The law was “*ministered by angels*”  
(Gal. iii, 19: see Acts vii. 53), “*the word  
spoken by angels*” (Heb. ii, 2 :—*they* were  
the promulgators of the “*handwriting in  
ordinances*.” In that promulgation of theirs,  
God was pleased to reveal Himself of old.  
That writing, that investiture, so to speak,  
of God, was first wiped out, soiled and  
rendered worthless, and then nailed to the  
Cross — abrogated and suspended there.  
Thus God *stripped off the principalities  
and the powers*—divested Himself of, put  
off from Himself, that *ministration of  
angels*, manifesting Himself henceforward without a veil in the exalted Person  
of Jesus. And the act of triumph, by  
which God has for ever subjected all principality and power to Christ, and made  
Him to be the only Head of His people,  
in whom they are complete, was that sacrifice, whereby all the law was accomplished.  
In that, the *principalities and powers* were  
all subjected to Christ, all plainly declared to  
be powerless as regards His work and His  
people, and triumphed over by Him, see  
Phil. ii. 8, 9: Eph. i. 20, 21. No difficulty  
need be created, on this explanation, by the  
objection, that thus more prominence would  
be given to angelic agency in the law  
than was really the fact: the answer is,  
that the prominence which is given, is  
owing to the errors of the false teachers,  
who had evidently *associated the Jewish  
observances* in some way *with the worship  
of angels*: St. Paul’s argument will go  
only to this, that whatever part the angelic powers may have *had*, or be sup-  
posed to have had, in the previous dispensation, all such interposition was now  
entirely at an end, that dispensation itself  
being once for all antiquated and put away.  
Render then,—**Putting off** (by the absence  
of a copula, the vigour of the sentence is  
increased. The participle is contemporary  
with “*hath taken out of the way*” above,  
and thus must not be rendered *‘having* put  
off’) **the governments and powers** (before  
spoken of, ver. 10, and ch. i. 16: see  
above), **He** (God, who is the subject  
throughout: see also ch. iii, 3 :—not *Christ*, which would awkwardly introduce  
two subjects into the sentence) **exhibited  
them** (as completely subjected to Christ;—  
not only put them away from Himself,  
but shewed them as placed under Christ)  
**in** (element in *which he made a show of  
them*) **openness** (of speech; declaring and  
revealing by the Cross that there is none  
other but Christ the Head *of all principality and power*. Observe, that “in  
openness” is equivalent in English to  
**openly**), **triumphing over them** (as in  
2 Cor. ii. 14, *we* are said [see note there]  
to be led captive in Christ’s triumph, our  
real victory being our defeat by Him,—so  
here the principalities and powers, which  
are next above us in those ranks of being  
which are all subjected to and summed up  
in Him) **in Him** (Christ: not, as A.V.,  
‘*in it*,’ viz. *the cross*, which gives a very  
feeble meaning after the declaration that  
God “*raised Him*,” and “*quickened us  
together with Him*” above).  
16—23.] *More specific warning against  
false teachers* (see summary on ver. 1),  
*and that first* (vv. 16, 17) *with reference  
to legal observances and abstinence.*

**16.**] **Let no one therefore** (because this is  
so—that ye are complete in Christ, and that.  
God in Him hath put away and dispensed  
with all that is secondary and intermediate)  
**judge you** (pronounce judgment of right or  
wrong over you, sit in judgment on you)  
in eating (not, in St. Paul’s usage, *meat*  
as A.V.) **and in drinking** (i.e. in the  
matter of the whole cycle of legal ordinances and prohibitions which regarded  
eating and drinking: these two words  
being perhaps taken not separately and  
literally,—for there does not appear to  
have been in the law any special prohibition against *drinks*,—but as forming  
together a category in ordinary parlance.  
If however it is desired to press each  
word, the reference of “*drinking*” must  
be to the Nazarite vow, Numb. vi. 3), **or  
in respect of feasts or new moon, or  
sabbaths** (i.e. yearly, monthly, or weekly  
celebrations) :

**17.**] **which** (the relative may refer either to the aggregate of