

aiōn something more subtle and internal in its character.' ”

After adding more that is interesting of the ethical meaning of *aiōn*, the Archbishop has made a most important admission to which it will be necessary to call attention. He says, “ It must be freely admitted that there are two passages in the Epistle to the Hebrews which will not range themselves, according to the distinction here drawn between *aiōn* and *kosmos*, namely, i. 2, and xi. 3. In both of these *aiōnes* are the worlds contemplated, if not entirely, yet beyond question, mainly, under other aspects than those of time. Some indeed, especially modern Socinian expositors, though not without forerunners who had no such motives as theirs, have attempted to explain *aiōnes* at Heb. i. 2, as the successive dispensations, the *chronoi* and *kairoi* of the divine economy. But however plausible this explanation might have been if this verse had stood alone, xi. 3 is decisive that the *aiōnes* in both passages can only be, as we have rendered it, ‘the worlds,’ and not ‘the ages.’ ”

This is a stupendous admission, and one that ought not to have been made except on sufficient grounds. No grounds but a necessity ought to be considered sufficient. Are we, then, shut up to this admission by a necessity? If so, what forms the necessity? We suspect, and of this there can be no doubt, that it is the commonly accepted divinity of the passage which required the Archbishop's admission, and necessitated his philology to be thumbscrewed into compliance. Just because faith here, from a foregone conclusion, *must* mean belief, *aiōn* must mean the material universe. But, on consideration, it will be evident as demonstration that faith here must be understood in the same sense which it takes in the quotation from the prophet in chap. x. 38; and we think we have succeeded to put it past question, that there it does not mean the power and exercise of believing, but the principle of faith in opposition to that of works. Let faith, then, take this, its true

sense here, and the necessity to do violence to the learned prelate's philology, and of investing *aiōn* with a new and before unheard of signification, will at once utterly disappear. Is it not a prejudice against any interpretation of a text when one of its most important words is forced to take a wholly new meaning in order to sustain the correctness of the exposition? Now this is just the case here. Not only is an important word of a text required to take an unusual sense to support an interpretation, but a meaning is forced upon it that is wholly unknown to it elsewhere. According to the Archbishop—and a more competent philological authority, we suppose, does not exist—the history of this word affords no instance of its taking the meaning of the material universe until it was, as he says, but we deny, employed in this sense by the apostle in the Epistle to the Hebrews.

But neither is this all. Another principal word in the text must be made to take a wholly new meaning in order to support the accepted interpretation of "faith" in this connection. Philology must be yet further humbled and coerced to sustain the received theology of this passage. *That* must submit, because *this* is established. Yea, with a confidence so nearly universal and completely unquestioning is the latter received, that not to acquiesce in it one may well fear being put outside the pale of rational beings, and, if mentioned at all, spoken of only in such terms as might be suggested by pity or by scorn. Be this as it may, however, we do doubt, and for this further reason. The word rendered "framed" in verse 3 never takes the meaning of *create*, or *make*, in the creative sense, throughout the New Testament, and ought not to have this signification forced upon it here. In every instance in the New Testament where mention is made of creation, the word *ktizein*, *poiein*, and *genesthai*, with their derivatives are constantly employed; *katartizein*, the word used here, never. It is surprising that the received theology of this context, in view of the facts we have brought to notice, seems never to have been

questioned. Nothing, however, can be more clear to our mind than that the accepted exposition of the word faith in this text and connection, when tested by the philology of its own learned advocates, by logic, by the scope of the writer, and by the application of the doctrine taught throughout the passage, wholly fails. No exposition of any word under such conditions can be sustained.

In prosecuting our enquiry into this part of our subject yet another step or two, by a further reference to this passage, we do so under a serious conviction of many years' standing, that there is scarcely a more important word employed in the Scriptures, and hardly one that is more ill understood, not to say misunderstood, than is faith. Perhaps, indeed, it may well be doubted whether so much extravagant folly is blurted out in our pulpits on any subject as on believing; or whether there is throughout the whole field of religious literature more unlearned and learned nonsense written about anything than there is about faith.

It must be clear to all that read the original text that the preposition *en* (in,) is to be understood as governing *pistis* (faith) in every instance in which this word is put in the dative case throughout Heb. xi: Should any doubt this, *en tautēi* (in this,) in verse 2, ought to remove all hesitation. Now all our instructors teach us that the primary sense of this preposition is *in, within, contained within*. From this primary meaning proceed, in the most natural manner, two distinct significations; one, *the specific way or means of performing an action*; the other, *the particular sphere within which an action takes place*. It is in the former of these significations that this preposition is accepted so generally, and attended with so much mistake, throughout this connection. "By faith," therefore, instead of *in faith* has become the rendering, and the interpretation has followed accordingly. By believing, therefore, it is said, by many, have all these wonderful things been done. Others, more hesitating, have felt it to be necessary that there should be distinctions made between effi-

cient and instrumental causes, and upon this subject they have expended some learning; while some of these have at length told us that, properly speaking, faith, that is, in the sense of belief, is not a cause at all. All this seems to arise from, and proceed upon the fundamental mistake about the meaning of faith here, which has been already pointed out. If faith, in chap. xi., takes the sense belonging to it in the quotation from the prophet, in chap. x. 38, as it ought to do, and must do, to be rightly understood, it will then be seen that *en pistei* is not to be taken as the *means by which*, but as the *sphere in which* something has been done. Harmony will then reign throughout, and difficulty vanish. All these things that are here predicated of faith, will then have been done *within the sphere of*, and *in accord with* the principle of faith, instead of *by believing*; a notion that, to be tolerated in the mind at all, needs no end of conciliatory explanation; and after all, at its best, it leaves a strong sense of unsatisfaction, not to say dissatisfaction.

Once more: the generally accepted interpretation of faith in verse 3, seems also to be logically faulty. "Through faith, we understand," &c., it is usually said; but is faith, or believing, the ground or the means of our understanding? Do we believe in order to understand? Again we doubt. This notion appears to us to be neither good logic nor good divinity. Rather, as it seems to us, we require to understand, in order to believe. Is not the Word of God, as such, received by the understanding on evidence? Need we to be possessed of justifying faith, as this is called here, in order to receive the testimony of God in his Word? Is this justifying faith requisite for us in order to receive God's testimony of fact, respecting the creation of the material universe? Are those that reject God's account of the creation excusable because they have not this so-called justifying faith? Moreover, would any man be able to believe this, who possesses justifying faith, if he did not first understand that it was so from God's testimony? We will take it that each of these questions will suggest with unflinching

certainly its own appropriate answer, and that this will be a sufficient refutation of the accepted reasoning on this subject. Happily for the logical credit of the apostle in this matter, we have, in Rom. x. 14, an example directly to the point. He there says, "How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?" But it surely does not require proof that a man cannot believe, nor believe in, that of which he has no knowledge. Good Sibbes says, "Faith is an understanding grace; it knows whom it trusts, and for what, and on what grounds it trusts." By a figure of speech, this is beautifully true. Spoken of a believer, it would be true without a figure. Paul, too, knew whom he believed. Having now conducted our enquiry into the acceptableness of the accepted interpretation of faith in this connection to a point where it conclusively appears that it can only be retained upon such terms as the scope of the writer being ignored, philology being again and again violated, divinity making no end of conciliatory explanations, and logic being humbled, we may very well take our leave of it.

From the length to which the foregoing observations have been extended, our remaining remarks on *pistis* (faith) construed with *ek* (out of) must be brief.

This construction occurs several times in connection with justifying. In Rom. iii. 30, we have "Justify the circumcision *by* faith." In Rom. v. 1, "Being justified *by* faith." In Gal. ii. 16, "We have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified *by* the faith of Christ." In Gal. iii. 8, "Justify the heathen *through* faith." And in Gal. iii. 24, "Justified *by* faith." Neither *by* nor *through* at all represents the preposition employed by the apostle, and both are evidently used to sustain the mistaken sense of belief in "faith" which is so commonly accepted. Sinners believe with the heart in order to righteousness, but they are never said, and never can be said to be justified *ek* (out of) believing. In every one of the instances

quoted, the self-same idea is found. It is the idea of a principle, ground, or source, that is distinguished from another and a totally different one, out of which a certain proceeding springs, and is completed. Were any argument needed to confirm this view, nothing more could be required beyond what is found in the quotation from Gal. ii. 16. Knowing from the divine testimony that a man is not justified from works of law, but through the faith of Jesus Christ, "Even we," says the apostle, "have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified from the faith of Christ." Can any man fail to see that the believing of the apostles and the faith of Christ are two broadly distinguished and plainly distinct things? Just as the righteousness of God is revealed in the gospel to be from the principle of faith, (which is of free gift from pure favour), in order to belief, (which is the simple reception of the benefit bestowed), so the apostles renounced the principle of works, and became obedient to that of faith.

To sustain the common interpretation, namely, justification by believing, in whichever of the senses this term may be commonly understood, the apostle's words, in Gal. ii. 16, should run thus:—*Even we have believed in Jesus Christ that we might be justified from the belief of Christ.* According to this rendering of his words we should, indeed, understand him to mean that the justification of himself and his brethren arose out of and was owing to the act of their believing in Christ. But would this be a right rendering? Would this be what the writer intended to convey? Is there a syllable of such teaching to be found in the Book of God? Is anything like this known in the experience of the godly? Can a sinner's justification arise out of and be owing to his believing in Christ in the nature of the thing?

It seems to be thought that believing, under grace, must not only supplant working, under works, but that the former is just a substitute for the latter; that is, that believing is introduced into the place of working to accomplish the same thing by a different method. That

as, according to the principle of works, a man was to justify himself by working, so, according to the principle of faith, a man is to justify himself by believing. That as righteousness in the former case arose out of a perfect working, so, in the latter, the same thing is to arise out of and to be owing to a certain distinguished act of believing, which has commonly been designated a justifying faith, in distinction from some others which do not, it is said, possess this peculiar excellence. So that, in either case, or in both, a man's justification is, in fact, to arise out of and to be owing to his own act, whether of working or believing. But are these things so? Upon the principle of works the working, if perfect, *made* the man's righteousness; but does believing, upon the principle of faith, do this even when this act takes its most perfect form? If not, will it not appear, then, that the province and power of believing are altogether different from those of working? When a man works in order to righteousness it is to make or maintain it; but when he believes in order to righteousness there is nothing of the kind in his thoughts or intentions. When a man ceases working and commences believing in order to righteousness, he renounces the principle of works and acquiesces in that of faith, and he looks, not to make a righteousness for himself, but to receive one of the Lord, and so to be made righteous; that is, to be "justified freely by his grace."

In every view of it, the notion of a sinner being justified out of his own act of believing is a pure fallacy. True, there are many who attribute no justifying virtue to believing, although they speak of a justifying faith. But, why then, in the sense of believing, speak of faith as justifying at all, if believing does not justify? Justifying faith is a wholly unscriptural term; in the sense of believing it is susceptible of no true interpretation, it expresses very badly the most harmless of its accepted meanings, it is in a high degree misleading on a most important subject, and it would be every way well if it fell into disuse. Unscriptural and misleading as this term is, there can be little doubt, however, that

it has arisen from the scriptural one, "justified by faith;" still it nevertheless owes its existence to the fundamental mistake, in the interpretation of the words whence it arises, of confounding principle and practice. Moreover, there is no just ground to doubt that in every instance, without exception, in which Paul speaks of "works," of "works of law," and of "faith," in connection with justification, principle is intended and not practice; and there is as little ground to question that he is almost universally interpreted as speaking of practice and not principle. Whoever so mistakes the apostle's meaning can never understand his teaching on this great subject until the error is corrected. Let the matter be well weighed, and it will most evidently appear that as justified by believing cannot be the meaning of "justified (*ek pisteōs*,) from faith," in the quotation from Gal. ii. 16, so neither is it in any one of the others. No doubt the faith of Christ implies a believing in him. Each of these, indeed, will always imply the other; but one is not the other, and they ought never to be confounded.

We have other examples of this construction and meaning in the term "Righteousness which is of faith" found in Rom. ix. 30, and x. 6. This term does not at all mean that men are justified from believing, as has been already said, and it means very much more than that men believe in order to righteousness. The righteousness, which is of faith, is just that element of God's salvation which is essential to the justification of sinners. As it is the righteousness of faith, it is to be understood as springing out of that principle which is so designated, and which is everywhere opposed in the Scriptures to that which bears the character and name of works.

In Rom. iii. 26, we have another example. As nothing can more decisively show, so nothing, perhaps, has contributed more strongly to give, the bias of general opinion in favour of belief for faith, than what we find here. "Justifier of him that believeth in Jesus" we read; "Justifier of him that is of the faith of Jesus" is what Paul said. But where lies the difference?

Just here. Paul speaks of the faith of Jesus, and men interpret this of the belief of believers. Hence so much mistake and misleading on this subject. No doubt they who are of the faith of Jesus are believers on him; but these things are very far from being identical, and the terms from being interchangeable, and their difference is important. What the apostle teaches here is, that there are some men who are of the works of law, and others who are of the faith of Jesus. That not one individual who is of the works of law shall be justified before God; verse 20. That the righteousness of God, which is brought to pass through that wondrous scheme of faith which has Christ for its Beginner and Perfecter, is manifested as being unto and upon all them that believe. That, according to this scheme, sinners are justified freely by grace, on account of the redemption which is in Christ Jesus. That God set forth his Son, through means of this scheme of faith, as a propitiation by his blood, in order to the manifestation of his righteousness, that he might appear to be just, and made known to be the justifier of him who is of the faith of Jesus. It is not said here that God is the justifier of the sinner who believes in Jesus, but of him who is already of the faith of Jesus, as opposed to them who are of the works of law.

Another example is found in the term "of faith," without the addition of the distinctive designation "of Jesus," but inclusive of it. This may be found in Gal. iii. 7, "They which are of faith;" and again, in verse 9, "They which be of faith." No doubt these are believers; but that is not what is asserted and taught here. What is taught is, that these persons are discriminated as belonging to a certain class that adheres to a particular principle in religion, which is designated by the word "faith," or the term "faith of Jesus."

So, again, when the apostle tells us "The law is not of faith," Gal. iii. 12; he teaches us that the principle of law is not only not identical with that of faith, but that it is the precise opposite.

Another example, about which a good deal of confusion seems to prevail, is found in Gal. v. 5. Belief, as the meaning of faith in this verse, is wholly out of question wrong. The Galatians had gone from grace to law, from the principle of faith to that of works in the matter of justification. Paul gave them a proof of this defection, by showing them the example of himself and brethren. "For we," he says, "by the Spirit," (the teaching and power of the Holy Ghost) "from faith," (the principle, as opposed to works, from which every blessing of salvation arises) "wait for the hope of righteousness." To make these words represent the idea of waiting for the hope of righteousness by believing is simply a monstrous perversion of meaning.

Another noteworthy example is that in Gal. iii. 22 : "The promise *by* faith of Jesus Christ." Here we have another instance of a distinction between the faith of Jesus Christ and the believing of believers. The apostle is not speaking here of some promise which comes into possession by means of belief in Christ, and of its being given to them that believe at the time of their believing. Plainly, what he teaches is, that the Scripture has shut up the whole world under sin, and consequently, under condemnation, and, therefore, wholly without the pale of works of law respecting the attainment of righteousness, that the promise which arises out of the faith of Jesus Christ, might be given to them that believe. The faith of Jesus Christ, so designated because he is its Beginner and Perfecter, is the source out of which the promise arises to them that believe. In Christ, the promise was made, and out of the faith of Christ, in direct opposition to works, it springs.

Only one other instance remains, namely, that in James ii. 24 : "Not *of* faith only." How a man may be said to be justified from the principle of works, and from that of faith too, will present no difficulty to him that has mastered the instruction of the Word on the provinces of these principles in the different economies which have been established between man and his

Maker and Saviour; but to him that has not, this matter will be a Gordian knot which can be no more cut than untied. Faith and works here, are the principles or grounds of a man's justification; they are not identical with believing and working, and ought not to be so interpreted.

The conclusion arrived at is, therefore, that in no one instance of the word *pistis* (faith) governed by *ek* (out of) is the sense of believing to be understood.

It will be instructive to observe that out of the twenty instances of this construction brought to notice, in just half of them the preposition is rendered "by," seven times "of," once "from," and once "through." Rendered "by," and "through," there can be no doubt that the noun governed is commonly understood as an instrument, and that instrument, the believing of believers. So interpreted and accepted, no term that affects theological truth so widely has ever, perhaps, been misunderstood with worse effect. Interpreted as the instrument of reception, utterly aside as this is from the meaning of the term, the interpretation is comparatively harmless. When, as is most general, it is spoken of as an instrument of acquirement, and the exercise of it a duty, the mischievousness of the teaching cannot be overrated; but when, as by Dr. Macknight, its exercise is expounded as equal to a complete performance of duty, and will be rewarded accordingly, the interpretation is a little too vicious to be much hurtful. When the preposition is rendered "of," as in the example "righteousness of faith," there is still a pertinacious clinging to believing. It is then the righteousness which, as some, is received by believing; or, as others, which is to be acquired or appropriated by anybody if he will only believe; or, as others, believing will be reckoned as an equivalent to a complete performance of duty. What but the perverseness of pre-conception could warp candid minds enough to rest in the crookedness of such twisted meanings? Paul is speaking of the source of righteousness, not of its reception. No doubt righteousness is received upon the

same principle that it is bestowed ; but when we read of the righteousness which is from faith, in evident distinction from another that is from works, we are not to understand faith to be the instrument of the reception or acquirement of the blessing, but the nature of its source. Even in the one solitary instance of the most correct rendering of the preposition, namely, "from," (Rom. i. 17,) Mr. Haldane will have it "by," and faith, that is, believing, the instrument of reception. Alford adopts De Wette's notion of faith being the subjective ground; and others what not of the same description. But objective ground, or source, or principle, the evident teaching of the apostle, men will not see in this construction. Why is this? Is it an unwillingness that the edifice of salvation, from foundation to topstone, should be wholly of grace? When will men be content that God Almighty should do something completely for them, that shall be wholly of grace?

CHAPTER VIII.

OF FAITH, CONSTRUED WITH OTHER PREPOSITIONS.

A FEW observations will take in all that, for our present purpose, it will be necessary to say about this word when construed with some of the other prepositions.

Of the several instances in which *pistis*, (faith,) is governed by *en*, (in,) it will be unnecessary to bring more than three or four under review. Respecting the interesting occurrence of this construction in Gal. ii. 20, "I live in the faith of the Son of God," it seems a positive marvel that interpreters, as with one consent should fix on believing as the meaning of faith here. Alford, indeed, rejects *by* and adopts *in*, in its exact local sense, as referring to an element; but, surprisingly enough, he holds fast to the sense of believing, and makes the exercise of believing the local element of

Paul's life! This seems to be another example of the power of preconceived notions to influence the mind when interpreting the Word of God. Paul said distinctly, with the greatest clearness, "I live in the faith which is of the Son of God." He teaches us that it was in that great scheme of favour, so designated, he found the element of his life, and that, as a sphere, it contained within itself all the aims of his activities, all his delights, his desires, and his hopes. It seems impossible that any mind, not predetermined to see nothing else in faith but believing, could mistake the meaning here.

In Col. ii. 7, we have "Stablished in the faith." The difference between "stablished in the faith," and stablished in believing, is not great, and taking the latter for the former involves no serious error; but they are not identical. Walking in Christ in this text, presents the idea of the sphere of the Christian's activities. "Rooted and built up in him" give the figures of a tree and a house, and Christ the local home and stability of the Christian under these views. In being "stablished in the faith" we have the same thoughts in unfigured language, with this difference; namely, for Christ himself the faith of Christ is substituted as the sphere of the man, the element of the tree, and the foundation of the house.

In Tit. i. 13, we have "Sound in the faith." Here an objective sense ought to be undoubted, and the importance of what is believed seriously taken into account. It may be justly questioned whether some teachers of religion, in their exceeding anxiety about believing, are not almost, if not altogether, forgetful about what is to be believed; but all should lay it much to heart that the salvation of sinners is, in Scripture teaching, joined only to a "belief of the truth."

It is assumed, as has been already said, from the connection of *en* (in) with the pronoun relating to *pistis* (faith) in Heb. xi. 2, that this preposition is to be understood in every following occurrence of the noun in the dative case in that passage. On this

assumption, and giving to *en* its natural local meaning, we have then the sphere within which all those things were done of which mention is there made; and, at the same time, an interpretation that will free the earnest student of the Word of God from the manifold embarrassments which beset him when trying to expound faith as the instrumental means by which those wonderful things were done.

Pistis (faith) construed with *en*, 2 Cor. xiii. 5, like unbelief, 1 Tim. i. 13, is the name of a state. Under different views of them, these same opposite states are otherwise represented. Darkness and light, alienation and reconciliation, death and life, are some of the more familiar of these representations. The state of faith is only entered by a translation. None are born in it; all require to be born again into it. As being in darkness, men are delivered from the state so called and brought into light. As enemies, they are reconciled. As dead, they are quickened. As found in a state of disobedience and unbelief, they are raised, through the Gospel, to obedience, and to the whole condition of things that is found in the state of faith.

The importance of being in either of these states, and all men are in one or the other, is sufficiently indicated by the terms employed to represent them. But from the earnest exhortation of the apostle it would appear that a man may mistakenly imagine himself to be, or may falsely assume a seeming to others that he is, in the state of faith. Hence the Corinthians were to examine and prove themselves. A matter of this importance was not to be cheaply taken for granted by them. Misconception was possible, and a mistake might be cherished where life and death were in question. Hypocrites have no need of this self-examination. Purposely putting on an appearance to deceive, they cannot be mistaken. Neither for this reason could the apostle have such in view. But all others that name the name of Jesus, without exception, may profitably engage in this work.

It would carry us quite beyond our present purpose

to discuss the matter at length, but we may just remark that there are not a few influences at work which as we judge, are, in this respect, very strongly misleading. One of these is the often and earnestly repeated exhortation or invitation, it is both these by turns, "Only believe! only believe!" varied at times by "Believe now, believe at once!" and, at other times, otherwise varied to the same effect. Now that, from the popular reverence entertained in a greater or less degree for men engaged in the sacred calling of the ministry of the gospel, this sort of thing, however ridiculous it is to reflecting believers, is likely to produce certain effects, is well enough known to all that have expended but the least thought upon the matter. If special services are organised to bring this sort of thing to bear on the popular mind, given that considerable numbers of the people can be brought together, and a man of fervent spirit and some oratorical power is found suitably to address them, and it may be assumed, with an almost mathematical certainty, what corresponding results will follow. New and forcible impressions will be experienced. Moral revolutions in some cases will be effected. Conversions will abound. Baptisms, when this ordinance is observed in connection, will be multiplied. Sympathizing magazines and newspapers will put forth glowing accounts of successes. Sanguine minds will talk of Pentecostal times, and of the Millennium, and of a nation being "born at once." Zealous teachers, more ardent than judicious, imagining that faith, and prayer, and preaching, are the prime factors in the salvation of sinners, from the great things supposed to have been accomplished, will come to form calculations of how much effort would suffice to convert a whole community. Then will come the inevitable reaction, on which it is painful to think, but unnecessary now to dwell.

God forbid, indeed, that a syllable should be written or uttered reflecting disrespectfully on a true earnestness of soul in the work of the Lord. A cold-hearted minister of the gospel is a misnomer. He that is cold-

hearted in this work has mistaken his vocation, and, however orthodox, and learned, and devout he may be, the sooner he is otherwise employed the better. But he, on the other hand, whose zeal carries him aside from the line of knowledge can only mislead, and the more successful he is in that course, the more mischief he works. After all of this kind of thing that may have been brought about by human agencies, and whatever may be the number or the startling character of the conversions which may have been effected, it is of the highest importance to know that if a radical change in the entire moral nature of the converted has not been created by God himself, they have simply been impressed more or less deeply by natural forces, and have acted under certain merely human influences. If they have not been created anew in Christ Jesus, if they have not passed from death to life, if they have not been born again, if they have not been translated from a state of unbelief to a state of faith by the power of God, they have misconceived the truth about themselves respecting one of the most momentous matters that can affect the interests of human beings. Whether, or to what extent, or with what guilty consequence, they may have been misled, must be left to the Judge of all motives and actions of men. Abhorrent to us as is a cynical suspicion of the entire effects of those outbursts of unwonted fervour and activity that occasionally take place under the designation of revivals, the credulity of a weakness bordering on imbecility would, it seems to us, be required to regard the results of such movements with an unquestioning confidence. A serious conviction of the unwarrantableness of the manner of address we have mentioned; the evident teachings of many Scriptures, particularly the parables of our Lord, and notably among them those of the sower and the seed, and the ten virgins; the Scripture testimony of apostacies; the history of the church; and, to mention nothing more, our own painful observation, peremptorily forbid all such unquestioning confidence. We suggest, with all brotherly well-wishing, that the converters in

these movements, and the converted, should bear in mind and lay to heart that conversions may take place which have no basis in regeneration; that they should read together, learn, and inwardly digest such a book as that of President Edwards on "Religious Affections;" and that, by this and similar means within their reach, they should seriously observe the exhortation given to the Corinthians, "Examine yourselves whether ye be in the faith."

Passing to *dia*, (through,) construed with *pistis*, (faith,) we have about nineteen instances of this particular construction; but in no one of them does the general opinion concede any other meaning to faith than belief. Is this a right judgment? I doubt.

In six of these instances the faith is expressly spoken of as being in direct relation to Christ. "By faith of Jesus Christ" in Rom. iii. 22, and Gal. ii. 16. "Through the faith of Christ" in Phil. iii. 9. "By the faith of him" in Eph. iii. 12. "By faith in Christ Jesus" in Gal. iii. 26. "Through faith which is in Christ Jesus" in 2 Tim. iii. 15.

Now as *pistis*, (faith,) is always in the genitive case when construed with *dia*, (through,) it seems clear, that there are only three meanings which can possibly be assigned to that word in this construction; namely, that of an instrumental means, or that of an efficient cause, or that of a principle of procedure. All expositors whose opinions count for anything in general estimation, decide for the former. They are at a point that "the faith of Jesus Christ" means the belief of believers in him, and they come to the very necessary conclusion from these premises that instrumental means must be the meaning. Bound by the conviction that the faith which is of Christ and in him, mentioned in these quotations, is a believing on him; any other deduction is impossible. But is the conviction from which this conclusion is drawn a necessary one? No. Is it a sound one? This is doubted. Another conviction that leads to another conclusion is entitled to consideration. The faith mentioned in these instances which is

of Christ and which is in him, is not that of which he is the object, that is, belief, or believing; but a great scheme of favour so designated from him because he is its Beginner and Perfecter. Not the exercise of belief in or upon him, as an instrumental cause through which something is done; but that great scheme of pure grace which bears his exalted name because he is its Alpha and Omega, considered as a principle of procedure, through which something is done, is what is intended. If the reader will undertake an operation that cannot be very well done without some pains; that is, if he will thoroughly pick to pieces in his mind what is said to be, and to be done, through the faith that is of Jesus Christ, and that is in him, in these passages, he will find that believing, taken as the instrumental means, is immensely overweighted, and will require all sorts of apologetic explanations. Whereas, on the fullest consideration of what is said to be, and to be done, through the faith of Christ, taken as a principle of procedure, all will be easy, and all clear.

In some instances of this construction, when faith is connected with Christ by no express reference, the same principle of procedure is intended. For instance, we have in Rom. iii. 30, "Justify through faith;" and "Do we make void the law through faith?" in verse 31. "Receive the promise of the Spirit through faith," in Gal. iii. 14. And "Saved through faith," in Eph. ii. 8. In these instances the faith, as opposed to works, is the principle through which proceeds, severally, justification, receiving the promise of the Spirit, and salvation. This view is entirely confirmed in the last quoted passage by what follows. "Not of works," says the apostle, "lest any man should boast." But it is the law, or principle, of faith, Rom. iii. 27, as we have seen, not believing simply, which, according to the apostle, excludes boasting. Could anything be more decisive?

On Gal. iii. 14, Alford says faith is there "the subjective medium; but rendered objective by the article, as so often by St. Paul." Is this criticism sound? Is

it necessary to conclude that when Paul gave *pistis* (faith,) an objective form by the use of the article, he did not intend to convey a corresponding meaning? Might not the apostle be teaching a truth which the dean failed to perceive, or perceiving, discarded? Would it not be as honourable to Paul to entertain the view that he meant what he said, rather than that he indulged in a habit of peculiar, if not faulty, and, withal, misleading composition? Nothing but a being tied down by the conviction that faith must almost always mean belief, it is felt, could induce such a man to write so mischievously faulty a criticism. *The* faith does not mean *your* belief, when the pronoun is not employed, nor always when it is. For, see 1 Thess. iii. 2.

Only five instances of *pistis*, (faith,) construed with *peri*, (concerning,) occur in the New Testament; namely, Acts xxiv. 24; 1 Thess. iii. 2; 1 Tim. i. 19; vi. 21; and 2 Tim. iii. 8; but seeing that in all these occurrences an objective sense is generally admitted, save in 1 Thess. iii. 2, it will be only necessary to say a word about that. An objective sense is clear here. Timothy was sent, not to comfort the Thessalonians concerning their believing, but to hearten them about what they believed. No doubt the heartening them about what they believed would strengthen their belief under the tribulations they suffered for the Gospel's sake; but the latter depended on the former, not the former on the latter; and therefore the former was the express object of Timothy's mission.

Once only we have this word construed with *apo*, (from,) namely, in Acts xiii. 8; but an objective sense is here allowed by all.

Construed with *epe*, (upon,) it occurs twice; namely, in Acts iii. 16, and in Phil. iii. 9. But in both these instances expositors cling to their fondly cherished subjective meaning nevertheless for that, in both occurrences, according to their own teaching, the objective form is used. No objection ought to exist against the meaning agreeing with the form. Many difficulties, and as many objections, stand against coercing the form

into compliance with the favourite meaning. Feeling a difficulty, as it is supposed, respecting Phil. iii. 9, it seems that some one suggested a construction to Alford, which he speaks of with a kind of half approval, which gives this rendering: "the righteousness which is of God *on* my faith." That is, as it is explained, the righteousness of God which is "built on, grounded on, granted on the condition of my faith;" that is, on believing. Now if any imagination can conjure up a theological notion more monstrous than this exposition, that faculty is capable of creations more distorted and preternatural than vulgar opinion credits. If there are any in whose minds such an exposition fails to disestablish the favourite meaning of the word under consideration in this text, it would be utterly useless to add anything further with the view of convincing them. They must be given up. Give the word its true meaning, and let the exposition be, The righteousness of God which is grounded or built on the faith, of which Christ is the Beginner and Perfecter, and all will be analogical and beautiful.

The word we are considering occurs four times with *kata* (according to), namely, in Tit. i: 1; in verse 4; in Heb. xi. 7, and in verse 13. Leaving a consideration of the occurrences in Titus for the present, it may be observed that general opinion, consistent with itself so far, gives the same meaning to faith, in the two instances mentioned in Heb. xi., as it does in all the others in this connection. There ought to be no doubt that an objective sense is intended in both. The righteousness, which is according to faith in verse 7, is the same as that revealed in the gospel to be "from faith to faith"; and those that died according to the faith in verse 13, died consistently with, along the line of, that principle. They had lived, supported through all their afflictions (*ek*) from the sustaining power of that principle, and they died (*kata*) according to it in all respects. Here an end might be made to the consideration of this word when construed with a preposition, and only a few remarks more shall be added.