and were to be set at one in reference to  
God. The Apostle’s meaning clearly is,  
that by the blood of Christ’s Cross, reconciliation with God has passed on *all creation as a whole*, including angelic as well  
as human beings, unreasoning and lifeless  
things, as well as organized and intelligent.  
Now this may be understood in the following ways: 1) creation may be strictly regarded in its entirety, and man’s offence  
viewed as having, by inducing impurity  
upon one portion of it, alienated the whole  
from God: and thus “*all things*” may be  
involved in our fall. Some support may  
seem to be derived for this by the undeniable fact, that *the whole of man’s  
world* is included in these consequences  
(see Rom. viii. 19 f.). But on the other  
side, we never find the *angelic beings* thus  
involved: nay, we are taught to regard  
them as our model in hallowing God’s  
name, realizing His kingdom, and doing  
His will (Matt. vi. 9, 10). And again the  
terms here used, “*whether .. . whether*  
..? would not suffer this: reconciliation is thus predicated of each portion  
*separately*. We are thus driven, there  
being no question about *the things on the  
earth*, to enquire, how *the things in the  
heavens* can be said to be reconciled by  
the blood of the Cross. And here again,  
2) we may say that angelic, celestial creation was alienated from God because a portion of it fell from its purity: and, though  
there is no idea of the reconciliation extending to *that portion*, yet the whole, as  
a whole, may need thus reconciling, by the  
final driving into punishment of the fallen,  
and thus setting the faithful in perfect and  
undoubted unity with God. But to this  
I answer, a) that such reconciliation (?)  
though it might be a result of the coming  
of the Lord Jesus, yet could not in any  
way be effected by the *blood of His cross*:  
b) that we have no reason to think that  
the fall of some angels involved the rest in  
its consequences, or that angelic being is  
evolved from any root, as ours is from  
Adam: nay, in both these particulars, the  
very contrary is revealed. We must then  
seek our solution in some meaning which  
will apply to angelic beings in their essential nature, not as regards the sin of some  
among them. And as thus applied, no reconciliation must be thought of which shall  
resemble *ours* in its process—for Christ took not upon Him the seed of angels, nor  
paid any propitiatory penalty in the root of  
their nature, as including it in Himself.  
But, forasmuch as He is their Head as  
well as ours,—forasmuch as in Him they,  
as well as ourselves, live and move and  
have their being, it cannot be but that the  
great event in which He was glorified  
through suffering, should also bring them  
nearer to God, who subsist in Him in common with all creation. And at some such  
increase of blessedness does our Apostle  
seem to hint in Eph. iii. 10. That such  
increase might be described as a *reconciliation*, is manifest. In fact, every such  
nearer approach to Him may without violence to words be so described, in com-  
parison with that previous greater distance  
which now seems like alienation;—and in  
this case even more properly, as one of  
the consequences of that great propitiation  
whose first and plainest effect was to reconcile to God, in the literal sense, the  
things upon earth, polluted and hostile in  
consequence of man’s sin. So that our  
interpretation may be thus summed up:  
All creation subsists in Christ: all creation  
therefore is affected by His act of propitiation: sinful creation is, in the strictest  
sense, *reconciled*, from being at enmity:  
sinless creation, ever at a distance from  
his unapproachable purity, is lifted into  
nearer participation and higher glorification of Him, and is thus *reconciled*, though  
not in the strictest, yet in a very intelligible and allowable sense.

**21—23.**] I*nclusion of the Colossians in  
this reconciliation and its consequences,  
if they remained firm in the faith.*

**21, 22.**] {21} **And you, who were once  
alienated** (subjective or objective ? —  
*‘estranged’* [in mind], or *‘banished’* [in  
fact]? In Eph. ii. 12, it is decidedly objective, for such is the cast of the whole  
sentence there: in Eph. iv. 18 it describes  
the objective result, with regard to the life  
of God, of the subjective ‘being darkened  
in the understanding.’ It is better then  
here to follow usage, and interpret objectively—‘ alienated ’—made aliens) **from  
God** (not from *the commonwealth of  
Israel*, nor from *the life of God*: for  
‘God’ is the subject of the sentence), **and  
at enmity** (active or passive? ‘*hating  
God*,’ or ‘hated by God?? Meyer takes  
the latter, as necessary in Rom. v. 10 [see