was baptized by Mr. Scott, and took a place among the people thus described.

In the Life of Dr. Thomas, written by Mr. Robert Roberts, the writer proves himself a worthy successor of the Dr. by putting as much contempt on this baptism as possible, winding up his narrative thus:- "There was no escape. The Dr. was obliged to give in his adhesion, and, the necessary arrangements being made, a move was made to the canal, which passed the front of the house, and the Dr. was immersed, by Mr. Scott, for the remission of sins, in the presence of a number of witnesses, at ten o'clock at night, by the light of the moon." But Mr. Roberts well knew, because he had published a letter from the Dr. containing it, that the Dr.'s estimate of the matter, in A.D. 1837, was widely different. In a letter to Mr. A. Campbell he then wrote: I am a Christian, and glory in the name, and am jealous of the honors and privileges and immunities attached to it; so much so that I am not content to share them with the innumerable pretenders to the title in the Protestant and Papal sections of the kingdom of anti-Christ. Bro. W. Scott can testify that I believed the Gospel, and obeyed it before witnesses. Those brethren can testify from the development of a three hours' conversation upon the truth, that I heard it and read it and obeyed it. They, therefore, are my witnesses that I put on Christ understandingly and honestly, and I am, therefore, a Christian." This was written as a sort of protest against Mr. Campbell counting as Christian congregations of pious persons who had been baptized on confession of faith, without understanding the full design of baptism. But, whatever might have been his reason for so writing, the Dr. thereby shows that his baptism, by Mr. Scott, was not at all the hasty, ignorant procedure his biographer describes.

Some ten years later, however, Dr. Thomas concluded that he had never been a Christian; that the baptism by Mr. Scott was worthless, because he had not previously understood certain Old Testament promises, which he had since come to hold as of that faith and hope by which we are saved. Consequently, he then got himself re-immersed.

The Dr.'s second baptism we hold to be but a humanly devised induction into a faith and hope concocted by himself, upon which three or more small sects have since been founded, each, up to a given point, truly *Thomasite*.

We must, however, retrace our steps a little. In the *Herald of the Future Age*, March, 1847, Dr. Thomas declared that "*Pride and ambition* were the leading characteristics of his early manhood," and those who know his career perfectly understand that his after life has not been otherwise characterized. To be an equal among brethren, where no man is master, would not satisfy him. To be the *founder, leader and designator* of a party seems to have been his aim.

Considerably before his re-immersion, having been accepted as a preacher among the disciples, he created contentions by advocating the non-immortality of the soul, the non-resurrection of heathen, infants and idiots, the unconsciousness of the dead, and the final annihilation of the wicked. Though these views were distasteful to the disciples generally, they did not consider the understanding of such topics essential to fellowship, and, therefore, continued in communion with him so long as he held them as opinions not to be imposed upon his brethren. They were, however, advocated to a disturbing extent, and Mr. Campbell and others found themselves compelled to protest. This led, in 1838, to a discussion between him and Dr. Thomas, which resulted in the following resolution being adopted by brethren present, and accepted by the Dr.:

"Resolved, that whereas certain things believed and propagated by Dr. Thomas, in relation to the mortality of man, the resurrection of the dead, and the final destiny of the wicked, having given offence to many brethren, and being likely to produce a division among us, and believing the said views to be of no practical benefit, we recommend Dr. Thomas to discontinue the discussion of the same, unless in his defense when misrepresented."

Upon this resolution, a month later, the Dr. said, "Thus has been happily composed, and, I trust, for ever extinguished, the misunderstanding which has so long subsisted between us." Still he was not content to let it be so, but soon lifted his dogmas out of the region of opinion into that of the faith and made them parts of the Gospel,

without the belief of which there is no salvation. After this of course his remaining with the disciples was impossible, and, therefore, he published an abjuration of the foundation upon which he had stood and started anew, making belief in his theory of the coming of the Lord to set up His kingdom in Jerusalem, as also the reception of his opinions as to the immortality of the soul, etc., essential to salvation. Speaking of his then abandoned faith and baptism, he wrote - "We confess that the *whole matter was a mistake, and as such make this public abjuration thereof.*" He further intimated that, "having been immersed into an *erroneous system,*" he there and then should "*abjure the whole transaction* in which we [he] once firmly thought we had once believed the one only true Gospel of Christ." He then adds, "No man can acceptably believe the Gospel who holds the dogma of an immortal soul in man. We abjure it as a damnable heresy." "We erred in holding in abeyance the most trivial inference from the truth on any pretense whatever." This abjuration of his former faith, baptism, and associates was published in his own periodical, in March, 1847, and reprinted in the *British Millennial Harbinger*, Nov., 1848.

From the date of this abjuration he has stood in the attitude of leader and founder of a sect entitled to bear his name - which sect, after compassing sea and land for some sixteen years to make proselytes, he then put down as not "exceeding, perhaps, a thousand in America and Great Britain." The next year found him in this country, for the purpose of propagating his opinions. But why come here? Because there were then, perhaps, a hundred churches of the faith he had abjured, from which he hoped to make converts. But how did he proceed to accomplish his purpose? He arrived in London in 1848, and immediately applied to the Church of Disciples there for fellowship. That church, and the churches in Great Britain generally, knew nothing of his published abjuration. The writer of these pages, who was at that time a member of the London Church, had heard from America some indefinite intimation that the Dr. had denounced the Disciples as not holding the Gospel and as without valid baptism, etc. This he made known to the church, and was appointed one of a deputation to see Dr. Thomas. The deputation was charged to say that if he had denounced the faith of the Disciples in America the Church in London must decline his fellowship, as it would be inconsistent in him to fellowship persons here who held the faith and baptism he had adjured. But reception by that church was important to his purpose. It would give

him access to the churches generally, that he might apply himself to rending them as far as possible. Consequently, he gave vehement assurance that he had not at all denounced the Disciples in America, that there were a few who denounced him, but only a few, and that he recognized them everywhere. On this assurance he was received, being informed that while the church did not agree with the views attributed to him, they were willing to hear him, and that, on the understanding that he held those views not as of the faith but merely as opinions, he might occupy Lord's-day mornings and evenings in discoursing thereupon. Thus he occupied their attention for some three weeks, and the, full of profession of friendship and brotherhood, left to visit the churches to which his having been received by the London Church gave him access. During his stay he completely concealed that his views were held as of the faith and essential to valid baptism. But before the expiration of the year there came to hand from America his own paper, containing the abjuration, published the year before he came to England. The document was put before the London Church, when all were amazed. Some could not bring themselves to believe that such an imposition could have emanated from the fair-spoken man who had treated them in every respect as brethren, and who had never hinted that he could not count their faith and baptism valid. They, therefore, directed a kindly letter to be addressed to him, asking how, having published his abjuration of the faith and baptism of their brethren in America, he could deny the fact and obtain fellowship in a church of precisely the faith and order he had thus abjured? They received answer to the effect that they need not trouble about his fellowship with them, as he had received nothing at their hands but some small portions of bread and wine which his contributions had more than paid for, and that as to his having had fellowship with them, they should remember "that the Lord had fellowship with Judas." It was, thereupon, resolved to the effect that Dr. Thomas, being guilty of deliberate untruth, is unworthy of further fellowship. Several of the churches to which he thus obtained access were by his subtleties divided, or small parties were taken off and re-baptized into what he termed the Hope of Israel, and thus *Thomasism*, obtained a footing in England and Scotland, the adherents thus made, for the most part abiding but for a little, were largely swallowed up by worldliness or infidelity.

The miserable attempt to evade this charge, put forth by Dr. Thomas, and later on by his interested biographer, Mr. Roberts, is that the

abjuration was not of our churches, but of their *faith, hope, and baptism*, which, as he held, appertain to a "damnable heresy." It is also put that his repudiation of "leading men" did not refer to those of the Disciples, as he embraced the leaders of ALL denominations (which, of course, included those of the Disciples also). He had been informed by us, in the plainest terms, that if his views upon the kingdom, immortality, etc., were held by him, as of the faith to be believed in order to baptism and membership in the Church of Christ, he could have no fellowship with the London Church, nor the use of its chapel. His answers were such as could but assure us that he had not renounced the faith, hope, and baptism of that church, and he accepted its fellowship, and used its meeting house on that assurance. Thus we were deceived by the founder of *Christadelphianism*, in order to aid its introduction into churches in this country. And though Mr. Roberts backed up the subterfuge that it was not an abjuration of us, because all sects were alike abjured, he knew that the abjuration of our faith and standing was absolute, because he, himself, had printed in the *Christadelphian*, long before his publication of the biography, a letter from Dr. Thomas to Walter Scott, in which the thing is completely apparent, and which reads -

"I see, or think I see, in it 'confirmation strong as Holy Writ,' that you are not '*in the faith,*' and have *no hold of the 'anchor within the veil,*' consequently, if you continue the believer and apologist of one of the world's systems of religion - your *cara sposa nova* Protestantism - you cannot be presented holy, unblamable, and unrebukeable before God. This is my view of your case, and not of yours only, but of all your editorial co-laborers, and, *as far as my observation extends, of all the leaders of what is called, 'this Reformation.'* But, alas! how are you spoiled by *philosophy and vain deceit* - a philosophy deemed wisdom by the Greeks, but consummate foolishness by God."

"You believe, doubtless, that you lifted me into the kingdom of God when you immersed me for the remission of sins in 1832. I once thought so, too, but I believe otherwise now. You will see from the *Herald* that I have repudiated the event in which you and I were concerned."

"I believe you wrong in all the premises; I, therefore, withdraw my adhesion to them."

Though the followers of Dr. Thomas have been few, yet they have divided into opposing parties, with as little liking for each other as had the Jews and Samaritans. A few lines will show the kind of treatment those received who followed Dr. Thomas for some time after his re-immersion, but who did not advance with him in his more recent speculations. In this country were a few such, whom the doctor pleased to call *Dowieites*, and others, somewhat similar, in America, whom he named *Benjamites*. These parties, declining to follow him, when he made the resurrection of the saints in *mortal* bodies part of his gospel, were consequently handed over to Satan as deniers of the faith. Then, according to their testimony, he poured out a torrent of reviling, of which they give a sample in their *Gospel Banner*, Sep., 1867.

"We have a great many speculators in the faith on this side of the Atlantic, who profess to be the *Ecclesia*, mere theorists, who are a sort of amalgam, made up of a little Storrism, a little Adventism, a little Campbellism, and a hodge-podge of traditions, of which water, pork, alcohol, tobacco, salt, leaven, raisins, and the everlasting nigger, are the prolific head-centres." "They would rather be notorious for abomination than not notorious at all." "The Benjamin Mark Paper [a periodical devoted to original *Thomasism*] is a truly *blood-thirsty* and *diabolical* sheet." "His own selfishness has been the god of his idolatry; and to gratify this such a man will *slander, lie, steal*, or play the *hypocrite*, if it will only pay." "They have thought that their new paper might be their old, dirty, and blood-thirsty banner, new revised ... for editing at other people's risk, *little Ben* has discovered, pays better than printing on his own hook." ... These *dishonest, mean-spirited traitors* to good faith sought excuse and justification in the *devil's law of incorporation*." ... I have put you in possession of these details that the real friends in Britain may know by what sort of natural brute beasts I am assisted." ... "I have hitherto taken no notice of *him*, nor his confederate, the *ex-theatrical candle snuffer*, being too much occupied with the *Apocalypse*." ... "We *Christadelphians* in America are a distinct generation from the so-called *Benjamites* - we are strong in the faith and

unspoiled by accursed crotchets, which, when blended with it, make it ineffectual and generative of *knaves* and *hypocrites*."

Now if the *Thomasites* of the earlier sorts were anything like the description Dr. Thomas thus gave of them, they were a very sorry lot, indeed, and the reader can judge as to the sort of people his gospel calls out, or as to what under its influence they subsequently became. If, on the other hand, they are not base men, what must he have been who thus vents his spite upon them? False charges were hurled against the *Dowieites*, in Edinburgh, which they were able to refute, and then it was said that it was a mistake, the *Dowieites* of another town were intended.

When in Birmingham, Dr. Thomas in publicly denouncing the Disciples as taking only the New Testament as their guide, said, "Some people say that the *Old Testament is nothing more than an Old Jewish Almanac; WHICH WAS A SAYING OF ALEXANDER CAMPBELL'S*. The next morning he received a note, objecting to the saying being attributed to A. Campbell, and asking where in his writings it could be found. An answer was returned to the effect that as he had not his books with him, he could not name the page of the "*Christian Baptist*," and intimating, that the Disciples in America generally re-affirm it. He was immediately offered a copy of the volume, and required to prove his assertion, which was not admitted to be true. But he neither withdrew the statement nor told where the saying could be found. The following is a sample of Mr. Campbell's many sayings concerning the Old Testament:

"So full of the doctrine of the New Institution is the old that we find all the Apostles unceremoniously applying everything they quote from the Law, the Prophets, and the Psalms to the Messiah, His kingdom and the fortunes of His people; as if the Jewish writings had no other object than to unfold the kingdom of heaven. .. Every one then who would accurately understand the Christian Institution must approach it through the Mosaic; and he who would be proficient in the Jewish must make Paul his commentator. While the mere politician, moralist, or religionist contemplates the one without the other though he may find much to admire in both, he will never understand either." - *Chris. System*, p. 140.

Thus the Dr. stands convicted of bearing false witness. Mr. Roberts, too, continues, in substance, to reiterate the charge against people who hold as Mr. Campbell did, though he had the words just cited from Mr. Campbell put into his hands.

The False Claims of Dr. Thomas

The claim put in, in reference to Dr. Thomas, by his followers is, indeed, a tremendous one; and awful, if true, must be the condition of those who reject it. It is nothing less than that the true faith and hope of the church of God were absolutely lost to the whole of Christendom. That neither Romanists nor Protestants had, till Dr. Thomas re-discovered them, a knowledge of the faith and hope absolutely necessary to salvation. That the Dr. was raised up of God to restore the completely lost knowledge of the way of life and pardon. And we find that the way he has made known requires an understanding of Old Testament prophecies, which the most pious and truth-seeking, after years of labor, fail to see alike, and which the masses of the people are admittedly incapable of determining of themselves. That this is no exaggeration may be seen by a note in one of their publications thus - "EAST ZORRA - The Ecclesia in this place, if not growing in numbers are growing in knowledge of the things of the Spirit. Every male member has purchased a full set of Bro. Thomas' works, *Elpis Israel* and three vols. of *Eureka*. We would recommend others to do the same. Dr. Thomas' works are *absolutely necessary in order to an intelligent acquaintance* with the word." Intelligent acquaintance with the Bible means, of course, interpretation according to Dr. Thomas' books. The writer, then, from *East Zorra* is perfectly correct, for it is certain that no man ever understood the Bible from his own examination of it and apart from the Dr.'s books, as he does; and more, no one is likely to learn from it the conclusions affirmed by Thomasites as essential to a valid faith and baptism. Thomasism never has been, and never can be, learned by any person without the Dr.'s books or instruction from those who are indebted to him for their faith.

But though multitudes are utterly incapable of coming to an intelligent conclusion on various items of the Thomasite faith, there are tests, which even the illiterate are able to apply, by which his tremendous claim is declared false. As for instance -

1. A man thus raised up of God to restore the lost and only saving faith, must be one possessed in some degree of the Spirit of Christ -

2. He must be one who would not knowingly deceive, and who would not publish the writings of other men as his own, nor declare his own work containing them "original throughout."
3. As an expositor of prophecy he must be correct where his dates, for the fulfillment thereof, are fixed.

By the application of these tests Dr. Thomas is completely discredited, and shown to be either a deceiver or himself woefully deceived.

FIRST. - Then let the reader turn back to p. 6, and read again that torrent of dirty reviling which he poured upon those who stood to what he taught some little while before and who refused to follow him further. Let it be also remembered that he was an adept at that sort of abuse. Mr. Roberts, in writing his biography endeavors to whitewash as much as possible, but evidently finds the task difficult. Of course he omits much of the kind of thing just referred to, which would have appeared had the intention been to exhibit the Dr. as he really was. But that was not the intention, and Mr. Roberts says - "The part of friends has been rather to hide than expose infirmity. Gratitude threw the ample fold of protection over what may have been deemed the faults of an otherwise great and noble and extraordinary character." The greatness and nobility we have never been able to discover. We see merely a restless, ambitious man, who must be a leader, and who, therefore, made a miserable little sect for himself rather than be an equal among equals.

SECOND. - Unblushing plagiarism. It should be remembered that we are not writing thus for the first time, and our "Glance at the History and Mystery of *Thomasism*," published A.D. 1869, when the Dr. was in this country, and then put into his hands, contained the same charges. We then wrote that the Dr. had been charged with deceiving his readers by professing originality when gross plagiarism prevailed. The charge and proof thereof, having been published by others, come into small space here. In his introduction to *Anatolia* he alludes to certain pamphlets whose unprincipled authors have, as he says, taken, without acknowledgment, parts of his *Elpis Israel*, and used them as their own. He then adds that, unlike those pamphlets, "*Anatolia is original throughout.*" The words, as here, are printed in italic, and there are no qualifying phrases in the context. What amount of what he terms "unacknowledged plagiarism" would be discovered were his entire

work examined, the writer cannot say, having, with a view to this test, only compared a small portion of the book. The following quotations from "*The Prophecy of Ezekiel concerning Gog*," by Granville Penn, on the one hand, and from *Anatolia*, on the other, will show whether the testimony of Dr. Thomas on common facts is more reliable than his predictions concerning prophetic dates.

ANATOLIA.

"The question as to what nations are signified by Rosh, Meshekh, and Thuval has long since been determined by the learned. The celebrated Bochart, about the year 1640 observed in his elaborate researches into sacred geography, that ROS, Ros, [the Hebrew word is omitted] is the most ancient form under which history makes mention of the name of RUSSIA; and he contended that Rosh and Meshekh probably denote the nations of Muscovy and Russia. 'It is credible,' says he, 'that from Rosh and Meshekh (that is the Rhossi and Moschi) of whom Ezekiel speaks, descended the Russians and Muscovites, nations of the greatest celebrity in European-Scythia.' We have indeed ample and positive testimony that the Russian nation was called Ros by the Greeks in the earliest period in which we find it mentioned, as Ethnos de oi Ros Schnthichon, peri ton archtoon Towron; that is, the Rosh are a Scythian nation bordering on the northern Taurus! and their own historians say, 'It is related that the Russians (whom the Greeks call Ros, and sometimes Rosos, Rosos) derived their name from Ros, a valiant man who delivered his nation from the yoke of its tyrants.'" p. 65.**

"And thus the three denominations, Rosh, Meshekh, and Thuval, united in the prophecy point out, with equal capacity and conciseness, those widely extended regions, which, at the present day, we denominate collectively THE RUSSIAN EMPIRE." p. 66 **

"Since the name of Scythae, or Magog, is to be considered not by itself, but in geographical connection with Galatae, or Gomer, we have only to enquire, whether any geographical affinity is really ascribed by the Greeks to the Scythae and Galatae? and to ascertain to what regions of the earth those

names so associated, were applied. If we can discover these two points we ought thereby to have discovered specifically the Magog of the prophecy, which is to be associated with the region, or people, of Gomer." - p. 67.

"From the Hebrew Scripture we learn that Magog and Gomer were the names of two of the sons of Japhet; and it is to ancient Hebrew authority alone that we can resort to ascertain where, according to the common repute of the Israelites, the nation which descended from those two heads of families, and which long retained the proper names of those heads, were spread and established. Josephus says, 'That Japhet, etc., etc.' [and so on, with a quotation from Josephus, the same as given by G. Penn.] It only therefore remains for us to ascertain which were the nations that the Greeks at the time of Josephus [called Scythae, and which they then called Galatae; and to observe whether the geographical affinities of these nations are such as answer to those which are plainly required by the prophecy for Magog and Gomer.]"

GRANVILLE PENN.

"If we next enquire what nations are signified by those three proper names we shall find that this question also has been long determined by the learned. The celebrated Bochart, about the year 1640, observed in his elaborate researches into sacred geography that ROS, Ros, is the most ancient form under which history makes mention of the name of RUSSIA; and he contended that the two first of those names properly denote the nations of Russia and Muscovy. 'It is credible,' says he, 'that from Rosh and Mesech (that is the Rhossi and Moschi) of whom Ezekiel speaks, descended the Russians and Muscovites, nations of the greatest celebrity in European-Scythia.' We have indeed ample and positive testimony that the Russian nation was called Ros by the Greeks in the earliest period in which we find it mentioned. Ethnos de oi Ros Schnthichon, peri ton archtoon Towron. 'The Ros are a Scythian nation bordering on the northern Taurus.' This testimony is given by Cedrenus, Zonarus, Leo Grammaticus, and Tzetzes; and their own historians thus report, 'It is related that the Russians (whom the Greeks call Ros, ROS, and sometimes Rosos, Rosos) derived

their name from Ros, a valiant man who delivered his nation from the yoke of their tyrants." p. 19.**

"And thus the THREE DENOMINATIONS united in the prophecy point out, with equal capacity and conciseness, those widely extended regions, which, at the present day, we denominate collectively THE RUSSIAN EMPIRE." p. 22 **

"But, since the name of Scythae (1:e. Magog,) is here to be considered, not by itself, but in geographical connection with GALATAE, or GOMER, we have only to enquire, whether any geographical affinity is really ascribed by the Greeks to the Scythae and Galatae? and to ascertain, to what regions of the earth, those names, so associated, were applied. If we can discover these two points, we ought thereby to have discovered specifically the Magogue of the prophecy, which would be able to associate to themselves the region, or people of Gomer." - p. 41.

"We know from the Hebrew Scriptures that these are the names of two sons of Japhet! and it is to ancient Hebrew authority alone that we can resort, to learn where, according to the common repute of the Hebrew people, the nations which descended from those two heads of families, and which long retained the proper names of those heads, were spread and established. Josephus is the earliest Hebrew authority of weight and learning, to which we can address ourselves; and he distinctly informs us, 'That Japhet, etc., etc. [The quotation following being ANATOLIA] Scythae and which they styled Galatae; and to observe whether the geographical affinities of these nations are such as answer to those which are plainly required by the prophecy of Magog and Gomer. Heroditus, the most ancient Greek writer.' [Here follows the quotation from Heroditus, taken from G. Penn, p. 65. the same as referred to on the other side.] It only therefore remains for us to ascertain which were the nations that the Greeks, in the time of Josephus, called Scythae and which they called Galatae; and to observe whether the geographical affinities of these nations are such as answer to those which are plainly required by the prophecy for Magog and Gomer. Heroditus, the most ancient Greek writer."

[Here follows the quotation from Heroditus, as copied in *Anatolia*, p. 36.]

"Enough is as good as a feast." But if the reader desire other samples of the originality of *Anatolia*, and of the trustworthiness of its author who declares it "*original throughout*," he will be able to find what he desires by going to Granville Penn for himself. The edition from which the above are taken bears date A.D. 1814.

But besides being, in this way, partly taken from Granville Penn, *Anatolia* is indebted to Thomas Newton, D.D. Not so openly in the form of exact unacknowledged quotation, but by transference of ideas in the succession in which they are found in his *Dissertations on the Prophecies*. If the reader would test this he should compare the paraphrase of Daniel 11: found in *Anatolia* with a paraphrase of the same chapter in *The Dissertations*.

Though this exposure of the fraud and falsehood of declaring "*Anatolia* original throughout" was as gall and wormwood to Dr. Thomas, and though the exposure followed him through the country, he came not forward to refute it. But Mr. Roberts, who was at hand, for any business of that sort, walked right up to the facts, stared them in the face, and declared they were not there. He wrote -

"The use of a page or two of historical matter from an old work to illustrate prophetic teaching never contemplated by the original writer, affords D.K. an opportunity for another vehement plunge of his cannibal knife. Plagiarism is a very convenient cry, and serves his purpose, but it is not exactly suited to the case. Every writer must get his history from somewhere, but according to D.K. it must be original."

So much for Mr. Roberts! But the case is not thus met. Had Dr. Thomas merely taken historical quotations from Granville Penn, there would have been no room to find fault, but he takes Penn's deductions and inferences from historical facts and from prophecies, imitating his italics and other peculiarities, and inserts them in *Anatolia* as HIS OWN. He goes to work with Bishop Newton's Paraphrases of Dan. 11: before him, adopts and modifies ideas at pleasure, and then declares his work *wholly original*. It may not be convenient to admit that in all this there is plagiarism; but when, as he says, the author of *The Coming Struggle* drew upon his *Elpis Israel*, it was "*unacknowledged*

plagiarism." Why did not Dr. Thomas name Granville Penn as one whom he had thus used, or why not at least have indicated the borrowed parts by quotation marks? But no, nothing of the sort - the great man must produce an *entirely original* book, and as he could not do it himself, better men, who had gone before, are made to contribute both words and ideas without acknowledgment. Give honor to whom honor is due! Let Dr. Thomas have his reward, and Mr. Roberts also who thus shows himself worthy to bear the Dr.'s mantle, and ready to carry on the work after his master's discreditable methods.

THIRD. - As an expounder of prophecy, Dr. Thomas claims to stand unrivalled; to have been providentially raised up for that purpose. Happily we are in a position to test that claim. During his sojourn here, in 1850, he published *Elpis Israel*, which turned out a great blunder, inasmuch as his doctrine of the kingdom of God is therein set forth in its bearing upon existing European kingdoms, so that the Dr. plays the part of a prophet and proves a false one; not that he claimed to be really inspired, but he so presented a scheme of unfulfilled prophecy as to mark out great events and fix the time for their accomplishment. Take a sample from *Elpis Israel* -

"The eleventh chapter of Daniel is therefore fulfilled as far as the first colon of the fortieth verse. The things which remain to be accomplished in the time of the end are briefly outlined in the remaining part of the chapter. The King of Egypt, having pushed at the Little Horn, as we have seen, the next event of the prophecy is an attack upon him by the King of the North, as it is written, 'And the King shall come against him like a whirlwind, with chariots, and with horsemen, and with many ships;' that is, the Russo-Assyrian autocrat shall attack Constantinople by sea and land, and with such whirlwind impetuosity that the Sultan's dominion shall be swept away. The Russian fleet of forty ships in the Black Sea is in preparation for this event. The whirlwind nature of the attack implies, I think, not only its overwhelming character, but that when it is made, the allies of the Sultan will be off their guard; that is, by the autocrat's assurances of peace and moderation, for which they will give him credit, Constantinople will be left unprotected, and it will fall into his hands before they can come to the rescue. To '*push at him,*' and to '*come against him,*' are phrases which imply more than simple invasion; they indicate likewise *direction* that the

invasion is to take. In the case of the King of the South, when he 'pushed at him,' he directed his course towards Constantinople, but he did not come against him, because he was stopped by 'the powers.' The King of the North, however, is to do more than push; he is actually to 'come against' the Sultan, which can only be done by sitting down before Constantinople. Now, between the pushing of the King of the South, in 1839, and the coming of the King of the North, there has, as yet, been an interval of ten years. It is not to be supposed that the Autocrat would attack the Porte without some provocation, real or pretended. It is, therefore, the mission of the Frogs, as we have seen in a former chapter, to bring about such a state of things as will involve the Autocrat and Sultan in war. This situation has been created, and, it is probable, that when spring arrives the Sultan will be attacked, and that 1850 will see the end of the Ottoman dominion. The reader will perceive, then, that the operation of the Frog power comes in between the attacks of the King of Egypt and the Russo-Assyrians upon the Porte. The policy they originate is to involve the whole habitable in war, the more immediate effect of which will be, that 'the King of the North shall enter into the countries, and shall overflow and pass over.' To 'enter into the countries' implies invasion, but to 'overflow and pass over,' indicates conquest. The result of the conquest will be that 'many countries shall be overthrown.' The war will have made terrible havoc with the Horn-kingdoms and the Austro-Papal Empire; the former will have lost their independence, and the latter will have been 'destroyed unto the end.' *"Elpis Israel*, pp. 375, 6.

Writing, then, A.D. 1849, he gives it that the first part of Daniel 11:, down to the first colon in 5: 40, was, at the time, fulfilled - that the Emperor of Russia, by the aid of the fleet, then ready in the Black Sea, would take Constantinople within a year or so, and that probably A.D. 1850, would see the end of the Ottoman dominion - that the "whole habitable" would then be involved in war, the immediate effect of which would be that the King of the North (Russia) would overthrow "many countries," and Austria will have been overthrown. Now none of these things happened, and the time is long since passed. Russia was completely beaten by Turkey, France, and Britain. Their armies sat down on Russian territory, instead of the Russians taking

Constantinople, and the Black Sea fleet was sunk by the Russians themselves, to keep it from seizure by the British.

In the *Gospel Banner*, Nov., 1848, he predicted the then future of Ireland, with as little accuracy as in the case of Constantinople. He there says -

"The Judgment upon Ireland has been sitting since 1786. That crisis was the beginning of a retribution of seventy-five years. This period is called 'THE END' - the end of the last period, of the continuance of modern Europe, as organized into ten kingdoms, and the 'Holy Roman Empire' in the days of Charlemagne. A.D. 1786 was the *beginning of the end*, 1848 the *concluding* of the end, and 1864 the *termination* of the period. The events of these seventy-five years are the fulfillment of the following words concerning modern Europe:- 'The Judgment shall sit and they shall take away of his (the Little Horn's or Holy Roman) dominion, to consume and destroy it to the end.' .. *After 1864 Ireland and the rest of the world will enter upon a new era, in which peace, righteousness, and blessedness will reign in the midst of the nations.*"

Well, 1864 "*the terminus* of the period" passed and the kingdoms and the Holy Roman Empire did not oblige the Dr. by falling out as predicted. Ireland and the rest of the world have not entered upon the new era, in which peace and righteousness reign in the midst of the Nations. It is even still the old era of war and unrighteousness. Fenianism is the peaceful blessing that came in answer to the Dr.'s prediction of peace and righteousness. So that it is clear that he did not understand the Scriptures concerning the Kingdom of God and the kingdoms of men.

Later on Dr. Thomas published an Exposition of Prophecy, entitled *Anatolia*, in which he went more into detail than in *Elpis Israel*, and, consequently, deeper into error. On page 91 of *Anatolia*, we read -

"But before Israel and the holy ones can enter upon this work, Michael, the great commander, must stand up, and the holy ones must be raised from the dead; and a communication must be established between Israel and the land of their enemies and their future commanders; for the reason given for their fighting against the sons of Greece is, 'because the Lord is with them,

and shall be seen over them.' The Lord then will have come as the Ancient of days, at some time previous to 1872. ... My conviction is that the judgment upon Babylon will be announced as about to set; and that the *ancient of days* and the saints will meet in the air and among the clouds, *in the common A.D. 1866, or 1290 years from A.D. 606.*"

Here is a clear statement, not to the effect that a time before which the Lord cannot come will expire at the date fixed, but that sometime before 1872 the Lord's coming *will have taken place*, and that "sometime previous" is set down as 1866.

Let us hear him again:

"Lastly, forty-five years after the end of the 1290 years, the period of the Little Horn of the West's prevalence over the Holy Ones is brought to a close. This period, it will be remembered, is 1260 years long. The *end* of it is designated by that of the 1335 years, which have a beginning in common with the 1290. They commence seventy-five years before the 1260, being times pertaining to the Heirs of the Holy land, or Kings of the East, and therefore part of Judah's times; while the 1260 are a part of the times of the kingdom of Babylon - the period of its prevalence against the Holy Ones and their people; and consequently to be calculated from a different beginning, though ending at the same epoch - A.D. 1865-6. *'Blessed he that expects and LABOURS for the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days.'* ** When they terminate, the resurrection of the dead predicted in Dan. 12: 2, will come to pass; for the revelator said to the prophet, 'Be thou to thyself till the end; for thou shalt rest, and arise to thine inheritance at the end of the days.' The days last mentioned in the context are the 1335 and must therefore be the days referred to. Daniel was to be to himself till the end of these days, till which time he was to be at rest, 'sleeping in the dust of the earth.' This is the present condition, mere dust and ashes of the tomb recently discovered in Persia. But in a few years, that is, about 1866, when the 1335 years terminate, he will 'arise to his inheritance' in the Kingdom of God. - *Anatolia*, p. 97.

The above was written in 1854 when Daniel was "sleeping in the dust of the earth," but he was to rise from the dead and stand in his lot in "a few years," that is "about 1866." But "*about*" in this connection does not mean within *five* or *ten* years, but close upon, as indicated above - 1865, 6.

Thus the Dr. claimed to understand perfectly when the 1335 years terminate, and what would then transpire, and thus he proves that he knew nothing about it. Yet, strange to say, with his dates past and his predictions falsified, he continued to treat all comers as though he alone understood the Bible. Again, we read -

"How highly important is this exhortation now, seeing that in about a dozen years the resurrection will have transpired, and no further invitation to inherit it be presented to the world.** The glory that shall follow is great for the approved. The world is theirs, when all nations come and do homage before the Prince of Israel, because His judgments are made manifest. But before they can have 'power over the nations,' they must bind the strong that rule them. This is their mission at the end of the 1335 years: 'To execute vengeance upon the nations, and punishment upon the peoples; to bind their kings with chains, and their nobles with fetters of iron; to execute upon them the judgment written; this honor have all his saints.' *From A.D. 1866 to A.D. 1911*, a period of over forty years, they will be engaged in this work and in the organizing the world upon new and better principles." - *Anatolia*, p. 97.

This is definite enough! For *forty* years, commencing 1866, the *resurrected saints* are engaged in "executing vengeance upon the nations and punishment upon the peoples." Of course when the Dr. wrote this he expected that 1869 would find the Lord in Jerusalem and he, himself, engaged in binding "kings with chains and nobles with fetters of iron." But in place of that he was found in Birmingham, in a large hall, teaching 200 people that he is providentially raised up to tell what shall shortly come to pass. On the next page to that from which the last quotation is taken he says, "Such is the solution of the Great Eastern question which has been *providentially* formed for the development of the terrible situation of A.D. 1866." *Anatolia* concludes with a "Calendar of the Seven Times of Babylon and Judah," wherein the events of 1854 are described and those of 1866 predicted thus -

"1854, THE EASTERN QUESTION. - *'The sign of the Son of Man in the heaven'* of Babylon, indicative of His coming as a thief. England, France, and Turkey belligerent against Russia and Greece. Austria balancing between the parties, but sure eventually to side with Russia. A general war inevitable.

"1866, End of the 1335 years. Egypt, Palestine, and Jerusalem overspread with a Russo-Gogian abomination of desolation answering the Nebuchadnezzar's Image; while Edom, Moab, and part of Ammon swarm with the forces of the Anglo-Tarshish Lion of the east and north. Thus the forces of 'the whole habitable' of Babylon are gathered 'in the Valley of Decision. The 1260 years of Papal prevalence is at an end. The Ancient of Days comes; the Holy Ones awake from the dust of the earth; they meet him in the clouds, and prepare to take the dominion under the whole Babylonian heaven." - *Anatolia*, p. 102.

The only thing correctly stated in these two sections is, that in 1854 (*when they were written*), "England, France, and Turkey were belligerent against Russia." The fact, the Dr. says, was "*the sign of the Son of Man in the heavens*," which clearly proves that he knew nothing about the subject.

Other equally clear instances of misinterpretation of the prophets could be added from the Dr.'s works, but these are ample for the purpose. Note well the points of failure -

1. That the Russian fleet (in the Black Sea when *Elpis Israel* was written) was in preparation to attack Constantinople, that Russia would then conquer, and that the Ottoman dominion would be brought to an end about A.D. 1850. Whereas the Russian fleet never left the Black Sea but was utterly destroyed; Russia was defeated and the Ottoman power victorious.

2. That the Turco-Russian war was to make "terrible havoc with the Horn Kingdoms and the Austro-papal Empire; the former to lose their independence and the latter to have been destroyed to the end." But *now*, thirty years after the date fixed, the Horn Kingdoms and the Austrian Empire refute the false interpretation.

3. That A.D. 1786 was the "*the beginning of the end*, 1848 the concluding of the end, and 1864 the termination of the period, and that *after 1866 IRELAND and the rest of the world* would enter upon a new period, in which peace, righteousness, and blessedness would reign in the midst of the nations." And now, in 1881, internal conflict, crime, and a new coercion bill for Ireland tell of the falsity of the prediction.

4. "The Lord will have come as *Ancient of Days* the some time previous to A.D. 1872. He will meet the saints in the air, A.D. 1866." But nothing of that sort then occurred, and the saints have not yet met the Lord in the air.

5. That about A.D. 1865, 6 Daniel would arise from the dead to his inheritance in the Kingdom of God. But those years are long since passed and the dead are not raised and inheritance in the Kingdom of God has not been entered into neither by Daniel nor any other.

6. That for forty years following the resurrection of the saints, in 1866, they would be engaged in executing vengeance upon the nations and binding kings with chains, and in reorganizing the world. But fifteen years beyond that period have passed, and nothing of the sort has transpired.

7. "Egypt, Palestine, and Jerusalem were to be overspread with Russian Forces, A.D. 1866. The forces of the whole habitable of Babylon gathered in the valley of Decision." But the Russian forces did nothing of the sort and the gathering in the valley has not taken place.

Well, what is the Christadelphian answer to this formidable indictment of false interpretation of prophecy? One that is utterly lacking in honesty. But the reader shall have it. After our first publication of their failures, Mr. R. Roberts replied thereto, thus -

"The apparent failure in the Dr.'s calculations of prophetic dates is another theme of David's malignity. He says *apparent* failure, for of *real* failure THERE HAS BEEN NONE. A.D. 1866 has been symbolized by epochal events characteristic of the termination of the little horn period, though it has not brought the consummation."

But the Doctor's entire interpretation required the *consummation* then, and the fact that it is not even now reached, is evidence of *real* failure.

Daniel was to rise from the dead at that time and he has not yet done so; but with Mr. Roberts that is not real failure. To foretell a dozen events, positively as to dates, not one of which transpires at or near the time appointed is not real failure. Well, Mr. Roberts has queer notions of *realness*.

But it is said that the Dr. predicted the destruction of the Papal power in 1866, and that in that year marked events transpired in relation thereto, and that, therefore, he was a wise and true interpreter. That when a man makes *fifty* calculations, one of them comes partly true is no proof that he knew much about the matter, while the many failures prove his untrustworthiness. Years before 1866, we wrote of that year as the expiration of the term *guaranteed* to the kingdom of the Popes, and clearly put it, that then, or soon after, marked changes might be expected, which could not possibly transpire before that date. We were satisfied that the prophetic word warranted that much to be said, and it proved to be so. But in that we claimed no originality; hundreds of books had said the like, and the mere adoption of that one prediction by Dr. Thomas, and its admixture with his numerous speculations now falsified by time, is not a saving clause by the aid of which he can be delivered from the clearly established charge of utter worthlessness as an interpreter of prophecy.

The conclusion, then, is irresistible; that in view of the three principles laid down, Dr. Thomas could not have been raised up of God to restore a long lost faith; because a man called to such work must, in some degree, possess the Spirit of Christ, be incapable of publishing as his own and completely original, much that he had merely taken from previous authors; and because the prophetic interpretations of such an one, so far as they are tested by the lapse of time, must be generally correct. In these particulars the founder of *Christadelphianism* is a complete failure, and consequently his claim as the restorer of the *Old Paths* is disproved.

Doctrinal Monstrosities.

This outline would not be at all complete without, at least, a brief exhibit of leading doctrines of Christadelphianism; which, it may not be too much to say, set forth a God, a Holy Spirit, a Christ and Creator other than those of the Bible.

1. GOD AND CREATION

God, according to Christadelphianism, is not immediately the creator of our world, nor of our race. We owe what we are and have to the creative agency of numerous subordinate gods, or angels, so that creation is not the work of ONE GOD only, but of *many Gods*. Dr. Thomas wrote:-

"There will be found no good reason to question the conclusion that Elohim [translated God in Gen. 1: 1] is a noun plural, and signifies *Gods*, and ought to be so rendered throughout the chapter.

"It pleased the King Eternal, nearly six thousand years ago, to add a new habitable province to His dominions, not by an original creation of a globe, but by the reconstruction of one already existing as one of the solar planets. He commanded His angels to go and execute the works, according to the order detailed by Moses. They harkened unto the voice of His word, and in six days finished all they were commanded to do."

"But the animals were still without a king; therefore, said the chief of the Elohim, 'Let us make man in our own image.' There was none like the Elohim of all the creatures they had made, therefore they determined to make an animal after their own form. They shaped him with head, limbs, and body, like their own, so that he stood before them the earthly image of the celestial Elohim. As much their image as Seth was the image of his father Adam."

"It is credible that they [the Elohim] were once animal men of other spheres; that in a former state they were made subject to vanity not willingly; that while in the flesh they believed and obeyed God; that they succumbed to death as mortal men; that they rose from the dead, and so attained to immortality as the Elohim of the Invisible God. ..."

"Mortal and corruptible beings like ourselves become Elohim, mighty in strength, and framers of new worlds."

Christadelphians, behold, then, your Gods and Creators.

But, whence comes this gross error? From small knowledge of Hebrew, badly used. Dr. Thomas finds Deity represented by a plural noun, and, therefore, rushes to the conclusion that there were a multitude of Gods. He tells us that one of them said to the rest of them, "Let *us* make man." But then the One who said that is also Elohim (plural), showing that the thing will not hold. Put it, that there was one God in plural personality (not God's plural). The reading is then congruous, and the plurality indicated thus:- "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." (John 1: 1.) Hence, then, reference to immortalized human beings, it would be proper to say, "Let us make man." And with this agrees the fact, that though the plural form of the noun *Eloah* is used, the singular of the verb is retained, showing that creation is ascribed to ONE GOD, and not to a *multitude of Gods*. But that is not all. For dismissing all idea of plural personality, the use of Elohim (plural), with a verb *singular* would be appropriate; because, as expressed in the grammar of *Gesenius*, "Greatness, especially as associated with power and sovereignty, is plurally expressed. Hence there are several nouns used in the plural as well as in the singular, to denote LORD or GOD." But as our present purpose is to *exhibit* Christadelphian doctrines, not to *discuss* them, we pass on.

2. THE HOLY SPIRIT

With feelings akin to indignation, we read -

"That God is a material being residing in an *unknown but local center*. In Him are assembled *light, heat, electricity, color, substance*. The chief of these materials is electricity, which is OMNIPOTENT in its operations. Different elements and substances are but different forms of the *same eternal essence*,

or *first cause*, described in the Bible as SPIRIT, but in scientific language as ELECTRICITY. The Omnipresence of God only means that His Spirit - [*electricity*] - flows from Him everywhere. The Holy Spirit is not a personality, but the *vehicular effluence* of the Father."

Then, from elsewhere, we read -

"Having ascertained that the Creator has located existence, we inquire as to His nature. It is common to suppose that he is an immaterial universal diffusion - an incorporeal subtle principle pervading the universe - without local center - 'without body or parts.' It is obvious that the very opposite of this is true." "Spirit irradiating from Him, has under the fiat of His will, been embodied in the vast material creation which we behold, and now constitutes the substratum of all existence." "The Holy Ghost is the focalized concentration of the will-power of the Father - exerted by means of His 'free spirit,' which fills heaven and earth." (*R. Roberts*).

"We allude to ELECTRICITY. This is everywhere, and is at the bottom of all organization, in fact, of all substance, whether organized or unorganized. MATTER in every form is but a combination of grosser elements, held together by electricity. Electricity governs the laws of an animal's life and a planet's motion: - Omnipotent under the hand of intelligence to destroy or build up. What is this? Could a better name be devised than what the Scriptures have given it - SPIRIT? (*R. Roberts*).

Dr. Thomas also says -

"They (the Scriptures) teach that Spirit emanates from His substance, and that space, which is unbounded, or infinite, is filled with this SPIRIT - Spirit which is seen in the lightning and heard in the thunder." "Yahweh (Jehovah) is synonymous with Spirit."

God, then, we are asked to believe, is a material being, residing in some local center. That which, in scientific terms, is called *Electricity* is in the Bible described as *Spirit*; the Omnipresence of God means that electricity flows from Him everywhere; the Holy Spirit is, "that same free spirit, gathered up, as it were, under the focalization of the divine

will, for the accomplishment of divine results." Well, we have always felt something like awe at the thought of the immediate presence of the Holy Spirit, which, of course, if this doctrine be true, was but foolish superstition, seeing we have merely to do with electricity, which we control by lightning rods, send along wires at pleasure, convey into lamps to light our streets and entertainments, and get manifestation of its indwelling in the body of our puss, when in the dark we stroke its black coat the wrong way! We use this language in no flippant manner, but in sober sadness. *Christadelphianism* is responsible for thus terribly trifling with the nature of Deity, for this letting down of God to their sensuous conception.

3. THE "DIVINITY OF THE SAVIOUR.

On this head there is no manner of doubt as to what is really held. But, still, knowing that a clear and full statement of their belief would repel many if it came upon them at once, there seems a studied mystification, a saying and unsaying. Jesus *is* God, and He is *not* God; that is, He is in one sense and is not in another sense, and the one aspect or the other seems to be preferred as inquirers may be prepared to receive it. In Birmingham, as in most places of note, where there are Christadelphians, they exist in two parties, who, of course, doom each other to perdition. The party led by Mr. Roberts put out a sort of creed, in two columns, which commenced -

"CHRISTADELPHIANS

BELIEVE	DO NOT BELIEVE
In ONE GOD revealed to Israel.	In the co-eternity of Jesus with the Deity.
In Jesus of Nazareth as a man.	In the existence of Jesus before His conception at Nazareth."

The published creed of the other section affirms that they -

"Do not believe in the pre-existence of Jesus, nor that *bodily* He was in Heaven before He appeared among men, nor that He came bodily from heaven. His existence was necessitated by the fall, and at that time He existed as the 'word' or promise, and 1,800 years ago 'the word' became flesh and dwelt among the

Jews. His own language, 'I came down from heaven,' 'I am from above,' is understood as referring to His superior origin, which was in heaven, God being His Father."

That is, that though He said He came down from heaven, He never was in heaven; that though He prayed to be glorified with the glory He had with the Father before the world was, yet He never had any such glory, and never was either with the Father or anywhere else before He came into the world; and though it is written - "He was in the world, and the world was made by Him," yet He never made the world at all, and had no kind of real or bodily existence before He was begotten of Mary! Now we do not say that he pre-existed in flesh, but that as the WORD He was in the beginning with God, and that the Word was a divine personality, and was GOD; that all things were made by or through Him, and that without Him was not anything made that was made. (John 1:) To talk of His having existed not as a person, but as a purpose, or as a promise, or as a spoken word, is to juggle with terms, and the logical result is to get rid of a personal God altogether. They must accept it thus - "In the beginning was the *Word* (that is, a thought or promise), and the *Word* (thought or promise) was with God, *and the Word* (thought or promise) *was God*." (John 1: 1) But the more exact reading of the last clause is, "*And God was the Word*," and, consequently, if the Word was merely a thought, purpose, or articulated sound, then God, Himself, is merely that, and Personal Deity vanishes from the field.

A Christadelphian handbill, recently circulated in London, Birmingham, and other large towns, refers to the writer of these pages thus -

"Why do you accuse the Christadelphians of denying the *divinity* of Jesus Christ? A doctrine which they most positively maintain, but which you most emphatically deny, by declaring that He pre-existed, not being able to distinguish between the pre-existence of a thing and the divinity of that thing. Must a divine thing of necessity pre-exist? If Jesus pre-existed, how can you show that he was begotten of the Virgin by the Father when He already existed? Is not this denying the Father and the Son?"

Their admission of the "*divinity*" is a poor business, as we shall see further on, But how we can be made to deny the *Divinity* of Christ by affirming his pre-existence, is more than ordinary minds can comprehend, unless the writer means as his words imply, that the Self-existent and Eternal cannot be divine! Then it is asked, "Must a divine thing of necessity pre-exist?" But either the writer does not know what he is writing about, or he seeks to mislead. "Divinity," so far as it belongs to this inquiry, and applies to the Savior, is equivalent to Deity - the Deity of Christ is the question. "Must a divine *thing* pre-exist?" So, then, Christ is a "*thing*." We must take that as the most recent Christadelphian development, having already been informed by Mr. Roberts, that "The declarations of the Scriptures concerning the Spirit of God are so identical with the portraiture of electricity by modern science, *that there can be no doubt as to the synonymity of the two things.*" There, then, the Holy Spirit is one *thing*, and according to the handbill, the Savior is another *thing*! Yes! Deity "*must* of necessity pre-exist," being Uncreated, Self-existent, Eternal. If the Savior is not *that*, He is not divine in the only sense in which the term has place in this question.

Mr. Roberts, pressed by an opponent, becomes at time, on this subject, very explicit. He writes -

"The Spirit with which he (Jesus) was anointed, and through which the Eternal Father manifested Himself in Him, was pre-existent, but not the man anointed of God, who learned obedience by the things which he suffered. *He existed only as a purpose*, and his glory was a foregone conclusion before the foundation of the world."

About the time of the last visit of Dr. Thomas to this country, there seems to have been some revulsion of feeling owing to suchlike denials of the proper pre-existence of the Savior. Consequently, Mr. Roberts published, from the pen of Dr. Thomas, an article on the text, "He was before me," wherein the Dr. says -

"John the Immerser, then, was not sent to introduce One who had no existence until six months after his own birth of Elizabeth; but to herald to the house of Jacob 'the Lord of Hosts, the King of Israel,' 'without whom there is NO SAVIOUR,' (Isaiah 43: 11.); and who, as the Great Light, was about to

tabernacle among them in the sense of His Name IMMANUEL (*immanu*-AIL, DEITY *with us*).

"In the days of the decadence of Judah's Commonwealth, Scribes erected for themselves watchtowers high as the turrets of the celebrated watchtowers of the days of Nimrod. On the pinnacles of these, they set themselves to eye the incidents of the situation with telescopic gaze. But all their wisdom resulted only in the confusion of their tongues, and an inability to discern anything in Jesus but a mad blasphemer, who affirmed equality with Deity, and existence before Abraham. Their prophetic telescope from the pinnacles of their Babel watchtowers enabled them to see nothing but a man of flesh in 'the Man Christ Jesus.' 'Is not this,' said they, 'Jesus the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? how is it then that he saith *I came down from heaven?*' (John 6: 42.)

"No; John did not come to proclaim any such phantasmata. He saw no such sights as these watchtower people professed to see from their fleshly standpoints. He came to introduce one who had been rich for countless ages. 'He who was rich,' and who had said 'the earth is mine and the fullness thereof;' and who by coming into the world he had made (Jno. 1: 10), placed himself in circumstances of extreme poverty, that we through his poverty might be rich. - 2 Cor. 8: 9). This was 'the mightier one,' whose shoes' latchet John said, he was not worthy to unloose. But to this, he also added the testimony that this mightier one was preferred before himself, because, said he, 'HE WAS BEFORE ME.'

"In what sense, then, was Jesus before John? Certainly not in the sense of being born of Mary before John was born of Elizabeth, because John was born six months before Jesus. John being six months older than Jesus, John was in that sense before Jesus. But John says, *Jesus was before me*. Hence, He pre-existed before John, though born after him.

"Nor can it be said that the mission of Jesus was before John; because before the coming or manifestation of Jesus, John preached the approaching advent of Jehovah; and Jesus did not begin his mission till John had finished and was imprisoned.

"The question then in view of the prophetic word, is, *Whom did John Introduce?* The Spirit of Christ in Malachi; and Isaiah saith it was *Jehovah*. This is undeniable by anyone claiming to understand and believe the prophets. We are brought then to this: Was John before Jehovah who sent him, or was Jehovah before John? The answer is obvious. Such was the pre-existent mightier one, of whom John said, 'He was before me.'
"Christadelphian, April, 1870.

Now the uninitiated would be likely to take the foregoing as that little short of a repudiation of the ordinary talk of Christadelphians as to the Deity and pre-existence of Christ. But it serves merely to blind those who read it in its ordinary acceptation, and certain Christadelphians were led to inquire whether they were being taken back to Trinitarianism, which, of course, they were not. Mr. Roberts assured them that "Instead of being something new, as some were fearing, it is the same as advocated in all the Dr.'s works, the dressing being a little different, that's all." But we may hear the Dr. a little further on the Deity of Christ -

"He was flesh, having been born of the flesh, though not by the will of man; and He is now Spirit, having been born of the Spirit, from the grave to incorruption. Jesus, then, is Spirit. Paul styles Him a life-imparting Spirit, and the Lord the spirit. Being Spirit, He is, therefore, *Theos*, or God. He is now no longer flesh and blood, but *Holy Spirit Nature* - a flesh and bones embodiment of Spirit, and, therefore of the One Jahweh" (*Jehovah*).

There, then, Jesus *is* (not *was*) God, having become so since His death on the cross. And even that does not amount to more than Christadelphians consider will also become true of themselves. They will be as much God as Jesus is. Dr. Thomas writes:-

"Those who are taught of God, and by that teaching are enlightened by the spirit - and life words of the truth, are transformed, or fashioned, like unto the body of His glory. This occurs at the epoch of the resurrection, the manifestation of the sons of God, who all become like Him in body, as they have been in faith and practice - Spirit, because born of the Spirit, and therefore GOD, because *Spirit is God.*"

Thus, Jesus is God because He is *Spirit*, and *Spirit* in the Bible is, in "scientific language, *Electricity*," and the saints destined for Spirit-bodies, will, in the future, be *God*, as Jesus now is. But, though the Savior is now God, and King of Kings and Lord of Lords, His elevation will not last long. He has to come down again to a subordinate place. Mr. Roberts writes -

"Christ, at the end of the thousand years, is to abdicate His position of absolute sovereignty. It would seem as if on the accomplishment of His mission as mediator in the complete redemption of the world, He steps down from His high position at the end of the thousand years, that God may be manifested (without a medium), as the only eternal governor. Yet though no longer the supreme ruler of the earth, Christ will no doubt continue to occupy a position of peculiar pre-eminence as the Captain of the many sons."

So now, really, after all, he is only the "*medium*" through which God is manifested; and by and by will not be even that, but a captain over many sons. If these men had imagined themselves specially commissioned to denude and dishonor Christ, they could scarcely have done more to that end than they have.

But, beyond all this, according to one of the parties of the last *Christadelphian* division, the adherents to Mr. Roberts have so far dishonored the Savior as to have little chance of salvation unless they repent. The conflict relates to the *flesh of Jesus*. Dr. Thomas was questioned thus:- "Was the flesh of Jesus from His birth by Mary, pure, holy, spotless, undefiled?" "Had He not been put to death violently, would he have lived for ever?" The answer given to both questions is, "*No*," and according to Mr. Roberts, those who hold the opposite are engaged in "Satanic efforts to resist the truth." He says -

"The idea that Jesus was of the same Nature as Adam before His fall, is equally untenable, in the sense in which it is put forward. His nature was developed from Mary, and He partook of the qualities of that nature. If, therefore, Christ was of the same nature as Adam before the fall, so must Mary have been. The fact is, both were of the flesh of sin." (*Ambassador.*) "All New Testament allusions to the subject teach that the flesh of human nature is a sinful thing." (*Slain Lamb.*)

The *Christadelphian Lamp*, started in the interests of the Anti-Roberts party, makes known their estimate of Mr. Roberts -

"Concerning the writings of Dr. Thomas, Bro. Roberts, on page 564 *Christadelphian*, writes:

"There is but one safe position, and in that we mean, by the favor of God, to entrench ourselves 'for better or for worse,' viz., *the whole truth as brought to light by Dr. Thomas.*

"What will Christadelphians as a body, and independent thinkers generally, say to this dogma of human infallibility? Those who knew Dr. Thomas well will probably regard it as a disgrace, which were he alive, he would be the first to cast off. As to people of common sense, on the outskirts of our cause, will they not conclude that some of us are enslaved by the idolatry of humanity? Here we have an emphatic declaration, that to depart in any way whatever from the things taught by Dr. Thomas, imperils our salvation? We should like the editor of the *Christadelphian* to speak with more precision in this matter. We should like him to tell us *what things*; for as our own columns have shown, Bro. R. himself is in grievous contradiction to the Doctor in many things. Besides this, he is guilty of tampering with the Doctor's writings, and plainly tells his readers that the Doctor was formerly in the habit of using 'equivocal language' but that he 'avoided' such language 'in his latter writings.' We further remark that this 'equivocal language' is upon the *present subject* of controversy. See *Christadelphian* cover, Notes, F.R.S. Now what will be inferred from these facts?

1. That Bro. R. professes to stand entirely on the Doctor's teaching.
2. While professing this he is greatly at variance with the Doctor.
3. That the full text of the Doctor's works he dares not reproduce on the present question.
4. *That he assumes to interpret the Doctor's meaning for the brethren, but refuses to present the whole of the Doctor's words.*

"These tactics are tactics of a strongly biased mind; of a mind that shrinks from the full light, and the obvious conclusions of the statements on which it professes to rest its faith; and worst of all, while trying to sustain popularity on professed absolute confidence in the Doctor, insinuates unwittingly that on some matters the Doctor has contradicted himself."

"There is one thing we thank Bro. Roberts for, namely, the insertion of a copy of our diagram in the *Christadelphian*. His styling it the Renunciationist Heresy will not spoil its use with those whose eyes are not jaundiced with the spleen of envy. Finally, should this copious vomiting of bile relieve our fiery antagonist of his dizzy madness, we shall not regret it, even though our outer garments have been somewhat befouled thereby."

"We sincerely believe, that any man who has got into the state of mind exhibited in the foregoing handling of the Word of God, to support his notion of the physical uncleanness of the unblemished 'Lamb of God,' is, for the time being, totally unfit to investigate any question, and entirely unworthy of any consideration as a professed teacher of the ignorant, and of them that are out of the way. We feel sure that this display of want of candor, of deliberate abuse of the Word of Truth, and of a list of gross incongruities and shocking absurdities will save many more from his trust and guidance, and we hope will be to them and others a standing lesson of the necessity of *proving* what they assent to, *for themselves*."

Here we leave the two Christadelphian camps to settle their conflict. Each seems to think that the earth should open and swallow up the tents of the other faction.

4. Other Strange Doctrines

Other items of this system of doctrines may be expressed thus -

1. That man has not an immortal soul - that after death he remains out of being till re-created at the Resurrection - that heathen, infants, and idiots will never rise from the dead, but perish like the brutes - that there is no personal immortal *devil* or *Satan*, no endless hell, that *sin* is the devil.

2. That God and Christ have not now a Kingdom on earth, that Christ is not now a King, and that, therefore, none have been "translated into the Kingdom of God's dear Son."

3. That the Kingdom of God foretold in Scripture, and yet to come, is the Kingdom of David, and will consist of the twelve tribes of the literal Israel, re-organized in Abraham's land, as the Kingdom of Christ, with all Gentile nations as His dominions - that at the return of Christ He will raise the dead saints, but in mortal bodies, and with them enter Jerusalem, and appoint Rulers of the Kingdom from among His brethren; that for some forty years they will be engaged in executing vengeance upon the nations and punishment upon the peoples, binding kings and nobles with chains and fetters, and organizing the world upon new and better principles.

4. That the foregoing things are included in the Gospel and Hope, and that the understanding and belief of them are essential to valid immersion into the Divine Name; that there is, therefore, no salvation without such understanding, belief, and immersion.

Now look at the consequence! Thousands of poor souls who feel their need of a Savior, and who love Him who died for them, and whose hearts are won to God, *must perish forever!* Because, educationally and otherwise, they are not fit to settle for themselves what the Scriptures teach concerning the nature of the human soul, nor competent to decide whether this sect rightly expounds the Law, the Prophets, and the Psalms. Suppose the Christadelphian interpretation of the Old Testament and of the Gospel correct (which the most *learned, Bible-searching, and pious* deny) then thousands around us, however earnestly desirous to know and do the will of God, could not, owing to their little education, and hard and long working for daily bread, come to an intelligent reception of the Gospel and Hope without years of effort, and in many cases not even in the remainder of an ordinarily prolonged life. Questions are involved upon which Christ-loving and God-obeying men, both learned and unlearned, have carefully, prayerfully, and constantly searched the Scriptures, and yet differ - differ as to whether the soul is immortal or not, whether the coming of the Lord will be premillennial or not. They have no interest in maintaining either the one view or the other, and would as soon hold the one as the other upon finding it Scriptural, and could do so and retain their present church connection, and suffer no loss; and yet they

differ, and every one of them remaining in error as to the soul's immortality, or understanding that the Israel to which God promises certain blessings is not the Israel of the flesh, but the spiritual seed of Abraham, must be eternally lost! Oh most horrible doctrine! Blasphemy against the revealed character of God! A denial of the Divine love! Thanks be to God, He has never dealt with poor erring man after this fashion!

That the foregoing is no exaggeration appears from the facts of one case, out of many, published by Mr. Roberts - that of the conversion, in London, of Mr. Bosher, who on his re-immersion gave an outline of his past life. He appears to have been from his youth a pious seeker after God and truth. He was immersed and became a member of the church over which the "Rev." Baptist Noel subsequently became pastor, and for twenty-two years was highly esteemed as a member thereof. But what was his state of mind when baptized, in order to taking membership in that church? Here are his own words - "The uppermost thought in my mind, when I went down into the baptistery, at John Street Chapel, was - I now identify myself with the Lord Jesus. Oh! how I love him. Oh! I should like now to die; not to come out of the water again, but to leave this body now, that my immortal spirit may flee to Him and dwell with Him, and not come in contact and contamination with this evil world again. This was the thought that just swallowed me up, and with that thought I have gone through life from that time to this." Now look at the case - Here is a man who from his heart so believed in Jesus, and so loved Him, and so thoroughly turned to God in repentance, that then, and after, he would rather die instantly than contaminate himself by sin. Baptized in that condition of soul-surrender to God, to Christ, and to purity of life, he looked upon his baptism as *identifying him with Christ*. Yet that faith, repentance, love and self-surrender pass for nothing, his baptism was invalid, and he unsaved, and he continued so for twenty-two years, during which he lived esteemed in church fellowship and adorned by the fruits of the Spirit. We are not mistaken at this point! Hear him thereon - "But there was one doctrine that lodged in my mind at the time of my baptism in John Street, which above all, I can now see, *made it worthless*. I believed in immortal-soulism." There now! According to Roberts and Co., we now know that a mistake upon the nature of the human soul (faith in Christ, love of God, so strong and abiding as to purify the life, notwithstanding) dooms its possessor to death. But we may rejoice in

this, that the *Scriptures of Truth*, without the Dr.'s works, "original throughout," or concocted from the speculations of others, are able to make us "*perfect, thoroughly furnished to every good work.*" Depend upon it that though the Bible contains many things hard to be understood, and some that cannot be understood till the time of their fulfillment, THE FAITH - that which is submitted for belief in order to salvation - is not among the things difficult of comprehension. It is true, notwithstanding all that *Christadelphians* can say to the contrary, that "*If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead thou shalt be saved.*" (Rom. 10: 9.) How completely unacquainted with the intricate questions unfolded, or rather folded up, in the books of Dr. Thomas, must the Eunuch and the household of Cornelius have been, baptized as they were after instruction in the Gospel which, in all probability, did not occupy an hour and of which they knew nothing before. The fact is clear that even if every item of the *Christadelphian* creed were true, instead of being largely and extravagantly false, it would still be "another Gospel" when the belief if it is made essential to salvation. Not only "another Gospel," but a hard and impossible law, in compare with which circumcision and the rites and ceremonies of the Old Institution would be an easy yoke. There is a long specification of intricate doctrines which must be believed in order to salvation, and another list which must be disbelieved or the sinner must be lost. And multitudes are educationally and otherwise incapable of understanding these things.

The spirit engendered by this miserable system is apparent to most persons acquainted with its adherents. Even to suspect one in fifty of any measure of piety is not reasonably possible. And how could it be otherwise? What is there in it to change the heart, or to assimilate the life to that of Christ? Next to nothing! They feed on very garbage - dissertations on the nature of the soul, or the non-existence of the devil, or the non-resurrection of infants, pagans, and idiots. Their very hope involves much that is common to marauders who slaughter in hope of entering upon property possessed by others. Dr. Thomas, as published by Mr. Roberts, says -

"The estates of all the misers of this present evil world will be turned to righteous and beneficent account by and bye, in the hands of Jesus and His brethren. Only when that time comes they won't have to wait the death of the misers. They will take

possession, and turn the owners adrift, in most cases into the grave." ... "All the earth will learn at the cost of much blood and treasure, the futility of resisting the new *Eastern Regime*."

Mr. Roberts seems charmed with the prospect of fighting other than word battles. He says -

"His coming in the Spirit draws near; a people is in preparation, increasing in number, faith, zeal, and service, to whom He will be revealed, with the thousands He shall bring from the dead by His power, and by means of whose recruited forces He will enter into conflict with the world, drive Gentile power from every throne, and establish His kingdom under the whole heaven. *Christadelphian operations will then be transferred from the arena of debate to that of military coercion.*"

On reading of the defeat of the French army, all along the line, in the late war, Mr. Roberts exclaims, "*Quite refreshing.*" Alluding to the slaughter, he says-

"To those who have learned to place the sanctity of divine law first it is as natural as the drowning of millions in the flood, or the perdition of the Sodomites in the flames. When the time comes the sword will be put into the hands of this very class [*Christadelphians*], and they will have no more compunction than Samuel in hewing the political Agags to pieces. Not that they delight in war, but they will have a strong nerve for the execution of laws whose supremacy is necessary to universal well-being."

That God does punish nations by the sword is not for a moment denied; that the finally impenitent will meet a sad fate at His hands, is clear. But that the Church of the Lord shall be the agents in the work of slaughter is nowhere taught; and the state of mind which gloats with evident satisfaction upon a call to stain hands by blood and slaughter is not likely, meanwhile, to produce Christian fruit. The Savior did, unquestionably, faithfully point to dire calamities, which in the end would fall upon guilty people. But when he came to the near contemplation of the realization, in the looming destruction of Jerusalem by sword and flame, His deep sorrow and scalding tears attest the utter absence of the Christadelphian spirit.

It may be desirable to say that this doctrinal outline is not presented as complete; much, not less objectionable, might be added. Nor are we to be understood as denying every Christadelphian affirmation here cited, nor as affirming everything denied. Christadelphians, like other errorists, hold some modicum of truth; but we shall have to go very far before we find a party, professing to take the Bible as a whole, more distant from the doctrine of Christ and the apostles.