598 ST. JOHN. XVI.   
   
 Yreprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of   
 1 Acts 22— judgment: ®! of sin, because they believe not on me;\*10 of   
 37.   
   
 Y render, convict.   
   
 We have here, in a few deep and wonderful delivered (from the power of Satan to God)   
 words, the work of the Spirit on the world who may be yet delivered,—not the con-   
 set forth. This work He shall begin when demned. If the “refutation” of the world   
 He is come,—come, that is, to you: not, is a moral process, its result may just as   
 however, merely ‘dy your means,’ but per- well be conversion, as Only   
 sonally: so that it is not the work and thus did the refutation carried on by the   
 witness of the Apostles which is spoken of, Spirit answer the end of Christ’s ;—   
 except in so far as they are servants of the only thus could it be a cheering support   
 Holy Spirit, but His own immediate per- to the Apostles. Certainly, the judgment.   
 sonal working. 8. will convict] It is with which it closes is condemnation, not   
 difficult to give in one word the deep however of the world, but of the Prince of   
 meaning of the original term: ‘convince’ the world.’ De Wette denies the   
 approaches perhaps near to it, does not salutary side of this convicting process—   
 express the double sense, which is mani- but he is certainly wrong: see below.   
 festly here intended—of a convincing unto These three words, sin, righteousness,   
 salvation, and a convicting unto condemna- judgment, comprehend the three great   
 tion :—‘reprove’ is far too weak, convey- steps of advance in spiritual truth among   
 ing merely the idea of an outward rebuke, men. Of itself the world does not know   
 whereas this reaches into the heart, and what Sin is, what Righteousness is, what   
 works inwardly in both the above-men- Judgment is. Nor can either of these be   
 tioned wa; See the whole question revealed to any man, except by the Spirit   
 amply discussed in Archdeacon Hare’s of God working within him, Each man’s   
 “Mission of the Comforter,” vol. ii. note conscience has some glimmering of light   
 K. Liicke’s comment is valuable: on each of these; some consciousness of   
 ‘The testimony of the Holy Ghost in guilt, some sense of right, some power of   
 behalf of Christ as opposed to the unbe- judgment of what is transitory and worth-   
 lieving world (ch. xv. 26) is essentially a less: but all these are unreal and un-   
 refutation, a demonstration of its wrong practical, till convicting work of the   
 and error. All the apostolic preaching, as Spirit has wrought in him. 9.] And   
 addressed to the world, takes necessarily the great opening of Sin to the world is   
 this polemical form (1 Tim. v. 20; 2 Tim. to shew them that its root and essence   
 “iv. 2; iii, Titus i. 9,13; ii. And is, unbelief in Christ as the Son of God.   
 the more difficult was the disciples’ Unpetier:—for, mankind being alien   
 against the power of this world with only from God by nature, the first step towards   
 the Word for their weapon, the more com- their recovery must be to lay hold on that   
 fort was it for them, that the power of only safety which He has provided for   
 God the Spirit working by this refutation them; aud that laying hold is faith, and   
 was their help. In Matt. x. 19, 20; Luke the not doing it, when revealed and placed   
 xii. 11, 12, the apologetic side of their before them, is siz. Beforetime, it was   
 conflict, which was in close connexion with also unbelief ;—\*The fool hath said in his   
 the polemical, is brought into view. In heart, there is xo God :’—but now,—for   
 the word here used is always implied the we can only believe as God has revealed   
 refutation, the overcoming of an error, a Himself,—it is unbelief in Christ the Son   
 wrong, —hy the truth and the right. of God,—the having no desire to come to   
 And when, by means of the “refutation” Him: see this pointedly asserted 1 John   
 the truth detects the error, and the right v. 10—12. Remember, this unbelief is   
 the wrong, so that a man becomes conscious aimere want of historical faith,—but un-   
 of them,—then arises the feeling of guilt, belief in its very root,—the want of a   
 which is ever painful. Thus every such personal and living recognition of Jesus   
 “refutation” is a chastening, a punish- as the Lord (1 Cor. xii, which, wherever   
 ment. And hence this office has been the Spirit has ‘opened comwission 7   
 called the punitive office of the Spirit. by the planting of the visible Church, is   
 The effect of the “refutation” carried on the condemning sin of the world. Of this   
 by the divine Spirit in the world may be He shall convince those who are brought   
 to harden: but its aim is the deliverance out of the world, and ultimately convict   
 of the world. his term the world, in those who remain in it and die in their   
 John, includes those who are not yet sins (sce ILare, Mission of the Comforter,”