

Swedenborgian comment on Robson's 'Heads of Doctrine with Christian Proofs',
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The Compendium of Scripture Teaching on The Trinity, The Atonement, Imputation, and The Resurrection, by the Rev Woodville Woodman (New Church Minister, Kearsley, Lancs).
London: F. Pitman, 20 Paternoster Row; Manchester J.B. Ledsham, 31, Corporation
Street.

This is an interesting and able pamphlet. It has been written to dispel some of the errors and mistakes contained in a tract entitled, "Heads of Christian Doctrine with Scripture Proofs" by the Vicar of St Giles's, Northampton, and which has been extensively circulated in that district. This circumstance, it was thought, afforded a fair opportunity for the publication of a suitable pamphlet, calling public attention to the New Church views on the four subjects which are mentioned; and Mr Woodman kindly and readily undertook the work. Though it consists of only twenty pages, it is closely printed in small type, and contains a large amount of matter, which, from the forcible manner in which it is put, cannot fail to impress most favourably, all by whom it is seriously and thoughtfully read. The four subjects treated on, when viewed in the light of truth, are among the gates which lead to the New Jerusalem, and we feel assured that her friends will rejoice to see them opened with so much ability and Christian temper. We bespeak for the tract a wide circulation, because it is so well calculated to serve the cause which it has been written to defend and explain. It is not necessary to quote passages from a work of so small a price; but we cannot forego the pleasure of adducing the following as a specimen of its compact and reasoning power reasoning power:—

In proceeding to the consideration of the Atonement, it is extraordinary that the fundamental inconsistencies in the current doctrine on this subject, to say nothing of its direct contradiction to Scripture, should have escaped the notice of its advocates, - in many instances men of intelligence and candour. Mr. Robson, for instance, after labouring to establish the co-equality of the Persons in his view of the Trinity, when treating of the Atonement, altogether invalidates the positions for which he had previously contended. The term 'co-equal' evidently implies the possession of the Divine attributes in the same degree by each of the persons. In the language of the Athanasian Creed, 'none is afore or after another; none is greater or less than another.' But how stands the matter? Take the attribute of Justice. If the three are co-equal, they must be so in this respect, and the justice of the Son and Holy Spirit must be equal to that of the Father; so that if the justice of the latter demanded full satisfaction for the violation of the divine law, so likewise must that of the Son. So far, however, from this being the case, He was not only willing to forego the demands of His own justice, but volunteered to satisfy those of the Father. Where then is the equality? How the justice of the Holy Spirit was affected in the transaction, is not explained. Take on the other hand the attribute of Love, and this appears to belong mainly, if not entirely, to the Son. If this attribute had been equal in the Father, He, like the Son, would have foregone the demands of His justice, and, if necessary, have Himself suffered on man's account. What then becomes of the equality? As regards the Holy Spirit, the principal attribute assigned to it is passivity - a willingness to acquiesce in the arrangements of the other two.