



JACOB VOORSANGER MEMORIAL



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THE INSPIRED WORD.

A SERIES OF

PAPERS AND ADDRESSES

DELIVERED AT THE

BIBLE-INSPIRATION CONFERENCE,

PHILADELPHIA, 1887.

EDITED BY

ARTHUR T. PIERSON.
II

*Ἰπὸ Πνεύματος Ἁγίου φερόμενοι
ἐλάλησαν ἅγιοι θεοῦ ἀνθρώποι.*



NEW YORK :

ANSON D. F. RANDOLPH & COMPANY,

38 WEST TWENTY-THIRD STREET.

BS 480
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EDWARD O. JENKINS' SONS,
Printers and Stereotypers,
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A WORD PRELIMINARY.

THE Word of God is the Palladium of the visible Church of Christ, which stands or falls with the Bible. In proportion as this blessed Book is revered and obeyed, does the believer's life increase or decline in all that constitutes its true vitality.

It is not strange that upon the Word of God all the forces of the foes of Christianity should be massed. If confidence in that Word can be undermined; if, by subtlety and sophistry, its *infallible inspiration* may be made to appear like an old wives' fable or groundless tradition; if in any way men may feel at liberty, like Jehudi, to use a penknife on the sacred roll and cut out of it whatever is offensive to the proud reason or the wayward will of the natural man—the Devil will have achieved his greatest triumph.

Brethren, who are specialists in their departments of study, and who represent all forms of evangelical faith, were asked to come together and give their united testimony. The reader of these pages has the result before him. There is scarce a chord struck in which there is not the fullest harmony. If any discord is apparent, probably it is only apparent, and a clearer definition of terms would eliminate all seeming variance.

The editor's work has been little more than a supervision of proof-reading and arrangement. The authors alone are responsible for the views they advocate; but it seemed wisest to allow the papers to stand without alteration, that

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it might be seen how general is the accord upon all that is fundamental to the unity, integrity, divine inspiration, and infallible authority of the Word of God.

May the Author of that Word accompany this humble attempt, through the million tongues of the press, to give to a cosmopolitan audience the benefit of what was spoken comparatively in the ears of a few.

In behalf of the Committee:

ARTHUR T. PIERSON.

PHILADELPHIA, PA., *Feb.*, 1888.

THE BIBLE CONFERENCE IN PHILADELPHIA.

THE following circular letter, issued in May, 1887, will sufficiently explain the Conference and the nature and contents of this volume :

“It has been decided to hold a Conference in Philadelphia, November 15-20, on the subject of *The Plenary Inspiration of the Scriptures*.

“Irreverent sceptics persistently attack the foundations of our most holy religion, while professing friends of Christianity are doing incalculable injury through their adverse criticisms on the Bible. Thus timid disciples become discouraged, many of whom make shipwreck ; while the army of the doubters increase on every hand. Such a Conference is needed in order to confirm the faith of Christian believers in the canon of Holy Scripture, which, in its original languages, has been held by the Church in all ages as the product of the Holy Spirit in all its parts and terms. Men of God spake and wrote as they were moved by the Divine Spirit.

“The members of the Committee have selected the following topics to be presented by able, scholarly teachers, who have ever been faithful to the Bible as the very word of God : Importance of the Subject ; Different Theories of Inspiration ; Alleged Objections to Plenary Inspiration between Inspiration and Illumination ; The Office of Criticism with reference to God's Word ; Jesus a Qualified Witness to Inspiration ; Testimony of the Apostles ; Canon of Scripture ; The Bible and the Monuments ; Adaptation of the Bible to Human Need ; The Bible Inspired, not Evolved ; The Bible an Organic Whole ; The Testimony of Jesus to Himself ; The Scriptures are the Word of God, *versus* The Scriptures contain the Word of God ; History of the Doctrine of Inspiration ; Principles of Interpretation ; The Spirit and the Word ; Preach the Word ; Testimony of the Scriptures to Themselves ; Relation of the Personality of the Lord to the Doctrine of Inspiration ; Difficulties of Conscientious Readers Considered ; The Structure of the Book an Evidence of its Inspiration ; Difference between Inspiration and Revelation ; The Bearing of Prophecy on Inspiration.

"We earnestly hope that this legitimate effort to make prominent the full Inspiration of God's Word will meet with your hearty accord and endorsement. If the Conference therefore commends itself to your judgment, we shall greatly appreciate your signature to the Call. Above all, we seek, with your brotherly co-operation, your earnest prayers, that through this effort God will indeed glorify Himself in the exaltation of His blessed Word.

"We are yours, in the bonds of the Gospel,

- "WM. R. NICHOLSON, *Chairman*,
"Bishop R. E. Church, Philadelphia.
"JOHN T. BECKLEY,
"Pastor Beth Eden Baptist Church, Philadelphia.
"ROBERT C. MATLACK,
"Sec. of Episcopal Educational Society, Phila.
"ARTHUR T. PIERSON,
"Pastor Bethany Presbyterian Church, Phila.
"JAMES A. MORROW,
"Secretary of Bible Society, Philadelphia.
"J. HOWARD-SMITH,
"Prof. of Systematic Div. R. E. C. Sem., Phila.
"J. M. STIFLER,
"Professor Crozier Theological Seminary.
"J. L. LITCH,
"Pastor Central Pres. Church, Norristown, Pa.
"GEO. C. NEEDHAM, *Secretary*,
"Manchester-by-the-Sea, Mass."

The other members of the Committee desire to add to the above, their own cordial recognition of the faithful and gratuitous labors of the Secretary, in whose mind the idea of the Conference first originated, and by whose persevering efforts it was carried to a successful completion.—EDITOR.

The following was the Programme both of Topics and Speakers :

NOVEMBER 15. TUESDAY.

- 10 A.M. SPECIAL HOUR OF PRAYER AND PRAISE.
1. 11 A.M. OPENING ADDRESS, Rev. Thos. A. Hoyt, D.D.
2. 3 P.M. QUESTIONS CONCERNING INSPIRATION,
Rev. Wayland Hoyt, D.D., Philadelphia.

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3. 4 P.M. THE RELATION OF THE GOSPELS AND THE PENTATEUCH,
Prof. J. M. Stiller, D.D., Crozier Seminary, Pa.
4. 7.30 P.M. THE TESTIMONY OF THE SCRIPTURE TO ITSELF,
Rev. Geo. S. Bishop, D.D., Orange, N. J.

NOVEMBER 16. WEDNESDAY.

5. 10 A.M. BIBLE MIRACLES,
Prof. L. T. Townsend, D.D., Boston University.
6. 11 A.M. PRINCIPLES OF INTERPRETATION,
Rev. Wm. Dinwiddie, D.D., Greenwood, Va.
7. 3 P.M. ALLEGED OBJECTIONS TO INSPIRATION CONSIDERED,
Rev. Washington Gardner, D.D., Jackson, Mich.
- *4 P.M. THE BIBLE AND THE MONUMENTS,
Prof. W. R. Harper, Ph.D., Yale College.
8. 7.30 P.M. THEORIES OF INSPIRATION,
Rev. James H. Brookes, D.D., St. Louis.

NOVEMBER 17. THURSDAY.

9. 10 A.M. DIFFICULTIES OF THE BIBLE AS TESTED BY THE LAWS
OF EVIDENCE, Rev. T. S. Childs, D.D., Washington.
10. 11 A.M. THE TESTIMONY OF THE APOSTLES TO INSPIRATION,
Rev. T. C. Johnson, D.D., Charleston, West Virginia.
11. 3 P.M. THE WONDERFUL BOOK,
Rev. James E. Gilbert, D.D., Indianapolis.
12. 4 P.M. THE BEARING OF PROPHECY ON INSPIRATION,
Rt. Rev. Wm. R. Nicholson, D.D., Philadelphia.
13. 7.30 P.M. JESUS THE SUPREME WITNESS AND EXAMPLE OF IN-
SPIRATION,
Prof. Howard Osgood, D.D., Rochester Seminary,
New York.

NOVEMBER 18. FRIDAY.

14. 10 A.M. THE MORAL GLORY OF JESUS A PROOF OF INSPIRATION,
Prof. W. G. Moorehead, D.D., Xenia College, Ohio.
15. 11 A.M. THE CANON OF SCRIPTURE,
Rev. Talbot W. Chambers, D.D., New York.
16. 3 P.M. PREACH THE WORD,
Rev. Howard Crosby, D.D., New York.
17. 4 P.M. THE SPIRIT AND THE WORD,
Geo. C. Needham, Evangelist.
18. 7.30 P.M. THE ORGANIC UNITY OF THE BIBLE,
Rev. Arthur T. Pierson, D.D., Philadelphia.

* Dr. Harper withholds his paper, having other uses for it, which he wishes not to anticipate by its separate publication.—Ed.

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OPENING ADDRESS.

THOS. A. HOYT, D.D.

BRETHREN:—I bid you welcome to this city, to this house. In the name of Chambers Church, and of the Christian people of Philadelphia, I salute you. Your persons and your cause alike command our hospitality. Your mission is a noble one. Were you met as a body of astronomers, we would regard you with interest, while you displayed the chart of the sidereal heavens, pierced their abysses with far-reaching telescope, revealed to our view millions of suns and systems, and caused us to listen to the oratorio of the stars,

“Forever singing as they shine,
The hand that made us is divine.”

Or, were you geologists, we would be delighted to roam with you through the corridors of ages and study the successive eras of earth's formation, and gaze with awe upon the finger-prints of the Almighty impressed upon the rocks. These pursuits would be ennobling: in the one we would range through the realms of infinite space; in the other, through the epochs of unmeasured time; in both, we would be led to the throne of Him who fills all space and embraces all time—whose being is infinite, whose existence is eternal.

Or, were you a company of geographers, we would listen with profit to your descriptions of the surface of the earth; its distribution into land and water; its gradations of climate from arctic to tropical; its variety of

scenery as seen in mountain and valley, forest and river, desert and jungle. We would hear "the shout of the isles answer the thunder of the continents." Under your guidance we would leap from pole to pole, and swifter than the electric current, our thoughts would girdle the globe at the equator. The steppes of Asia, the land of the midnight sun, the wastes of Alaska and Patagonia, the mysteries of the dark continent would be explored.

Or, were you a learned assembly of historians, we would be fascinated by the story of mankind as it went forth from its source to people the earth; its migrations; its vicissitudes of conquest and subjugation, of civilization and barbarism, of glory and shame; the transformation of its primeval unity into a multitude of nations, languages, customs, laws, religions.

Or, were you scientists, and could tell us of the forces of nature, could unfold the hidden powers of the material universe, and inform us of things kept secret from the beginning, but now made known to physical science, we would be pleased to hear you.

Or, were you philosophers, and attempting a more adventurous flight, should discourse of man's nature, of his intellect, his affections, his will, of the true, the beautiful, the good; should be able to tell us what man is in the depths of his consciousness; and should strive to expound the principles of metaphysics, the laws of logic, and the essence of virtue:—we would follow you with alacrity along these inviting, though arduous paths.

Or, lastly, were you a convocation of patriots and philanthropists assembled to consult for the welfare of the country and the race; were the problem before you, how evils might be repressed, good morals promoted, the laws of the land enforced, and the customs of society rectified, you would be entitled to our respect and sympathy.

Were any of these the motive of your meeting, we would gladly welcome you, and would gratefully receive your instructions on these high themes.

But your purpose plumes itself for a yet loftier flight. It is said that the several species of the eagle differ in the elevation to which they attain. Some fly in full sight of man; others can be barely seen as a speck in the sky; others, still, mount beyond our vision; while far above them all, soars the royal bird, and from its supreme height, poised on even pinions, surveys with serene majesty the entire scene of earth and air beneath it. Such is your mission as compared with all the departments of knowledge I have enumerated. Some of them skim the ground, others rise to the upper air, others touch the stars, but you wing your flight to the third heaven. As the imperial eagle spurns the earth, the cloud, the thunder, and fixes his eye on the sun, so do you, in this conference, turn from all lower objects to gaze with undimmed vision upon the Sun of Righteousness. Your theme is greater than all the others because it overlaps and because it transcends them.

The Bible touches all human knowledge; it has a word to say on each of the subjects just passed under review; and what it says is the basis of all that man has to say of them. But for the Bible we would know nothing of the origin of the universe. All the cosmogonies that men have invented are puerile conceptions. That God created the heavens and the earth, making all things by the word of His power—this the greatest minds of antiquity failed to discover. This Book, only, unfolds the sublime panorama of creation, in which we behold worlds roll from the plastic hand of the Creator, and begin their mighty revolutions, while "all the sons of God shout for joy."

The Bible utters the first syllable in the history of the human race. Deprived of its teachings, man is a riddle,

a sphinx, a baffling enigma to himself. Neither human history or human nature can be explained except in the light of Scripture; unless man was at first holy, then fell into sin, and now has a Redeemer, we fail to comprehend how or what he is. Philosophy has stumbled just here: in striving to expound man's complex and tangled nature, she has omitted to notice that he is in an abnormal state; that his soul is disturbed by a malign influence, and "like sweet bells, jangled and out of tune," no longer gives forth its pristine harmonies.

Apart from the Bible, man knows nothing of his origin. The wisest of the ancients failed to indicate the source of the stream of humanity, but indulged in wild, vague guesses. Some said he came from the beast, some from the gods, some from earth, others from the skies. It is only in this book we learn that God created man in His own image, that his body was formed of the dust of the ground, and that his spirit was the inspiration of the Almighty.

As the Bible speaks the first word about man, so it utters the last. Nowhere else can we learn of his destiny; whether the soul dies with the body, or is reabsorbed in Deity, or reappears on earth, or vanishes into air, or passes into eternal sleep. No man knows what will come after death but those who have this divine revelation, in which are taught the Alpha and Omega of humanity; that the body returns to earth as it was, that the spirit returns to God who gave it, that there will be a resurrection of the dead, and that the soul and the body reunited shall live forever in happiness or woe, according to the final judgment, as determined by the good or evil of this present state. These truths, so familiar to us, are high as heaven above the thoughts of men: and this leads us to notice that the Bible not only overlaps human knowledge, but also transcends it. This has already appeared,

but we now enter a sphere where the contrast will be still more conspicuous.

God is not only the sublimest, but the most indispensable object of knowledge; yet of God, man is most ignorant. He knows but little of himself, but far less of God. Consider the notions of God held by the greatest of the heathen philosophers. They did not know whether there was one God or many; whether there was a supreme deity who made the world, or whether all the gods were themselves created beings; whether God took care of the world, or held Himself aloof from it in stoical indifference or cynical contempt; whether He was blind fate, or subject to human passions; whether religion and virtue were closely united or entirely separated.

Amid this babel, listen to the clarion voice of the inspired Word, which tells us "there is but one only, the living and true God"; that He made all things for Himself; that His providence is over the works of His hands; that "the first and great command is, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart; and that the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."

Although God had manifested His eternal power and Godhead in His works, and although He had given man faculties with which to discern the tokens of deity, yet "the world by wisdom knew not God." Admitting, however, that reason acting on the natural manifestations of God can derive some knowledge of Him, what is the extent of that knowledge? We may from these sources learn that God is the First Cause, the Architect of the Universe, the moral Governor of the world, the Arbitrator of human destiny; that He is the Creator, the Ruler, the Judge.

But these are only the axioms of the theology of the Bible; the pedestal of the column of divine truth erected in the Scriptures; the foundation of the glorious temple

of revealed religion. It is only in this Volume God proclaims Himself "Merciful and gracious, long-suffering and abundant in goodness and truth; keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin." Here, only, do we learn that "God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." From nothing but the study of this Book could have been derived the statement that "God is a Spirit, infinite, eternal, unchangeable in His being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth"; and the inference that, as the prismatic colors compose the white light of day, so these attributes combine to form the sublime truth that "God is Love."

Thus it is that God has magnified His word above all His name, or has magnified His name above all things by His word; that is, God has revealed Himself more fully by His word than by any other method. Creation, Providence, and Conscience proclaim His majesty and glory, but the word reveals His inmost heart.

Such is the foundation of your faith, and it is immovable. When the wise man mused upon the evanescence of human life, when he saw that "one generation passeth away and another generation cometh," he assured himself with the thought that "the earth abideth forever." Thus, when we reflect with anxiety upon the rapid fluctuations of human opinion, we are strengthened by the conviction that "the word of the Lord liveth and abideth forever. For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass; the grass withereth and the flower thereof falleth away: but the word of the Lord endureth forever."

The Bible is that immortal word of God. Though it may be obscured at times by the mist of human error, by the fog of human doubt, by the storm of human passion,

it remains fixed and immovable. The polar star may be hidden from our view by the exhalations of earth, by clouds in the sky, by the black wings of the tempest; but these pass away, and the great sentinel of the heavens still beams upon us with celestial radiance. In like manner, amid the gloom of sin, folly, and doubt, this divine luminary enlightens the world; "seeing it is God that said, Light shall shine out of darkness, who hath shined in our hearts." In the light of God we see light; the direct rays of the sun do not penetrate the caverns of earth; we must soar, that we may gaze.

The aim of this conference is to ascend "the vantage-ground of truth—a hill not to be commanded, and where the air is always clear and serene, and not with swelling and pride, but with pity"; with yearning hearts and helping hands, "to see the errors and wanderings and mists and tempests in the vale below." "Certainly it is heaven upon earth to have a man's mind move in charity, rest in providence, and turn upon the poles of truth."

"On every summit lies repose." Far above the dust and clamor, cloud and storm, you discern the peak of Pisgah; it is the mount of vision; if you can reach it, the world will be below and heaven above you: it will become Mt. Tabor, and you shall be transfigured into the likeness of your Lord.

Fear not, brethren, to make the bold attempt; the foot of the hill is enveloped in clouds and conflict; its top is bathed in light.

" Like some tall cliff that lifts its awful form,
Swells from the vale and midway leaves the storm,
Though 'round its breast the rolling clouds are spread,
Eternal sunshine settles on its head."

QUESTIONS CONCERNING INSPIRATION.

WAYLAND HOYT, D.D.

FROM the Cape of Good Hope there shoots out into the sea a sand-bank, forty or fifty miles in length, making the sea shallower and more dangerous, and along which a tremendous current swirls.

It was in the year 1830, an East Indiaman, called the *Lady Holland*, was making the then tedious and difficult passage to Hindostan. For a whole week the clouds had hidden the sun; accurate knowledge of the position of the ship had been impossible; the winds had blown fitfully and boisterously; three times the vessel had been beaten off her course, but by soundings, on Saturday, the 13th of February, the captain knew that he had entered on this shoal.

It was hazardous to go on far in such doubt of his whereabouts, and in such rough water, and in the grasp of such a current. He would turn the vessel back to sea by 8 o'clock that evening, the captain said; then, having taken further soundings, he thought he might safely go on till 10 o'clock, when he would surely turn back or heave to till morning. But, when four bells sounded 10 o'clock, and the captain was just about to give the order to turn back, with tremendous concussion the ship struck upon rocks—a jagged, cruel reef of them, over which the waves dashed so savagely that wave and rock together broke the vessel's back at once, and the fore-part of her sank amid the breakers.

I cannot wait to tell the story of the escape of the passengers, and how, at last, they were all landed upon a bit of sandy beach, amid the rocks. One of the passengers on

board this wrecked ship, Lady Hollaud, was a young man, Alexander Duff. He was on his way to what subsequently proved to be such magnificent missionary service in India.

The significant fact just now, is this: while the wrecked passengers were huddled in a hovel erected by searchers for penguins' eggs amid these rocks and sands, a sailor, walking along the little beach, noticed something cast up high and dry. Going to it, he found it to be a quarto copy of Bagster's Bible and a Scotch Psalm-book, scarcely shattered, and with Mr. Duff's name written on both distinctly. That Bible and that edition of the Psalms were about the only books, out of a library of more than 800 volumes which this young missionary was taking with him to India, which were not swallowed up in the shipwreck or reduced to pulp.

And what is still more singular, this copy of the Bible had not been in daily use, but wrapped in chamois leather, had been packed in the boxes with the other books. They had been dashed to pieces or wetted into pulp. Here, in the poor hovel, he held the uninjured Bible in his hands, and read out of it to the drenched, chilled, but saved passengers, the 107th, the traveler's Psalm:

For He commandeth, and raiseth the stormy wind: which lifteth up the waves thereof.

They mount up to the heaven: they go down again to the depths: their soul is melted because of trouble.

They reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man; and are at their wit's end.

Then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble: and He bringeth them out of their distresses.

He maketh the storm a calm: so that the waves thereof are still.

Then are they glad, because they be quiet: so He bringeth them unto their desired haven.

The experience made a profound and capturing impression upon Mr. Duff. It ruled his life. It was, to him,

the voice of Providence, declaring that, compared with all other books, the Bible was the supreme and supremely necessary book for India—for man.

And what a most real picture of the history of the Bible—this incident. To wreck the Bible, to make it pulp, though men have affirmed it done a thousand times, has been impossible. Out of every storm of higher criticism, so-called, like Kuenen's and his school; or of lower criticism, like Tom Paine's or Voltaire's; or of scientific skepticism and denial, like Haeckel's, and much of our modern so-called advanced materialistic thought; or of ecclesiastical proscription, like that of Rome; or of a fashionable and sensual neglect, like that of the upper classes in England in the 18th century; somehow, the Bible gets surely seen to be the victor, and not the victim of the storm.

And while, in our day, the storm against the Bible does not lessen, in our day also the triumph of the Bible is the more radiantly seen. Up to the year 1800 from four to six million copies in about thirty different languages measured the distribution of the Bible. Eighty years later, eighty different Bible societies with unnumbered agencies and auxiliaries report a distribution of more than 165,000,000 copies of the Bible or of portions of it, together with 206 new translations, and besides this are to be reckoned the unknown millions of Bibles and New Testaments distributed by private publishers throughout the world. When the Canterbury revision of the New Testament was at last issued, immediately began the largest sale ever known of any single book, and immediately was sent from New York to Chicago the longest telegraphic message ever wired, about 118,000 words—the New Testament, from the first of Matthew to the last of Romans—because public interest was so great that it could not brook the delay of twenty-four hours of transmission by the slower steam. Verily, no wreck has struck the Bible yet.

Says Thomas Carlyle: "In the poorest cottage are books—*is one Book*, wherein for several thousands of years the spirit of man has found light, nourishment, and interpreting response to whatever is deepest in him; wherein still, to this day, for the eye that will look well, the mystery of existence reflects itself, if not resolved, yet revealed, and prophetically emblemed; if not to the satisfying of the outward sense, yet to the opening of the inward sense, which is the far grander result."

And what was true when the great Scotchman wrote these words, is truer still to-day of the expanding sovereignty of the Bible. Verily, the presence and influence of the Bible in the world of mind is a moral phenomenon no less imperial than the grasp and sway of the great elemental forces in the world which we call physical.

For this persistent and victorious empire of the Bible the immemorial explanation and affirmation has been the INSPIRATION OF IT. And by Inspiration has been always meant *that the Bible was given to man by God, and that it was so given that it becomes for man the authoritative and infallible standard for doctrine and for deed.*

Now, this of Inspiration, and therefore of Infallibility, is not a new claim for the Bible; it is the ancient claim. And yet, even so fair and candid, and usually scholarly a man as James Freeman Clarke, in combating the orthodox doctrine of Inspiration, will allow himself to make such a statement as is to be found on the 94th page of his "Truths and Errors of Orthodoxy," where he says: "The orthodox theory rests on few facts, but is mainly an assumption. It seemed necessary that there should be *authority* somewhere; and when Protestants rejected the authority of the Church, they took the Bible in its place. The doctrine of inspiration, therefore, was adopted as a basis for the authority of the Bible."

And so the doctrine of Inspiration, no older than the

Reformation, is the necessary and intended inference. And this is a charge not unfrequently made by those who would dispute the doctrine.

Let us listen to the Christian Fathers for a moment, as Canon Westcott has so carefully arranged their sayings on this matter in Appendix B. in his introduction to the Gospels, and entitled "On the Primitive Doctrine of Inspiration":

Epistle of Barnabas.—“The Lord saith in the Prophet”; “the Spirit of the Lord prophesieth”; “the prophets received their gift from Christ and spake of Him”; “Moses spake in the Spirit.”

Clement of Rome.—“The Holy Spirit saith”; “look carefully into the Scriptures, which are the true utterances of the Holy Spirit.” “Ye know, beloved, ye know well the sacred Scriptures, and have looked carefully into the oracles of God”; apostles sent to preach the kingdom of God “with the full assurance and measure of the Holy Spirit when they had received the promises, and been fully convinced by the Resurrection, and confirmed in the word of God,” of whose number, “the blessed Paul, at the beginning of the Gospel, in very truth wrote by inspiration.”

Ignatius.—“For the divinest prophets lived according to Jesus Christ, being inspired by His grace”; “I do not give you injunctions as Peter and Paul; they were apostles—I a condemned man.”

Justin Martyr.—The “history which Moses wrote by Divine inspiration, while the Holy Spirit of prophecy taught through him”; “we have been commanded by Christ himself to obey not the teachings of men, but that which hath been proclaimed by the blessed prophets and taught by Him.”

Athenagoras.—The Christian “gives no heed to the doctrines of men, but those uttered and taught by God”;

“he has prophets as witnesses of his creed, who, *inspired by the Spirit*, have spoken of God and the things of God.”

Irenæus.—To us “the apostles, by the will of God, have consigned the Gospel in the Scriptures to be the ground and pillar of our faith,—and by them we have learnt the truth; that is, the doctrine of the Son of God,—for after that our Lord rose from the dead, and they were clothed with *the power of the Spirit* from on high, they were filled with a perfect knowledge in all things.”

Origen.—“Truly, it is most evidently preached in the churches that the *Holy Spirit* inspired each of the saints, prophets, and apostles, and that the same Spirit was *present in those of old time*, as in those who were *inspired at the coming of Christ*”; Christ, the Word of God, was in “Moses and the prophets, *and by His Spirit* they spake and did all things”; “the records of the Gospels *are oracles of the Lord*—pure oracles, as silver purified seven times in the fire”; “*they were accurately written by the co-operation of the Holy Spirit.*”

Surely, it were hardly possible to state, in any words which we might choose, more definitely and clearly the doctrine of the *infallible and authoritative Inspiration of the Scriptures*. This is no modern doctrine; it is the immemorial claim. As they did for so many other doctrines, the creeds of the Reformation but rescued this, of the infallible and solely authoritative Inspiration of the Scriptures, and brought it out from the blackening shadow of an apostate and arrogating Church which had been declaring *itself* the chief authority.

But that, concerning this doctrine of Inspiration there is in our day much doubt and discussion, must be evident to him who is in the least alive to the tides and turnings of thought around himself.

Concerning this doctrine of Inspiration I propose to ask, and, as far as I may be able, to answer, *four questions*.

14 QUESTIONS CONCERNING INSPIRATION.

This is the first question: *What is that for which Inspiration is to be claimed?* King James' version? Certainly not. The Canterbury revision? No. The Douay version? Of course not. The Bishops' version, the Genevan, Cranmer's, Tyndall's, Wickliff's, in Germany Luther's—any one of the versions which have ever been made at any time or anywhere—is Inspiration to be claimed for all or any one of these? By no means. Well, then, of the most ancient and precious manuscripts which we possess—the Ephraem palimpsest in the imperial library at Paris, the Alexandrian codex in the British Museum, the Vatican codex in the Vatican, or most ancient possibly, and most complete of all, the Sinaitic codex at St. Petersburg—of these most venerable and inestimably valuable manuscripts is Inspiration to be claimed?

The Rev. H. R. Haweis, of London, said, in a recent address on Inspiration, before the students of Harvard University, that the doctrine of Inspiration comprised the notion of inspired copyists and inspired printers and even of inspired printers' devils—pitiable and worse joke on so grave a subject.

But neither for versions nor for manuscripts is Inspiration to be claimed. Inspiration is to be claimed only for the primal sacred autographs.

Immediately do we admit that the variations, small and great, among the various existing manuscripts number not less than one hundred and twenty thousand. And while we are glad to know that the most of these variations are only those of spelling and inflection; that there are not more than sixteen hundred or two thousand places where the true reading is at all in doubt; that the places where doubtful readings affect the sense are fewer still; that those of any dogmatic importance are comparatively immensely few; while we are devoutly thankful to what we believe

to be a Divine Providence which has so marvellously preserved for us a knowledge of the original inspired text; and while we rejoice to know that through the development of the science of Biblical criticism "there is reason to believe that never since the apostolic age was the original text of Scripture more accessible than it is to-day to the careful student," let it be forever remembered that—to quote the language of a distinguished teacher of theology—"we affirm Inspiration and authority of the *original Scriptures*, the *sacred autographs*, but not of the copies or versions."

Many alleged errors and discrepancies in the Scriptures are the fault not of the original inspired Scriptures, but of the ignorance or carelessness or unwise zeal of the copyist.

We believe a most gracious Providence has, in a most wonderful way, kept for us a knowledge of the original inspired Scriptures. But that Providential guardianship, through pen of copyist, and resistance of decay of parchment, and secluded resting-place in some vault or library, and stroke of the printing-press of Guttenberg, is a totally different thing from that divine inspiration and therefore divine authority which we affirm belongs, for example, to that first copy of the Epistle to the Romans which the Apostle dictated and to which he affixed his own apostolic signature. It is that text which is the inspired text. Copies of that text are but the windows through which we look upon *that text*.

This is the second question: *What was the method of that original Inspiration?*

Consider, that as plainly as one walking on the seabeach holds in his vision two diverse elements—the ground on which he walks, and the sea heaving to the far margin, and dashing in long curls of foam along the shore; so must one, looking into the Bible, be immediately con-

scious that his mental vision rests also upon two elements as plainly diverse, and yet at the same time as plainly evident, namely, the divine element in the Scripture and the human.

It is said that a chaplain of Frederick William First of Prussia, having been ordered to give the briefest possible proof of the truth of Christianity, replied: "The Jews, your Majesty!" Certainly a most happy and true answer.

In the centre of the Place de la Concorde, at Paris, thrusting its straight shaft into the wonderful vista opening from the gardens of the Tuileries to the majestic Arch of Triumph crowning that distant hill, there stands an Egyptian obelisk. You draw near and gaze upon it, and your first thought is that of difference. That single block of reddish porphyritic granite, those exact sides mounting upward to the stars, those distinct and strange yet singularly beautiful hieroglyphics sculptured into its faces, proclaim at once the fact that there is an immense chasm between it and the modern buildings and statues and fountains which surround it. It belongs to another age and to another people and to another civilization than that which spreads its roofs and lays out its gardens and dashes on its tides of frivolity and pleasure beneath its shadow and around its base.

And amid all civilizations, and amid all countries, and in almost every city of the old world and the new, there has been lifted the shaft of a nationality as unmingled and as easily distinguished and as severely-distinct from all the other peoples amid which it stands, as is that Egyptian obelisk in Paris from the modern buildings around it. Persecution, climate, various environment, so active and so efficient in change toward all other peoples, seem to be somehow helpless and baffled toward this people. I need not wait to show how you can read of the present plight and status of the Jewish people in those old prophecies, uttered

and written thousands of years ago, as plainly as to-day you can see their plight and status in the streets of any modern city.

In this photographically exact forecasting of the future of which history, as the days go, becomes but the more and more precise fulfillment, and which is so evidently utterly above any human ken or guess, in this large prophetic area of the Scripture, how plainly does this *divine element* appear.

So also, does the divine element appear in all those disclosures concerning that other world to which we hasten. It is divine light which shines down into our dark world from the New Jerusalem. Forevermore the tomb has been too awfully opaque for man's poor vision to descry beyond it.

So also, does the divine element appear in all those matchless principles and precepts which make the Bible so unique a book. No merely human teacher could have ever uttered the Sermon on the Mount. Indeed, a constant element in the Bible is this *divine element*. What the blood is to the body, is the divine element to the Scripture.

But, on the other hand, an element as real and as pervasive is the *Human*. Moses, Samuel, David, Solomon, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezra, Ezekiel, Malachi, Paul, Matthew, Luke, Mark, James, Peter, John—these are men, and they and the other inspired writers with them, do bring into this Scripture a distinctively *human element*.

They bring into the Scriptures a human element, in that they so manifest *diverse temperaments*. Moses is never Joshua, nor Isaiah Jeremiah, nor Ezra Ezekiel, nor Paul Peter, nor the far-flashing, deep-hearted John the prosaic James.

They bring into the Scripture a human element, in that they reflect their *different environments*. As the mountains and seas and pellucid airs of Greece appear

in Homer, so do these human writers of the Scripture become the mirrors of their surroundings. The thunderstorm, marshalling the squadrons of its black clouds upon those flanks of Lebanon which David could behold, flashes and crashes in David's Psalms; the figures of Ezekiel get their shape from that grotesque but powerfully significant Assyrian sculpture amid which he was exile; you can see the impress of Gamaliel's school on Paul; and if one did not know of his long imprisonments in their garrisons, one would easily suspect that Paul must have been thrust into the closest contact with soldiers from his constant military figures.

These writers bring into the Scripture a human element, in that they constantly manifest their *own peculiarities and idiosyncrasies of style*. They are never in the least, like puppets, compelled. They are always like free men, freely disporting according to their natural make and inclination. He only sings and soars a poet in the Scripture who, like David or Isaiah, is naturally a poet. The logical Paul argues. The deep, mystical John, without argument, announces.

Further, there is a human element wrought into the Scripture, in that *entirely natural and usual human conditions are made use of*. The prophetic vision is flashed into a dream as the prophet sleeps; and even trances and transports frequently take their rise and borrow their meaning from the then surroundings of the subject of them. It is to the *hungry Peter who would have eaten*, that the revelation of the obliteration of the vast distinction between Jew and Gentile in the Christian Church is made, under the form of food for which his hunger was then calling.

There is also a human element brought into the Scripture, in that the mightiest and most far-reaching instruction for all the ages *is made to hang on entirely human and natural events*. They were the worldliness and de-

filament and clashings of the little church at Corinth that called out, and, on the human side, were the causes of the Epistles to the Corinthians.

There is, in addition, a human element carried into the Scripture, in that so large a portion of it is but a *record historical and biographical*. For this, no disclosure from God was needful; there need be nothing more than a transcription of the archives of the kingdom of Judah or of the kingdom of Israel,—as simply human an operation as can be well conceived of.

Here are evidences, and many others might be mentioned too, of a human element at work in the Scripture, an element as really human as—to put it no lower—Plato was human when he discoursed concerning his republic.

I do not know a finer phrase which at once condenses and expresses all that I have been saying of these evidently present and different elements in Scripture, than that of Professor Murphy, the author of what seems to me the most wonderfully luminous commentary extant on the Genesis: "*The Bible is the Word of God, with all the peculiarities of man, and all the authority of God.*"

I have read of an amateur painter who one day, having finished a landscape sketch, found that he had gotten the rocks in the foreground of it altogether wrongly placed and painted. Rather than paint out his rocks and paint them in again aright, he would change the rocks. So, with spade and crowbar, and digging and tugging, he falls to and forces the rocks into some poor accordance with his picture. It is not infrequently that thus, holders of pet theories treat facts. They will not adjust their theory to the facts. They will misplace facts to their theory.

I suppose, concerning no doctrine has a bad theory wrought more mischief than with this of Inspiration, because the reaction has been so often and so quick to the denial of Inspiration altogether. I do not suppose that

many in these days hold the bald and distorting *mechanical* theory ; but the results, in a kind of weakening hold of the doctrine of Inspiration, on the public mind, show plainly enough, the evil of its ever having been holden. While there is about this theory of the method of Inspiration great show of reverence, there is really no reverence in it at all, because it so plainly dashes itself athwart God's facts. When even so great a man as the judicious Hooker says : "The sacred writers, as often as God engaged them in this heavenly work, neither spoke nor wrote anything of their own, but uttered syllable by syllable as the Spirit put it into their mouths"; when he thus degrades the sacred writers from penmen into pens, he only makes most injudicious mischief by a statement so already at variance with the plain facts; and all who thus in their thought and theory and speech deny or tend toward the denying of the plain human element in Scripture, help on and perpetuate the mischief.

And it is to be said that it was with precisely this *mechanical* notion of Inspiration that Coleridge broke, when enunciating his criterion of Inspiration as that which *finds him*, he goes on to protest against "the doctrine which requires me to believe that not only what finds me, but all that exists in the sacred volume, and which I am bound to find therein, was not only inspired by, that is, composed by men under the actuating influence of the Holy Spirit, but likewise *dictated by* an infallible Intelligence."

In attempting to state a theory of the method of Inspiration which shall seek to adjust itself with the facts and not the facts with itself; which shall humbly and reverently recognize the divine element in the Scripture, but at the same time as really the so manifestly freely acting human element in it, let certain things be remembered.

Let it be remembered that *Inspiration* is not necessarily *dictation*. I quote here the illustration, and, to a great extent, the words of another :

“When Benjamin Franklin was a young man, one of his hungriest desires was to acquire a perfect style of writing; and, as he admired Addison more than any other author, he was accustomed to take an essay of the ‘Spectator,’ and make very full notes of all its thoughts, images, sentiments, and of some few of its phrases. He would then place his manuscript in his drawer, wait several weeks, or until he had forgotten the language of the original, and then would take his memoranda and write out an essay including every idea, emotion, flash of imagination he had transferred from Addison to his notes, and would seek thus to make his coarser and rougher style something like Addison’s smooth and quietly flowing one. Franklin’s essay was in such a case not *dictated*, but was *inspired* by Addison.

“Orthodoxy believes the Bible to be inspired, and her definition of inspiration is the gift of infallibility in teaching moral and religious truth. But, by inspiration thus defined, orthodoxy does not mean dictation. She means that the Bible is as full of God as Franklin’s echoed essay was of Addison. As in his essay there were both an Addisonian and a Franklinian element, so, speaking roundly, there are in the Bible a divine and a human element, but the latter is swallowed up in the former even more completely than the Franklinian was in the Addisonian. All the thought in Franklin’s essay is, by supposition, Addison’s, and some of the phrases are his, but Franklin’s words are there. All the moral and religious thought of the Bible is, according to the definition of inspiration, divine, and so are some of the phrases, but human words are there.”

Let it be further remembered that Inspiration is *not necessarily Revelation*. Indeed, it seems to me quite possible to make out from the Scripture the distinction which Archdeacon Lee insists on—that Revelation and

Inspiration differ generally as to the source—Revelation being the office of the divine Word, and Inspiration of the divine Spirit. There is much in the Scripture which is Revelation, as when Paul declares to the Galatians that he received the Gospel which he preached by Revelation. There is much in the Bible for which no Revelation whatever was necessary. The subject-matter of it was already in existence. It was, for example, sheer and simple and recorded history. The sacred writer was a mere copyist, transcribing, for example, the lists of kings in Chronicles. But, while *Revelation* had nothing to do with such a process as this, *Inspiration* plainly had. Inspiration has to do with the *accurate transmission of truth to future ages*. And as Inspiration aided Paul to *tell* the Gospel which he received by Revelation, accurately, to set its mighty meanings forth, free from error, in his wonderful epistles, so I believe Inspiration enabled the compiler of the Chronicles to give that section of Jewish history to men *inerrant*, to use the word just now in vogue. But Revelation and Inspiration are diverse. As an inspired man might receive new truth from God as Paul did, so an inspired man might go searching amid musty records to find out historic truth, as the compiler of the Chronicles, we will suppose, did. The inspiration is concerned *about the accurate setting forth of the subject-matter*, whether it be a great gospel, or a snatch of history about the reign of some obscure and ancient king.

Let us also remember that profound sentence of Rev. Dr. Henry B. Smith: "God speaks through the personality as well as through the lips of His messengers." Pour into that word "personality" everything which, speaking generally, goes to form personality—the age in which the person lived, his environment, his degree of culture, his temperament, whether logical, like that of Paul, or mystical, like that of John.

And now, remembering these things, that Inspiration is not necessarily dictation ; nor Revelation ; and that a personality would be chosen of God just because that personality was the one best fitted, because of temperament, environment, culture, to set forth the sort of truth just then necessary to be set forth—it seems to me that we must see that Inspiration was not a mechanical, crass, bald compulsion of the sacred writers ; but, on the other hand, was such, dynamic, divine, influence over his freely-acting faculties, that his faculties, in their relation to the saying forth, or the writing forth, of the subject-matter then in hand were kept *inerrant*.

In this view, even personal character is not a necessary element in Inspiration. Even the covetous Balaam or the double-dealing Caiaphas may, for the moment, accurately say forth the truth of God.

Nor were the sacred writers any further influenced than toward the setting forth of the *special subject-matter* of the truth *just then in hand*. Entire accuracy here might easily consist with ignorance or failure of memory toward other things. The teaching, and the expression of that teaching, in the first Epistle to the Corinthians, are entirely accurate ; at the same time, it is possible that Paul should not be able to recollect how many people he had baptized at Corinth—a thing aside from the particular subject-matter of the Epistle.

And now in concluding the answer to this second question as to the *method* of Inspiration, let me transcribe a brief passage from the “Inspiration of Scripture,” by Archdeacon Lee, a book which, though written as far back as 1854, does not seem to me to have been surpassed by any subsequent book, I know, upon the subject. Says Archdeacon Lee :

“In the combination of the two elements thus co-operating, namely, the actuation by the Spirit of God, and the distinct

but subordinate agency of man, consists—what has been usually termed—the dynamical theory of Inspiration. According to this theory the Holy Ghost employs man's faculties in conformity with their natural laws; at the same time animating, guiding, moulding them so as to accomplish the Divine purpose, just as in nature the principle of life, when annexed to certain portions of matter, exhibits its vital energy in accordance with the conditions which that matter imposes; while it governs and directs, at the same time, the organism with which it is combined. We must therefore look upon Inspiration as a divine power, acting not only *on* but *through* man. We must not regard the sacred penmen, on the one hand, as passive machines, yielding to an external mechanical force—such a view takes in merely the *objective* side of Inspiration; on the other hand, if we dwell solely upon the *subjective* phase of this influence, we lose sight of the living connection of the writer with God. Were this latter conception correct, the authors of the Scripture, following the impulse of their own genius and in accordance with their own judgment, proceeded, in the natural course of things, to develop new inferences from the germ of truth implanted within them. The true theory, as it recoils from any such negation of the Divine majesty of the Bible, so it equally ignores the defective estimate of the opposite extreme. The human element, instead of being suppressed, becomes an integral part of the agency employed; the peculiar type of each writer's nature was even essential to the due reception of that particular phase of truth presented by his statements; his share in the great work was apportioned to the order of his intellect and the class of his emotions; while his characteristic form of expression was absolutely requisite for the adequate and complete conveyance of His Divine message."

As Canon Westcott has said: "The Bible is authoritative, for it is the voice of God; it is intelligible, for it is in the *language of men.*"

I think all I have been saying will enable me to make a very speedy answer to the third question I have to ask concerning Inspiration—namely, *What is the extent of it?*

Does Inspiration extend to every part of Scripture? It seems to me, recollecting that Inspiration has to do with

the transmission of truth; and recollecting also the distinction between Revelation and Inspiration; it seems to me that the answer must be an immediate yes—Inspiration extends to the *whole of Scripture*, to your dry list in Chronicles as much as to the detailing of Isaiah's vision, or of the wonderful words of the Master in the upper room, or of the linked arguments of Paul. The true formula cannot be, the Bible contains the word of God; it must be, the Bible *is* the word of God.

But further, does Inspiration extend not simply to the thought, but also to the *very words* of Scripture? Remembering that while Inspiration is not necessarily dictation, but also remembering that Inspiration *is* the *dynamic Divine guidance* of faculty, it seems to me again that the answer must be immediately yes—Inspiration extends even to the very words of Scripture.

But here I would reject the old phrase "*verbal Inspiration*," because it is a phrase so conjoined with the old, bad, mechanical theory of remorseless dictation. But I would hold to and affirm the Inspiration of the Scripture *even as to words* in the phrase *plenary Inspiration*, which means that the Scripture is full of Inspiration up to and including its words. In what way full, the dynamic theory explains.

I think this matter of the Plenary Inspiration of Scripture, *even to its words*, a most important one. Granting that, by a straining and breathless tug of inward-looking attention, you can dimly distinguish in your consciousness between the thought and the words, still must remain indisputably true, I think, this statement of Dr. Hodge, of Princeton: "The thoughts are in the words. The two are inseparable. If the *words* priest, sacrifice, ransom, expiation, propitiation, purification by blood, and the like, have no divine authority, then the *doctrine* which they embody has no such authority."

You confront me with objections. You point me, for example, to the discrepant accounts concerning the Resurrection. I answer, plainly to me at least, these are not discrepant accounts. They are only different sides of a great fact as different people saw these different sides. These apparent discrepancies are even valuable to me as manifest evidence of the perfectly freely acting human faculty, under the guidance of the Holy Ghost.

You point me to variations as to numbers. I answer, we do not claim inspiration for copyists, and precisely here is where copyists would be likeliest to blunder. Besides, we have to do with *oriental* methods of computation, which, as I have read, "permit one to write first the units, and then the tens, and then the hundreds, or to *reverse the order* and write the highest first." Hence confusion and the liability to tumble over statements in *translation*. For example, in Samuel where fifty thousand, threescore and ten men are mentioned, it is literally seventy, and fifty and a thousand, which *may* mean either, as in our version, fifty thousand threescore and ten, or it may mean one thousand one hundred and seventy. Before declaring against the plenary Inspiration of the Scriptures because of variations in numbers, I will wait until it is sure to be absolutely impossible to harmonize the variant numbers.

You fling at me the imprecatory Psalms. I answer, with Professor Phelps: when Milton sang his sonnet on the slaughter of the martyrs, in Piedmont,—

"Avenge, O Lord, Thy slaughtered saints, whose bones
Lie scattered on the Alpine mountains cold,"—

he gave expression to a feeling of indignation against terrible wrong than which nothing can be more righteous. His words are the reflection of the divine *ὀργή*. The quality of righteous wrath is in God, therefore it ought to be in a healthy literature written by man, who is the

image of God. I think imprecatory Psalms ought to be expected in Scripture. I think, were there no imprecatory Psalms in Scripture there were missed one of the firmest evidences of its divine origination.

You point me to apparent clashes with scientific theories. I answer, the Bible is a book which teaches morals. The idea of Inspiration is infallibility in the realm of morals and religion. Its speech about scientific facts must therefore be according to the popular conception of those facts. But, on the one hand, scientific theory does not always prove itself to be scientific fact. And, on the other hand, there have been already proven too many strange fore-pointings and fore-flashings toward the latest scientific facts in the very turn of the words of the wonderful book, to make me fear that Scriptural expression and real scientific fact will, at last, not be found in harmony.

No, as to the extent of Inspiration, I continue to affirm the *Plenary Inspiration of the Scripture*.

There is but one remaining question I have to ask and to seek to answer concerning Inspiration in order to cover the ground I have intended in this paper. That question is: *What was the quality of this Inspiration*—was it only greater in degree, but the same in kind, as that which we call—speaking too loosely I cannot help thinking—the inspiration of men now, of the great poet when he soars and sings, of the great philosopher when he thinks, of the great orator when he speaks? Or if not this, was it only greater in degree, but the same in kind, as that most benignant and illuminating touch of the Divine Spirit which is the gracious gift to-day to Christians? Was this Inspiration of the sacred writers similar then to these, or was it an Inspiration different both in kind and in degree—peculiar, unique, solitary, separated by chasm widest and deepest from all other sorts of spiritual influ-

ence which may, by any careless and popular stretch of language, be denominated Inspiration?

I answer, this Inspiration of the sacred writers was in the strictest sense solitary, singular, separate, different by complete chasm both in kind and in degree. And I think this to be the true answer for these, among many other, reasons.

Because the Bible, the issue of this Inspiration, is *so unique*. We are so familiar with the wonder that it is stripped of its wonder, and yet nothing is more wonderful. Here are sixty-six books, stringing along through different ages, for a space of nearly two thousand years. Some of them written in an age barbarous, some of them written in an age of the highest civilization, springing out of the most diverse environments, and yet at last brought together, and bound together, and constituting the Bible; and from the beginning to the end one unclashing and increasing purpose runs. In all the world's literature there is not an approach to such majestic and unique example. Such difference of effect points surely to difference of cause.

Because, again: The *effect* of what we ought to call the illumination of Christians by the Holy Spirit is different, manifestly, from the effect of Inspiration on the sacred writers. Illumination by the Holy Spirit of Christians now, does not result in giving to Christians new truth—it only results in rendering vivid to them the truth already given. Sanctify them through Thy truth, Thy word is truth. Pastor John Robinson was plainly right in telling the pilgrims, as they left Delfthaven, that without doubt new light would flash upon them; but he was also, as plainly right, in telling them whence it would flash—*from the Holy Scriptures*. He had no thought of any revelation of new truth, only of the vider vision of truth already revealed. But through the inspiration of the sacred writers a vast amount of new truth has been given to the

world. Since the action of the Holy Spirit in the inspiration of the sacred writers is thus different in *kind of result*, the inspiration of the sacred writers by the Holy Spirit, and the illumination by the Holy Spirit of Christians now, must be different in kind.

Because, again: Only as difference in kind as well as in degree of Divine action in the sacred writers is insisted on, is it possible to hold the Scripture in its proper place as the authoritative rule of faith and practice. Why *only* to the sacred writers should *such degree* of Divine influence be given? Why is the canon closed, if inspiration of *the sort* of the sacred writers is still possible?

And, once more: Because the Scripture itself distinctly assures us that there are diversities of operations by the same Spirit. Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are differences of ministries, but the same Lord; and there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all.

Suppose I say, as I once heard a most intelligent Christian say, that wherever the Holy Spirit is, there is Inspiration. That is true; but it is only true as I make that word Inspiration a word so great and wide that it covers *all* the operations of the Divine Spirit—regeneration, sanctification, illumination, guidance. I cannot say that all these are present whenever the Holy Spirit is present, because, to the regenerate man the Holy Spirit is not present to regenerate, but is present to sanctify. There are *differences* of ministries. I have no right to make that word Inspiration so wide a one. It is impossible for me to think clearly, or speak clearly, theologically, and do it. There are diversities of operations. “For no prophecy ever came by the will of man; but men spake from God, being moved by the Holy Ghost” (2 Peter i. 21). *πάσα γραφή θεόπνευστος* (2 Tim. iii. 16). The only time the word “inspired” occurs in the Bible it occurs in connec-

tion with the word translated Scripture. These passages seem to me plainly to point to a distinct and diverse operation of the Holy Spirit toward the writers of the Scripture. Both in kind and in degree was the action of the Holy Spirit different and lonely in the Inspiration of the sacred writers.

Said the suffering Sir Walter Scott to his son-in-law, Mr. Lockhart, as Sir Walter lay there, faint and feeble amid the thickly-gathering shadows of his last illness—said he in answer to Mr. Lockhart's question, "What book shall I read to you?" "Why do you ask that question? There is but *one* book. Bring me the Bible."

There *is* but one book; it *is* the Bible; and it *is*, and it must remain, *the one book*, because it, and it alone, has been given by the *Inspiration of the Holy Ghost*.

THE RELATION OF THE GOSPELS AND THE PENTATEUCH.

J. M. STIFLER, D.D.

THIS topic is somewhat arbitrary. The Bible is one complete organism—the Old and the New Testaments being interlinked and related at every point and page. But this vital connection is not methodical or mechanical. The roots and the limbs of a tree are one, but it would be impossible to say what is the peculiar relation of a particular root to a particular branch. The Pentateuch and the Gospels are not specially and peculiarly related. The one stands toward the other just as the entire Old Testament stands toward the New. The parts are related only because the whole is. In discussing, then, the relation between the Pentateuch and the Gospels, it is not intended that their coincidence is special. A part of the subject is considered instead of the whole.

I. The relation through the genealogical tables in Matthew and Luke is more profound than it appears at first sight. The quiet way in which these tables are introduced seems to say that the histories of the Old Testament are now simply carried a step further, or, if you please, to their sequel and consummation. There is no violent break between the Old Testament and the first page of the New, either in their spirit or subject. The Gospels are primarily concerned about Jesus of Nazareth. And the story of His life is taken up precisely as that of Abraham in the twelfth chapter of Genesis. This chapter is immediately preceded by a table, showing Abraham's descent from Shem. Shem begat Selah, Selah begat Eber, and so on to Nahor, who begat Terah, and Terah lived seventy

years and begat Abram. After this, the history of Abraham is given chapter after chapter. The history of Noah and of others is introduced in a similar way. Now prominently Matthew begins in this Old Testament fashion, and as quietly assumes connection, and the same sort of connection, with the Old Testament as appears in Moses between the previous chapters of his Genesis and the twelfth, where he begins the story of Abraham. And under this assumption there is another, viz., that Matthew is continuing the Old Testament story, so that the two are intimately joined.

The same in large measure is true of Luke, although he does not begin his Gospel with the table. While Mark and John have no table, the latter obviously connects his Gospel with the first chapter of Genesis by a higher genealogy. This appears in two things. First, the similarity of thought, even of words. Genesis reads: "In the beginning God created." John says: "In the beginning was God." Genesis, in detail, tells how God created all. John summarizes: "All things were made by Him." Genesis gives the origin of life and light. John says: "In Him was life, and the life was the light of men." But, secondly, who fails to observe that John throws up and forward into such a flood of light that nothing else meanwhile appears, the *ἐν ἀρχῇ*, the very first words of Genesis in the Septuagint. Observe, too, the same sublime assertion about "light" and "darkness." The similarity between the first five verses of Genesis and the first five in John cannot be accidental.

While Mark has no genealogical table, and no other sign of immediate connection, does not his abrupt initial statement seem to assume as well understood what Matthew and Luke more formally state? The Gospels do not begin a story, they continue one. Without the Pentateuch they would be each a torso.

II. There is an unmistakable relation in subject-matter between the Pentateuch and the Gospels. They give the same origin of the race—Adam; the same God—Jehovah, with the same character—holy. They deal largely with the same nation and a peculiar nation. They trace that nation to a common ancestor, Abraham. In a word, the Pentateuch and the Gospels have a like relation to a circle, first of great moral thoughts, and secondly of historical incidents interwoven with them.

And yet these things are but details. To stop here is to leave almost wholly out the main subject. The Gospels are not treating primarily about Abraham and Moses, about law and sacrifice, about precepts and ethical principles. They are chiefly concerned about the Christ—portraits of Him.

Says Edersheim, in his preface to the "Life and Times of Jesus": "Rather must the Gospels be regarded as four different aspects in which the evangelists viewed the historical Jesus of Nazareth as the fulfillment of the divine promise of old, the Messiah of Israel, and the Saviour of men." * This has been the belief of the Church since the days of Irenæus, whose "comparison of the four Gospels to the four living creatures mentioned in the Apocalypse" † is well known. The Gospels are not memorabilia, not memoirs. They are a fourfold disclosure of the character of Jesus—fourfold, shall we say, that our single conception may be complete? But this Jesus is Himself the fulfillment of the law, its filling out. "Think not that I am come to destroy the law," the Pentateuch. "I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill"; to fulfill, shall we understand not alone in what He said, but more strikingly in what He was? The law was symbol, He was reality. As John writes: "The law was given by Moses, but grace

* Pref. *ad init.*

† Ellicott's "Life of Christ," pp. 31, 32.

and truth came by Jesus Christ." The double antithesis in this sentence is instructive. Law is contrasted with truth. Then the law is not truth, it is the symbol of it. Again, the law was "given," but the truth "came"—came to be by Jesus Christ, who says elsewhere: "I am the truth." He embodied it in His person, character, and life.

The question now comes to this: The Gospels being a portraiture of Christ—one homogeneous character stereoscoped, if we may so speak, from the four varying pictures—in what relation does He stand to Moses, or Moses to Him? How does He fulfill? He Himself said: "Moses wrote of me." How? Incidentally mentioning Him prophetically here and there, dropping symbols of Him now and then; or, when He says, "Moses wrote of me," does He speak comprehensively, intending to say Moses wrote of nothing else—that the outline and substance of the Pentateuch are wholly about Christ? This is a question that only a volume can answer. And no volume satisfactorily considers it. The Pentateuch has not yet received its profoundest study. When it is no longer considered merely as history, but also as Gospel, a shadow of the truth, light will begin to break forth. It does relate most intimately to Christ. "A righteousness of God hath been manifested"—in Jesus Christ—"being witnessed by the law."

Dr. Alfred Cave, speaking of the difficulties presented to a devout mind by the Old Testament symbols, goes on as follows: "But immediately the Jewish and Christian theories are compared, these stumbling-blocks are the very things which prove most conclusively the fact of a common architect. The priesthood has its *rationale* in the 'priest forever,' the tabernacle in the incarnation, the atonement by blood, in Calvary, the non-dissected feast in the great Paschal Lamb, the passover in the daily appro-

priation of the merits of a crucified Jesus, the Feast of Ingathering in the dispensation of the Spirit, the Feast of Tabernacles in the rejoicing of the saints through Christ. And these resemblances, which must have been pre-ordained, are innumerable." * A connection of this sort between the old covenant and the new must be admitted.

But what is lacking here, and what nothing but the profound and devout study of the most evangelic mind can hope to find, is the kind of relation between the two, the comprehensive principle underlying the Pentateuch that explains its form and substance, and accounts for these "resemblances which are innumerable."

When such a relation of subject and substance is once sufficiently clear, two beneficent results immediately appear: First, in the line of apologetics. The attack upon the Old Testament to-day is critical. It is not rationalistic or mythical. It takes up the Books of the Old Testament, examines and compares their contents, and attempts to condemn them on their own showing. Kuenen strives to prove that the Pentateuch was written by the Jewish priests about the time of the return from the exile—not all at once, of course, but that it reached its final form at this date; that the object was to secure their own office as priests of the nation; that Deuteronomy was written first, Genesis last, and the rest meantime. The priests had already gained such a place in the political and religious life of the nation at the time of its return from the exile that they could perpetrate this fraud successfully. For effect, the whole was ascribed to Moses, who, many years before, had led their ancestors in a migration; who had given them some rudimentary precepts, now wrought out in the Ten Commandments, and some method of sacrifice, and who had a traditionary reputa-

* *Princeton Review* for 1879, Vol. I., page 614.

tion. Now this theory is not unreasonable. It is apparently supported by many facts, cited by its earnest advocates from the Old Testament itself. These citations are being reweighed. The higher criticism will be confronted with its own methods.

It is shown already that the date fixed for the composition is untenable. The Samaritans have a Pentateuch. Where did they obtain it? The enmity between them and the Jews arose about this time. If they did not possess this long before this date, they never would have accepted it from the Jews afterward.* But there is a quicker and no less effective way to meet these theories. The Mormon elders to-day might write a fivefold book as the documentary source of their entire religious and domestic system. For effect, they might ascribe it to Solomon, who worshipped in a temple and had numerous wives, and, however absurd, the people might be persuaded to accept it as a revelation from God, because it explained in large measure their system.

Such a book might be embellished with numerous cases of prophecy and accounts of subsequent fulfillment adorned with miracle and with many instances of providential interference. Even incongruities, absurdities, and immoralities might find place in its pages, which a rude, uncritical age and people would not detect.

It would pass down the Mormon national current for five hundred years, its credibility constantly increasing in the flow of time until some learned Kucenen skilled in criticism should finally lay bare its fraudulent origin and its contradictory character. Such a book might be written in such a way. The case is supposable.

But what now, if at the end of this time a man should

* "Recent Theories of the Pentateuch," *British Quarterly*, January, 1884.

arise, unique in character, holy in life and purpose, so like and yet so unlike men, that they could not decide whether he was human or divine; and what now, also, if it were found that this very Mormon book was the only book that described and predicted this man: that all contradictions, stories, rites, and laws met in that good man in a harmony like that which exists only between cipher and key, so that his life made the book significant? This case is not supposable. A book so written could not anticipate a life so lived. And yet this is substantially what Kuenen has supposed. His theory, swathed with vast learning, demands the belief that the post-exilian "sopherim," to use the half contemptuous word of Rev. S. Baring-Gould,* palmed a fraud upon the Jews of their age—a fraud that turns out a few centuries later to be a marvelously exact pre-delineation of the Messiah, that a book whose source and substance are fraud, was fulfilled by a person whose every deed, and thought, and breath was holy. Now establish the relation between Moses and the Gospels, and the theories of the rationalistic, of the mythical, and of the critical schools fall—*mole ruit sua*—never to rise. That fraudulent priests should prove to be most famous prophets—this, man cannot be persuaded to believe. Indeed, the continuity between the first five books of the Bible and the four Gospels is already so apparent in so many points as to furnish a sufficient argument against the critical theory. The "charcoal sketch" in the Pentateuch is so exactly like the divine portrait in the Gospels, that candor readily admits that but one mind conceived both, and but one hand drew both.

But, secondly, the adequate unfolding of the relation between Moses and the Gospels has vast homiletic value. To establish that relation will give authority to the types

* "Some Modern Difficulties," page 106.

and symbols of the Pentateuch. The marrow, the very soul of the Gospel, is in them.

It is there as it is nowhere else. There is a vast deal there that is nowhere else. But these types are distrusted, and their authority questioned until their vital connection with Christ is admitted, until it is seen that He is in them and they in Him.

The disciples could make nothing of the parable: "The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man who sowed good seed in his field, but while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares"—the disciples could make nothing of any of this until He identified the terms of the parable: "He that sowed the good seed is the Son of man; the field is the world, the good seed are the children of the kingdom," etc. What authority could the parable have had until He set its bounds? It left us on a trackless ocean without star or compass. And so it is with the types, symbols, and ceremonies of Moses. Uncertainty allows them to grow effete, but when their vital and exact relation to the Gospel is discovered, they become authoritative and widely instructive.

It is hazarding little to say that there is vastly more Gospel in Moses than in the Gospels. The soul of the Gospel is divine atonement for sin. How little of atonement we have in Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. How very, very much of it symbolically in Moses! Now, besides all else that our adorable Lord is, He is certainly the key to Moses. "I came to fulfill," He said.

He Himself directs us to Moses to learn of Himself. The key is the vital thing for admission to the treasure-house, but it is not the house. The Gospels give admission to the Pentateuch, which is rich in Gospel stores.

There would have been no Gospel in the lily's spotless white, if Jesus had not pointed to it as the work of God. But now the flowers of the field bloom fragrant with

truth. We could have seen no Gospel, either in the falling or the feeding sparrow, if Jesus had not indicated it. And now all this lesson is there as it is nowhere else. We might never have dreamed that there is Gospel in the constitution of the family. But now every pulse of parental affection says—it cannot possibly be so said by any other voice—"If ye, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask Him?" And now, just so when Christ is seen linked with these Old Testament symbols—a rejected Joseph, a curious tabernacle, a bleeding or a burning ox, a goat led into the wilderness, and all the rest of which there is so much—they come to us in as authoritative lessons as the flowers of the field or the fowls of the heavens, and like them preach as no other voice can or does.

The irreverence and, perhaps, the aim of the higher criticism must be deprecated as it is at present behaving. But in the end, a devout exegesis will find itself greatly indebted to it. It was the enemy who taught Israel of old the glory and comfort of their own monotheistic, non-idolatrous code politically; and perhaps the enemy is again divinely intended to teach us the value of the documents of that same code theologically. And when that value is ascertained, and the relation between the old covenant and the new broadly established, the Pentateuch will no longer be called an effete book, nor will it be supposed to be so inferior to the Gospels. They are not related as new and old, not even as fountain and broad flowing stream, but rather as material and model. When the Israelite in the wilderness saw the accumulating piles of material that finally went into the erection of his tabernacle, what could he make of that unorganized mass? With both boards and curtains it was stuff for neither a house nor a tent. But to Moses, who had seen the pattern

in the mount, that pattern explained every curtain and board, every nail and rod, every loop and tach, while yet lying in a disorderly heap. The Gospels are to the law what that pattern was to the material intended to realize it. The Gospel becomes a complete temple of worship when it is erected with all the material furnished by the law.

III. The Gospels and the Law are related by means of direct quotation and reference. According to Turpie* there are just one hundred quotations in the Gospels from the Old Testament, thirty-eight of which, or twelve less than one-half, are from the Pentateuch. The greater number of these are made, or commented on, by Jesus himself. Besides these quotations there are about forty allusions or references, more or less direct, in the Gospels to the Pentateuch—about forty, if the list in Davidson's "Hermeneutics"† was correctly counted. These quotations have provoked much study, and have given rise to more than one learned volume, the latest of which is by Crawford Howell Toy, professor in Harvard University.

The discussion of this particular relation between the New Testament and the Old brings us again face to face with Jesus.

What is His authority as an interpreter of the Pentateuch? Or, if we are to meet the Neologians, what is His ability in interpretation? Some would hesitate to bring Jesus into this controversy at all.

Dr. George T. Ladd, of Yale College, in his recently published work,‡ warns against what he calls "the perilous venture of committing the honesty and competency of Christ to every detail of the contents" of the Old Testament. It is a greater peril to refuse to call the most

* "The New Testament View of the Old." † Page 510.

‡ "The Doctrine of the Sacred Scriptures," page 34.

competent witness. Any honest reader of the Gospels must admit that He did in some sense indorse Moses.

There is a peril, however, and it is a great one, in committing Him to our view, of the teaching of either Testament. It lurks in a lazy assumption that He has done for us what evidently He intended we should do for ourselves by earnest study and the cultivation of a devout spiritual insight. He came, not to interpret in detail, or at all. All that He did do in this field is purely incidental. He came to fulfill the Old Testament Scriptures. It is ours to interpret and to show the profound meaning and measure of that fulfillment. But how is that to be done without bringing Him into this question? And whatever may be thought of the inexpediency of committing Jesus on this point, we have no choice left. He comes in necessarily. He was long ago brought in. Loyalty to Him will not call it inexpedient to defend Him when assailed.

Either to avoid or to preserve the divine authority, but more likely because Jesus' words crossed his views, John Solomon Semler, professor in Halle, gave currency more than a century ago (he died in 1797) to the so-called "Accommodation Theory."* Although the theory is generally assigned to Semler, he did not invent it. "It was a favorite," says Alexander, of the followers of Des Cartes in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Its complexion would suggest an origin still nearer the dark ages.

This "impious theory" long ago brought Jesus face to face with this question. It is not a "favorite," however, of living Neologians, as may be seen in Professor Toy's book, who nevertheless is confronted by Jesus and seeks

* See W. L. Alexander's "Connection and Harmony of the Old and New Testaments," page 148; and Davidson's "Hermeneutics," page 694.

to nullify His testimony thus: "We must compare them (the quotations) with the original passages, interpreted according to what we hold to be the best canons of hermeneutical science. The comparison must be made with all caution, humility, and reverence, but the science of hermeneutics must be the final authority, even if it should seem to us to come in conflict with Him. . . . As an individual man, He had of necessity a definite, restricted, intellectual outfit and outlook, and these could be only those of His day and generation. . . . As teacher of spiritual truth sent from God and full of God, He is universal; as logician and critic, He belongs to His times."*

In the same strain Rothe declares: "The Redeemer never claimed to be an infallible or even a generally precise interpreter of the Old Testament. Indeed, He could not have made this claim; for interpretation is essentially a scientific function, and one conditioned by the existence of scientific means, which, in relation to the Old Testament, were only imperfectly at the command of Jesus, as well as of His contemporaries."† All of which would be ridiculous, if it were not so offensive in its self-conceit, viz.: that Jesus, Son of God, was not as competent to judge of the truthfulness of words which He quoted from the Old Testament as are Drs. Toy and Rothe, because, forsooth, He had not the "scientific means" which are in the hands of His critics in Harvard University and Gotha. How much He might have learned from an adequate modern library! The bald accommodation theory would rob Jesus of His moral character. The critical theory would steal His credentials as an accredited teacher from God, eclipse His divinity, shackle

* "Quotations in the New Testament," pp. 28, 29.

† Quoted from *Zur Dogmatik*, Gotha, 1863, in Ladd's "Doc. of Sacred Scriptures," p. 28.

and limit Him by the narrow critical knowledge of His time, and make Him so far but a poor human scribe, vastly more incapable of telling what was true or false in the book He so often quoted, than are these men so learned in hermeneutical science. While Athanasius, Balthazer Hubmeyer, Roger Williams, and hundreds of others could be in sharpest antithesis with the current of interpretation about them, standing like rocks against it, Jesus "belongs to His own times"; the feeble creation of His age! May grace not fail where there is such sore need of patience. He who said, "Moses wrote of me"; He who said, "Not one jot or tittle shall pass from the law till all be fulfilled"; He who said, "Had ye believed Moses ye would have believed me"; He who said, "If ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words?" He is to be distrusted in all this, although He also solemnly declared: "Even as the Father said unto me, so I speak." He averred: "The word which ye hear is not *mine*, but the Father's which sent me." And one cannot help asking, though the question may belong only to the realm of a prayer-meeting, What is that conception of the ineffable, adorable Son of the Father—of Him who said, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father"? what is the conception of Him when men virtually say He quoted the Scriptures in as much ignorance as the scribe of His day? Hermeneutical science is invaluable in interpretation. But a little religion does not come amiss either, the reverence which, in heart-broken penitence for blinding, misleading sin, owns before Him that "the foolishness of God is wiser than men."

Dr. Ladd says: "A *quasi* ethical preparation is an indispensable requirement," when men are about to ask, "What did Christ teach as to the nature of the Old Testament Scriptures?" Ah, it must be more than *quasi* ethical. It must have more than "caution, humility, and

reverence." It must be deeply inter-shot and informed by the Spirit of God. Says Prof. C. A. Briggs: "Through the avenues of Scripture we go to find Christ—in their centre we find our Saviour. It is this personal relation of the Author of the entire Scripture to the interpreter that enables him truly to understand the divine things of the Scripture. Jesus Christ knew the Old Testament and interpreted it as one who knew the mind of God. He needed no helps to climb the pyramids of interpretation. He was born and ever lived at the summit."* In the same strain he declares: "The doctrine that the Holy Spirit is the supreme interpreter of Scripture is the highest attainment of interpretation." It is unquestionably true that piety will not answer for a lack of the knowledge of Greek. Prayer cannot take the place of an acquaintance with Hebrew. But piety and prayer will give a vastly better knowledge of the Bible than any one can attain through hermeneutical science without these. "I thank Thee, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes" (Mat. xi. 25).

The chief thing to be noticed in the quotations is that they are frequently transferred in words, sometimes even in a sense foreign to the original. They are not often made with verbal exactness.

The prophet represents the Lord as saying: "I will send my messenger before me." This is quoted: "I send my messenger before thee." Now reduce all the Bible penmen to mere scribes, insist that these books must be interpreted just as other books are, and this feature of quotation cannot be explained. Professor Toy says emphatically: "The Old Testament is to be made its own

* "Biblical Study" (1883), page 364.

interpreter." He says the prophet writes with no vagueness. He has in mind a definite picture, and "describes it in clear words." * Of course the New Testament is to be interpreted in the same fashion. But, now, if quotations are not brought in their contextual sense and in their own words from one Testament to the other, the science of hermeneutics must protest, and he who made the quotation must be regarded as the victim of his times, conditioned and limited by rabbinic exegesis. Professor Toy's method defeats itself. He seems to protest against a mechanical fulfillment of particular predictions, but when he takes these up as quotations he seems to find fault because they are not mechanically transferred. Hermeneutics can never compass the movements of that living Spirit which breathes both in the Old Testament and in the New, who transfers His own words from one to another in a way that shows He is a vital power and not a dead something. The Spirit is the author of the Pentateuch. It is not Moses. Any Sunday-school teacher can show that Jesus used His own words, the very same words now in this sense, now in that, and again in a third, † and cannot any living spirit do the same? Has the Holy Spirit no ability to show what He does mean by His utterances? Can He use words but in one way and in one sense? Suppose that He of whom it is said in the Gospels, "I send my messenger before thee," was the very one who said it in Malachi. Suppose that he who quoted had a distinct consciousness of this and wished to identify the two, would not that account for the change in the pronoun, and make it strikingly significant? The very fact that the quotations in the Gospels are independent and free, following sometimes neither the letter nor the

* "Quotations," page xxvi.

† e. g., Matthew vii. 2; Mark iv. 24; Luke vi. 38.

sense of the original context, is a substantial proof that they who quote are independent—not bound to the letter as were the scribes, but men with living authority equal to them who wrote the Old Testament. The evangelists were not slavish copyists, but original writers, with minds moved and informed by God's Spirit.

“But,” says the Biblical critic, “this is the question at issue: were any of these men inspired? Criticism must settle that question.” It cannot. It might as well attempt to measure the heat of the sun with a tape-line. The thing is not adapted. The form and fashion of the tabernacle were inspired. But who would think either of proving or disproving it by the science of modern architecture? Noah's ark was created in obedience to inspiration. Can nautical science prove or disprove it?

God's words do not whisper their secret to science. When He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will guide you. God interprets His own Word. It does not interpret itself. God's words are spirit and life, and the critical scalpel has no function until life has ceased.

And now since Jesus “taught as one having authority, and not as the scribes”; since, as Professor Briggs says, “Jesus Christ knew the Old Testament and interpreted it as one who knew the mind of God,” His quotations from it are worthy of the profoundest regard. To be sure, He never professed to be a textual critic. He accepted and taught the Pentateuch as He found it. But His frequent quotations from and references to it, show His estimate of its value and trustworthiness. They come to Him with the question: “Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause?” declaring, at the same time, that Moses suffered to write a bill of divorcement and to put her away. “And Jesus answered and said unto them: For the hardness of your heart He wrote you this precept, but from the beginning of the creation God made

them male and female. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother and cleave to his wife, and they twain shall be one flesh. What, therefore, God hath joined together let not man put asunder." Now here are a number of things said directly and implicitly. First, Jesus says Moses wrote the precept of divorce. Again, He says God made them male and female from the beginning of the creation, which implicitly declares that He made the first pair, indorsing thus the Mosaic story of the creation of Adam and Eve. He implies also that they were the "beginning" of His creation of men. His method of interpretation is also indicated, that specified creation is also legislation, that what God *does*, interprets what He says. Now, Jesus has not said that the first and the second chapters of Genesis are inspired, but He both refers to and quotes them as indicative of the divine will on one of the most momentous of ethical questions. If He used them as an embodiment of the divine will, we may. If He calls that story the beginning of creation, it is safe to deny that there were pre-Adamites. If He quoted Genesis as the divine reason for monogamy, we may. If that story of the institution of the marriage relation is not true, if it had no existence before the days of Ezra's scribes, there is no divine authority for monogamy; Jesus gave no other ground for that authority than the account which Moses writes.

In Mark we have a quotation from Exodus xx. 12 and xxi. 16, introduced by the word Moses. Moses said: "Honor thy father and thy mother, and whosoever curseth father or mother let him die the death." But Matthew (xv. 3), in reporting this same occurrence, represents Jesus as saying: "For God commanded, saying, Honor thy father," etc. What one ascribes to Moses, the other ascribes to God. No doubt Jesus used both introductions to the quotation, of which Matthew selects one and Mark

the other. But this need not be pressed. If we had Matthew alone, it would be equally apparent that Jesus gave divine authority to Moses' words.

What a marvelous story is that of the destruction of the cities of the plain. And to what else does Jesus refer when He says: "It shall be more tolerable for Sodom in the day of judgment than for thee" (Capernaum)? To what else does He allude when He warns believers, "Remember Lot's wife"? He who could speak confidently of the future, the judgment, was probably textual critic sufficient to assure us that this story did not arise as Kuenen suggests.

They came to Him with a perplexing question about the resurrection. A woman had outlived seven successive husbands. In the resurrection whose wife should she be? And what is His answer? "Now that the dead are raised, even Moses showed at the bush when he called the Lord the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." Here Moses is quoted as an authority on the question. Mark's account reads: "And as touching the dead that they rise, have ye not read in the book of Moses how in the bush *God spake* unto him, saying: I am the God of Abraham and the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob?" Here, again, what is credited to Moses in one place is ascribed to God in another. Several other points are noteworthy—one approaching, incidentally of course, textual criticism. First, he indorses the curious story of the theophany in the bush. Secondly, he confirms the chronological order of these characters in the Pentateuch—Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses. Thirdly, he ascribes the Pentateuch to the Lawgiver, "Have ye not read in the book of Moses?"

It is needless to enlarge on other quotations. No one can fail to remember how He Himself, "beginning at Moses and all the prophets, expounded to them in all the

Scriptures the things concerning Himself"; how He declared, "As it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be in the days of the Son of man" (if the higher criticism is correct, candor must have compelled Him to say here, "As it is reputed to have been in the alleged days of Noah"); how He said, "One jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law till all be fulfilled"; how in His dying agony He confessed His thirst, that these same Scriptures on this point might be fulfilled. He may have paid no attention to criticism, but with all these allusions of His from the beginning of the divine story on through, touching so many chapters, indorsing Moses not only in general, but in numerous particulars, it is safe to use His own words against His critics: The Scriptures cannot be broken. "Hengstenberg," says Alfred Cave,* "made a collection of incidental declarations in which his opponents betrayed or confessed that their *piece de resistance* was an initial disaffection toward the supernatural. It was a bold stroke, and one requiring some courage, to charge their unbelief with their opposition. Christian faith does not circumscribe the activity of God by the operations of natural law. A spiritual realm moves and molds, and sometimes breaks through the natural. Let men believe first in the present, living God. Those who have felt the quickening thrill of His nearness, who have been humbled in heart and intellect under the hourly sense of His gracious forgiveness of their sins, will not find the difficulties in His Word discovered by cold study, animated only by "Zeitgeist" rather than by the Holy Ghost. He will not stumble at the supernatural who has thus experienced it in his own soul, in whose consciousness it is a daily reality.

* *Princeton Review*, May, 1879, page 593.

THE TESTIMONY OF THE SCRIPTURE TO ITSELF.

GEORGE S. BISHOP, D.D.

THE Bible is the very handwriting of God! Suppose I believe that. Suppose, instead of Luke and John and Paul and Peter, I behold in overawed imagination "God grasping the pen" and setting down the sentences, the words, the jots and tittles—every stroke of it; does not that fix me? does not that arrest me? does not that determine, shape, and mould me, as no conviction other, lesser, can?

That is the Anchor to which, by twisting a few honest strands, I would help, if I may, to rebind our cables. When we were resting quietly inside of Sandy Hook, our own ship and others swung round with the tide, but none changed its place, for all were well anchored. The ships of sentiment are swinging loose to-day, and with the counter tide. That has been, and it will be, again and again, so long as human opinion is the vacillating and uncertain thing it is. But we need not fear, for the old anchor holds as firm, as steady, as inflexible as ever. That anchor—back of all departures, heresies, and fluctuations—is the literal, direct, Divine inspiration, *on the original parchments*, of the Word of God.

We cannot consent to see in the Bible the pens nor the penmen; but, undistractedly, the Master Intellect, which everywhere directs each thought. We must maintain with Justin Martyr, with Chrysostom, and with Theophilus of Antioch, the illustration of that "*harp*" on which

the Spirit breathes, "the strings of which He touches to evoke each vital tone." We must "adore" with Athenagoras "the Being who has harmonized the strains, who leads the melody, and not the instrument on which He plays. What umpire at the Games," he cries, "omits the Minstrel while he crowns the lyre?"

The mistake of moderns, and especially of recent moderns, has been "crowning the lyre." The whole question of Inspiration has, within the last half century, been made to turn upon the *writers*. It has been unhinged from those stanchions on which St. Paul makes it turn—the *Writings themselves*.

This misdirection of thought would seem to be much like that of the boy who stands at the end of the telegraph line and gets a message from his father ("I have written to him the great things of My Law"), and who, instead of taking the message as direct, authoritative, final, goes to work to discuss the posts, the wires, electricity, the key-board, the touch of the finger, the process. His business is simply to heed and obey.

The doctrine of direct, dictated, verbal Inspiration—that everything in the Bible was set down by the finger of God—has these five things in its favor:

1. It is the *first*, original, and oldest doctrine.
2. It is the *simplest* doctrine.
3. It is the *undeviating* doctrine which has proved the bulwark of the Church of God. Defended in the earliest centuries by men like Athenagoras and St. Augustine—defended still by men like Wickliffe, Huss, and Luther in the struggles which led in the Reformation—and, in post-Reformation times, defended, by men like the Buxtorfs, John Owen, John Gill, and Gaussen—it has been the one, consistent, inexpugnable, permanent doctrine from the beginning. Scripture—sunlight to the sun—is the

untarnishable radiance of God. What *it* says, *God* says.

4. A fourth fact is the *logical impossibility* of any other counter position. "If we do not take direct Inspiration," says Waller, "what we are to take is not so clear." If we begin to admit inequalities in Revelation, where shall we stop? If we turn our attention away from the writing to occupy ourselves with the writer—his genius, his knowledge, the amount of assistance required—who does not see that this descent from heaven to earth, from the high Himalaya of the Divine to the low, marshy ground of the creatural human, must tend to gravitate, to minimize, and more and more, until your Bible is reduced to Shakespeare or (who knows?) to Bret Harte. The fabricators of degrees in Inspiration—the men who so self-confidently set forth to us their four classes,—the inspirations of "elevation," of "superintendence," of "suggestion," of "direct dictation,"—tell us themselves that the last is the highest. Ah well! we will choose—we will cling to that highest. Why not? If dictation anywhere—in any one instance, then dictation all the way through. If not, why not? Where are the limits? Where shall we stop? Suppose certain words in the Scripture—only a few—to be put there by God. Suppose this admitted, and it is admitted—who shall define the number of those words? Who shall assume to stand up and tell us where God the Holy Ghost expresses Himself in the very form of the word and where He retires from the word and leaves it a shell merely human?

The difficulties attaching to any other view of Inspiration than the Verbal are simply overwhelming. Suppose that something, no matter how little—whatever you please—be left to the writers themselves, and who shall satisfy us that nothing essential has been omitted, nothing irrelevant or trifling has been emphasized, nothing inaccurate

has been set down? Who does not see that, so, inspiration is utterly lost?

5. And that leads, logically, up to the climacteric position, that we must hold to Verbal Inspiration, or if not, at last—*give up the Bible*. What other result can there be? Is not this just what it comes back to—"I receive what appeals to my likings, I repudiate what I dislike"? In other words, I make my consciousness my arbiter—my prejudice, my Book—and my self-will, my God.

The subject which has fallen to my lot in this discussion is, The Testimony of the Scriptures to themselves—their own self-evidence—the overpowering, unparticipated witness that they bring.

Permit me to expand this witness under the following heads:

- I. Immortality.
- II. Authority.
- III. Transcendent Doctrine.
- IV. Direct Assertion.
- V. The Casket of the Gem—the very Language in which Revelation is enshrined.

I. Immortality—"I have written!" All other books die. "Most of the libraries are cemeteries of dead books." The vast perennial literature falls as the leaves fall, and perishes as they perish. Few old books survive, and fewer of those that survive have any influence. Even to scholars the names of Epictetus and Lucretius—of the *Novum Organum*—of the *Nibelungen Lied*, convey nothing more than a title. They have heard of those books—have skimmed a page or two here and there,—that is all. Most of the books we quote from have been written within the last three or even one hundred years.

But here is a book whose antemundane voices had grown old, when voices spake in Eden. A book which has sur-

vived not only with continued but increasing lustre, vitality, vivacity, popularity, rebound of influence. A book which avalanches itself with accretions, like the snowball that packs as it goes. A book which comes through all the shocks without a wrench, and all the furnaces of all the ages—like an iron safe—with every document in every pigeon-hole, without a warp upon it, or the smell of fire. Here is a book of which it may be said, as of Immortal Christ Himself—“Thou hast the dew of thy youth from the womb of the morning.” A book dating from days as ancient as those of the Ancient of Days—and which when all that makes up what we see and call the universe shall be dissolved, will still speak on in thunder-tones of majesty, and whisper-tones of light and music-tones of love—for it is wrapping in itself the everlasting past—and opening and expanding from itself the everlasting future; and, like an all-irradiating sun, will still roll on, while deathless ages roll, the one unchanging, unchangeable Revelation of God.

II. Immortality is on these pages, and Authority sets here her seal. This is the second point. A Standard.

Useless to talk about *no* standard. Nature points to one. Conscience cries out for one—conscience which without a law constantly wages the internal and excruciating war of accusing or else excusing itself.

There must be a Standard and an Inspired Standard—for *Inspiration is the Essence of Authority*, and authority is in proportion to Inspiration—the more Inspired the greater the authority—the less, the less. Even the rationalist Rothe, a most intense opponent, has admitted that “*that* in the Bible which is not the product of direct inspiration has no binding power.”

Verbal and direct Inspiration is, therefore, the “Thermopylæ” of Biblical and Scriptural faith. No breath, no

syllable; no syllable, no word; no word, no Book; no Book, no religion.

We hold, from first to last, that there can be no possible advance in Revelation—no new light. What was written at first, the same thing stands written to-day, and will stand forever. The Bible, the true fact beneath the Grecian myth, springs into light Minerva-like, full armed. The emanation of the mind of God—it is complete, perfect. “Nothing can be put to it, nor anything taken from it.” Its *ipse dixit* is peremptory—final.

What can be more awful, more stupendous than the sanction which rounds up the Book, by which it is secured and sealed and guarded? “If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this Book: and if any man shall *take away from the words* of the Book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the Book of life, and out of the Holy City, and from the things which are written in this Book.”

The Bible is the Word of God, and not simply CONTAINS it. This is clear,—

Because all the words in it, even those of the Devil and of wicked men, were put down by the finger of God.

Because the Bible styles itself the Word of God. “*The Word of the Lord* is right,” says the Psalmist. Again, “*Thy Word* is a lamp to my feet.” “Where-withal shall a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed thereto according to *Thy Word*.” “The grass withereth,” says Isaiah, “the flower thereof fadeth, but *the Word of our God* shall stand forever.”

Not only is the Bible called the Word of God, but it is distinguished from all other books by that very title. It is so distinguished in the 119th Psalm, and everywhere the contrast between it and every human book is deepened and sustained.

If we will not call the Bible the Word of God, then we cannot call it anything else. If we insist upon a description rigorously exact and unexposed to shafts of wanton criticism, then the Book remains anonymous. We cannot more consistently say "Holy Scripture," because the crimes recorded on its pages are not holy; because expressions like "Curse God and die," and others from the lips of Satan and of wicked men, are unholy. The Bible, however, is "holy," because its aim and its methods are holy. The Bible, likewise, is the Word of God, because it comes from God; because its every word was penned by God; because it is the only exponent of God; the only rule of His procedure, and the Book by which we must at last be judged.

1. The Bible is authority because in it, from cover to cover, *God is the speaker*. Said a leader of our so-called orthodoxy to a crowded audience but a little while ago: "The Bible is true. Any man not a fool must believe what is true. What difference does it make who wrote it?"

This difference, brethren: *the solemn bearing down of God on the soul!* My friend may tell me what is true; my wife may tell me what is true; but what they say is not solemn. Solemnity comes in when God looks into my face—God! and behind Him everlasting destiny—and talks with me about my soul. In the Bible God speaks, and God is listened to, and men are born again by God's Word. "He is not a Christian who believes or obeys Matthew or John or Peter or Paul." What makes a Christian is believing and obeying God. "So then Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God." It is *God's Revelation* that faith hears, and it is *on God revealed* that faith rests.

2. The Bible is the Word of God. It comes to us *an-*

nounced by miracles and heralded with fire. Take the Old Testament—Mt. Sinai; take the New Testament—Pentecost. Would God himself stretch out His hand and write on tables in the giving, and send down tongues of fire for the proclamation of a Revelation, every particle and shred of which was not His own? In other words, would He work miracles and send down tongues of fire to signalize a work merely human, or even partly human and partly Divine? How unworthy of God, how impious, how utterly impossible the supposition!

3. The Bible comes clothed with authority in the *high-handed and exalted terms of its address*. God in the Bible speaks out of a whirlwind and with the voice of Elias. What grander proof of literal inspiration can be than in the high-handed method and imperative tone of prophets and apostles which enabled them—poor men, obscure, and without an influence; fishermen, artisans, publicans, day-laborers—to brave and boldly teach the world from Pharaoh and from Nero down? Was this due to anything less than God speaking in them—to the overpowering impulse and seizure of God? Who can believe it? Who is not struck with the power and the wisdom of God? “His words were in my bones,” cries one. “I could not stay. The lion hath roared, who will not fear; the Lord hath spoken, who can but prophesy?”

4. The Bible is the optime of authority, because it is from first to last a glorious projection on the widest scale of the *decrees of God*. The sweep of the Bible is from the Creation of Angels to a new heaven and new earth, across a lake of fire. What a field for events! what an expanse beyond the sweep or even reach of human forethought, criticism, or co-operation! what a labyrinth upon whose least and minutest turning hangs entire redemption, since a chain is never stronger than its smallest link! Who, then, will dare to speak till God

has spoken? "I will declare the decree!" That pushes everything aside—that makes the declaration an extension, so to say, of the Declarer.

"I will declare the decree!" When we consider that the Bible is an exact projection of the decrees of God into the future, this argument is seen to lift, indeed, to a climax; and, in fact, it does reach to the very *Cruz* of controversy; for the hardest thing for us to believe about God is to believe that He exactly absolutely knows, because He has ordained, the future. Every attribute of God is easier to grasp than that of an infallible Omniscience. "I will declare the decree," therefore, calls for direct inspiration.

5. The Bible is the optime of authority, because *the Hooks at the end of the chain prove the dictated Inspiration of its every link*. Compare the Fall in Genesis—(one link), with the Resurrection in the Apocalypse—the other. Compare the Old Creation in the first chapters of the Old Testament with the New Creation in the last chapters of the New. "We open the first pages of the Bible," says Vallotton, "and we find there the recital of the creation of the world by the word of God—of the fall of man, of his exile far from God—far from Paradise, and far from the tree of life. We open the last pages of the last of the 66 books dating 4,000 years later. God is still speaking. He is still creating. He creates a new heaven and a new earth. Man is found there recovered. He is restored to communion with God. He dwells again in Paradise, beneath the shadow of the tree of life. Who is not struck by the strange correspondence of this end with that beginning? Is not the one the prologue, the other the epilogue of a drama as vast as unique?"

6. The Bible is the optime of authority, because, over this vast range of supernatural, confessedly Divine thought, purpose, and action, there are no lights, and *no explanations*,

save those furnished by the Book itself. That Book must be supreme, whose only parallel, comparison, and confirmation is itself. Here is an *argumentum ad hominem*. Why do we not possess concordances for other volumes—for their very words? Because in human writings there is no such nicety—no such Divine significance as makes the sense and all the argument turn on the single words, and their exact consistency and correspondence everywhere throughout the book.

Your concordance, my brother, every time you take it up, speaks loudly to you of the inspiration and authority of Holy Writ. It says to you: “Not the Bible only, but this word, that word—all these single words, are God-breathed—Divine!”

7. Another argument for the supreme authority of Scripture, is the *character of the investigation challenged* for the Word of God. The Bible courts the closest scrutiny. Its open pages blaze the legend: “Search the Scriptures!” *Ereunao*—“Search.” It is a sportsman’s term, and borrowed from the chase. “Trace out”—“track out”—follow the word in all its usages and windings. Scent it out to its remotest meanings, as a dog the hare.

“They searched,” again says St. Luke, in the Acts, of the Bereans. There it is another word, *anakrino*, “they divided up,” analyzed, sifted, pulverized, as in a mortar—to the last thought.

What a solemn challenge is this! What book but a Divine Book would dare speak such a challenge? If a book has been written by man, it is at the mercy of men. Men can go through it, riddle it, sift it, and leave it behind them, worn out. But the Bible, a Book dropped from heaven, is “God-breathed.” It swells, it dilates, with the bodying fullness of God. God has written it, and none can exhaust it. Apply your microscopes, apply your telescopes to the material of Scripture. They

separate, but do not fray, its threads. They broaden out its nebulae, but find them clustered stars. They do not reach the hint of poverty in Scripture. They nowhere touch on coarseness in the fabric, nor on limitations in horizon, as always is the case when tests of such a character are brought to bear on any work of man's. You put a drop of water, or a fly's wing, under a microscope. The stronger the lens, the more that drop of water will expand, till it becomes an ocean filled with sporting animalcules. The higher the power, the more exquisite, the more silken become the tissues of the fly's wing, until it attenuates almost to the golden and gossamer threads of a seraph's. So is it with the Word of God. The more scrutiny, the more divinity; the more dissection, the more perfection. We cannot bring to it a test too penetrating, nor a light too lancinating, nor a touchstone too exacting.

The Bible is beyond all attempts at exhaustion, not only, but comprehension. No human mind can, by searching, find out the fullness of God. "For what man knoweth the things of a man save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man save the Spirit of God."

III. That leads up to the third point. The Scriptures testify to their Divine Original by their transcendent doctrine, their outshining light, their native radiance, the glow of the Divine, the witness of the Spirit.

We should expect to find a Book, that came from God, pencilled with points of jasper and of sardine stone—enhaloed with a brightness from the everlasting hills. We should look for that about the book which, flashing conviction at once, should *carry* overwhelmingly and everywhere, by its bare, naked witness—by what it simply is. That, just as God, by stretching out a hand to write upon the "plaister" of a Babylonian palace, stamped,

through mysterious and disjointed words, conviction of Divinity upon Belshazzar, and each one of his one thousand "lords," so, after that same analogue,—why not?—God should stretch out His hand along the unrolling palimpsests of all the ages, and write upon them *larger* words, which, to the secret recognition of each human soul should say, not only, "This is Truth," but "This is Truth, God-spoken!"

The Bible is the Word of God, because it is the *Book of Infinities*—the Revelation of what nature, without it, never could have attained, and, coming short of the knowledge of which, nature were lost.

The greatest need of the soul is salvation. It is such a knowledge of God as shall assure us of "comfort" here and hereafter. Such a knowledge, nature, outside of the Bible, does not contain. Everywhere groping in his darkness, man is confronted by two changeless facts. One, his guilt, which, as he looks down, sinks deeper and deeper. The other, the Justice of God, which, as he looks up, lifts higher and higher. Infinite against Infinite—Infinite here; Infinite there—no bridge between them! Nature helps to no bridge. It nowhere speaks of Atonement.

Standing with Uriel in the sun, we launch the proposition that the Scriptures are Divine in their very message because they deal with three Infinities:—Infinite Guilt; Infinite Holiness; Infinite Atonement.

A Book must itself be *infinite* which deals with Infinities; and a Book must be *Divine* which divinely reconciles Infinities.

Infinite Guilt! Has my guilt any bottom? Is Hell any deeper? Is there, in introspection, a possible lower, more bottomless nadir? Infinite Guilt! That is what opens, caves away under my feet, the longer, the more carefully I plumb my own heart—my nature, my record. Infinitely guilty! That is what I am and *where*—far, far

below the plane of self-apology, or ghastly "criticism" of the Book which testifies to this. Infinitely guilty! That is what I am. Infinitely sinking, and, below me, an infinite Tophet. I know that. As soon as the Bible declares it, I know it, and, with it, I know that witnessing Bible divine. I know it—I do not know how—by an instinct, by conscience, by illumination, by the power of the Spirit of God; by the Word without, and by the flashed conviction in me which accord.

And, counterpoised above, me, a correlative Infinite—God! What can be higher? What zenith loftier? What doming of responsibility more dread or more portentous? Infinite God—above me—coming to judge me! On the way now. I must meet Him. I know that. I know it, as soon as the Bible declares it. I know it—I do not know how—by an instinct. Even the natural man must picture to himself when thus depicted, and must fear,

"A God in grandeur, and a world on fire."

An infinitely Holy God above me, coming to judge me. That is the Second Infinite.

Then the Third and what completes the Triangle, and makes its sides eternally, divinely equal—Infinite Atonement—an Infinite Saviour—God on the cross making answer to God on the throne—my Jesus—my refuge—my Everlasting Jehovah.

By these three Infinities—especially this last—this infinite Atonement, for which my whole being cries out its last cry of exhaustion—by this third side of the stupendous Triangle—the side which, left to myself, I could never make out, the Bible proves itself the soul's Geometry—the one Eternal Mathematics—the true Revelation of God.

Aye! and by that ineffable something—self-luminous—flooding the soul, which bathing the Book bears the reader as well on its tide.

La larga ploia
 Dello Spirito santo, ch'è diffusa
 In su le Vecchie e in su le nuove cuoia,
 È sillogismo, che la mi ha conchiusa
 Acutamente sì, che in verso d'ella
 Ogni dimostrazion mi pare ottusa.

“The flood, I answered, of the Spirit of God
 Rained down upon the Ancient Testament and New,
 This is the reasoning that convinceth me
 So feelingly, each argument beside
 Seems blunt and forceless in comparison.”*

We take the ground that these three things—Guilt, God, Atonement—set thus in star-like apposition and conjunction, *speak* from the sky, more piercingly than stars do, saying: “Sinner and sufferer, this Revelation is Divine!”

We take the open ground, that a single stray leaf of God's Word, found by the wayside, by one who never had seen it before, would convince him at once that the strange and the wonderful words were those of his God—were Divine.

The Scriptures are their own self-evidence. We take the ground the sun requires no critic—truth no diving-bell. When the sun shines, he *shines* the sun. When God speaks, His evidence is in the *accent* of His words.

How did the prophets of old know, when God spoke to them, that it was God? Did they subject the voice, that shook their every bone, and made their flesh dissolve upon them, to a critical test? Did they put God, so to say—as some of our moderns would seem to have done—into a crucible, into a chemist's retort, in order to certify that He was God? Did they find it necessary to hold the handwriting of God in front of the blow-pipe of anx-

* Dante—*Il Paradiso*.

ious philosophical examination, in order to bring out and to make the invisible, visible? The very suggestion is madness.

The Scriptures are their own self-evidence. The refusal of the Bible on its simple presentation, is enough to damn any man, and, if persisted in, will damn him—for,

“A glory gilds the sacred page,
Majestic, like the sun,
It gives a light to every age,
It gives, but borrows none.”

IV. Glory spreads over the face of the Scriptures, but this glory, when scrutinized closely, is seen to contain certain features and outlines—testimonies inside of itself, direct assertions, which conspire to illustrate again its high Divinity, and to *confirm* its claim.

This is our fourth point: The Scriptures say of themselves that they are Divine. They not only assume it; they say it. And this, “Thus saith the Lord,” is intrinsic—a witness inside of the witness, and one upon which something more than conviction—*confidence*, or Spirit-born and *saving faith*, depends.

The argument from the self-assertion of Scripture is cumulative.

1st. The Bible claims that, as a Book, it comes from God.

2d. It asserts that its very words are the words of God.

3d. It asserts that each pen-stroke is God-breathed—inspired.

Now, let us go back, and resume these three points a little more slowly; and,

1st. The Bible claims that, *as a Book*, it comes from God. In various ways, it urges this claim.

One thing; it says so. “God in old times spake by

the prophets; God now speaks by His Son." The question of Inspiration is, in its first statement, the question of Revelation itself. If the Book be divine, then what it says of itself is Divine. The Scriptures are inspired because they say they are inspired. The question is simply one of Divine testimony, and our business is, as simply, to receive that testimony. "Inspiration is as much an assertion," says Haldane, "as is justification by faith. Both stand, and equally, on the authority of Scripture, which is as much an ultimate authority upon this point as upon any other." When God speaks, and when He says "I speak!" there is the whole of it. He is bound to be heard and obeyed.

And God does speak. He brings the Bible to us, and He claims to be its Author. If, at this moment, yonder heavens were opened—the curtained canopy of star-sown clouds rolled back—if, amid the brightness of the light ineffable, the Dread Eternal were Himself seen, rising from His throne, and heard to speak to us in voices audible—no one of these could be more potent, more imperative, than what lies now before us upon Inspiration's page.

In the Bible, God speaks, and speaks not only by proxy. Leviticus is a signal example of this. Chapter after chapter of Leviticus begins: "And the Lord spake, saying"; and so it runs on through the chapter. Moses is simply a listener, a scribe. The self-announced speaker is God.

In the Bible, God himself comes down and speaks, not in the Old Testament alone, and not alone by proxy. "The New Testament presents us," says Dean Burgon, "with the august spectacle of the Ancient of Days, holding the entire volume of the Old Testament Scriptures in His hands, and interpreting it of Himself. He, the Incarnate Word, 'who was in the beginning with God,' and 'who was God'—that same Almighty One is set

forth in the Gospels as holding the 'volume of the Book' in His hands—as opening and unfolding it, and explaining it everywhere of Himself.”

Christ everywhere receives the Scriptures, and speaks of the Scriptures, in their entirety—the Law, the Prophets, and the Psalms, the whole Old Testament canon—as the living Oracle of God. He accepts and He endorses everything written, and even makes most prominent those miracles which infidelity regards as most incredible. And He does all this upon the ground of the authority of God. He passes over the writer—leaves him out of account. In all His quotations from the Old Testament, He mentions but four of the writers by name. The question with Him is not a question of the *reporter*, but of the Dictator. Suppose a sovereign like Kaiser Wilhelm dictating five or six letters to five or six different private secretaries at once. Suppose that six agents have penned the six parts of one letter! Our Saviour does not see the six pens. He sees the one Writer, the one Hand outstretched, viewless, infallible, awful—behind all human hands.

And this position of our Saviour which exalted Scripture as the mouthpiece of the living God was steadily maintained by the apostles and the apostolic Church. Again and over again, in the book of the Acts, in all the Epistles, do we find such expressions as “He saith,” “God saith,” “The oracles of God,” “The Holy Ghost saith,” “Well spake the Holy Ghost by Esaias the prophet.”

The Epistle to the Hebrews furnishes a splendid illustration of this, where, setting forth the whole economy of the Mosaic rites, the author adds, “The Holy Ghost this signifying.” Further on, and quoting words of Jeremiah, he enforces them with the remark, “The Holy Ghost is witness to us also.” The imperial argument on

Psalm xcv. he clenches with the application, "Wherefore (as the Holy Ghost saith), To-day if ye will hear His voice." Throughout the entire Epistle, whoever may have been the writer quoted from, the words of the quotation, are referred to God.*

2d. But now let us come closer, to the very exact and categorical and unequivocal assertion. If the Scriptures as a Book are Divine, then what they say of themselves is Divine. What do they say?

In this inquiry, let us keep our fingers on two words, and always on two words—the Apostolic keys to the whole Church position—"γραφή," "θεόπνευστος."

"Graphe"—writing, *writing*, THE WRITING,—not somebody, something back of the Writing. The Writing, "*He Graphe*," that was inspired.

And what is meant by inspired? "*Theopneustos*," God-breathed. Modern theologians have played at shuttle-cock with various "degrees" of inspiration. It is indeed a wretched play—this bandying of quibbles in the mouths of mortals to whom God vouchsafes to speak, and who themselves are sitting shaking on the crumbling precipice of an Eternal destiny.

Degrees of inspiration! Shades of varying value in the cadences of the Almighty's voice! He whispers, hesitates, speaks low in Esther, in the sixteenth chapter of St. Mark, and in the eighth chapter of St. John's Gospel. He stutters, falters in the Genealogies; is inaccurate in figures. He evidently weakens, halts: Almighty God breaks down!

Degrees of inspiration! The older theologians, thank God, did not know them—nor own them. Why should they? As well discuss degrees in Deity, in Predestina-

* Olshausen, *Die Echtheit des N. T.*, cited by Dr. Lee.

tion, in Providence, as talk about degrees in that of which Augustine says: "Whatsoever He willed that we should read either of His doings or sayings that He commissioned His agents to write, as if their hands had been His own hands."

"God breathed" sweeps the whole ground. God comes down as a blast on the pipes of an organ,—in voice like a whirlwind, or in still whispers like Æolian tones, and saying the word, He seizes the hand, and makes that hand in His own the pen of a most ready writer.

Pasa Graphe Theopneustos! "All sacred writing." More exactly, "every sacred writing"—every mark on the parchment is "God-breathed." So says St. Paul.

Pasa Graphe Theopneustos! The sacred assertion is not of the instruments, but of the *Author*; not of the agents, but of the *Product*. It is the sole and sovereign vindication of what has been left on the page when *Inspiration gets through*. "What is written," says Jesus, "how readest thou?" Men can only read what is written.

Pasa Graphe Theopneustos! God inspires not men, but language. The phrase, "inspired men," is not found in the Bible. The Scripture never employs it. The Scripture says that "holy men were moved"—*pheromoi*—but that their writing, their manuscript, what they put down and left on the page, was God-breathed. You breathe upon a pane of glass. Your breath congeals there; freezes there; stays there; fixes an ice-picture there. That is the notion. The writing on the page beneath the hand of Paul was just as much breathed on, breathed *into* that page, as was His soul breathed into Adam.

The Chirograph was God's incarnate voice, as truly as the flesh of Jesus sleeping on the "pillow" was incarnate God.

We take the ground that *on the original parchment—*

the membrane—every sentence, word, line, mark, point, pen-stroke, jot, tittle, was put there by God.

On the *original parchment*. There is no question of other, anterior parchments. Even were we to indulge the violent extra-Scriptural notion that Moses or Matthew transcribed from memory or from other books the things they have left us; still, in any, in every such case, the selection, the expression, the shaping and turn of the phrase on the membrane was the work of an unaided God.

But what? Let us have done with extra-Scriptural, presumptuous suppositions. The burning Isaiah—the perfervid, wheel-gazing Ezekiel—the ardent, seraphic St. Paul, caught up, up, up into that Paradise which he himself calls the “third heaven”—were these men only “copyists,” mere self-moved “redactors”? I trow not. Their pens urged, swayed, moved hither, thither by the sweep of a heavenly current, stretched their feathered tops, like that of Luke upon St. Peter’s dome, into the far-off Empyrean—winged from the throne of God.

We take the ground that on the original parchment, the membrane, every sentence, word, line, mark, point, pen-stroke, jot, tittle, was put there by God.

On the *original parchment*. Men may destroy that parchment. Time may destroy it. To say that the membranes have suffered in the hands of men, is but to say that everything Divine must suffer, as the pattern Tabernacle suffered, when committed to our hands. To say, however, that the *writing* has suffered—the words and letters—is to say that Jehovah has failed.

The writing remains. Like that of a palimpsest, it will survive and reappear, no matter what circumstances—what changes come in to scatter, obscure, disfigure, or blot it away. Not even one lonely THEOS writ large by the Spirit of God on the Great Uncial “C” as, with my own eyes I have seen it—plain, vivid, glittering, out-

starting from behind the pale and overlying ink of Ephraem the Syrian—can be buried. Like Banquo's ghost, it will rise; and God himself replace it, and, with a hammer-stroke, beat down deleting hands. The parchments, the membranes decay; the writings, the words are eternal as God. Strip off the plaster from Belshazzar's palace, yet Mene! Mene! Tekel! Upharsin! remain. They *remain*.

Let us go through them, and from the beginning, and see what the Scriptures say of themselves.

One thing: they say that God spake, *πάλαι ἐν τοῖς προφήταις*, "anciently and all the way down, *in* the prophets." One may make, if he pleases, the "*ἐν*" instrumental—as it is more often instrumental—*i. e.*, "*by*" the prophets; but in either case, *in* them, or *by* them, the Speaker was God.

Again: the Scriptures say that the laws the writers promulgated, the doctrines they taught, the stories they recorded—above all, their prophecies of Christ, were not their own; were not originated, nor conceived by them,—were not rehearsed, by them, from memory, nor obtained from any outside sources—were not what they had any means, before, of knowing, or of comprehending, but were immediately from God; they themselves being only recipient, only concurrent with God, as God moved upon them.

Some of the speakers of the Bible, as Balaam, the Old Prophet of Bethel, Caiaphas, are seized and made to speak in spite of themselves; and, with the greatest reluctance, to utter what is farthest from their minds and hearts. Others—in fact all—are purblind to the very oracles, instructions, visions, they announce. "Searching what, or what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify!" *i. e.*, the prophets themselves

did not know what they wrote. What picture can be more impressive than that of the prophet himself hanging over and contemplating in surprise, in wonder, in amazement, his own autograph—as if it had been left upon the table there—the relict of some strange and supernatural Hand? How does that picture lift away the Bible from all human hands and place it back, as His original Deposit, in the hands of God.

Again: it is said that “the Word of the Lord came” to such and such a writer. It is not said that the SPIRIT came, which is true; but that the *Word* itself came, the *Dabar*-Jehovah. And it is said: “*Hayo Haya Dabar*,” that it *substantially* came—essentially came “*essendo fuit*”—so say Pagninus, Montanus, Polanus—*i. e.*, it came germ, seed and husk and blossom—in its totality—“words which the Holy Ghost teacheth”—the “words.”

Again: it is *denied*, and most emphatically, that the words are the words of the man—of the agent. “The Spirit of the Lord,” says David, “spake by me, and His word was in my tongue.” St. Paul asserts that “*Christ spake in him*” (2 Cor. xiii. 3). “Who hath made man’s mouth? Have not I, the Lord? I will put *my* words into thy mouth.” That looks very much like what has been stigmatized as the “mechanical theory.” It surely makes the writer a mere organ, although not an unconscious, or unwilling, unspontaneous organ. Could language more plainly assert or defend a verbal direct inspiration?

Yes, but in only one way—*i. e.*, by denying the agent. And that denial we equally have from the lips of our Saviour. “*It is not ye that speak*, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you. Take no thought *how* or *what* ye shall say. The Holy Ghost shall teach you what ye *ought* to say”—both the “*how*” and the “*what*”—both the matter and form.

In a line with the fact, again it is said that the word came to the writers without any study—"suddenly" as to Amos (chap. vii. 15), where he is taken from following the flock.

Again: When the word thus came to the prophets *they had not the power to conceal it*. It was "like a fire in their bones" which must speak or write, as Jeremiah says, or consume its human receptacle.

And to make this more clear, it is said that holy men were *pheromenoi*, "moved" or rather carried along in a supernatural, ecstatic current—a *delectatio scribendi*. They were not left one instant to their wit, wisdom, fancies, memories, or judgments either to order, or arrange, or dispose, or write out. They were *only reporters*, intelligent, conscious, passive, plastic, docile, exact, and accurate reporters. They were like men who wrote with different kinds of ink. They colored their work with tints of their own personality, or rather God colored it, having made the writer as the writing, and the writer for that special writing; and because the work ran *through them* just as the same water, running through glass tubes, yellow, green, red, violet, will be yellow, violet and green, and red.

God wrote the Bible, the whole Bible, and the Bible as a whole. He wrote each word of it, as truly as He wrote the Decalogue on the Tables of stone.

Higher criticism tells us—the "New Departure" tells us, that *Moses* was inspired, but the *Decalogue* not. But Exodus and Deuteronomy, seven times over, declare that God stretched down the tip of His finger from heaven and left the *marks*, the gravements, the cut characters, the scratches on the stones (Exod. xxiv. 12). "I will give thee Tables of stone, commandments, *which I have written*" (Exod. xxxi. 18). "And He gave unto Moses, upon Mount Sinai, two tables of testimony, tables of stone

written with the finger of God" (Exod. xxxii. 16). "The Tables were the work of God and *the writing was the writing of God*, graven upon the tables" (Deut. iv. 12, 13). "The Lord spake unto you out of the midst of the fire, and He declared unto you His covenant, even ten commandments, and *He wrote them* upon two tables of stone" (Deut. v. 22). "These words the Lord spake and *He wrote them* in two Tables of stone and delivered them unto me" (Deut. ix. 10). "And the Lord delivered unto me two Tables of stone *written with the finger of God!*"

Seven times, and to men to whom writing is instinct; to beings who are most of all impressed, not by vague vanishing voices, but by words arrested, fixed, set down; and who themselves cannot resist the impulse to commit their own words to some written deposit, even of stone, or of bark, if they have not the paper; seven times, to men, to whom writing is instinct and who are inclined to rely for their highest conviction on what they have styled "documentary evidence," *i. e.*, on books;—God comes in and declares, "I have written!"

The Scriptures, whether with the human instrument or without the human instrument, with Moses or without Moses, were written by God. When God had finished, Moses had nothing else to do but carry down God's autograph. That is our doctrine. The Scriptures, if ten words, then all the words—if the Law, then the Gospels—the writing, the writings, *He Graphe—Hai Graphai*—expressions repeated more than fifty times in the New Testament alone—*this, these* were inspired.

3d. But if the words were inspired, then every pen-stroke, mark, scratch, "jot," "tittle" was inspired—every Hebrew vowel-point down to the Seghol and the Sheva.

The question as to literal and autographic inspiration will always move back, inch by inch, in discussion, until

it has reached and finally confronted the crucial defense of the Reformers—THAT OF THE VERY POINTS.

The New Testament hangs for authority upon the Old Testament, and the Old Testament hangs upon the points.

It is perfectly well understood by us all that the consonants are characters or letters in the Hebrew, and that the vowels are placed over these, within them, but especially *beneath* them in the form of marks or points.

These points determine the words, and the words determine the sentence. Whether a word be a noun or a verb; or, if a noun, what noun? if a verb, what verb? passive or active, past, present, or future?—all this, in a given particular case, may depend on the points.

Take as an illustration, in the Hebrew the word שָׁעַר *to esteem*. This, by change of the vowels, becomes שַׁעַר *a gate*; שַׂעַר *a porter*; שָׁעַר *vile*; שִׁעַר *to shudder*; שֵׁעַר *the hair*; שִׁעַר *fear, horror*. All seven words, verb, noun, or adjective, to be distinguished only by the points.

Take as another illustration, in the English, the word "Broad," for instance. The consonants are B. R. D. Now for the vowels—*Bard, Bird, Beard, Board, Aboard, Brad, Braid, Bred*, past of to breed—*Bread*, an article of food—*Broad, Abroad, Brood*. Twelve words, at least with three consonants.

The *manuscript* is theopneustic, not the *man*. The inspiration of the Vowel-points—part of that manuscript—is therefore seen to be integral, vital. Of course, if the *pen-strokes* are inspired upon the parchment, the *words* are. Give the pen-strokes, and you give the words. The establishment of the Points will, therefore, always be the establishment of the Church doctrine of exact, direct, chirographical inspiration; and not only this, but also the establishment of one straight, permanent, received, and changeless text; and this Dr. Ginsburg, himself the

foremost laborer against that text, as equally against the vowel-points, most readily admits.

The constant, uniform tradition of the Jews, affirming that the points came down from Moses, and the giving of the Law, was a tradition unbroken down to the year 1538, twenty-one years after Luther had nailed up his Theses. The points were then denied by Elias Levita, a rationalistic Jew, who stood alone against the sentiment of his whole nation, at the time of writing his book.* “It is to the Massoreth Ha Massoreth of Levita,” as Dr. Ginsburg admits, “that we owe the present modern controversy concerning the antiquity and inspiration of the Points.” “The rejection of the Points,” as he admits, “by men of laxer tendency, following Levita, produced most lamentable effects, especially so far as the criticism of the Old Testament is concerned” †—effects, indeed, we may add, from which we have not yet recovered, but which, in spite of all the resistance of a sound and a loyal conservatism, are still seen working themselves out in the popular, so-called, “Higher Criticism” of the day. “It was,” continues Dr. Ginsburg, “the unwarrantable liberty taken with the text, first started by Capellus, following in the wake of Levita, and the resort to all sorts of emendations and conjectural readings, in order to sustain the peculiar and the preconceived fancies of different individuals and schools, which converted the controversy about the Vowel-points into an Article of Faith in the Reformed Church of Switzerland, and led to the enacting of a law in 1678 that no person should be licensed to preach the Gospel in the churches, unless he publicly declared that he believes in the integrity of the Hebrew text, and in the Divinity of the very Vowel-points.”

* Buxtorf, *Tractatus de Punc. Origina.*

† *Massoreth Ha Massoreth*, p. 61.

The last Doctrinal Confession of the Reformed Church of Switzerland, the *Formula Consensus* of 1675, drawn up by Heidegger and Turretin, and which fitly closes the period of the great Calvinistic confessions, says as follows :

“In particular, do we accept the Hebrew Codex of the Old Testament, which comes to us from the hands of the Jewish Church, to which were formerly committed the ‘Oracles of God’; and we firmly maintain it, not only as to the consonants, but also as to the vowels, *sive ipsa puncta*, the very points; the words as well as the things, as *theopneustos*—God-breathed—part of our faith, not only, but our very life.”

The question is settled for us, however, not by Confessions, but by the Book itself.

THE BIBLE TESTIFIES THE INSPIRATION OF THE POINTS.

1. It says, with reference to the Tables of the Law, that they were the work of God absolutely; and that the writing was the writing of God—the whole of it; and that it was graven of God—every scratch of it. See Exod. xxxii. 16.

2. Our Saviour tells us that part of these scratches were “jots,” or *yodhs*, and “tittles,” or little pointed marks, and that not one of these shall pass away. These words of Christ, “jot,” “tittle” (see Matt. v. 18), are no repetition of some common and exaggerated proverb, and they are no tautology. They mean, in all Divine intention and *emphasis*, just what they say, and they refer to the specimen of the two Tables, not only, but to the whole scope of Scripture as well. “Seeing our Saviour,” says Fulke, the great champion of Protestantism, “seeing our Saviour hath promised that never a prick (*i. e.*, a vowel-point) of the Law shall perish, we may understand

His words of all the prophets, for we do not receive the vowels from some later Jews, but from the Prophets themselves." Such, also, is the comment of the distinguished Hebraist, Hugh Broughton, as well as that of the great Piscator, who says: "It appears from this text (Matt. v. 18), that the Holy Bible, in the time of Christ, had the points, and that these points were confirmed by our Saviour."

3. The Bible asserts the inspiration of the very vowel-points, because it says "words which the Holy Ghost teacheth"—the *words*. "Words," notice, brethren, not "*half-words*"—not wind-swept skeletons, which wait to be filled in by human conjecture. Consonants are not words, and if men can make vowels, they can also make consonants, and so make their own words, and so make a Bible. Nor does the minuteness of the vowel-point impugn the argument, since God, who can engrave an Aleph, can equally engrave a Kibbutz or a Sheva. Exod. xxxii. 16 says that He did so.

4. The inference is unavoidable from Deut. xxvii. 8, where the command is given to write "very plainly"—literally to cut each mark in deep. This must include the vowel-marks, as well as consonants, for on them, most of all, the plainness must depend. There are innumerable passages where, without the vowel-points, no man alive can tell the meaning of the Holy Ghost, nor know the mind of God.

Rome opposes, with all her most virulent force, the vowel-points, because, once rid of *these*, she makes the Church the arbiter—the umpire and interpreter. The Church puts in the points.

This anti-scriptural and arrogant assumption of exclusive rights in the monopoly of truth—the very doctrine of the scribes and Pharisees who sit in Moses' seat—was never voiced more boldly than by that bulwark of the

papacy, Morinus, who does not hesitate to put it that "the reason why God ordained the Scriptures to be written in this ambiguous manner (*i. e.*, without the Points), is because it is His will that every man should be subject to the judgment of the Church, and not to interpret the Bible in his own way. For, seeing that the reading of the Bible is so difficult, and so liable to various ambiguities, from the very nature of the thing, it is plain that it is not the will of God that every one should rashly and irreverently take upon himself to explain it; nor to suffer the common people to expound it at their pleasure; but that in those things, as in other matters respecting religion, it is His will that the people should depend upon the priests."

Counter to this entire principle of Rome, Protestantism stands for the points, and the more, that she is driven to substitute for an Infallible Church, an Infallible SOMETHING—a Bible.

"The Bible," says Protestantism, "is independent of all men—of all tradition, of all councils, of all decretals and canons. It needs no Pope; nor college of scarlet-frocked cardinals; no Ecumenical Assembly to endorse its claim."

"The Church," says Protestantism, "is built on the Bible, and not the Bible on the Church." The Church is to be shaped to the Bible, not the Bible to the Church. The Church is to return to the Bible, not the Bible to the Church. The Church is not the keeper of the Bible, but the Bible keeps the Church. The only barrier against backsliding; the only hope in reform; the only power to heal, that is vital, is the Book of Books, and the conviction that its every utterance and every pen-stroke is Divine.

5. A fifth and final indirect but powerful testimony of the Scripture to the vowel-points, is in the marginal notes

which the Hebrew brings with it—the so-called *Keri Ve-Kethib*. The Keri in the margin nowhere changes the vowels of the text. The margin everywhere testifies to the vowel-points as authentic. *It is the consonants in every instance that are changed.*

The Vowel-points then, according to the Scripture as well as the universal Jewish tradition, are an integral part of the text—of the very handwriting of God. The Kabalah (Sohar I; 15, b.) asserts that “the Vowel-points proceeded from the same Holy Spirit who indited all the sacred Scriptures.”

Suppose one to take the opposite ground, that the consonants alone were inspired and the vowels, a human invention, were afterward introduced. Now see the difficulties:

When? At what moment were they introduced? Such a change as the pointing over—from Genesis to Revelation—of an unpointed Bible must have produced among Christians, as well as Jews, little less than an earthquake.

Press the argument further: The Points are in existence. They are here. Not only do we have books written and printed *without* them, but we have books with them, the Great Temple Copy, of which these shorthand, ephemeral copies are briefs. *Where did the points come from which are to-day upon the MSS. considered as authority?* those MSS. which regulate criticism and are the unswerving conservators of the true text? The points upon those MSS., whence did they come?

Press the argument still further. It is said that the points were invented by the Masorites because we get them from the Masorites, but the question echoes and still echoes, “Whence did they get them?”

Press the argument homo to the wall. It is said that the points were *invented* by the Masorites. It is said so,

because Levita first said so. But what did he know about it? Nothing. He stood, as Buxtorf shows, alone—a single man against the sentiment and history of his whole nation. His speculation was built rashly up on a conjecture like a blind man's dream—upon a fancy, rootless as a mushroom growth. There were several schools of the Masorites. Which school invented the points? Why did not other schools—the jealousy of scholars is proverbial—observe, dissent, dispute them? How explain the miracle of a complete unanimity and unexceptional subjection to the school of Tiberias, if school of Tiberias it was? How account for it that childish, doting Rabbins of Tiberias, “men more mad than Pharisees, bewitching with traditions and bewitched, blind, crafty, raging,” should have shown such nice Divine composure and exactness as appears in all the adaptations of the points? “Look at the men,” says Dr. Lightfoot in his masterly response to Walton's Prolegomenon. “Read over the Jerusalem Talmud, and see there how R. Judah, R. Chaninah, R. Hoshaia, R. Chija Rabba and the rest of the grand Masorites behave themselves. How earnestly they labor at nothing; how childishly they handle serious disputes, how much froth, venom, smoke—pure nothing in their disputations. Then if you can believe the pointing of the Bible came from such a school,” become a Jew yourself, “believe also their Talmuds. The pointing of the Bible savors of the work of God the Holy Ghost and not of that of lost and blinded and besotted men.”

To these considerations let us add the following, which rest the argument in a *reductio ad absurdum*.

Remove the points from the text, for an interval, say, of 500 years, and no man could, from the consonants only, make out the Hebrew. The vowels are indispensable for reading and teaching a language. What one might do with briefs—a skeleton—after he has mastered a tongue is

one thing, but what a beginner can do is another. "It was," says Dr. Gill, "the duty and the interest of every Hebrew to read his Bible, that being the charter of his salvation—a charter written not for learned men only, but for the common people—men, women, and children who could not read without the points."

But lastly—to round up the whole—*Vowels are the life of a language*—the consonants are not. The consonants are simply stops upon the breath; but the breath—Ah, E, O—Ye-Ho-Vah—is primal, the soul. As says the *Kubalah*, the oldest and most eminent Jewish authority, "Consonants are the body, and the vowel-points the soul; the consonants move with the motion and stand still with the resting of the vowel-points, just as an army moves after its sovereign." "Vowels," says Dr. Gill, "are the life and soul of language. Letters without them are indeed *dead* letters; the consonants stubborn, immovable things; they cannot even be pronounced without vowels, which are, as Plato says, their necessary bond." That, therefore, the Hebrew, the first and most perfect language of all, God's own peculiar language, should be without them, is inconceivable.

V. And so we reach the fifth and closing Head—the Casket of the Gem. The Bible is its own self-evidence, not only in its Immortality—in its Sublime Authority—in its Transcendent Doctrine—in its Direct Assertions—but also in the very Languages in which it is enshrined.

Let us go back to the Hebrew—to God's language—to the tongue in which He said, "Let there be light!" before there was a world.

The oldest languages are philologically the most perfect, and nothing else, perhaps, betrays so deep, so pathetic a stamp of the Fall as does the downward progress of the human tongue.

Back of our coarser and more block-like English, we transfer ourselves to the French, with its subtler refinements—with touches of its hair-like pencillings upon the shades of thought; or with its buoyant swell and give to all emotion, as elasticities of wave to sinuosities of shore.

And back of this again: in dream-like thrall to more melodious cadences of the Italian tones—"accents whose law was beauty, and whose breath enrapturing music." And back of these—back of their mother-Latin—to the infinite versatility and grandeur and depth and comprehensiveness of the Greek. Greek! in itself a universe prepared for teeming and for populating thought. Greek! with its infinite and wondrous subtleties of shade in mood and tense, its play of graceful and innumerable particles, and cadences like chimes of air-flung and metallic bells. And, back, still back—and, the farther, the more complicated and abstruse—the more exacting in its constructions—the more precise in its articulations—the more attenuated in its case and tense endings, is our human speech—the more Divine a vehicle of wide enfranchised thought. The Sanscrit is not any longer like pulley-blocks roped together, nor like corals threaded on a string. Smooth and pellucid in its flow, it is as liquid sunlight dropping in echoes of a rhythmic and remote cascade, as from the ledges of an upper and angelic heaven.

Language, then, the higher we trace it, is not found to be a bungling and mechanical attempt at understanding. It is more and more the throb of holy heart to heart—the flash of heavenly thought rekindling thought, without the chasmed break, without the filmy veil; and all our dying tongues, down to the latest, are but fainter echoes—fragments of that earlier and loftier speech, in which the angels spoke to man—Adam to God, and God to Adam. When we have reached the beginning, we have in possession the *language* of God; the *words* and the

GRAMMAR which God gave in Eden—which man has corrupted, confounded, lost away in dialectic dislocations since the fall.

The Hebrew, like a prism shattered into various lights at Babel, is the matrix of all other roots and forms.

1. Because in it, as in no other, names are Divinely expressive. Originally, names are characters in photograph. They are, or they should be, like labels on phials, which describe the contents. Names at the first were manifestations of men and of things. They are so in Hebrew. Adam means "Earthy," Seth "Substituted," Noah "The Consoler," Abraham "The Father of Multitudes," Jacob "Supplanter," Moses "Delivered," "Drawn out."

2. The Hebrew is original, because in it, as in no other, derivatives are built upon their roots, so that one can look through the derivative straight to the root, or back, so to say, through the slides of the telescope to the first slide—the root notion ruling unswervingly everywhere. Take as an example, Adam—earthy, because made from the earth—Isha, "woman," because made from Ish, man. In other languages the continuity is often broken. In Greek, *Anthropos*, "man," has no relation to *Ge*, the earth. In Latin, *mulier*, or *femina*, "woman," has no relation to *homo*.

3. The Hebrew form is antecedent to all similar forms in all other languages. Its root stands first. This is splendidly argued by Scaliger in opposition to the Maronites, who claimed a greater antiquity for the Syriac. What is the Hebrew for "king," says Scaliger,—"**MELEKAH.**" What is the Hebrew?—"MELEK." Which has the root, and which is the shorter? That settles it.

4. Because the language employed by Adam in naming the animals was Hebrew, and that language was not

invented by him upon the occasion, but had been taught him by God.

One thing: Because the names given to the animals imply a knowledge of their attributes and characteristics.

Another thing: God had already been talking to Adam, and in the same language.

Again: It seems that the animals were brought to Adam as object-lessons, to see what he would call them—*i. e.*, God wished to see how accurately Adam would fit the name taught to the thing.

5. Because language is called in Scripture, not only “*Throat*” and “*Lip*,” but especially “*Tongue*,” and it is said that God teaches man this: “The Lord God hath given me the tongue of the learned” (Isa. l. 4). “The preparations of the heart,” not only, but “*the answer of the tongue*, is from the Lord.”

6. Because the whole earth was once of one tongue and one speech, and that speech by common consent of all Jewish and Gentile Traditions, the *Lingua Sancta*, the Holy, or the Hebrew Tongue. So says Ephodcus; so Jonathan the Paraphrast. With this agree the Kabbalists, the Jerusalem Talmud, the Book of Cosri, R. Ben Jarchi, R. Ben Ezra, R. Levi ben Gerson—as well as Jerome, Ambrose, Chrysostom, Augustine.*

7. Because God himself spoke before Adam was created, and spoke in Hebrew, calling “Light,” יוֹם Day; “Darkness,” לַיְלָה Night; “Firmament,” שָׁמַיִם Heaven; “Dry land,” אֶרֶץ Earth, etc.

Hebrew was the first language, and therefore the most perfect language; for “that which is perfect,” says Aristotle, “requires a perfect expression”; and Adam, being made very good, must have had a language *very*, *i. e.*

* See Buxtorf, “*De Antiquitate Ling. Heb.*”

perfectly good ; besides, a language which God speaks, must be like God.

And one is tempted to believe agreeably with the ascending and unswerving trend of this conviction—that *deep* the die of inspiration strikes into the *very structure* of those languages which an Infinite Wisdom has deigned to employ as its mouthpiece.

Let us not tarry here upon mysteries, like that of the Incarnation, found by the Kabbalists in the Divine Tetragrammaton, in the very form of the word Jehovah itself, but take the verb, the life of every language. In the Hebrew the conjugation is from the third person down. It begins with “He” as the actor—*i. e.*, with God first. It thus subverts the carnal languages of men and turns them upside down.

Language, in its decadence, marking the steps of our apostasy from God, begins with us here in the Occident, the sunset—“I,” “Thou,” “He,”—*makes man the greatest* and God least and last. The Hebrew, born when morning stars rejoiced, reverses this—confutes the spirit as the speech of carnal man and conjugates its verb Divinely down from God.

Another feature stamped upon the very structure of the tongues of inspiration, which, taxing your indulgence here, I venture to suggest, is that they not obscurely hint, before one word is spoken, all the redemptive scheme of God. Presenting the V of our apostasy and our recovery—down from the Third Person, God, to the lost person, I, in the Hebrew ; then from the lost person, “I,” up again to the Third Person, God, in the Greek,—they further and even more strikingly exhibit man’s aphelion and his counter perihelion in the *directions which they take*. Hebrew, which teaches the fall and departure from God, is written from the “right hand where God works” toward the left—from the sheep to the goats ; while

Greck, which tells us of return and recovery, is written the other way—from the left to the right—from the goats to the sheep—from the “wilderness” to the “fold”—in God’s thought of it backward.

Thus, stamped upon the gravements of its very *casket*—upon the structure of the tongues in which it speaks, we read conspicuous, *self-evident*, the truth, that while Philosophy, the science of man, moves forward, Theology, the science of God, moves backward—“*Philosophia quotidie pro-gressu, Theologia nisi re-gressu non crescit.*”

Backward, backward, backward, the whole Volume moves us—not only nineteen centuries behind the present moment; but back of time itself and every moment into the light of all eternities—to speak the proclamation of a Gospel as antique and as unchangeable as are the determinate counsel and the foreknowledge of God—for “Of Him and through Him and to Him, are all things—to whom be the glory, forever. Amen!”

Brethren: the danger of our present day—the “down-grade,” as it has been called, of doctrine, of conviction, of the moral sentiment—a decline more constantly patent, as it is more blatantly proclaimed, does it not find its first step in our lost hold upon the very inspiration of the Word of God?

Does not a fresh conviction here, lie at the root of every remedy which we desire, as its sad lack lies at the root of every ruin we deplore?

Brethren: a fresh conviction—only that—*of the very Inspiration* of the Word of God—spreading itself abroad in the minds of our earnest American people, would wake—from Maine to Arizona, and from Florida to Idaho—the wave of a revival such as this continent has never known.

Key up! then—let us key up our “*Credo*” in the absoluteness of the word which God has spoken. Bind

again! Let us re-bind all cables to that Anchor, and the Ship of destiny, including all souls' freightage, will again obey her rudder, and be saved from wreck.

The great question for every man is that of his personal answer to the Word, spoken out of the skies, of a personal God.

BIBLE MIRACLES.

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UNDERLYING all our discussions of the Bible, whether arguing for its genuineness, its authenticity, its credibility, or its inspiration, is a subject which at the outset demands recognition; it is the subject assigned for the present hour. That this claim is not extravagant is easily shown. For we might, in the ordinary way and to *our* satisfaction, prove that the Bible is all we claim for it; still, our arguments would have but little weight with unbelieving scientific and logical minds, if these minds were convinced that there is in the Bible the record of events purporting to be true, which, upon scientific grounds, are felt to be impossible. The reasoning is, that if the matters recorded are impossible, they are incredible; if incredible, they completely destroy the claims of the Bible as to its infallibility and inspiration. Hence, unbelieving people who are acquainted with philosophical and logical methods, will invariably ask that all other discussions relating to the Bible may be suspended until we have come to a somewhat satisfactory solution of those events of an unquestioned supernatural character which fill a very large space in the sacred volume.

As it will be impossible, in the time before us, to do justice to the entire subject of Bible miracles, and as it will be unsatisfactory to limit the discussion to some single miracle, we make a compromise, and confine attention to the miracles recorded in the New Testament, and almost exclusively to those wrought by our Lord in the presence of His disciples. But it should be borne in mind

that the same principles and methods employed in the discussion of our Lord's miracles apply equally well to all others, whether contained in the New or in the Old Testament.

Upon careful inquiry, the chief difficulty hanging over the subject of miracles will be found in the fact that they seem to antagonize what is termed "the uniformity of nature," which is said to be such as not to allow anything like a miracle to take place.

David Hume—who, it must be confessed, has presented one of the most powerful metaphysical arguments ever offered on either side of this subject—bases his reasoning, you remember, upon the uniformity of nature as opposed to things extraordinary. "A miracle," he says, "is a violation of the laws of nature; and, as a firm and unalterable experience has established those laws, the proof against a miracle, from the very nature of the case, is as entire as any argument from experience can possibly be imagined."

Benedict Spinoza also brought to bear upon these questions a giant intellect; but likewise built his argument upon the supposition that there is "an established uniformity in the processes of nature," which renders miracles impossible. Theodore Parker's position is essentially the same: "I do not believe there ever was a miracle, or ever will be; everywhere I find law the constant mode of the operation of the infinite God." Of similar character are the words of Ernest Renan: "We banish miracles from history in the name of a constant experience."

Certain other rationalists of late date have seized upon a sentiment of Goethe, and constructed their theories accordingly. "An audible voice from heaven could not convince me," says Goethe, "that water burns; I rather hold this to be blasphemy against the great God and His revelation in nature."

A writer in *The Westminster Review* applies this same test to the resurrection of our Lord. The article is based upon the plea that "there is no evidence of any miracle-working agency in nature"; the sharp, antithetical conclusion reached by the essayist is this: "If Christ died, He never reappeared; or, if He reappeared, He never died."

Now, it must be conceded that if the position is granted that miracles are an actual overthrow of the established processes of nature, and if it is still further granted that such overthrows are impossible, then there is no chance for further argument. Only two propositions of three terms each are needed completely to demolish the doctrine of miracles and to overthrow the foundation upon which rests the entire superstructure of revealed religion. Thus, a miracle is a violation of nature; a violation of nature is impossible; therefore a miracle is impossible. Revealed religion rests upon a miraculous basis; but a miraculous basis is an impossible basis; therefore revealed religion rests upon an impossible basis. Granting the premises, the demonstration is overwhelming and unanswerable. Logically, therefore, upon these premises of Hume, all the miraculous transactions recorded in the Bible become incredible; the supernatural becomes a theological dogma, deserving of no respect whatever; and the basis of Christianity being overthrown, the superstructure, as well first as last, may be left to fall to the ground; for in the end, fall it must.

But before granting the foregoing premises, and before abandoning the Christian faith,—which certainly has much that commends itself to the world,—it might be well to inquire if these men who oppose Christianity have not assumed in their arguments some things which they cannot prove, and some things which are absolutely false.

It may be that the public has been deceived by them;

that what has been thought to be reasoning is nothing but fallacy; that, in some instances, blatant assertions and ingenious guesswork have been palmed off for science, philosophy, and argument.

At least, these adverse teachings, without harm to any one, now and then may be re-examined. Speaking with perfect frankness, we think it can be clearly shown that the evangelical view of miracles is as yet unimpeached; that all the leading objectors to the Bible miracles have held untenable positions; and that the evangelical claims can be established as clearly as any other matters that fall within the range of moral demonstration.

CHRIST'S MIRACLES ARE PROBABLE IF THEY ARE POSSIBLE.

In support of these positions, we begin with a very conservative statement that Christ's miracles are *probable*, provided they are *possible*. Some of the probabilities in their favor are so apparent that they need merely an allusion.

It is in their favor, for instance, that they bear Christ's name. He has enthroned Himself completely in the realms of eternal and unreached ideals. He is the Supreme One. His miraculous power is not easily separated from Him. It seems natural for Him to do as He did. Everything about Him is remarkable. It is no stretch of fancy or of fact to say that the greatest miracle of all is Christ himself!

Not long since we were deeply impressed while reading from Dr. Channing, the father of American Unitarianism, the following words: "I ask you whether the character of Jesus be not the most extraordinary in history, and wholly inexplicable on human principles? He talks of His glories as one to whom they were familiar, and of His intimacy and oneness with God as simply as a child speaks of his connection with his parents. I maintain that this

is a character wholly remote from human conception. I contemplate it with a veneration second only to the profound awe with which I look up to God. It was a real character. Jesus is not a fiction. He is still the Son of God and the Saviour of the world."

"Till the end of time," says Fichte, "all the sensible will bow before this Jesus of Nazareth and acknowledge the exceeding glory of this great phenomenon."

We need not pause to continue these quotations. The hour could be filled with them. The point is this: that if miracles are possible, it is reasonable to expect, or in other words it is probable, that they would be associated with the name of this peerless One, who, though an unlettered mechanic, living in an unimportant province of the Roman empire, has revolutionized the ages; and of whom, even Renan has said, "Amid all the surprises of the future, Jesus will never be surpassed."

Essentially the same may be said of the connection of Christianity with our Lord's miracles. Christianity is a miracle next in importance to Christ himself. Taken as a whole, there is nothing among the religions of the world to be compared with it. It is to-day the dominant factor in the world's progress and redemption, and is the only hope of the human race. Hence, if miracles are possible, they might well attend the inauguration of this exceptional and beneficent system of religion.

And, further, Christ's miracles are found recorded in the unique and grandest book in the world—a book which, in its influence for good, rises far above all the other literature of the world. But this Book of books, with no hesitation and with no form of apology, records fully these wonderful deeds wrought by our Lord.

The character, too, of these miracles is worthy of note. They were just such deeds as one would expect at the hands of Christ; just such deeds as one would expect

at the inauguration of the Christian religion. They were deeds of mercy. The hungry were fed; the blind received their sight; the lame walked; the lepers were cleansed; the deaf were made to hear; and the dead were raised to life.

But again, upon grounds more strictly philosophical, do these Bible miracles seem probable. For if there is a God, and if He takes an interest in His children; if He tries to aid them in their journeys; if, as certainly no one disputes, confidence can be inspired in the average man by miraculous signs and attestations; and if, as Bible history clearly shows, marked benefits have resulted from such signs,—then it is at least reasonable to conclude that upon special occasions, and for special purposes, God would resort to miraculous agencies, provided He could do so; or, in other words, provided such an event as a miracle is possible.

Or, to be more specific, extending this part of the argument so as to cover the Old Testament miracles, as well as those of the New, we ask this question: If the establishment of the Jewish theocracy in any considerable measure depended upon the working of miracles before Pharaoh in Egypt, and before the Israelites on the way to Palestine; if the perpetuity of the Jewish religion in some considerable measure depended upon the working of miracles in connection with Daniel, Elijah, and a few others; and if the establishment of the Christian Church and the recognition of our Lord's divinity during the first century considerably depended upon the working of miracles then, are there not strong probabilities that the Creator would resort, at just those critical times, and not indiscriminately at other times, to miraculous interpositions, in order to accomplish these and other benevolent purposes; provided, we repeat, that such an event as a miracle is possible?

And in this connection, the fact should not be overlooked, that the various objects for which these Bible miracles were wrought, were as far forth accomplished as could be expected. That is, Pharaoh allowed Israel to depart; Nebuchadnezzar decreed that the God of Daniel should be worshipped; the priests of Baal were prevented from slaying Elijah, and he was permitted to slay them; the common people believed in Christ; and the Pharisees were often struck dumb by what they saw and heard, but could not explain.

In view, therefore, of the character of Christ, and of the character of Christianity, and of the character of the book in which the miracles are recorded, and in view of the character of the miracles, and of the objects to be gained by the working of the miracles, and of the results that followed their working, (what a magnificent grouping of probable evidences, unmatched, and more and more unchallenged!) may we not presume that every person present, and even every sceptic anywhere to be found, will be willing to place his feet upon the lower step of the ascending stairway; this extremely conservative step being merely this, that Christ's miracles, and, may we not add, all the other miracles recorded in the Bible, owing to their reputable surroundings, their lofty character, their benevolent purpose, and the results that followed their working, are probable, provided that such an event as a miracle is possible?

CHRIST'S MIRACLES ARE CERTAIN IF THEY ARE POSSIBLE.

The step next in order leads to the proposition that Christ's miracles are not only probable, but they are also certain, provided that such an event as a miracle is possible.

Confining attention for a moment to our Lord's miracles, their credibility is found in the main to rest upon the

testimony of men who, in their writings, claim to have been His intimate companions.

Four of these witnesses have given us, with almost legal exactness, separate and somewhat minute records of the things they saw and heard; one of whom, the third evangelist, an educated physician, deposes and says:

“Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us,

“Even as they delivered them unto us, which from the beginning were eye-witnesses, and ministers of the word;

“It seemed good to me, also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus:

“That thou mightest know the certainty of those things wherein thou hast been instructed.”

It would be interesting, did time allow, to study separately the character of these disciples who have given their depositions, and also the character of the Old Testament writers, and the character of those who, under that dispensation, wrought miracles; but, as this is not permitted, we hasten to the main question, which is this:

Did those men, and others who were associated with them, whose moral character cannot be impeached, whose competency cannot be questioned, whose presence on the spot no one denies, and who sealed their testimony with their blood, severally, conjointly, and deliberately falsify respecting those remarkable events with which they were fully acquainted, which they claimed to have seen with their eyes, to have heard with their ears, and to have handled with their hands? If Bible miracles are possible, is not such testimony strong proof of their certainty?

But it should be borne in mind still further, that this testimony, especially as to Christ's miracles, is corroborated by outside persons, who, in some instances, were hostile to

those who wrote the Gospels. Those persons were freely permitted to witness the working of the miracles. In some instances they were wrought in their homes, and upon members of their families.

In point of fact, the remarkable deeds of our Lord were rarely performed in secret; and, in the main, this is likewise true of all other Bible miracles. There were no appointed places; there were no prepared instruments and appliances; the miracles were wrought without apparent effort, "in the street and in the market-place, in the wilderness and on the sea, and by the sick man's bed and at the dead man's bier"; they were wrought upon any public occasion, and in all public places when opportunity permitted or circumstance required. In each place, and at all times, men were challenged to test and sift to the bottom the things they saw and heard.

Men did apply their tests: they questioned and cross-questioned those upon whom the miracles were wrought. Our Lord's enemies tracked and tagged Him day and night to find some fault or flaw, or to discover some trick of legerdemain, but at length gave up all such efforts. So overwhelming were the facts in the case, that the Jews not only never denied the public miracles of our Lord, but affirmed them; that is, they charged Him with working them by magic and by satanic aid; and they publicly condemned some of His most notable miracles because they were wrought upon the Sabbath day. Some of those wonderful deeds were so well established that such early sceptics as Celsus, Julian, and Porphyry found it impossible to deny them; indeed, they made no attempt at denial. Their only attempt was to break the force of our Lord's miracles by recounting similar ones which had been reported of Persius, Inachus, Minos, and certain others.

Not only these confessions, but likewise the conduct, of those outside parties, from first to last, have all the suggest-

iveness and significance of an admission. The recorded conduct of the common people, and that of the Pharisees, and that of the Roman rulers, were such as would be expected if what the apostles reported were true.

It should also be noted that the Old Testament miracles have similar support. That is, the recorded conduct of Pharaoh and his hosts, that of Nebuchadnezzar and his princes, that of Belshazzar and his lords, that of Sennacherib and his army, that of Ahab and the priests of Baal, were precisely what would be expected if the supernatural transactions which the Old Testament writers reported were true. And further, that the Israelites were slaves in Egypt, and for some reason were suddenly emancipated, no one now questions; that they passed many years in what is termed a wilderness, without the ordinary means of physical support, has ample confirmation; that during their subsequent exile in Babylon, some of their number rose suddenly to high political distinction, is now satisfactorily established by monumental history; and that in some manner their great prophets obtained knowledge of future events—a knowledge which did not find its verification until centuries afterward—is a fact which no student of prophecy and history would think of denying.

But these matters have even still further confirmation in certain commemorative rites and observances.

The Christian Sabbath, the Christian Church, and the Lord's Supper are commemorative institutions. They are inseparably linked with the life, the death, and the resurrection of Christ. They are unaccountable on any other grounds than those which have been put forth through all the centuries by the Christian Church, and they furnish, therefore, unanswerable evidence; at least evidence of such a character as in other matters would be regarded as ample proof of the certainty of the events they commemorate.

But with your indulgence we present one other item of evi-

dence for our Lord's miracles, and then, as lawyers say, we will sum up this part of the case. Said a gentleman to us not long since—a gentleman who was a lawyer by profession, whose reasoning powers appear to have been better than his acquaintance with the facts of religious history :

“ If it had been generally known in Jerusalem, as orthodox Christianity claims, that Jesus rose from the dead ; if at one time He was seen of more than five hundred persons, as Paul asserts ; if the apostles in Christ's name really wrought miracles, healing the sick and raising to life dead men ; and if there were such remarkable displays of power on the day of Pentecost as are recorded in the New Testament,—then almost everybody ought to have been convinced, and multitudes ought to have become Christians.”

We concede the force of this reasoning. For, of a certainty, if what is reported in the New Testament is true, multitudes ought to have been convinced, and many, at least of the common people, ought to have espoused the Christian faith.

The pertinent question, therefore, is this: What are the historic facts in the case? The answer is, that notwithstanding the obstacles and perils that beset the path of those who embraced the new faith, yet such numbers did become Christians as would be expected, provided the remarkable events recorded in the New Testament actually took place.

Tacitus, the Roman historian, speaking of the early Christians, whom he calls “ detestable criminals,” makes use of this language :

“ The author of their sect was Christus, who had been executed in Tiberius' time by the procurator Pontius Pilate. This pestilential superstition, checked for a while, burst out again, not only through Judæa, the first seat of the evil, but even through Rome. First were arrested those who made no secret of their sect, and by this clew a *vast multitude* of others also.”

Pliny, the friend of Trajan and Tacitus, was sent to rule Bithynia. Perplexed at the great number of Christians, he wrote to the Emperor Trajan to know what should be done; for "I fear," he said, "that if the vast numbers who are implicated are put out of the way, my realms will be depopulated."

"There is not a race of men," says Justin Martyr, "barbarian or Greek, nay, of those who live in wagons, or who are nomads, or shepherds in tents, among whom prayers and eucharists are not offered to the Father and Maker of the universe, through the name of the crucified Jesus."

"The word of our Master," says Clement, "did not remain in Judæa as philosophy remained in Greece, but has been poured out over the whole world, persuading Greeks and barbarians alike, race by race, village by village, every city, whole houses, and hearers one by one; nay, not a few of the philosophers themselves."

"In all Greece, and in all barbarian races within our world," says Origen, "there are tens of thousands who have left their national laws and customary gods for the law of Moses and the word of Jesus Christ."

"If you do not believe the miracles," says Augustine, "you must then believe that the world was converted without miracles; and this would be a miracle."

It thus appears that just such results followed the events recorded in the New Testament as were demanded by our friend the lawyer; that is, within a few years after the death of Christ, vast numbers embraced the Christian doctrine, holding it with such firmness that they were willing to die in its defence.

We are thus brought to the summing up of this second step in the general argument, which, in its application to the miracles of Christ, though at nearly every point it equally applies to all other Bible miracles, is this:

First, it would be remarkable if a *single* intelligent and

honest witness, with many motives to declare the truth, and with no motive to utter a falsehood, should nevertheless prefer, even at great personal peril, to utter many improbable falsehoods. But repeatedly was this the case, unless the New Testament writers and the friends of Christ believed the miraculous events recorded.

Second, it would be still more remarkable if several competent, intelligent, and pious eye-witnesses should *conjointly*, and at great personal peril, utter improbable falsehoods, and utter them in opposition to all the ordinary motives governing humanity. But such precisely was the case, unless the New Testament writers saw, or had the conviction that they saw, those facts which they have testified to and recorded; and convictions strong as were theirs are not easily accounted for except upon the supposition that the facts had been witnessed. These convictions, unless the facts are true, are well-nigh as unaccountable as are the miracles.

Third, it would be still more remarkable, and well-nigh incredible, if such improbable falsehoods were confirmed by the direct and indirect testimony and confessions of those who were acknowledged enemies of our Lord and His apostles; and

Fourth, it would be still more remarkable—indeed, no terms are strong enough to express the height of the improbability—if such supposed falsehoods, uttered by good men at great personal peril, were also supported by existing civil and religious rites and institutions commemorative of these events. But such, nevertheless, unquestionably is the startling improbability, unless it is admitted that the New Testament writers testified correctly.

Now, it must be confessed that these amazing improbabilities squarely confront those who deny the truthfulness of the events testified to by the apostles.

Standing by the ocean, one piece of seaweed floating

past would hardly attract attention ; much less would it enable one to make an unquestionable induction as to the tides. But when for five or six hours nearly every piece of seaweed, stick, and odd waif moves in the same direction, then we confidently say, "The tides are at work."

Thus, if some one man—a stranger, perhaps,—should report an unheard-of and remarkable event, we might question it. But when scores of men, who in other respects have proved themselves worthy of belief, affirm under the most solemn circumstances, and in the most solemn manner, that a given event took place under their eyesight, and when every conceivable circumstance in any way related to that event strongly corroborates it, then ought not this tide-flow of testimony and of affairs, at least in the judgment of thoughtful men, utterly to sweep away all preconceived objections as to the certainty of the New Testament miracles, provided, we repeat, that a miracle is a scientific possibility? Indeed, might not one discredit the evidences of the tides as well as the evidences of Christ's miracles?

Or, presenting the case in still another form, we ask what would be thought of a jury of twelve men who would render a verdict against the most solemn depositions of some of the noblest men who have ever walked the earth, depositions confirmed by a continuous array of corroborative evidence such as we have presented? We venture the statement, that if any lawyer should present a case supported by such evidence to twelve men; if he should also clearly prove to those men that the events testified to were scientifically possible; and if those men, in the face of such corroborated testimony, should return a verdict not in accordance with the evidence presented, that lawyer and that court would be appalled.

The lawyers in that court-room who were acquainted with the acknowledged laws of evidence, would look into

one another's faces bewildered; the judge on the bench would refuse to believe his eyes and ears. After a few moments' silence, he might well dismiss the court with this single injunction: "Gentlemen, you are discharged; the mission of all civil courts on earth is ended." We insist, therefore, that the magnificent weight of this testimony from the lips and pens of truthful and intelligent eye-witnesses, confirmed by enemies, confirmed by monumental rites, confirmed by civil and religious observances, confirmed by contemporaneous history, confirmed by co-ordinate transactions, which took place in different parts of the Roman empire, is matched by no evidence which has ever yet been adduced in support of any other fact, or any other grouping of facts, found recorded in human history.

Such, my hearers, is the chain of evidence as yet unbroken by ancient or modern sceptics, which the Christian Church presents to the world in support of *the certainty* of Christ's miracles.

THE MIRACLES OF CHRIST ARE POSSIBLE.

The first step in this argument is, that Christ's miracles are *probable* if they are *possible*. The second step is, that Christ's miracles are *certain* if they are *possible*. The position now reached is the third step in the ascending stairway,—a position upon which all that has preceded is left to stand or fall,—and is this: the miracles of Christ are *possible*.

Whether miracles are violations of the laws of nature, as is claimed by not a few writers upon this subject, or whether they are only violations of the recognized order of nature, as is claimed by several noted theologians, are questions relatively unimportant; they are technical rather than vital; they are questions never raised by our Lord or His disciples.

That which one is called upon to establish in this dis-

cussion is not, therefore, a satisfactory definition of miracles, but the presentation of evidence that certain deeds which have been called miracles—those of absolute control, as when at the word of Christ the sea became as a pavement and the tempest as a child of obedience; or those of creative power, as when, at the word of Christ, five thousand men, besides women and children, without visible supply, were abundantly fed; or those of healing the sick and of raising the dead—were actually wrought by our Lord. The point of vital issue is this: If these deeds can be shown to be *possible*, then the question whether or not they are miracles, and the question whether or not miracles are possible, will take care of themselves.

We may be a little more explicit, applying this thought to the Old as well as to the New Testament miracles: If one can prove beyond a doubt that the waters of the Red Sea were so parted as to make a wall on the right hand and on the left, and that the parting and water-walls were such that the Israelites could pass over the sea-bed dryshod; or if one can prove beyond question that the whole celestial machinery was arrested for nearly a day, so that there was no day like that before it or after it; or if one can prove that Elijah called down fire from heaven, and that the water in the trenches about the altar burst out in flames and burned dry; or if one can prove with perfect clearness that Jesus was dead, that He lay dead in His grave until the third day after His interment, that He afterward willed Himself to life and with a mutilated body walked among His disciples for forty days; then, we repeat, despite any number of philosophic definitions, common sense will be perfectly satisfied that miracles are possible and that miracles have been wrought.

The attitude of the believer and of the unbeliever toward each other can now very easily be stated.

Says the man of faith: "I believe the miracles of the

Bible because of their character, and because they are well authenticated by testimony and monuments."

But the objector replies: "I do not believe those miracles because, by universal admission, they are 'violations of fixed laws,' or they are 'effects contrary to the established constitution of things,' and are, therefore, impossible and incredible."

The man of faith continues: "I believe the miracles of the Bible, and I believe them because they are probable, and because they are firmly authenticated, and also because certain events have taken place in the history of the universe, which, at the time they took place, were just as 'contrary to the established constitution of things,' and were just as 'manifest violations of the operations of the known laws of nature,' as are the miraculous transactions recorded in both the Old and New Testaments."

The closing rejoinder of the unbeliever is this: "If it can be clearly proved that anything has happened in the universe that is as contrary to the established constitution or course of things as are Bible miracles, then I will accept those miracles upon the evidence presented."

Again the believer answers: "I will present proof that is clear, ample, and unanswerable, that such events have taken place, or else I will surrender the entire argument."

And I appeal to you, my hearers, if in this statement the believer has not put his case fairly and reasonably.

We are, therefore, henceforth to search simply for established facts. As our time is limited, we need not take a broad sweep, though there is no end to the facts that could be employed for our purpose, but will confine attention to the advent of man and woman on the earth. In a word, there was a time when not a man could be found here. Not a bone, not a solitary relic of man can be found after reaching certain boundary lines in geological history.

Indeed, there was a time when man could no more have

lived on the earth than he can now live in a furnace where iron is boiling hot. There is, therefore, no denying the statement that the appearance of man on the earth was something contrary to the then existing order of things. Indeed, in some respects the origin of man on the earth is the oddest thing that ever has happened, and, in some respects, is the miracle of miracles. The origin of man is at least the most unaccountable riddle which modern science has undertaken to solve; and, seemingly, science is no nearer solving that riddle than she was fifty years ago.

And the creation of the first woman is full as puzzling to the sceptical scientist as is the creation of the first man. The troublesome difficulty is thus stated :

There could have been no first child without a woman ; and there could have been no first woman unless she had grown from a child, or had been full formed by supernatural power. The first child, or the first full-grown woman, were interruptions in the then existing order of things. Once they were not here ; afterward they were here, and are now here. And we defy the whole world of science to throw a solitary ray of light upon the creation of the first man or the first woman apart from creation by supernatural interposition. The creation of the first man and woman is one of the solid granite walls against which infidelity will yet beat its brains out, provided it continues to make its assaults upon the scientific possibility of Bible miracles.

“Oh, no ; you are going too far,” some one replies. “The creation or origin of things is easily accounted for upon naturalistic grounds. The earth was evolved ; then vegetable life came by spontaneous generation ; then lower forms of animal life were evolved from vegetable life ; and then the higher animals and man, without any miraculous interposition, were in an orderly way evolved from the lower animals.”

Now, even if these claims were admitted, still the argument in hand would retain largely its force: for vegetable life, which once was not, afterward was; and animal life, which once was not, afterward was; and man, who once was not, afterward was.

Here, therefore, in the then existing and apparently established constitution of things, were breaks and interruptions, three of them perfectly distinct from one another so far as science can judge; and they were of a character such that no human mind could have anticipated either of them. No deeds wrought by our Lord were matters of more surprise than was the appearance on the earth of vegetable life, or of animal life, or of human life. Hence, if the unbeliever insists that the coming of life on earth was a natural evolution at the time it came, then all the believer need say in reply is, that the miracles of Christ, which are no more wonderful than the origin of life, were also a natural evolution at the time they were wrought. In other words, the hypothesis that the New Testament miracles were the product of a natural evolution at the hands of Christ has for its support every scientific fact and every form of argument that can be employed in support of the hypothesis that the origin of life is the product of a natural evolution. Therefore, the integrity of the Bible account of the miracles of Christ (and essentially the same may be said of the Old Testament miracles), upon the ground of their impossibility, cannot be questioned by any advocate of evolution and natural selection, without endangering the foundations upon which he is seeking to build his superstructure, which is antagonistic to revealed religion.

But in this concession we have granted to the unbeliever, for the sake of the argument, far more than is needful. For, in the light of recent thought, these claims of spontaneous generation and evolution by natural selection, upon which materialism is entirely dependent, are

nothing but the merest unauthorized assumption. It is guesswork in the face of stupendous difficulties. There is not a man of science on earth to-day who claims that there is a particle of reliable evidence that life originally came into this world through spontaneous generation. The assumption has been made, but the evidence is utterly wanting. Nor is there a noted man of science anywhere to be found, deist, atheist, or agnostic, who claims that there is a shred of evidence that life has ever appeared on this earth except through the presence of antecedent life.

The distinguished advocates of spontaneous generation, one after another, have been completely silenced. The unbelieving scientist, with shortened breath and with blanched cheek, can see at present one alternative—only one—*divine interposition* or *spontaneous generation!* But the closing words of Professor Tyndall's lecture on "The Origin of Life," before the Royal Institute at London, leave at present no alternative; and the intelligent scientist now stands face to face with divine interposition, and nothing else. "This discourse," says the professor, "is but a summing up of eight months' incessant labor. From the beginning to the end of the inquiry, there is not a shadow of evidence of spontaneous generation. There is, on the contrary, overwhelming evidence against it. . . . I am led inexorably to the conclusion that in the lowest as in the highest organized creatures, the method of nature is, that life shall be the issue of antecedent life."

But this admission and conclusion of Professor Tyndall call for the interposition of the Author of all life; and the moment His interposition is admitted, then every difficulty vanishes, and the path of every true believer is as bright as sunlight can make it. For, if divine interposition can make a world, then divine interposition can control it and all its affairs after it is made; if divine interposition amid primeval darkness can call into existence a universe of flames ("star-

stuff"), then divine interposition can send flames from the sky to light the altar built by Elijah; if divine interposition can fashion and send forth every planet and every star on its stupendous journey, and can bind star and planet in their courses, and can arrest in their development astronomical and geological epochs, then divine interposition can arrest other processes, and cause the sun to stand still over Gibeon, and the moon over the valley of Aijalon; if divine interposition can stir the winds of the Sea of Galilee, then divine interposition can hush them when they are stirred; if divine interposition can build healthy physical tissues in our bodies, then divine interposition can restore them to health when they are sick of fever or palsy; if divine interposition, out of crude materials, can build an eye so that it can see, then divine interposition can give sight to that eye after it has become blind; if divine interposition can, from the dust of the ground, build a human body, and animate it, and present to the world its Adam, divine interposition can reanimate the full-formed and dead body of Lazarus and present it to his weeping sisters.

The question, therefore, as to miracles is not, at the present date, one of *possibility*. The only question is this: Were there at the inauguration of the Jewish religion, and at certain critical periods in the history of that religion, and were there at the inauguration of the Christian religion, purposes of sufficient magnitude to justify divine interposition? When that question is settled, the whole matter as to miracles is settled. And your judgment, my Christian brother, on the question whether it were wise for God to interpose and work miracles in the interest of the Jewish and of the Christian religions, is of just as much value as is the judgment of David Hume, Benedict Spinoza, Thomas Paine, Theodore Parker, or Robert Ingersoll.

Are we through? Nearly, but not quite. For there is one straw that extreme scepticism will struggle to clutch before sinking. It is this: though the hope of establishing the hypothesis of spontaneous generation has for years been a vanishing one, now altogether extinguished in the minds of the most scientific men, still, "maybe," "perhaps," as one noted writer on scientific matters lately has reasoned, science will yet discover a way of producing life by spontaneous generation. O Science! are you reduced to such straits? "Maybe," "perhaps," on the lips of modern science is nonsense. When science will present something beside such groundless vagaries, we will listen; not till then.

The entire scope of the discussion is now fully before us, and is this:

First. Christ's miracles (we confine the conclusion to His miracles, because, in the main, the argument has had reference to those rather than to the miracles of the Old Testament), owing to their lofty character, their noble object, their beneficent results, and their connection with Christ and Christianity, are *probable* if they are possible.

Second. Christ's miracles, owing to the massive chain of evidence in their support, consisting of testimony, traditions, monuments, and perpetuated observances, are *credible* if they are possible.

Third. That Christ's miracles are possible is a scientific fact placarded upon every new order of things that has come into this universe since the dawn of light. *Therefore*, Christ's miracles are *possible*, and they are *probable*, and they are *certain*.

I could wish, at this point, that the great Cicero were here; for, in view of the facts existing on every hand, he, with an eloquence grand, like that of yonder sea, would say to the little sceptics and to the blatant scoffers of this city and everywhere: "There is the argument in support of the miracles of Christ; take it, and break it if you can."

PRINCIPLES OF INTERPRETATION.

WILLIAM DINWIDDIE, D.D.

GOD hath spoken to us in His works of creation. "Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear" (Heb. xi. 3). "By the word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth." "For He spake, and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast" (Ps. xxxiii. 6, 9). "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth His handywork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge. There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard. Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world" (Ps. xix. 1-4). "For the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead" (Rom. i. 20). The creation is not now the scene of order and beauty that it was when it came fresh from the hands of the Beneficent Creator. It is made subject to vanity, and the whole of it groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now, in earnest expectation awaiting the manifestation of the sons of God, when the creation itself also shall be delivered into the liberty of the glory of the children of God. Still, even in its present condition, it gives such manifestation of God as to leave men without excuse in their sin (Rom. i. 20; viii. 19-22).

God hath also spoken to us by His Son, by Him who is
(110)

the Word. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God" (John i. 1, 2). "And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us (and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father) full of grace and truth." "No man hath seen God at any time; the only-begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him" (John i. 14, 18).

And this declaration or manifestation is clearer and fuller than that made in the creation. For the Son by whom God hath spoken to us in these last days is the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person. He said of Himself, "He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father."

In the third place, God hath spoken to us in His written Word, the Scriptures, which not only tell us of His power and Godhead, and of His glory as embodied in His Son, but they express to us in the language of men, with all the impressiveness to us of human speech, and with great amplitude of detail, who God is, what He has done, and what He will do according to the purposes of His own most wise, gracious, loving, and holy will in execution of plans as comprehensive as the universe and reaching from before the foundation of the world unto and through the ages to come. In this precious treasure committed to our keeping for our guidance and the sustenance of our spiritual life, men of every class and condition of life, widely separated in time and place, kings, statesmen, warriors, poets, orators, prophets, priests, ploughmen, fishermen, sailors, masters, servants, men, women, and children, doctors, rustics, are all used through the mighty energies of the Holy Spirit to declare to us the wonderful works and ways of God.

It is the same God, the one only living and true God, who speaks to us in all these ways. It is God with whom is no variability nor shadow of turning, the same from everlasting to everlasting. And, therefore, all these manifestations of Himself, made by Himself, must be in perfect harmony. Whatever we find revealed to us of the works and ways of God in creation, must be in complete accord with what is declared to us about Him by His Son, and with all that is written about Him in the God-breathed Scriptures of truth.

When, therefore, the scientist, fresh from the study of some part of the creation, propounds a theory which seems to be in contradiction to what the Scriptures teach, let the children of God possess their souls in calmness, and patience, and faith. Shall the children of the God of truth who hold from Him the Scriptures of truth not be always ready to welcome truth, new or old, from any quarter? Only let them be sure that it is the truth which they welcome. If new truth has been discovered by any, it cannot possibly contradict any word of Scripture. Let God's children have a simple but sublime confidence in the final triumph of His Word over every attack against it, covert or open, from men in their ignorance and folly, or from Satan with his plausible insinuations and denials begun in Eden.

And if we have imported into Scripture our own thoughts, instead of receiving from it God's thoughts, we ought to be thankful to any one who should dispossess us of our prejudices and misconceptions.

The history of geological theories furnishes many illustrations of this point. Theory after theory has been given forth to the world, with abundance of self-confidence and pretension, only to be displaced and laid aside in a short time as mere rubbish to be looked at occasionally as a part of the history of human thought, as curious and amusing

as the frantic efforts of the Ptolemaic system to explain the movements of the heavenly bodies.

Remember what progress has been made in the sciences, of geography, astronomy, and geology. At almost every step in new discovery many defenders of Scripture have been thrown into panic for fear the foundations should be destroyed. But the eternal rock of God's truth still rises in solid strength and majesty above all the waves and storms of controversy. And so will it continue to the end, for He hath said: "All flesh is as grass, and the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth and the flower thereof falleth away, but the word of the Lord endureth forever."

WHAT IS THE REAL WORD OF GOD?

This question ought to have a fair, clear, and distinct answer. Doubtless God has exercised a special providence in regard to His Word which is so important and precious a treasure to His dear children. But as a matter of fact we know that He has not wrought a perpetual miracle in making every copy of the original Scriptures, and every translation to be infallibly accurate. This treasure has been in earthen vessels. We know, for example, that there are various readings in the manuscripts. It is wonderful that all of them together impair no vital doctrine. We know, too, that the Septuagint version which was in common use and quoted by the apostles, is far from being an accurate version of the Hebrew. But we can bless God that this and any version which has ever had currency, has enough of accuracy to retain the life-giving power of God's Word so as to guide those who devoutly received it into the way of life.

As a foundation, then, for the true interpretation of the Scriptures, the wise Christian will gladly and fearlessly

avail himself of all help from manuscripts, versions, quotations, and commentaries, to put himself, after the most searching inquisition, in possession of the original text, as nearly as may be, and when the text is thus ascertained on the same principles as he would ascertain the text of any other ancient writing, let him sit down with such loving reverence to study and receive it, as becomes man and gives due honor to God, the author.

We learn from the Scriptures themselves what they are. They tell us that they are inspired, "God-breathed"; "holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." David in his last words said, "The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and His word was in my tongue" (2 Sam. xxiii. 2). Isaiah had written of revelations not fully understood by him (1 Pet. i. 10-12). "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him." Of these same things, Paul, with the larger measure of the Spirit belonging to this age, the age of the Church, says: "But God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man (literally, no one), but the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual" (or "communicating spiritual things by spiritual means") (1 Cor. ii. 10-13).

That is to say, the full revelation of the Scriptures in this age of the Church is the thoughts of the Omniscient Spirit Himself revealed to the writers of Scriptures, un-

derstood by them fully as having the mind of Christ, and communicated to us by them not in words of their own selection, but in words of perfect, divine fitness, because chosen by the Holy Ghost.

Let us take apart and look distinctly at the truths given us by the Spirit in this wonderful Scripture.

1. No one knows the things of God but the Spirit of God. He knows them perfectly.

2. He reveals them to those whom He appoints to communicate them.

3. Those to whom they are so revealed in this age, know them when so revealed. Not as the prophets of old who searched diligently to understand what the Spirit of Christ which was in them signified by His revelations surpassing all that had entered into man's heart.

4. Those chosen for this purpose communicate these revelations to God's people in words of human speech, yet not of their own choosing, but chosen by the Holy Spirit. What a rock of defence and security for the truth and integrity of the Scriptures amid all the waves and storms of doubt and unbelief and cavil!

What difficulty, therefore, can there be in the interpretation of the Scriptures thus given to us from God? They are written in the language of men, in words of the Spirit's choosing, and therefore of divine fitness. Men, with all their imperfection of knowledge and of expression, can write words clearly intelligible to men. Shall He, then, that made the tongue not speak so that men may clearly understand? The difficulty is from men and not from God. And the Scriptures show us what the difficulty is. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned" (1 Cor. ii. 14).

Men in their natural state have "the understanding" darkened, being alienated from the life of God through

the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart." But he that is spiritual has the mind of Christ (1 Cor. ii. 15, 16; Eph. iv. 18).

The Spirit is as necessary, therefore, for the reception of the truth by us, as for its communication to us.

We turn now to consider what the Scriptures tell us of their effect on those who receive the truth.

1st. They communicate life. The Son of man is the sower of the word. The good seed are the children of the kingdom. "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life." Men are born again not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God that liveth and abideth forever. And this is the word which is preached by the Gospel. Born of water and of the Spirit simply means born of the word and of the Spirit, the water being the emblem of the word. And James writes: "Of His own will begat He us with the word of truth." Life comes to us through the word of God.

2d. The word of God cleanses. "Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you," is said in close connection with "Every branch in me that beareth fruit, He cleanseth it that it may bring forth more fruit." It is the same process in all God's children. So the Lord prays: "Sanctify them through Thy truth; Thy word is truth." And the pattern of our sanctification is His own. He truly lived by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. Hence, His life was spotlessly clean and pure.

3d. The Scriptures also enlighten. "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path." "The entrance of Thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple" (Ps. cxix. 105, 130). God's word is His own eye looking into the inmost depths of the soul. For immediately after telling us that "the word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged

sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart," it goes on to say, "Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in His sight; but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do" (Heb. iv. 12, 13).

4th. The word of God is also the food of God's children by which the life communicated by the word grows by it from spiritual infancy to Christian maturity. We are exhorted, laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings, to desire the sincere milk of the word that we may grow thereby, unto salvation. All thorough principles of interpretation, therefore, lie deep down, imbedded and embodied in spiritual experience. A necessary and the best possible preparation for the interpretation of the Scriptures is that one should know in himself the effects of their power. We believe and therefore speak, the Psalmist and Paul agree in saying. The word, to be felt in the full measure of its power, even when preached by Paul, the chiefest of the Apostles, is to be taught and received, not as the word of men, but as it is in truth the word of God, which effectually worketh also in them that so believe. Grammatical and critical skill in regard to the forms of the language, knowledge of history, geography, and antiquities, furnishing matter of illustration,—these are not to be undervalued nor despised, but eagerly availed of by all who love the Scriptures; but the highest attainments in any or all of these, as a qualification for interpreting the real meaning of the Scriptures, are not worthy to be compared with the life-giving, cleansing, enlightening, and strengthening effects of the word of God experienced in one's own soul. We know that in the last days perilous times shall come, and doubtless they are already come, when

evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived, and it is the sense of this as being now upon us that has called together this conference. But we have God's perfect resources provided for those times, the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make us wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus, and the meaning of those Scriptures is to be confirmed to us by the character of those from whom we learn the truth. "Continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them." The safe interpreter of Scripture to us can only be he who exemplifies the effects of their power in himself. It is a wise judgment that, as a rule, one cannot go beyond his own spiritual experience of the truth in expounding it to others.

How sorrowful, in view of these considerations, to look over the "Christian world," as it is called, in most contradictory terms, and find the favorite and trusted expositors of the Scriptures to large circles of professing Christians, to be men ignorant or bitterly hostile in regard to the plainest teachings of God's word on some, and oftentimes on many of the most important lines of truth—blind leaders of the blind, and both falling deeper and deeper into the ditch!

CHRIST'S USE OF THE SCRIPTURES.

The view of the word of God thus given, and the deepest principles of interpretation, have their profoundest illustration in the use made of the Scriptures by the Lord himself. We have no evidence that He ever read any other book than the Scriptures, but His teachings are full of these. He lived in them. There was with Him unquestioning acceptance of the Jewish Canon, of the law, the prophets, and the Psalms. Of the law He said not one jot or tittle should fall away, but all should be

fulfilled; from Isaiah lxi. He reads the precious summary of His own gracious work, and says to them in the synagogue at Nazareth, at the opening of His public ministry, "This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears." Men have had most dispute as to the authority of Daniel's writings, of all the prophets, but Christ spoke of him as "Daniel the prophet." Men in our day, who claim, too, to be Christian teachers, have refused to the Pentateuch any higher character than that of a clumsy fabrication of post-exilic times, without a shred of the authority of Moses in its composition, except so far as his name is used in it to give currency to a "pious fraud." But the least to be regarded, in their opinion, of all the five books of the Pentateuch, Deuteronomy, was the word of God to Christ in His temptation; and with the sword of the Spirit gathered from this armory and from this alone, He put Satan to defeat. From one of the Psalms He quotes a saying: "Ye are gods"; which, with all the difficulty it may still present to our understanding, is to be accepted by us, as it was by Him, as a part of the Scriptures "which cannot be broken." His whole teaching is studded with allusions to almost every part of Scripture, and with especial distinctness to those against which men have most cavilled. He confounded the Pharisees by quoting from the 110th Psalm, and asking them how Christ according to it could be David's Lord, and yet his son. He refuted the heresy of the Sadducees from the very name God had given Himself when He spoke to Moses from the bush. In His most intimate communications to His disciples the Scriptures are ever before His mind and used by Him for their instruction. In the most solemn hours of conflict, trial, and suffering for Himself, the word of God is ever in His heart and on His lips, and the last word He uttered on the cross is a quotation from the 31st Psalm. After His resurrection, to the two disciples on the way to

Emmaus, "beginning at Moses and all the prophets, He expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself," under two heads, relating to His sufferings and to His glory, thus binding all Scripture together in one grand unity, Christ himself being the one great theme. Of these two disciples He opened the understanding that they might understand the Scriptures. Many a Christian, doubtless, in reading of this discourse, has wished that he had a record of it to guide him in the study of the Old Testament. But we may be assured that if needed, it would have been given to us, and its substance is without question ministered to all God's children who cease to grieve the Spirit and give themselves up to Him to be taught according to the Saviour's word, "He shall teach you all things and bring to your remembrance whatsoever I have said unto you."

And so even after His resurrection we see from the 1st chapter of Acts that the Scriptures were the great theme of His instructions during the forty days, and His last communication to His Church is full of references to the words previously given to His Church in the Old Testament and by Himself and His apostles.

What enemy to the truth can ever break the force of Christ's own example in using the Scriptures, so as to lead God's children to disregard or set aside any part of the precious word of God? And what methods or systems of interpretation that neglect or depreciate any part of the book of God which was an organic whole to Christ, can find acceptance with His Church?

DIFFICULTIES IN THE SCRIPTURES.

Alleged Discrepancies of the Gospels.—A great multitude of the supposed difficulties in the Gospels disappear at once when we abandon the utterly unworthy,

but not uncommon view of the four lives of Christ, that any or all of them are fragmentary and imperfect in any sense. Such a view is in entire contradiction of all that has been said in reference to the character and authorship of God's Word. Each gospel is perfect in itself for the end the Spirit had in view in giving it. No attempt is made to give all the details of Christ's life or to record all He says. The contrary is expressly stated. Loving students of the Scriptures, during the last half century especially, have brought to light that each gospel looks at Christ's life from its own peculiar point of view which imparts to each a particular object and character, and this being ascertained and kept in mind, the materials selected and used from the life of Christ in each gospel are all seen to be in beautiful harmony with the end proposed.

Thus Matthew traces the genealogy of Christ as the Son of David and the Son of Abraham, the gospel being Jewish in character, and presenting Christ as their Messiah. Luke, who presents Christ as the Son of man in His grace to the whole world, traces His genealogy up to Adam, the father of the race. The omission of the ascension scene from Matthew's gospel is explained in the same way. Many have been surprised that John's gospel makes no mention of the stupendous scene of the transfiguration of which he was an eye-witness, nor of the sufferings in Gethsemane, nor of the cry on the cross, "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?" But these things all belong to the history of Christ as the Son of man, not as the Son of God. While John's gospel itself tells us that it was written to this end, that "ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God."

THE INSCRIPTION ON THE CROSS.

Men professing reverence for the Scriptures have been so perplexed with the difficulty of reconciling the accounts

in the four Gospels of what was written on the cross, as to give up belief in verbal inspiration. But a patient examination of the record of that inscription demonstrates no necessary contradiction between them. And it is clearly stated that the inscription was in three different languages—Hebrew, Greek, and Latin—and Matthew gives us only the accusation that was made against Christ in the inscription.

PETER'S DENIAL.

With reference to the history of this, too, some have said it was impossible for us to reconcile the differing statements. Suppose it to be so. May our inability not be the result of our ignorance of some omitted fact or facts which would harmonize all? Independent, varying testimony of witnesses about a matter, proves their trustworthiness in so far as to show that there is no collusion among them, and without demonstration of contradiction we cannot discredit their testimony because of such variations.

It is fair, it is honest, and it is simply right and reverent to give such considerations their full force in meeting such difficulties in interpreting the word of God.

ELOHIM AND JEHOVAH.

What a noise has been made about the different names given to God in different parts of the Pentateuch! For instance, in the first chapter of Genesis, and through three verses of the second chapter, the name uniformly given is Elohim, uniformly rendered God in the Authorized Version. Beginning at the fourth verse of the second chapter, uniformly to the end of that chapter, another name is added, Jehovah, and the two rendered uniformly in the English Bible "the Lord God." Now, should we come to the study of these documents from the study of Niebuhr's dis-

section and exposure of the lying fables of Greek and Roman history, to which form and color were given by national pride and vanity, and seek to dissect and expose the falsehoods of Jewish fables, as Niebuhr did for Greek and Roman, and with no more reverence in the study, we might reach and rest in the conclusions of this irreverent and presumptuous school of critics. One, however, would suppose that any critic who had the fear of God before him, and knew the reverent use which Christ made of the Pentateuch, would shudder thus to treat the word of God.

But God's loving children will come to the study of the same words, and when He gives Himself a new name, they will reverently seek to find out what He means by it. And when they find the new name appears when He begins to deal with man on terms of special relationship, as endowed with privileges and placed in responsibility, and they find it the same name afterward used with His chosen nation to express the faithfulness of Him who was, and is, and is to come, the Eternal, they rejoice in the revelation. In the next chapter, too, Satan leaves out the precious new name when he speaks, and our first mother when speaking under his temptation; but God still gives it to Himself in all His tender and gracious dealing with those who have brought in sin and death upon all their race. And when in the next chapter on the birth of Cain, Eve thinks he is the seed of the woman who is to bruise the serpent's head, she says, "I have gotten a man from Jehovah." See how sweetly and discriminatingly both names are used in one short verse, chapter vii. 16: "And they that went in, went in, male and female of all flesh, as God had commanded him (God in relation to the animal creation); and the Lord (Jehovah) shut him in" (Jehovah in tender covenant faithfulness to His righteous servant). The little book of Jonah furnishes clear illustrations on the point, and so do the Psalms.

Much is lost of precious truth to those who fail to observe the same discriminating use of the name of God and of the Saviour in the New Testament also. God is the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our God and Father, as His first message to His disciples since His resurrection shows. Do these names mean nothing? Could either be omitted here? Or could either be substituted for the other when only one is used? To many this might be done with no appreciable loss of truth, because they have not found the sweet treasures locked up in these precious names. I can only find time to suggest passages worthy of most careful and loving study. Why in the garden, and also in a former anticipation of His sufferings, does Jesus call on His Father? Again, why in the three hours of darkness on the cross does He say: "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?" Again, a most instructive use of both names is given in His discourse with the woman at the well, showing the loving grace of the Father as He now seeks those to worship Him who shall worship Him in spirit and in truth, but in closest connection with this solemn word: "God is a Spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth."

SHALL WE JUDGE THE WORD, OR SHALL THE WORD
JUDGE US?

It is matter of devout thanksgiving that God has so wonderfully preserved His word to us. So many manuscripts of great antiquity, so many versions, so many quotations from it, that we have the means of ascertaining the original text with more accuracy than that of any other ancient writing whatsoever. Man, to whose hand this precious treasure was committed, has been so foolish and presumptuous as to tamper with it, taking from it what he did not like to find there, and adding to it what

God did not put there; one passage assimilating to another in some respects like it; all such additions and subtractions being blunders, every one of them, as for instance the assimilation of the Lord's prayer in Luke xi. to that in Matthew vi. When we have used all diligence to possess ourselves of the correct text as nearly as possible, how now shall we use it so as to interpret it aright to ourselves and to others? The right attitude of soul for an interpreter is suggested in these words of the Lord Jesus: "He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him. For the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day." We come to the study of God's word aright, therefore, when, in an humble and reverent manner, we subject ourselves to its authority, and search ourselves with its light, judging ourselves by it instead of sitting in judgment upon it. This self-judgment in the light of the Scriptures, when fully made, will divest us of all glorying in the wisdom and learning of the world, will place us before God in the humility and docility of little children, will strip us of the last trace of confidence in the flesh. The man, therefore, who has an inadequate sense of sin in general, and of his own sins and sin in particular, not having yet learned that deepest lesson in regard to sin which God at one time or other will teach to all His children, viz., "that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing," such a man lacks essential qualifications for the thorough interpretation of the word of God. Paul's experience in this regard is an example for the instruction of all God's children. Caught up to the third heaven, where he heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter; when he came back to earth he was in danger of committing the extreme folly of being exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations. So it was necessary, in the loving dealings of the Father, to humble him by the thorn in

the flesh sent him, the messenger of Satan to buffet him, to take out of him all the conceit of himself in supposing that in any energy of the flesh he could serve the Lord acceptably or efficiently. The trial was so sore, and so humbling, that he besought the Lord thrice to remove it. But the Lord in His love could and did not, but taught him: "My grace is sufficient for thee; for my strength is made perfect in weakness." Every interpreter of the truth must, if he do his work thoroughly, learn the same lesson, "When I am weak, then am I strong," for thus only shall the power of Christ rest upon him.

DISPENSATIONAL TEACHING.

It is a very important principle of interpretation that the differences of dispensation should be observed. The two great dispensations are those of the law, and of grace. Under that of law, God proposes a perfect law as to what man in the flesh ought to do. Under that of grace, when man has crucified the Prince of Glory in his hatred of God without cause, God displays the riches of His grace in opening wide to men of every nation the door of access to Him, and calls men now by the Gospel to a place of nearness, fellowship, and intimacy with the Father and the Son unknown in previous ages. It was the glory of His people in the former dispensation to be called the servants, and in exceptional cases, the "friends" of God. Now, "thou art no longer a servant, but a son, and because ye are sons He hath sent forth the spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father." Then Jews had pre-eminence over the nations in privileges and blessings, implying nearness and peculiar favor. Now, in this the Church age, the middle wall of partition is removed, and in the Church there is neither Jew nor Gentile, barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free, and we all have access by one Spirit unto the Father. Instead of worshipping

outside the veil, with no sacrifice adequate to purge the conscience, we now have boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, and having Him as an high-priest over the house of God, we are privileged to draw near with a true heart, in the full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water. We are all consecrated priests unto God; all believers are a holy and a royal priesthood.

And now to these considerations add the crowning glory of this age, that the Holy Spirit has come; our Comforter, to abide with us forever; to show us these things, and all things that the Father hath, as ours in fellowship with Christ, who baptizes all believers into one body, and builds them together as an habitation of God. About the coming of this Comforter, the Saviour said: "It is expedient for you that I go away, for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you." About the fruit of His presence in us in this age, He was speaking when He said: "He that believeth on me, from within him shall flow rivers of living waters." This is the great blessing of this dispensation, as contrasted with the former one. Has any adequate expression been given to it in any creed of Christendom? Has the truth about so vastly important a matter been taught line upon line and precept upon precept to all the people? Or, have only the surface and the externals of the great characteristic doctrines of this age been taught to the mass of professing Christians? Have men shunned to declare the whole counsel of God? Are many professing Christians now like the company of believers Paul found at Ephesus, to whom he put the question, "Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed?"

The system of teaching and interpretation which leaves out of view, or does not present with clearness and fullness in proportion to its prime importance, the characteristic

truth of the Christian dispensation, viz., the presence and indwelling of the Holy Spirit in every believer, and His baptizing them together as the body of Christ, and building them together as the habitation of God, together with the immense enlargement in consequence of the privileges and responsibility of the Church,—such teaching and interpretation egregiously fail to put due honor on the precious, perfect truth of the word of God revealed for this day.

THE INTERPRETATION OF PROPHECY.

It is a not uncommon opinion, though it may not be often distinctly and boldly avowed, that prophecy constitutes a small portion of the Scriptures, and an unimportant one in comparison with other portions deemed of greater and especially of more practical importance. It would be nearer the truth to say that all Scripture is prophetic. History demonstrates nothing more clearly than this, that man has failed in every place of responsibility and privilege in which God has placed him. And man will continue thus to fail to the end, "For no flesh shall glory in God's presence." Scripture tells us that we do well to take heed to prophecy as "unto a light that shineth in a dark place." Man's failure brings in ruin and darkness. In that darkness arises the light of prophecy to teach all men as Israel was taught, "O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself, but in me is thine help." Prophecy points to resources of help and blessing in God above and beyond all the failure of man and the ruin he has wrought. Look at the prote-vangelium from the Lord's own mouth in the garden, before man has been banished from Eden: "It shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." By one man's disobedience many have been made sinners. Sin has entered into the world, and death by sin, and has passed upon all men. How sweet and comforting in such darkness and

misery to hear that most comprehensive of all prophecies, which still awaits fulfillment, when Satan shall be bruised under our feet shortly, and the kingdom of our Father shall come, and His will be done on earth as it is in heaven !

In the abounding iniquity of the last of the antediluvian days, there sounds out the prophecy of Enoch, the seventh from Adam, which was partially fulfilled with judgment of God upon the wicked in the days of Noah, but awaits its final and complete fulfillment when the Son of man shall come in the clouds of heaven in the day of the judgment and perdition of ungodly men. Look at the abounding iniquities of the Canaanites in the land when God gave to the long-tried faith of Abraham those prophetic promises of blessing to all the nations of the earth through the seed to be born to him, in fulfillment of which Israel shall yet blossom and bud, and fill the face of the world with fruit.

As Israel embraces the abominable idolatries of the surrounding nations, see how, with prophecy after prophecy, light is shed on the darkness for all who will cleave to God. When the deeper darkness of the captivity comes, as the stars come out to view in the blackness of the night, so in the clear and full light of the prophecies of that period, God reveals times of future blessing, restoration, and glory yet to appear in their full and final measure of splendor.

The prophecies of the Lord himself in the Gospels point to, and are a provision for, the days when iniquity shall abound and the love of many shall wax cold. And with what splendor of light and clearness in the midst of growing darkness come out the prophecies of Paul, Peter, Jude, and John, in days when there have already come many antichrists, and scoffers have arisen, and when the Lord himself, looking down over His Church with all-seeing eye, finds even Ephesus to have left its first love, Satan entrenched at Pergamos, the abomination of Balaam,

and the Nicolaitanes, and of Jezebel, rife and rampant, churches with a name to live, but dead, a few in the midst of the deepening darkness and the prevalence of Laodicean indifference to truth, holding fast to His word, and not denying His name.

As the Lord thus provides prophecy as a light in the dark places for His people in all ages, and has interwoven it with the whole texture of Scripture, and as in this age of the Church the Spirit is given to guide us "into all the truth, and to show us things to come," what must we be compelled to say of interpretation of Scripture that ignores prophecy, or relegates it to a subordinate or unimportant place in the scheme, or turns from its study as from "an intricate and thorny path"? Such interpretation, however orthodox and correct it may be, as far as it goes, must be grossly defective in preserving the proper proportions of truth. And it must be very different from the teaching of Paul, who taught even young converts to be themselves always waiting for God's Son to come from heaven, and to know perfectly, so that they needed not that he should write to them of the judgments impending over the world. They had no vain dreams of the conversion of the world, but knew perfectly that the day of the Lord would come as a thief in the night to the ungodly, just as the deluge came upon them in the days of Noah, and the fire from heaven in the days of Lot came upon the cities of the plain.

THINGS NEW AND OLD.

God hath spoken at sundry times and in divers measures by the mouth of the prophets of past ages, but in these last days in fullness of revelation by His Son, and by those to whom having given the Spirit of His Son, He allotted the work of completing the Scriptures. The earlier utterances in divers measures of clearness and fullness are

all of divine fitness for their times, and for all time, especially as serving to lead immature believers by easy, elemental lessons, as it were, into the possession of full knowledge. Let the Passover in the Old Testament and the New furnish an illustration. In 1 Cor. v. 7, we learn that Christ our Passover has been sacrificed for us, and we are exhorted also to keep the feast of unleavened bread. Looking back to the institution of the Passover and of the feast following it, in Exodus xii. we find the Spirit going into a number of details with great particularity and minuteness. Shall I throw these aside as of no importance, the whole ceremony being now obsolete and of no importance for me now to study? Not if I properly honor and use God's word.

Can a spiritual mind doubt that the Lord himself dwelt on all these details and explained them to the two disciples on the way to Emmaus? Look at them. The passover is to begin the year. We, by nature the children of wrath, are dead in sin in God's sight until sheltered by faith in the blood of Christ our Passover. Then we begin to live. Again, the lamb must be without spot. So Christ offered Himself to God. Again, all the congregation of Israel killed the lamb together in the evening. Christians are not Christians in separation and isolation like grains of sand. They are brethren. The first instinct of the new life is to love the brethren. By this we know that we have passed from death to life. Again, the lamb was kept up four days before its sacrifice. How carefully during those days would parental love see to it that there was really no spot on the lamb. For on this hung the life of the first-born. Through what searching tests was Christ shown to be without spot before He offered Himself!

But the flesh of the lamb was to be eaten that night, to give strength for the journey. So now, the life of Christ

here in the body, received, believed in, incorporated into ours, gives strength to God's pilgrims through this world. We are only to walk where He walked before us. But not His life simply. "Eat not of it raw, nor sodden at all with water, but roast with fire." Christ's precious, spotless life, to avail for us, must pass through the fire. If we are to enjoy God's favor, Christ must bear the wrath due to our sin without the least mitigation. God made Him to be sin for us. Let Him eat the passover in haste, too; His loins girded, His staff in His hand, and His shoes on His feet. How impressive the picture of a stranger and pilgrim here, journeying to the rest which remaineth for the people of God! And the seven days' feast of unleavened bread to follow, with no leaven even in the houses. What a comment on "Be ye holy as He which hath called you is holy in all manner of conversation!"

It is one mind, one truth, one Christ from Genesis to Revelation.

In conclusion, we have God's word. How shall we interpret it to others? Let its life-giving, cleansing, enlightening, and strengthening power be experienced in our inmost souls, as men of God perfect, that is, full-grown, thoroughly furnished unto all good works. Let each of us have a message to carry to others of what God through His word has done for us and how He has had mercy upon us. Let His whole word be translated by the power of the Spirit into our daily, our whole life, of spirit, soul, and body. Be saints, children of light, walking in the light as God is in the light—Christ's living epistle, known and read of all men.

Have a simple, happy, childlike confidence in our Father's word, and a sublime assurance of its final vindication and victory over all its foes. If men do and will oppose, as we know they will, let us be gentle to all such, apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing them, in

Christlike pity to those whom the god of this world hath so blinded that they believe not. Christ himself wept over such. And in fullest, richest, sweetest fellowship with Him, with our Father, and with the Holy Spirit, may we ever walk, vessels meet for the Master's use, ever exemplifying His truth, His power resting on us, and we glorifying Him in our life, and, if He so will, in our death.

ALLEGED OBJECTIONS TO INSPIRATION CONSIDERED.

WASHINGTON GARDNER.

IN the treatment of our theme, it is important that we first determine what is to be understood by inspiration, that we may the more intelligently comprehend and consider the alleged objections thereto.

“Divine inspiration of the sacred volume,” has been declared to be “the first basis of Christian faith.”* “It may be best defined,” says another, “according to the representations of the Scriptures themselves as an extraordinary divine agency upon teachers while giving instruction, whether oral or written, by which they were taught what and how they should speak.”

Still another † says: “It is the imparting of such a degree of divine influence, assistance, or guidance as enabled the authors of the several Books of Scripture to communicate religious knowledge without error or mistake.” In the Book itself it is asserted that “Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.” ‡ And that “All Scripture is given by inspiration of God.” § We are not unmindful that this rendering of the last quoted passage is questioned, and that good authorities may be cited in favor of a different translation. We are

* Guizot, “Meditations on the Essence of Christianity,” page 171.

† Harmon’s “Introduction,” page 4.

‡ 2 Peter i. 21.

§ 2 Timothy iii. 16.

also aware that very good authority exists for the translation as given.

We may say at the outset, that here, upon the word of God itself as found in both the Old and the New Testaments, do we discover the standard of inspiration which we propose to set up, and against which the objections we are to consider are alleged. In this discussion, Inspiration is not to be confounded with Revelation. While it is asserted that all Scripture is given by inspiration of God, it is not asserted that all Scripture is revealed from the same source. All that was known was of course unrevealed, while all that was knowable, but unknown to the writer, and all that was unknowable, but which God desired to make known, were revealed ; so that inspiration embraces revelation, as the whole embraces all its parts.

It is conceded that God inspired the doctrines set forth in the Bible, but that the biographical and historical details are of man. With the advocates of this position, the theory is that the doctrines were unknown and unknowable to unassisted man, and that therefore God was consistent with Himself in revealing them ; on the other hand, it is alleged that the biographical and historical portions of the Book were either known to the writers or were within the domain of acquirable information, and as " God does not set up His divine torch in human study," nor " pour His light in quarters which man's eye and man's labor can reach," He is only consistent with Himself in withholding inspiration from man in that part of the Bible the contents of which he knew or might have known.

This objection is so well answered by Garbett in " God's Word Written," that we quote at length. The effect of this allegation

— "that the Scriptural writers were inspired in delivering the great doctrines of revelation relative to the nature of God and the salvation of man, but were not inspired in regard to

the biographical and historical facts; that the jewel of divine truth, in short, is of God, but that its historical setting is of man. But the effect of this theory is to deprive of their heaven-given authority those very portions of Scripture which constitute the evidence for the veracity of the whole, and in which alone such evidence could conceivably be afforded.

“That God in giving a revelation should supply at the same time some internal means of verifying it, will be admitted to be congruous not only with the gracious character of God, but with the mode of action He has actually adopted. It would be strange if God had provided in miracles and in prophecy an attestation to the authority of Scripture, and yet had afforded no means of ascertaining its truth. No Christian will doubt that the whole fabric of evidence possessed by us to prove the Bible to be a revelation from God, has been intelligently provided. It has not grown by chance, but has been schemed by the mind of God, ordered by His goodness and framed by His wisdom. But of this scheme the confirmation of its truth by the testimony of secular history and archaeological discovery, constitutes an important portion. But this proof lies altogether in the historical details of Scripture, not in its doctrines. We have no possible means of putting to any practical test its doctrines, such as the Trinity of persons in the Godhead; the union of two natures in Christ; the justification of the sinner by faith; or the person and operations of the Holy Ghost. We cannot climb up into heaven to see the eternal realities to which the revealed doctrines correspond. We accept them because we find them contained in a revelation we believe to have come from God. But we have no possible means of proving them. We have means of testing the accuracy of historical facts; and in these facts, therefore, it is natural that God should supply the means of verifying His own words. The historical portions of the Scripture are inseparably identified with the doctrinal, and form component parts of one and the same revelation, invested with one and the same authority.”*

It is urged that it is beneath the majesty of God to take note of details in unimportant and temporal human affairs, such as surround the great doctrines evolved from the

* Pages 286-7.

depths of infinite wisdom. To this objection we answer: In the natural world God has certainly shown concern for what seem to be, and, relatively speaking, are minor affairs, but of which a careful examination reveals the fact that they are indispensable parts of one stupendous whole. In the Holy Spirit's relation to human conduct, individual experience testifies that it does not concern itself alone with what may be termed the more important affairs of life, but with the lesser as well. The wisdom and the goodness of God manifested in this fidelity of His Spirit, is the more apparent when we remember that our life-course is largely determined by the things of apparent minor importance. Character is shaped and destiny fixed in large part by what seem to be the little things in life; but character and destiny, as the resultant of all life, are certainly not unimportant. God incarnate would never have been the faith of manifold millions who to-day confess Him, but for the fidelity of the human Christ to human nature in the details of His earthly life; and, at the same time, the manifestation of a perfect consistency between the human and the divine nature as revealed in one and the same person.

The teachings of our Lord must, from the very nature of their Author, be inspired. He was very God and very man. Yet we find Jesus entering into all the minutiae of life in setting forth and enforcing the great doctrines enunciated by Him. Certainly He did not esteem such a course unnecessary nor beneath Him.

It is alleged that the language is different in different portions of the Bible. The Scripture doctrine is, that God is immutable; therefore we should expect that the very language of the Bible, if the whole book is inspired of God, should be unchanged and unchangeable. We answer, that the human element is part and parcel of the Scriptures. The Book itself is a mirror of the age, the

peoples, and the customs of which it speaks. As a history it would not be accurate were it less than this; as a revelation it would hardly accomplish the end designed without this adaptation.

It is urged that there is great variation in the different accounts of incident or event, or discourse or the setting forth of the same doctrine; whereas, on the theory of a plenary inspiration, we should expect a uniform presentation. This theory, however plausible, is contrary to human usage and experience. All know that there is often a marked variation in the narrative accounts of the same events by the same person. And yet each and all are correct in so far as they set forth that which the writer undertakes to express. The thought is illustrated in the verbal or structural setting of principles or doctrines, in which, though there may be differences in the language and forms adopted, there is no substantial variation in essence. Familiarity with the New Testament makes clear the fact that our Saviour's teachings have all the qualities of variation indicated as characteristic of human teaching. And yet the inspiration of Jesus is unquestioned. If Jesus the Son, in His divine nature, chose to exercise this latitude, why fix the metes and bounds of God the Father in a stereotyped form, and then deny His authorship, unless He appears in such form as we consider He should?

It is alleged, on the part of those who deny plenary inspiration, that God did inspire the matter, but that He left to man the important work of setting it in speech. Is it not reasonable to suppose that if knowledge of the substance was of sufficient importance to be imparted under divine inspiration, that it would be so guarded in the method of impartation that there might be no serious mistakes? All understand how the substitution of one word for another alters, or may alter, the meaning intended to be conveyed. Profound and exhaustive arguments have

been founded on single words. Indeed, the distinguishing characteristics of the peculiar faith of a sect may depend in its root-doctrine on a single phrase, and it might almost be said on a single word. The inspired writers in the New Testament, as we see time and again, “rest positive doctrines and frame elaborate arguments on the authenticity of single sentences and single words of Old Testament Scriptures.”

Many who seem quite willing to concede inspiration to the New Testament Scriptures are disposed to deny it to very much of the Old. In answer to this, we aver that the writers in the Old Testament repeatedly declare that they spoke under the Spirit's inspiration, or that they voiced that which was given them to speak. David says: “The Spirit of the Lord spoke by me, and His word was in my tongue.”* Jeremiah asserts: “These are the words that the Lord spake.”† Isaiah testifies,‡ moreover, “the Lord spake thus to Ahaz, saying.” According to Ezekiel, “Speak my words unto them.”§ Amos says: “Hear this word which the Lord hath spoken against you.”|| Indeed, as an able writer¶ well says: “The direct messages from God constitute a very considerable proportion of the whole. It includes the latter part of the book of Exodus; the entire book of Leviticus; many chapters in Deuteronomy and Numbers; the greater part of the prophecy of Isaiah; the later chapters, from xli. to lxiii. expressly, and in form bearing this character; thirty chapters out of the fifty-two comprising the prophecy of Jeremiah; thirty-five out of the forty-eight of the prophet Ezekiel, with some slight occasional exceptions where the words of the prophet are professedly intermingled with the immediate words of

* 2 Samuel xxiii. 2.

† Jeremiah xxx. 4.

‡ Isaiah vii. 10.

§ Ezekiel iii. 4.

|| Amos iii. 1.

¶ Garbett, “God's Word Written,” p. 291.

God; twelve of the fourteen chapters of Hosea; almost the whole of the prophecy of Joel; six chapters of Amos out of nine; six chapters of Micah; the whole of the prophet Zephaniah and of Haggai; nine chapters of Zechariah, and the entire book of Habakkuk." These writers, as others, introduced Jehovah as the speaker by such words as "said," "saying," "thus saith the Lord," and closing with "the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it."

Not only is there this internal testimony to the inspiration of the Old Testament, but we find the New Testament writers constantly quoting from the Old Testament as the inspired word of God, and weaving into their argument for the acceptance of the new, threads drawn from the old. When proof was wanted that our Lord was the fulfillment of prophecy, we find Matthew saying: "He came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, 'He shall be called a Nazarene.'"* When Jesus was in the struggle with the tempter He declared, to the discomfiture of the adversary, "It is written," followed each time by a weapon for the soul's defense in a quotation from the Old Testament Scriptures. In the Acts of the Apostles we find the great leaders in the founding of the Church repeatedly quoting from the Old Testament in the argument to establish the truth set forth in the New. Peter, in his Pentecostal sermon,† asserts the resurrection of our Lord as foretold in Psalm xvi. and Psalm ciii. Again, when the fires of persecution were kindling about the feet of the disciples, they quote from the Old Testament: "Lord, Thou art God, who by the mouth of Thy servant David hath said."‡ Certainly if language means anything, it means in these and many other instances that Christ and His Apostles believed that the Old Testament

* Matt. ii. 23.

† Acts ii. 14-29.

‡ Psalm ii.

Scriptures were of God. The evidence is certainly not less convincing as to the New Testament. In this we find Jesus saying to His disciples,* having in view the ordeals through which they were to pass: "When they bring you unto the synagogues, and unto magistrates and powers, take ye no thought how or what thing ye shall answer, or what ye shall say: for the Holy Ghost shall teach you in the same hour what ye ought to say."† "Whatsoever shall be given you in that hour, that speak ye: for it is not ye that speak, but the Holy Ghost."‡ We have here the direct and positive affirmation that the Holy Spirit does speak through men. If in making a personal defense before magistrates and persecutors God sent His Spirit to speak through and for them, how much more should He voice by the agency used that which was to abide through many centuries and instruct and guide unnumbered millions of immortal beings in that which is of greatest moment to the individual welfare and happiness of each and of incalculable good to mankind?

Still another objection is that based on the variations of readings found in the manuscript copies of the Scriptures. The Authorized Version has long been subjected to severe criticism by men of acknowledged learning and of unimpeached piety and orthodoxy; not only on the ground of imperfect and questioned original texts, but also, from the standpoint of modern scholarship, of faulty translation. Bishop Marsh,§ one of the most acute and learned of scholars in the Church of England, said of the Authorized Version, that it "was made by some of the most distinguished scholars in the age of James I. It is probable that our Authorized Version is as faithful a representation of the original Scriptures as could have been made at that period.

* Acts iv. 25.

† Luke xii. 11, 12.

‡ Mark xi. 13.

§ Lectures, pp. 295-6.

But when we consider the immense accession which has been since made to our critical and to our philological apparatus; when we consider that the whole mass of literature, commencing with the London Polyglot and continued to Griesbach's Greek Testament, was collected subsequently to that period; when we consider that the most important sources of intelligence for the interpretation of the original Scriptures were likewise opened after that period, we cannot possibly pretend that our Authorized Version does not require amendment."

William Orme, a noted Scotch divine, speaking of the common version, says: "It was not made from corrected or critical texts of the originals, but from the Masoretic Hebrew texts, and from the common printed Greek text of the New Testament. Consequently, whatever imperfections belonged to the original at the time, must be expected in the version. That it is capable of improvement will generally be admitted, and that we are in possession of the means by which that improvement could be made, is equally unquestionable."* In the same strain do we find speaking, the eminent Presbyterian, Dr. John Pye Smith, one of the greatest Biblical scholars of his generation: "Every Christian who is moderately informed on these subjects knows that the early editions of the original Scriptures could not possess a text so well ascertained as those which the superior means and the diligent industry of modern editors have been enabled to attain."† It was the opinion of men like these, acknowledged leaders in theology, regardless of denominational affiliations, and the discovery of additional manuscript copies of the original Scriptures, that created among scholars of our generation a feeling of dissatisfaction with the Authorized Version, and an increasing demand for a thorough revision of the

* "Bibliotheca Biblica," pp. 37-9.

† "Scripture Testimony to the Messiah," pp. 39 and 41.

entire book, based on the latest and most approved texts. The result is the Revised Version, the product of the ripest scholarship of the English-speaking tongue in the two hemispheres; having at its command all the additional light that two hundred and seventy years of intensest interest and research have thrown upon it. All scholars who have critically examined and compared, concede the fidelity of the Revised Version to the original text; and yet, what error, fundamental to the Christian faith, has been discovered? What great doctrine accepted by the Church universal has it caused to be set aside or materially modified? What part of the foundation of our common faith has been shaken? Is not the Revised Version a valued witness to the great fact that through the centuries God has been caring for His message to men, and that His truth, like Himself, is "the same yesterday, today, and forever"?

Again, it is alleged that "the fact of inspiration is conceded, but the limits of that inspiration are not so clearly defined." We answer, that any limitation other than the Bible in its entirety, as originally given, is fraught with interminable difficulties and embarrassments. On any theory other than a whole Bible, what authority is to be recognized? Who shall say, this verse, this paragraph, this chapter, this book, this Testament is inspired, is of God? Who, with authoritative dictum, shall declare that corresponding portions are uninspired, are of man? What others are partly inspired and partly uninspired? On this theory, no two men will agree as to the inspired and uninspired portions; for it is purely a matter of personal judgment, biased by previous education, inclination, or desires. To do this, is to open wide the flood-gates of indifference, doubt, and infidelity, with all their attendant moral and spiritual calamities. It is to wreck the faith of men in the Word written. It is to remove the pillar of cloud by day, and of fire by night, the unerring guides

which humanity's Emancipator has placed before the sons of men in their march from the bondage of ignorance and sin to the liberty of knowledge and of holiness.

Belief in the unerring accuracy of the Scriptures, in their primal transmission, as of God, both in the expression of doctrine and in the record of historic fact, and, for the English-speaking world, belief in the Revised Version as the essentially accurate reproduction of that primal transmission, add immeasurably to their weight of authority. Sin and infidelity can make little impression on the citadel of a soul defended by a full-armed disciple, accepting and adopting the Bible in its entirety, as the "Thus saith the Lord." The minister of the Gospel who preaches a whole Bible, does not need to hedge, explain, apologize, and so weaken the faith of his hearers in that which he is set to defend. The hosts in the church militant, full-armed and equipped with the truth of God as revealed in the Word, and imbued with the Spirit that accompanied its deliverance, under the leadership of Him who is the personification of all truth, long after the "poor, feeble, stammering tongues" of its assailants "lie silent in the grave," will march on to still more glorious triumphs in the moral conquest of the world; until, in God's own fullness of time, in every clime and by every tongue we shall hear from the exultant lips of the mighty host of the redeemed: "Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of Glory shall come in. Who is this King of Glory? The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle.

"Lift up your heads, O ye gates; even lift them up, ye everlasting doors, and the King of Glory shall come in.

"Who is this King of Glory? The Lord of hosts, He is the King of Glory." *

* Psalm xxiv. 7-10.

THEORIES OF INSPIRATION.

JAMES H. BROOKES, D.D.

It is worthy of notice that the Bible itself says nothing whatever of the subject assigned for this hour. No theory of inspiration is presented or even suggested from the first of Genesis to the last of Revelation, but the Book everywhere asserts that the words it contains are words which God spoke to men, through whom He revealed His will and purpose. If we had read the sacred Scriptures alone, apart from human opinions, we could never have thought of different kinds or degrees of inspiration, but must have seen that the writers at least claim for the very language of their communications divine origin, divine accuracy, and divine authority. There is no attempt to explain how they were inspired, but from first to last historians, poets, prophets, and apostles come before us with the sublime announcement, "Thus saith the Lord."

So profound was the impression made by this announcement that the Jews for many centuries accepted without hesitation the Old Testament books as coming directly from God, and they dared not tamper with a word or letter of it at the peril of their souls. Josephus says: "Every one is not permitted of his own accord to be a writer, nor is there any disagreement in what is written,—they being only prophets that have written the original and earliest accounts of things as they learned them of God himself by inspiration. . . . For so many ages that have already passed no one has been so bold as either to add anything to them or to make any change in them." Philo, although strongly influenced by the philosophy of his times, boldly

affirms his faith, and the faith of his countrymen, in the fact that God inspired the men who composed the Old Testament, and spoke through them as His mouthpiece. Esdras, who may be taken as a representative of all the Apocryphal writers, tells us: "When the Lord spake unto them, they made a sport of His prophets"; "In the first year of Cyrus, king of the Persians, that the word of the Lord might be accomplished, that He had promised by the mouth of Jeremy"; and when he had read the law, "All they that were then moved at the word of the Lord God of Israel assembled unto me."

In the early Church also, while it does not appear that any theory of inspiration was discussed, there was entire unanimity among those who had a right to be called Christians, as to inspiration itself, an inspiration that was supernatural in its source, unerring in its truthfulness, and extending to the very words of Scripture. Thus Clement says: "Look into the Holy Scriptures, which are the true words of the Holy Ghost"; "Ye know, beloved, ye know full well the Holy Scriptures; and have thoroughly searched into the oracles of God." Barnabas, in the epistle ascribed to him, writes: "The Lord hath declared unto us by the prophets"; "Thus saith the Lord by the prophets"; "Moses in the Spirit spake." Irenæus testifies: "Well knowing that the Scriptures are perfect, as dictated (or spoken) by the word of God and His Spirit." Hippolytus says: "Be assured they did not speak in their own strength, nor out of their own minds, what they proclaimed; but first by the inspiration of the word they were imbued with wisdom." Origen declares: "The sacred books are not the writings of men, but have been written and delivered to us from the inspiration of the Holy Spirit by the will of the Father of all things, through Jesus Christ. The sacred Scriptures come from the fullness of the Spirit, so that there is nothing in the prophets

or the law or the Gospel and the epistles which descends not from the Divine Majesty.”

Any amount of similar evidence could be adduced, but it is sufficient to say that up to the Reformation, if even one voice was raised to advance some theory of inspiration, it was too feeble to be heard. The Protestant churches which followed the revival that swept over Europe as the result of the labors of Luther and others, promulgated no new nor unknown doctrine, when they embodied in their Confessions clear and distinct statements of the plenary inspiration and supreme authority of the Scriptures. Thus the Belgic Confession, A.D. 1561, asserts: “We confess that this word of God was not sent nor delivered by the will of man, *but that holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost*, as the Apostle Peter saith.” The Helvetic Confession, A.D. 1566, declares: “We believe and confess the canonical Scriptures of the holy prophets and apostles of both Testaments to be the true Word of God itself, for God himself spoke to the fathers, the prophets, and the apostles, and still speaks to us by the sacred Scriptures.” The Westminster Confession, among other like things, affirms: “The Supreme Judge, by which all controversies of religion are to be determined, and all decrees, councils, opinions of ancient writings, doctrines of men, and private spirits, are to be examined, and in whose sentence we are to rest, can be no other but the Holy Spirit speaking in the Scripture.”

Even the Roman Catholic Council of Trent “receives and venerates with an equal affection of piety and reverence all the books of the Old Testament, seeing one God is the author of both . . . as having been dictated, either by Christ’s own word of mouth, or by the Holy Ghost, and preserved in the Catholic Church by a continuous succession.” This decision has been recently confirmed by the Vatican Council, 1870, which says: “These books of the

Old and New Testaments are to be received as sacred and canonical in their integrity with all their parts, as they are enumerated in the decrees of the said Council, and are contained in the ancient Latin edition of the Vulgate. These the Church holds to be sacred and canonical, not because having been carefully composed by mere human industry they were afterwards approved by her authority, nor merely because they contained revelations with no admixture of error, but because having been written by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, they have God for their authority, and have been delivered as such to the Church herself."

There was no controversy, therefore, between the Protestant and Roman Church with regard to the plenary inspiration of the Bible. The former justly assailed the latter, because she attached equal importance to traditions, because she overlaid the word of God with unscriptural doctrines and ceremonies, and because she had departed from the faith in several essential particulars; but amid all of her errors she has never denied that the Scriptures were given directly by the Holy Ghost. Indeed, it was largely owing to Luther's influence and to his rash treatment of the epistle of James and the Apocalypse, that lax views of inspiration began to prevail; and the outgrowth of these views was the most monstrous heresy. Erasmus and Grotius undertook to decide what in Scripture is given by the Spirit, and what the writers were sufficient of themselves to discover and record; and these in turn were followed by Spinoza and Schleiermacher and others, who went to a greater length, until rationalism pervaded and devastated the German Church.

When this rationalism invaded England, impiously attacking the infallibility of the Bible, and asserting the existence of many errors in the sacred pages, those who defended it were weak enough to admit the errors, and

then claimed that there were different kinds and degrees of inspiration, as the inspiration of excitement, the inspiration of invigoration, the inspiration of superintendence, the inspiration of guidance, and the inspiration of direct revelation. Thus, after many centuries had passed, during which the people of God in the Jewish and the Christian dispensation had accepted the sacred book in all its parts, as coming immediately from Him and dictated by His Spirit, the first theory of inspiration made its hateful appearance. Happily it has passed away, and is no longer mentioned; but it must be borne in mind that it was invented to account for supposed imperfections and errors and mistakes in the sacred Scriptures.

So it is with all the theories adopted by false teachers and their adherents; and hence such theories are essentially infidel in their origin, tendencies, and results. Of none is this more true than of the popular theory, now held by the wisecracks, who "think above that which is written," and who tell us that while the thoughts are inspired, the words are uninspired. No one, unless he is anxious to believe as much of the Bible as suits him, unless he is willing to set aside those portions of the Bible that do not please him, unless he wants to make room for any opinion of his own, unless he is ready to abandon the whole field to the enemy, could have ever conceived an idea so utterly absurd. As Dean Burgon has said: "You cannot dissect inspiration into substance and form. As for the thoughts being inspired, apart from the words which give them expression, you might as well talk of a tune without notes, or a sum without figures. No such dream can abide the daylight for a moment. No such theory of inspiration is even intelligible. It is as illogical as it is worthless; and cannot be too sternly put down." As Professor Gaussen has said: "This theory of a divine revelation, in which you would have the inspiration of the

thoughts, without the inspiration of the language, is so inevitably irrational that it cannot be sincere, and proves false even to those who propose it. . . . Though the words are those of man, say they, the thoughts are those of God. And how will they prove this to you? Alas, by attributing to this Scripture from God, contradictions, mistakes, proofs of ignorance! Is it then the words alone they attack? And are not these alleged errors much more in the ideas than in the words? So true it is that we cannot separate the one from the other, and that a revelation of God's thoughts ever demands a revelation of God's words also."

It is a marvel that Christians, and especially Christian preachers and professors in colleges and theological seminaries, can be so easily bamboozled by the devil as to accept and propagate a theory, so ridiculous in itself, and so easily exposed in its glaring nonsense. The first theory of different kinds and degrees of inspiration, now exploded, had at least the merit of asserting that a portion of the Bible was given by the direct inspiration of God; but this wretched theory of inspired thoughts, and uninspired words, leaves no part inspired, throws wide open the door to all manner of infidelity, and casts us back for the hope of salvation upon a book that may contain nothing more than old wives' fables. How can you catch the thought? how can you get at the thought? what is the thought to you, if it is expressed in language subject to all the folly, to all the ignorance, to all the mistakes, to all the inherent disposition of men to "go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies"? So far as we are concerned, we can reach the thoughts only through the words, and if the latter have upon them the stamp of human infirmity, the former can do us no good, and we might as well throw our Bibles into the fire, and ourselves into the gulf of despair.

Many who see that no such dream can abide the daylight for a moment, that it is not even intelligible, that it is as illogical as it is worthless, in their anxiety to avoid faith in what God's Word says of itself, have devised a new theory of late, which they call Dynamic Inspiration,—whatever in the name of common sense that means. If they are asked for an explanation, they cannot for their lives give it, but content themselves with high-sounding phraseology which seems to them eminently satisfactory. But where does the Dynamic lodge? Is it in the thoughts, or in the words, or in both? Surely every one must see that it accounts for nothing, that it signifies nothing, and that it is an empty term leaving the subject of inspiration just where it was before. It would be vastly better to confess our ignorance of the method God took to give us an inspired book, than to hang over the sacred Scriptures a meaningless word, and then imagine that we have fathomed the mystery of His infinite wisdom.

There is another theory, called the mechanical, and even the most reverent students of the Bible seem to agree that this cannot be true. But precisely the same objection lies against the great mass who reject it, and perhaps the few who accept it, that can be urged against all other theories. That is to say, it is a theory, and for this very reason it is worthless. No man has a right to affirm that God used the men through whom He communicated His revelations, just as we use a printing-press, or type-writer, or other mechanical contrivance to express our thoughts, and no man has a right to affirm that He did not so use them, because the Scriptures do not inform us how they were inspired. If it had been written that the prophets and apostles were mere machines, employed for the transmission of God's thoughts and words, we would be bound to believe it; and had it been written that they were not machines, we would be bound to believe that also. But inasmuch as it

is plainly and repeatedly declared that their writings are inspired, without a single statement of the manner of their inspiration, we are bound to believe that they are inspired, without believing at all, in one way or another, in what manner they are inspired.

It is a real relief to get away from man's fruitless speculations, and vain guesses, and laborious gropings in the dark, and philosophical disquisitions, to the calm, clear, and straightforward statements of the Bible itself. We turn to the first man God commissioned to make known His will, and we find him saying, "O my Lord, I am not eloquent, neither heretofore nor since Thou hast spoken unto Thy servant, but I am slow of speech and of a slow tongue. And the Lord said unto him, Who hath made man's mouth? . . . Now, therefore, go and I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt say" (Ex. iv. 10-12). It will be observed that Jehovah does not promise to be with his mind, and teach him what to think, but to be with his mouth, and teach him what to say. So far as the record testifies, the thoughts of Moses were not inspired in any degree, but his words were inspired, and it is with these we have to do. Certain learned gentlemen claim to have discovered internal and linguistic evidence that Moses did not write the Pentateuch, and then with the strangest inconsistency insist that it is part of the inspired Scriptures. It is said that when Kuenen heard of this absurd position taken by his English and American admirers and followers, he exclaimed, "I have exposed the forgery of the books, but I certainly never thought of associating God Almighty with the fraud."

Those, however, who do not believe that the Pentateuch is a shameless forgery, are compelled to believe, unless they are as inconsistent as the higher critics, that its language was given by inspiration of God. "The Lord said unto Moses"; "The Lord spake unto Moses, saying"; "God spake all these

words, saying"; "The Lord called unto Moses, and spake unto him out of the tabernacle of the congregation, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them," are phrases of constant occurrence all through the Pentateuch. It is plainly stated that the tables Moses received on the mount "were the work of God, and the writing was the writing of God, graven upon the tables"; "and the Lord spake unto Moses, face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend." Now, what are those who hold theories of inspiration, going to do with evidence like this, that might be multiplied indefinitely? The words just quoted are found more than five hundred times in the five books; and if Moses did not tell the truth, or if he yielded to a weak imagination, when he so often and so solemnly declares that the language he wrote and uttered was put into his mouth by the Lord, then his testimony is not worth a straw upon any subject whatever.

If the words were not inspired, why did he say, when the Israelites were nearing the end of their long journey in the wilderness, "Ye shall not add to the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish aught from it"? (Deut. iv. 2). Surely the meekest man on the earth could not have attached such transcendent importance to his own word, nor could he have said, unless he knew they were inspired, "These words which I command thee this day shall be in thine heart; and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes. And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house and on thy gates" (Deut. vi. 6-9). He everywhere asserts that the words he communicated to the people were the words God told him to deliver; he nowhere intimates that any

message he uttered was his own in thought or language; and we are fairly compelled to accept his testimony upon this point, or to abandon all confidence in him as a trustworthy witness in any particular. When the higher critics tell us that he did not write the Pentateuch, they might as well tell us that our Lord Jesus Christ and His apostles, who over and over say he did write it, were ignorant of what modern scholarship has discovered, or that they lent the sanction of their names to a gross fraud; and in either event they must be dismissed from the mind as not entitled to the least respect.

Turning to the second division of the Old Testament, which our Saviour recognized and adopted, we find David to be the principal actor and agent, through whom God made known His will; and we bring all the theories of inspiration side by side with his dying testimony. "Now these be the last words of David. David the son of Jesse said, and the man who was raised up on high, the anointed of the God of Jacob, and the sweet psalmist of Israel, said, The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and His word was in my tongue" (2 Sam. xxiii. 1, 2). He does not say, "The Spirit of the Lord thought by me," but "spake by me"; nor does he say, "His ideas were in my mind," but "His word was in my tongue." So far as we can gather from the record, his thoughts were not inspired at all; and it is probable from the use made of his Psalms in the New Testament that his language often bore a meaning far beyond his conception of its import; but it is certain that his words were given by inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

Hence the value of the written word as it is set forth in all of his Psalms. "The words of the Lord are pure words, as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times"; "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple; the statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the

heart; the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes." "Forever, O Lord, Thy word is settled in heaven." "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path." "The entrance of Thy words giveth light." "Thy word is true from the beginning." "Thou hast magnified Thy word above all Thy name," or above every other manifestation of Himself, in nature, or in science, or in human reason. In the historical books and in the Psalms, including the other poetical books, "The Lord said," "The Lord spake, saying," "Thus saith the Lord," "The word of the Lord came," occur about three hundred times; and are we to dismiss such testimony at the bidding of man's idle theories of inspiration? That word can do for us more than any earthly parent or power; for "when thou goest, it shall lead thee; when thou sleepest, it shall keep thee; when thou awakest, it shall talk with thee." No wonder it is said at the close of this second part of the Scriptures, "Every word of God is pure; . . . add thou not unto His words, lest He reprove thee, and thou be found a liar."

Glancing for a moment at the third division of the Old Testament, known as the Prophets, let us compare human theories with divine testimony. We learn that Jeremiah recoiled, as Moses did, from the disagreeable mission upon which he was sent, saying: "Ah! Lord God! behold, I cannot speak; for I am a child. But the Lord said unto me, Say not, I am a child, for thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak. . . . Then the Lord put forth His hand and touched my mouth. And the Lord said unto me, Behold, I have put my words in thy mouth." He did not say, observe, "I have put my thoughts in thy mind and left thee to selection of any language that occurs to thee as suitable," but "I have put my words in thy mouth." Hence, all through his prophecy, "Thus

saith the Lord," "The Lord said unto me," are found at brief intervals, frequently sounding out again and again in the same chapter. But precisely the same thing is true of all the other prophets, without a single exception. Every one of them claims that he was delivering the very message God told him to deliver, and in the words of God. No man can dispute this statement, and there is not a hint in any part of the prophecies that in the least passage the writers were cast back upon their own thoughts or their own words. "Hear the word of the Lord," "The word of the Lord came," "Thus saith the Lord God," and similar declarations, are found about twelve hundred times in the prophecies; "saith the Lord" being repeated twenty-four times in the four short chapters of Malachi.

Are we to make nothing of all this? Is it to be set aside at the bidding of man's wholly uncalled-for theories of inspiration? Because he chooses to fancy that there are different kinds and degrees of inspiration, because he prefers to believe in inspired thoughts and uninspired words, because he tries to comfort himself with dynamic inspiration, because he is opposed to mechanical inspiration, are we to treat the explicit testimony of the word itself, given in more than two thousand places, as of no value? Out with all of these foolish theories, that are not worth the paper on which they are written! Men have no right to their opinions, when God has most explicitly and fully revealed His truth, as He has done upon this subject. "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them"; and it is certain that the theories of inspiration have only darkened His counsel. He does not set before us the foolish task of trying to explain how His book is inspired, but to believe, because He says it, that it *is* inspired and verbally inspired.

About this there can be no doubt whatever, when we come to see the extent of the inspiration our Lord Jesus Christ promised to His apostles. "When they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak; for it shall be given you in that hour what ye shall speak; for it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you." At another time, He said, "When they bring you unto synagogues, and unto magistrates and powers, take ye no thought how or what thing ye shall answer, or what ye shall say: for the Holy Ghost shall teach you in the same hour what ye ought to say." At another time, still later, He said: "When they shall lead you and deliver you up, take no thought beforehand what ye shall speak, neither do ye premeditate; but whatsoever shall be given you in that hour, that speak ye, for it is not ye that speak, but the Holy Ghost."

It is impossible to imagine any stronger proof of verbal inspiration than is found in these passages. The apostles were actually forbidden to think, to premeditate, to prepare their defense, to give themselves the slightest concern; and this upon the ground that *they* were not to speak, but the Spirit of God would speak through them, that the words they ought to utter should be given them the same hour they were needed. If it be urged by those who hold theories of inspiration that this was a special promise for a special occasion, still the main point is conceded; for it is admitted that God did sometimes at least communicate His own words, without interfering with the mental idiosyncrasy and peculiar style of each of His servants. What He does at one time, He can do at another; and what He did for the apostles when they were called to defend themselves, He did when they were called to preach His Gospel and to write epistles.

Hence, on the day of Pentecost, "they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues,

as the Spirit gave them utterance." It was not as the Spirit gave them thoughts, but as the Spirit gave them utterance; and it is certain that their words were inspired, because they immediately spoke in more than a dozen different languages and dialects, with not one of which had they the slightest previous acquaintance. All human theories of inspiration vanish before the fact that a number of unlettered fishermen in a moment proclaimed, in tongues utterly unknown before that hour, the Gospel of the grace of God, showing conclusively that the very words were instantaneously communicated to them, and through them to others. So, then, the apostles of our Lord were endowed and qualified for their work as His messengers, in precisely the same way that distinguished the messengers of Jehovah in the Old Testament times, from Moses to Malachi. Thus the harmony of the two dispensations is wonderfully preserved—for what was spoken, what was written, by men chosen to be ambassadors and witnesses for the truth, was directly from God himself.

But was the inspiration of the apostles, so distinctly promised, and so signally proved, subsequently withdrawn, leaving them to inspired thoughts, but uninspired words? On the other hand, Paul boldly affirms: "Now, we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth." Dr. Charles Hodge well remarks:

"This is verbal inspiration, or the doctrine that the writers of the Scriptures were controlled by the Spirit of God in the choice of the words which they employed in communicating divine truth. This has been stigmatized as the mechanical theory of inspiration, degrading the sacred penmen into mere machines. It is objected to this doctrine that it leaves the diversity of style which marks the different portions of the Bible,

unaccounted for. But, if God can control the thoughts of a man without making him a machine, why cannot He control his language? And why may He not render each writer, whether poetical or prosaic, whether polished or rude, whether aphoristic or logical, infallible in the use of his characteristic style? If the language of the Bible be not inspired, then we have the truth communicated through the discolored and distorting medium of human imperfection. Paul's direct assertion is that the words which he used were taught by the Holy Ghost."

Elsewhere the same apostle says: "If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord." Again he says: "He therefore that despiseth, despiseth not man, but God, who hath also given unto us His Holy Spirit." It is impossible, then, that he could be in doubt of the inspiration of his epistles, or confess that he was not always and equally inspired in writing, as some strangely insist he admits, when he says to the Corinthians, "I think, also, that I have the Spirit of God." It is, in fact, the strongest assertion of his inspiration, when read in the light of the Revised Version. His enemies, who denied his apostleship, claimed that they were taught by the Holy Ghost, and he exclaims in cutting sarcasm, "I think that I also have the Spirit of God."* If you false teachers claim to be inspired, how much more can I make the claim, to whom the Holy Spirit imparts the very words communicated to the church! This is the apostle who is led by the Holy Ghost to announce that "all Scripture is given by inspiration of God." That is, the writings contained in God's book, and the writings being made up of words, it is certain that all the words, as originally spoken or written by the men chosen for this purpose, were given by inspiration of God.

* See remark by Editor, page 183.

Then follows Peter, urging the brethren to "be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us the apostles of the Lord and Saviour"; putting the commandment of the apostles on the same high plane of divine authority with the words of the holy prophets, of whom he writes: "The prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." If this testimony is true, then man's will had nothing to do, not even in the selection of the language, with the prophecy; but holy men of God spake, not thought, but spake, being borne along by the Holy Ghost. But Peter exalts the epistles, and all the epistles, of his brother Paul to the level of the other Scriptures which he says are inspired, without the will of man having any part in it whatever; and thus, the inspiration of both the Old and the New Testaments rests upon immovable grounds. It would be better not to believe in inspiration at all, than to believe any theory that excludes the supernatural control and unerring accuracy of every word of the original Scriptures. Between such a theory and infidelity there is only the lightest shadow.

The test of knowing God is precisely the same that it was in the days of the beloved John, who, speaking for himself, and in behalf of his brother apostles, says: "We are of God: he that knoweth God, heareth us; he that is not of God, heareth not us. Hereby know we the Spirit of truth, and the spirit of error." Diligent and prayerful study of the words of the Bible, comparing Scripture with Scripture to ascertain its full teaching, prompt acceptance of its testimony in its plain and obvious meaning, and unquestioning submission to its decision as of divine authority, furnish the only safeguard of the soul in these last and perilous days. The Holy Ghost, as if foreseeing the profane tampering and trifling with the word of God, so

common now, alas! with men professing to be Christians, closes the Canon of Scripture with the startling admonition: "I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book."

Thus there is the most perfect unanimity among all the witnesses whom God commissioned, concerning the inspiration of their messages and writings. It is a unanimity so striking, Robert Haldane truly said:

"Nothing can be more clearly, more expressly, or more precisely taught in the word of God. And while other important doctrines may be met with passages of seeming opposition, there is not in the language of the Scriptures one expression that even appears to contradict their plenary and verbal inspiration."

But, apart from the distinct and abundant teaching of the Bible upon this subject, which ought to settle the question forever with the Christian, reason demands an inspiration higher than the position recognized by any popular theory. In the language of Dr. Charles Hodge:

"The inspiration of the Scriptures extends to the words. A mere human report or record of a divine revelation must, of necessity, be not only fallible, but more or less erroneous. The thoughts are in the words. The two are inseparable. If the words, priest, sacrifice, ransom, expiation, propitiation, purification by blood, and the like, have no divine authority, then the doctrine which they embody has no authority."

With this all humble and earnest students of the Bible will agree, for they see daily accumulating evidence of superhuman wisdom and skill in the selection of its words,

even to the minutest particle; and never have they discovered a single mistake, nor a verse which they are vain enough to imagine they could improve after the most careful thought and the most laborious effort. The more they read the book, the more are they convinced that man could as easily have made the world as he could have produced such a work as this. Hence, they are not surprised to learn that those who were employed to write the book are represented as examining eagerly into the meaning of the words they had received from God. "Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when He testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow" (1 Pet. i. 11, 12). They were like amanuenses sitting down, after the Master had withdrawn, and seeking to make out, if possible, the significance of His wonderful communications. The more attentively and the longer a believer reads the book, the more clearly will he perceive that, like the love of Christ, it possesses a breadth, and length, and depth, and height, which he could never compass, if he should do nothing but study it for a thousand years.

He is impatient, therefore, of all theories, and flings them to the winds, that he may take the Bible at just what it says. Canon Farrar has summed up these various theories, calling the first

—"the *organic*, mechanical, or dictation theory. It held that every sentence, every word, nay, even every syllable, letter, and vowel-point of Scripture had been divinely and supernaturally imparted. . . . According to those who held, or possibly even hold, this theory [thank God, there are some who hold it, not as a theory, but as a fact] the Bible not only records but *is* a revelation, not only reveals but *is* a religion,

not only contains but *is* the word of God. . . . The second theory has been called the *dynamic*. It holds that the Holy Scripture was not 'dictated by,' but 'committed to writing under the guidance of' the Holy Spirit. . . . The truths are inspired by the Holy Spirit, the words and phrases are the result of the writer's own individuality; the material is of God, the form is of man. . . . There may be weaknesses and imperfections in the mode of expression; there can be none in the truth revealed. . . . The next theory may be called the theory of *illumination*. . . . Some have distinguished between the grace of *superintendency*, which merely saved from positive error; the grace of *elevation*, which uplifted the thoughts and words to a lofty standard; the grace of *direction*, which guided them alike in what they omitted as in what they expressed; and the grace of *suggestion*, which vouchsafed to supply both words and thoughts. . . . The next theory, which has been widely embraced, may be called the theory of *essential* as distinguished from *plenary* inspiration. Its favorite formula is, that the Bible *contains* the word of God, while it rejects, as inaccurate, the expression that the Bible *is* the word of God. . . . The fifth theory may be called that of *ordinary* inspiration. . . . The holders of this theory believe that the action of the Holy Spirit, as exercised in the inspiration of Scripture, is not generically distinct from the ordinary influence of that Holy Spirit upon the heart and intellect of Christian men, which all admit to be analogous to it. They believe that the Bible animates and awakens the religious consciousness of man, but they attach no infallible truthfulness to all its utterances, nor any divine sanctity to its incidental and non-religious teachings."

But even Canon Farrar, utterly unsound as he is upon this vital point, and therefore unsound in many of his doctrines, is forced to make the following remarkable admissions: "Undoubtedly there is a vast multitude of passages in which the inspired writers claim to be delivering the direct messages of God." If they make this claim in a vast multitude of passages, and in not a single passage abandon the claim, by what right does any man set aside their au-

thority, and substitute for their testimony his own wretched theory? Again, the popular preacher and author says, in meeting the charge that the sacred writers sometimes erred, "that they did so err I am not so irreverent as to assert, *nor has the widest learning and acutest ingenuity of scepticism ever pointed to one complete and demonstrable error of fact or doctrine in the Old or the New Testament.*" The italics are his own, and in the face of such an admission, how is it possible to avoid the conclusion that God gave the very words of Scripture?

Men may say that there was no need of inspiration in the historical books of the Bible, forgetting that it is an exceedingly difficult and rare thing to write history truthfully, or even the most common occurrences, as illustrated daily in the newspapers, although the reporters may have no temptation to lie. They may say that they cannot understand how God inspired the words, forgetting that they cannot understand any better how He inspired the thoughts. They may say that differences of style disprove verbal inspiration, forgetting that the very same mind has often used a different style in the composition of legal documents, fiction, poetry, and philosophical dissertations; forgetting that the very same mind uses one style in sending a message through an illiterate boy to laborers on his farm, and another style in transmitting his views to a political convention assembled in his interests, and another style in communicating the results of his investigations to a scientific association, and another style in expressing his good wishes for the success of a benevolent organization; forgetting that the Holy Spirit dwells in the believer, controlling his speech and actions without reducing him to the helpless condition of an unthinking machine, and without changing his style or natural gifts and tendencies. They may say that if verbal inspiration is true, the four accounts of the inscription on the cross of our Lord

would have been precisely alike, forgetting that they would have been precisely alike but for verbal inspiration, the Holy Ghost requiring the writers to arrange the words according to His special design in the preparation of each of the gospels, and that all taken together form the complete inscription. They may say that it was unworthy of the Spirit of God to concern Himself about an old cloke and the parchments, which Paul left at Troas, forgetting that it was altogether worthy of Him to consult the comfort of His faithful servant, sending for the things that are the symbols of service and study, if the critics had eyes to see, and reminding them, if they had ears to hear, that He will not forget the lonely prisoner suffering for His truth.

But amid all the cavils and objections of foolish and ignorant men the voice of God sounds out high and clear in more than two thousand places from Genesis to Revelation, affirming the inspiration of the very words of the sacred Scripture. Sinful creatures, that dwell in houses of clay, whose foundation is in the dust, which are crushed before the moth, whose days are as an handbreadth, may construct their little theories of inspiration, but above them all, and outlasting all, is "the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever. For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: but the word of the Lord endureth forever." "Forever, O Lord, Thy word is settled in heaven": "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."

DIFFICULTIES OF THE BIBLE AS TESTED BY THE LAWS OF EVIDENCE.

T. S. CHILDS, D.D.

UNDOUBTEDLY there are difficulties in the Bible. The question is whether these prove that it is not the plenary inspired Word of God. On the other hand, it may be suggested whether they do not confirm it as the work of God, for they at once put it in harmony with all His other works. If the Bible were without difficulties, it would, for us, be out of the line with everything else that God has made or done. Nature and Providence are full of difficulties. There is nothing in the Bible harder of explanation and reconciliation than are the facts that meet us everywhere in God's creative and providential realms. If these difficulties do not prove that Nature and Providence are not, from beginning to end, the works of God, they do not on the face of them prove that the Bible is not such. Let us not be misunderstood. We are not identifying the domains of nature and of grace. There has arisen a mode of meeting the objections to the Bible that, it seems to us, must logically destroy the Bible as a supernatural revelation. "The Christian Church," it has been said, "rests upon an empty grave." We accept the statement. But the decisive question is, whether that grave was emptied by natural law or by the immediate power of God. On that question hangs the other, whether Christianity is *a* religion or *the* religion. Christianity is a supernatural religion or it is nothing. Between it and all other religions a gulf is fixed which they who would pass cannot. Its kingdom is not of this world. Its concep-

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tion is supernatural. Its life is supernatural. Its charter is a supernatural book. Its force and motives come from beyond the skies. Its issues are greater than nature brings.

In the recognition which we gladly give of the beauties of analogy between the natural and the spiritual worlds, we must guard the limits of the two. They are not the same. That kingdom of heaven which He who overcame the sharpness of death has opened to all believers, is not a kingdom whose mighty and eternal sweep can be forced into the framework of natural law. The incarnation of Bethlehem, the rifled grave of Joseph of Arimathea, the ascension from Bethany to the throne of God, were not by "natural law in the spiritual world"! The difficulties of the Bible confirm it as a Divine work; not by identity, but by analogy.

Another remark to be made in regard to these difficulties is this: they sift the Church, and they test the faith of men. When the Master was followed by a great multitude that would take Him by force to make Him a king, and fleeing from them was followed yet again, it was time to prove them, and in utterances of profoundest truth He piled difficulty upon difficulty with increasing intensity to the end. "I am the bread that came down from heaven."

"How is it that He saith: I came down from heaven?"

"I am the living bread which came down from heaven. . . The bread that I will give is my flesh."

"How can this man give us His flesh to eat?"

"Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you."

"This is a hard saying, who can hear it?"

"No man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father." And from that time many of His disciples went back and walked no more with Him (John vi.).

Often in the history of the Church there come these hours of Capernaum when the crucial word must be spoken; when *that* difficulty must be thrown out which shall test the crowds who follow the Lord either to make Him a king after their own thought, or to share the loaves and the fishes; when it shall be seen who of His disciples will go back and walk no more with Him in the unworldliness of His reign, in the purity of His truth, in the mystery of His leadings; and who, clinging to His hand through all mystery, all darkness, all difficulty, will meet His question of infinite pathos, "Will ye also go away?" with the answer of absolute trust, "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life."

In dealing with the difficulties of the Scriptures, therefore, we have not the least idea that they will all be removed. Difficulties will remain. They are put there to remain. The Lord of hosts Himself is a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence upon which many stumble and fall and are broken. If a man is determined to commit suicide he can do it by the very means that God has created to preserve life—by fire or by water. Spiritual self-destruction is quite possible through the Word of Life itself. At the same time no man has a right to put needless difficulties in the Bible, or to make difficulties where none exist. More than this, every man is bound to deal as fairly at least with the Bible as he deals with his fellowmen in the ordinary relations of life. That which would give him no trouble as a judge upon the bench, or a juror in the box, he has no right to urge as a serious objection to the Scriptures. And a principle that any court of law would accept as removing a difficulty, where there is no reason to assume falsehood or mistake, may reasonably be applied, and must in all fairness be accepted, if it relieves any alleged difficulty of the Divine Word.

In testing at this time some of the difficulties of the

Scriptures by the accepted rules of evidence, hardly more can be done than to present a few of these rules as applicable to these difficulties. But the rules are of the widest application. The solution of one difficulty by them is the solution of a hundred.

Looking upon the Bible as a whole, let us refer first to the familiar precept that every man is to be presumed innocent until he is proved guilty. This is emphatically true of a man of good general reputation. Now the Bible is not a new book. It has been before the world for ages. It has a character. That it is on the whole a good book, the bitterest opposers of its plenary inspiration not only admit but assert. It is conceded that it is entitled to its name—the *Bible, the Book*.

Paine, indeed, thought, or rather said, that any man who could read and write could make a Bible equal to this. Mr. Ingersoll seems to believe that he himself is the man who can read and write. These are the only two, as far as our memory just now goes, who have felt competent to write the 90th Psalm and the ten commandments; the Sermon on the Mount and the 14th chapter of John; the 15th chapter of 1st Corinthians, and the 21st and 22d chapters of the Revelation. Leaving these exceptional judges out of the account, most readers of the Bible have considered it as something more than an ordinary book. Its character has generally been regarded as justifying its title.

It claims to be a truthful book. By every fair principle this claim must be allowed until it is shown to be false. Bancroft's "History of the United States" claims to be a reliable work. The claim is generally admitted. If a man now comes forward and asserts that it is false in whole or in details, by universal judgment he must prove his assertion. And obviously his proofs must be stronger than the evidences of the truth of the history. If this is

so in reference to a book that has not stood the test of half a century, emphatically is it true of a book whose character has been established through the searching scrutiny of friends and foes for fifteen centuries—aye, for twice fifteen centuries. If a man now affirms the Bible to be false, wholly or in part, it rests upon him in all fairness to prove his position. And his evidence must be stronger than that which supports the book. For three thousand years a growing mass of testimony to the truth of the Bible has been rolling up in the face of every objection that ingenuity, learning, and the bitterest hostility could present. Account for it as we may, that is the fact. There is therefore a reasonable presumption in its favor, and in favor of any specific statement that it makes. If then we find in it a positive statement, for example, as to the origin of man, and that statement is now confronted by another and contradictory one, the two do not stand on the same level. The new claimant must prove his position, and to prove it he must disprove the truth of the Scripture record. It is not enough to show that his proposition might be true, if we had no other information on the subject. He must show that the Scripture, with its mass of supporting and cumulative evidence, is false. And he must support his new proposition by a body of evidence stronger than this manifold evidence of ages by which the Scriptures are sustained. A mere conceivable hypothesis of how man *might* have originated, even though that hypothesis may have the support of certain analogies, so long as it is destitute of *proof* as to how man *did* originate, cannot stand against the positive statement of the Word of God that he originated in another way. And we cannot understand the eagerness with which men professing faith in the Bible, seem ready to yield its clear declaration for an hypothesis that admittedly has not a solitary positive proof to sustain it; an hypothesis that

logically must make the incarnation of the Son of God—if the term is retained—an outworking of natural law, which outworking ought long ago to have been surpassed by one born greater than Jesus of Nazareth.

The character of the Bible may justly claim to sustain its record till it is proved false. Deal with it as fairly as you deal with the red-handed anarchist. Let the Book be innocent till proved guilty. And if innocent, like the Incarnate Word, the written Word stands a true witness in all things forever. Condemned, crucified, buried, it will always rise again. It is a perilous thing to condemn the guiltless.

Another rule of law is this: "The testimony of a single witness, where there is no ground for suspecting either his ability or integrity, is a sufficient legal ground for belief." (Starkie on Ev., i., 550.) The mere silence of one witness, or of many witnesses, cannot set aside the clear, positive testimony of a single trustworthy witness. That Josephus does not mention events which Moses records, does not affect the truth of the Mosaic record. And his silence as to the Bethlehem massacre—even if no reason could be suggested for it, as there can be—cannot, under this rule of law, affect the positive testimony of Matthew that there was such a massacre.

The courts go farther than this. They say: "If a witness swear positively that he saw or heard a fact, and another *who was present* that he did not see or hear it, and the witnesses are equally faithworthy, the affirmative witness is to be believed." (Decisions of the Supreme Court of Errors of the State of Connecticut, vol. 6, p. 188.)

In the case referred to in that decision, the court set aside a verdict that had been rendered by the lower court on the negative testimony of eleven witnesses against the positive testimony of three. The principle established by that decision, and which is universally accepted as law, is

that the negative testimony of witnesses present at any given transaction, cannot set aside the positive testimony of a far less number of witnesses, or even of a single reliable witness.

The silence of any of the Evangelists in reference to an incident or event at which they may have been present, but which possibly they may not have noticed, or which they do not record, does not contradict in the least the testimony of *one* who says such an incident occurred. The fact of the marriage in Cana is not at all disturbed because John is the only witness who testifies to it. The rule applies to that extraordinary doubt of modern criticism: whether the Israelites were ever in Egypt, because, as affirmed, the monuments do not record their presence, nor their flight, nor the destruction of the Egyptian host at the Red Sea. Now leaving out of the argument the strong probability that the monuments do refer to their presence in Egypt, and the further probability that the Egyptians would not be likely to preserve on their monuments the record of their own ignominy and overthrow, the objection could not stand for a moment in any court of justice in the presence of the positive testimony of the record to the history in Egypt. All the more, as this testimony is sustained by an extraordinary weight of incidental corroborative evidence, and is involved in the whole subsequent history of the nation.

Grant, if you will, that there are improbabilities in parts of the history; still the courts rule that "Mere improbability can rarely supply a sufficient ground for disbelieving direct and unexceptionable witnesses of the fact where there was no room for mistake." (Starkie, i., 558. See also Greenleaf on Ev., i., 1, 14, 15.)

That canon, fairly applied, sweeps away no inconsiderable portion of the objections to the Scripture histories. Take the great decisive fact of the resurrection of Christ,

a fact that carries with it the whole Christian system, and the verity of the whole Christian revelation. It is a fact of testimony; of the testimony of many witnesses, under a great variety of circumstances, at many times and places, and extending through so long a period as to preclude all reasonable or admissible supposition of "mistake." No fact of ancient history can be proved by testimony if the resurrection of Christ cannot be. The proof stands by itself, positive, direct, unexceptionable as to the character and capacity of the witnesses. It is proof that the law of the land declares cannot be set aside by "mere improbability." And if this fact is established, everything essential to Christianity is established. The seal of the risen Christ is on the Old Testament: His blood is on the New Testament. It is throughout the living Book of the slain and living Lord.

Another very important rule of law is this: "In cases of conflicting evidence, the first step in the process of inquiry must naturally and obviously be, to ascertain whether the apparent inconsistencies and incongruities which it presents may not without violence be reconciled." (Starkie, i., 578.) "Where there is an apparent inconsistency or contradiction in the testimony of witnesses, such construction shall be put upon it as to make it agree if possible, for perjury is not to be presumed." (Decision Sup. Ct. of Errors of Conn., vol. 6, p. 189.) Nothing is more remarkable than the constant violation of this rule by many of the critics of the Bible. Their effort is to see, not if the testimony can be made to agree, but if, by any possibility, it can be forced to appear contradictory.

The courts take even stronger ground on the obligation of harmonizing apparently conflicting evidence. If the elements of reconciliation are not found in the evidence itself, they insist on the admission of any reasonable supposition that will explain the difficulty.

“Where doubt arises,” says Starkie (Ev., i., 586), “from circumstances of an apparently opposite and conflicting tendency, the first step in the natural order of inquiry is to ascertain whether they be not in reality reconcilable, especially when circumstances cannot be rejected without imputing perjury to a witness; for perjury is not to be presumed; and in the absence of all suspicion, that hypothesis is to be adopted which consists with and reconciles all the circumstances which the case supplies.” (See also Starkie, i., 578, 582.)

Take the familiar case of the taxing when Cyrenius was governor of Syria (Luke ii. 2). Everybody knows how confidently it was asserted that Luke was in error because Cyrenius' government of Syria was several years later than Luke makes it. Equally, every one knows how that difficulty was met by the supposition, made almost a certainty, that Cyrenius was twice governor of Syria, once at the time in question and once later. Even if the supposition were not as probable as it is, if there were no other way of solving the difficulty, we should be justified, by the principle of law, in assuming it, rather than to assume that a witness as intelligent as Luke, and with his opportunities of knowledge, and with no motive for misstatement, should either wilfully or carelessly have made so gross an error. Here the rule fits perfectly: “In the absence of all suspicion, *that hypothesis is to be adopted which consists with and reconciles all the circumstances which the case supplies.*”

In regard to certain objections to the Mosaic record, *e. g.*, the improbability of the desert sustaining the host of the Israelites—we select this as an example of a mass of like objections—Dean Stanley, while holding in general to the historic fact, says, the recorded miracles do not meet the difficulty, and we have no right to add to them. For “if we have no warrant to take away, we have no warrant

to add." If by this he meant we have no right to add to the inspired word *as a part of it* what is not in it, he is quite correct. But if he meant, as he evidently did, that we have no right to make a reasonable supposition to explain an apparent difficulty of the Word, no utterance can be more groundless. He might as well object that Moses could not possibly have led the Israelites through the desert forty years, because no man could do that without sleeping; and the record does not say that Moses slept during all that time, and "we have no warrant to add" to the record!

The same difficulty is urged by others from the present barrenness of the desert, which it is contended is substantially as it was in the time of the Exodus. This is to be met not so much by hypothesis as by the facts—(1) That the condition of the desert was very different then from its condition now. Because the country around Philadelphia cannot now support a tribe of Indians by hunting and fishing, it does not follow that it could not do this two hundred years ago. (2) God had undertaken to bring the nation out. If every miracle necessary to this end is not recorded, it does not prove that it was not wrought.

This suggests an obvious and very important consideration. *Facts may now be missing* which were perfectly well known at the time of the event, but which have not been preserved. Hence, if a difficulty can be removed by a reasonable supposition of a missing fact, we are entitled to make that supposition.

Webster (Works, v. 6, p. 64), in his address to the jury on the celebrated trial of the Knapps for the murder of Capt. White, of Salem, Mass., says: "In explaining circumstances of evidence which are apparently irreconcilable, or unaccountable, if a fact be suggested which at once accounts for all, and reconciles all, by whomsoever it may be stated, it is still difficult not to believe that such fact is

the true fact belonging to the case." The missing fact that was wanted in this case to show a motive for the murder, was the stealing of a will, or the purpose to steal a will, and this proved the true hypothesis.

To illustrate by a familiar incident of the Old Testament history. The prophets Jeremiah and Ezekiel foretell the fate of the last king of Judah, Zedekiah. (Jer. xxxii.; Ezek. xii.) They declare that he shall be taken captive by the king of Babylon, that he shall go to Babylon, and that he shall die in Babylon; yet Ezekiel expressly says that he shall not see Babylon. Now here is apparently as gross contradiction as there can be; and if our information stopped here it would be impossible to reconcile it. Fortunately, however, the explanation is given in the history. From 2 Kings xxv. we learn that the king of Babylon, when Zedekiah was brought into his presence at Riblah, ordered his eyes to be put out, and sent him blind to Babylon. So that he saw the king of Babylon, he went to Babylon, he died in Babylon, and yet he never saw Babylon. But—and this is the point of this familiar case—if this unexpected and extraordinary fact had not been stated, how absolutely impossible it would have been to give any satisfactory solution of the difficulty. It may be doubted whether any supposition as violent as this needs to be made to reconcile every alleged contradiction of the Bible.

A remarkable illustration of the power of a missing fact occurs in the history of the overthrow of Babylon itself. The Scripture account (Dan. v.) says that Belshazzar was king of Babylon; that he was in the city engaged in a feast at the time of its capture, and that he was slain.

Reliable secular historians give the name of the king as Nabonnedus or Labynetus, and state that he was not in the city when it was captured; that he was not killed, but taken prisoner, kindly treated, and allowed to retire to

private life. These different accounts were not only eagerly seized upon by skeptics as proofs of the error of the Scriptures, but even Biblical scholars admitted them to be incapable of reconciliation. No longer ago than when the writer was in the Theological Seminary, that prince of Biblical scholars, Addison Alexander, said that no solution of the difficulty was known. He was too wise a man to say that no solution was possible. Kitto, in his *Cyclopedia*, declared that no hypothesis *could* harmonize the accounts. Yet the reconciliation was perfectly simple. A cylinder of historic records discovered by Sir Henry Rawlinson in the ruins of Lower Babylon, showed that there were, at this time, two kings of Babylon, a father and a son. One was occupying a stronghold near the city; the other was defending the city itself. The latter was taken and slain; the former was spared. Thus, by the Providential bringing to light of a fact buried for centuries, that which had seemed to be, and which had repeatedly and triumphantly been proclaimed to be, and which had been given up *as* being an irreconcilable contradiction, was shown to be perfectly harmonious. Yet if the hypothesis of two kings had been suggested as an explanation, before the discovery of the fact, it would have been hissed out of court by the whole skeptical school.

The two accounts of the death of Judas have not passed out of the field of popular objection. Matthew (xxvii. 5) says he committed suicide. Luke (Acts i. 18) says he fell headlong, and burst asunder. He does not say where he fell from, or what were the circumstances of the fall; and it is certainly not impossible, or even improbable, that both accounts are true. The traitor hung himself, possibly on the verge of a precipice—the supposed spot furnishes all the conditions for this—and afterward (how long is not said), the rope, or the limb of the tree, gave way, and he fell, striking first on the rocks at

the foot of the tree, and then plunging over the precipice with the result described by Luke.

The case is not without a parallel. A few weeks since the papers noticed the death of a gentleman in one of our Western States. According to one account, he perished in a railroad disaster; according to another, he committed suicide—a contradiction almost exactly like that in the case of Judas. Yet there was no real discrepancy. With his wife and child, he was on the fatal train that met its doom at Chatsworth. His child was killed. He and his wife were taken from the ruins terribly injured. The wife soon died. In despair, and with no hope of his own life, he drew his pistol and sent the ball through his own head. He perished in the Chatsworth disaster, and he committed suicide.

The application of these principles of law—the admission of any reasonable hypothesis, or of an hypothesis that may seem improbable, if it removes the difficulty; the supposition of missing facts known at the time but now lost—principles of constant application in our courts of justice—releases at once the pressure from a large part of the objections to the inspired record. The accounts of the healing of the blind men at Jericho, and the Resurrection of Christ,—two of the most difficult of full explanation in the New Testament,—require no more than this. It is not hard to present reasonable hypotheses to meet the cases as they stand. And if all the facts were known to us, we believe the harmony would be as complete and as simple as that of the histories of the siege and capture of Babylon.

Our limits warn us to draw this paper to a close. We are aware we have trodden a field that may be quite familiar to the members of the Conference. But in the multiplied forms in which the truth of the Bible is now assailed, and among the thousands whose faith has been shaken by arguments that they are not prepared to answer,

it is possible that some of these suggestions may not be without force.

To such hearers, if such are here, and especially to those who are feeling the brunt and power of the skeptical objections that are pressing everywhere, we may say, changing in a single word the language of one of the most eminent of American jurists: "All that the Bible asks of men (on this field) is that they would be consistent with themselves; that they would treat its evidence as they treat the evidence of other things, and that they would try and judge its actors and witnesses as they deal with their fellow-men, when testifying to human affairs and actions in human tribunals." (Greenleaf.)

In the meantime, if there are difficulties that do not yield to present knowledge, we can afford to wait. Many objections once supposed to be unanswerable have been answered. And the process is going on. God is very patient. But we may be assured that He who, just as the occasion has demanded, has summoned up the silent witnesses to His Word from the valley of the Nile, from the stormy cliffs of Sinai, from the plains of Mesopotamia, and from the sullen shores of the Dead Sea, will not fail in the future to give all the confirmation of His truth that the assailed faith of His Church may need.

THE TESTIMONY OF THE APOSTLES TO INSPIRATION.

T. C. JOHNSON.

THE Apostles have given us no special treatise on the subject of inspiration, but they have not failed to leave on record a number of clear and direct statements regarding it, while many things in their writings are assumptive of a definite position on the subject. Their evident uprightness of character, consistency with themselves, loftiness of aim, honesty of purpose, and independence of each other, give the highest value to their testimony. It is incredible, under the circumstances, that they should all claim inspiration for themselves and each other, did they not possess it. And if they were inspired, their testimony as to the Old Testament Scriptures must be accepted. We shall consider *first*, what they testify as to the *fact* of inspiration; *second*, as to its extent; and *third*, as to its nature.

I.—AS TO THE FACT OF INSPIRATION.

The Apostles testify that the Scriptures are given by inspiration of God. According to their evidence, we have a Bible that was given us under the special guidance and direction of the Holy Spirit.

First. *They testify that the Spirit was promised and given them in such a way as to make them authoritative teachers.* John affirms that Jesus promised them this "other comforter," who should bring all things to their remembrance that he had taught them, should guide them into all the truth, and show them things to come. Peter,

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as reported by Luke, testifies that the Pentecostal experience was an actual reception of the Holy Ghost, whereby they were endued with power, and spoke and acted as they were moved. In all the testimony as to the gift of the Spirit, it is positively implied, that it would at least enable the Apostles to become infallible teachers of the truth. It was not intended to render them infallible as men. When they taught orally or in writing, it was their privilege and their bounden duty to do so under the direction and guidance of the Holy Spirit. They would naturally be most careful in what they committed to writing, and pen no word that was not prompted and approved by the Spirit. Thus, we are authorized to expect inspired Scriptures from teachers who enjoyed the special gift of the Holy Ghost.

Second. *The Apostles claim inspiration for their own personal writings.* This is true of them all, if we may regard an evident assumption as a claim. It seems that the Apostles are either directly or indirectly the human authors of the whole New Testament. Now, they invariably write with the authority and assurance of infallible teachers. They never theorize, or express mere opinions. They assert facts, proclaim doctrines, and give commandments that could only proceed from the Holy Spirit, or else expose them to the charge of being mere dogmatists, if not positive blasphemers. Like their Master, they teach as those having authority, and not as the scribes.

Paul and Peter evidently mean to give more directly the force of inspired authority to their epistles, by writing expressly in the character of Apostles of Jesus Christ. To write as an Apostle, was to write with authority; and to write with authority was to write under the guidance of the Spirit. To add force to this truth, we find Paul signing his name with his own hand as a token in every epistle (2 Thes. iii. 17). This would seem to imply that

unauthorized and erroneous epistles were being written to the churches, to which 2 Thes. ii. 2, 3, may refer. "Nor yet be troubled . . . by epistle *as from us*, as that the day of the Lord is now present: let no man beguile you in any wise." Paul was recognized as the true teacher and prophet, and his own name, written in his own hand, was the token both of the genuineness and inspiration of his epistles. In some instances we find the Apostles boldly asserting the truthfulness and perfection of what they have written, which, under the circumstances, would be the highest presumption and folly if they were not conscious of their own inspiration. John, at the close of his gospel, says, referring to himself: "This is the disciple which beareth witness of these things, and wrote these things; and we know that his witness is true" (Jno. xxi. 24). How could he *know* that the sublime statements in the very first verses of his gospel were true, if he had not penned them under the guidance of the Spirit; and that his record of the Saviour's most wonderful and mysterious teachings were accurate, if the Spirit had not brought these things to his remembrance? At the end of the Revelation he pronounces a most fearful anathema on any person who should add to or subtract from the words of that wonderful book which had almost wholly to do with the future. Could there be a stronger claim to its infallibility or inspiration?

Paul says, as to the directions he gives in the First Epistle to the Corinthians: "If any man thinketh himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him take knowledge of the things which I write unto you, that they are the commandment of the Lord" (1 Cor. xiv. 37). And in his Epistle to the Galatians he wishes it understood at the beginning, that he writes by direct, divine authority, and he pronounces the curse of God upon any man who should preach a different Gospel from that which he had preached, which

in this epistle he restates in detail. He must believe or know himself to write as instructed and moved by the Holy Ghost. But this Apostle's testimony is still more direct in 1 Cor., second chapter. He there shows that the subject-matter of apostolic teaching is something the natural man can neither understand nor teach. "But unto us," he says (ver. 10-13), "God revealed them through the Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. . . . That we might know the things that are freely given to us by God. Which things also we speak, not in words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Spirit teacheth." Here Paul plainly declares that the Holy Spirit is the author of the truth he teaches, and that it is under His guidance that he proclaims it whether orally or in writing.

In the seventh chapter, verse 25, the Apostle says: "Now, concerning virgins, I have no commandment of the Lord; but I give my judgment, as one that hath obtained mercy of the Lord to be faithful." Also in verse 40, speaking of a widow in the "present distress," previously referred to, he says: "But she is happier, if she abide as she is, after my judgment, and I think that I also have the Spirit of God." These passages show: *First*, that the epistle, as a whole, consists of doctrines, commandments, etc., received directly from the Lord by revelation. *Second*, that the directions referred to in these passages are from his own judgment; but, *third*, that he *thinks* or *believes* himself to be giving them under the guidance of the Spirit. This modest claim to inspiration where he gives his judgment, does, in reality, emphasize the full inspiration of all his epistles.*

The term, "*think*," in the last passage above, does not imply a doubt in the Apostle's mind. The original word, *dokeo*, is ordinarily used as a modest and courteous way of expressing a strong conviction. So Paul writes and teaches

* Compare Dr. Brookes' Paper on this subject, p. 159.—ED.

as one who has the Spirit of God, and has obtained mercy of the Lord to be faithful.

Third. *The Apostles bear testimony to the inspiration of each other.* This they do in recognizing each other as of equal authority in their works and teaching, and classing the apostolic college with the prophets as the foundation upon which the Church is built, Jesus Christ being the chief corner-stone. But Peter bears direct testimony to the inspiration of Paul's epistles. In his Second Epistle, iii. 15, 16, he says: "Account that the long-suffering of our Lord is salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also, according to the wisdom given to him, wrote unto you; as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; wherein are some things hard to be understood, which the ignorant and unsteadfast wrest, as they do also the other Scriptures, unto their own destruction." Here, *first*, Peter classes *all* Paul's epistles with "*the other Scriptures*," referring, doubtless, to the Old Testament, and probably, also, to other apostolic writings. *Second*, he states that Paul wrote according to the *wisdom given* to him. This most evidently refers to supernatural wisdom. *Third*, he states that there are some things in these epistles "hard to be understood," which is not a reflection on Paul's perspicuity, but a recognition of the supernatural nature of the teaching. *Fourth*, he states that certain persons wrest them to their own destruction. Such could not be the case were the epistles not inspired by the Holy Ghost. This testimony is conclusive as to Paul's epistles, which make up such a large portion of the New Testament. And it might be noted that in that little word "also,"—"Our beloved brother Paul *also* wrote,"—Peter suggests that his own and other apostolic writings come under the same head. Thus, inasmuch as all the New Testament was written by the Apostles or under their direction, we have their own very clear testimony to the inspiration of this portion of our Bible.

Fourth. *The Apostles testify to the inspiration of the Old Testament Scriptures.* Their Old Testament was certainly identical with ours. Wherever they use the term Scripture or Scriptures, they refer to this collection of writings.

First. They refer to them as "the *Holy Scriptures*," which points to God as their author. Also their human authors are spoken of as holy men, which would indicate that in addition to being upright in character, they were under the special influence of the Holy Spirit.

Second. The Apostles refer to them and quote them in such a way as to assert their infallibility. There was an end of all controversy when they could say "*it is written.*" "What saith the Scriptures?" was Paul's ultimate appeal, and the strongest argument for the truth of the Gospel was that its great facts were "according to the Scriptures." They make their quotations from all parts of the Old Testament, and refer them to the Holy Spirit and to their human authors interchangeably. Quite frequently the Holy Spirit is referred to as the principal, while the human author is not mentioned at all, or is mentioned as the agent or organ through which the Spirit speaks.

Third. They positively assert their inspiration. Peter testifies that "no prophecy ever came by the will of man: but men spake from God, being moved by the Holy Ghost." This at least asserts the inspiration of the Old Testament as a whole, since the prophetic element is the very soul and substance of it. And Paul says (Rom. xv. 4) that "*Whatsoever* things were written aforetime, were written for our learning, that through patience and through comfort of the Scriptures we might have hope." They were all written for the use of the Church, and no one but the "Spirit of the prophets" was competent to guide in their writing. Also the familiar passage in 2 Tim. iii.

15-17, declares to Timothy, as in the new version, that "from a babe thou hast known the sacred writings which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. Every Scripture inspired of God is also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work." Here the *sacred writings* are evidently all the Old Testament Scriptures and the "every Scripture inspired of God" is certainly no less comprehensive, while it would also include the apostolic writings. The Apostles, like ourselves, applied the term "Scripture" to none but the sacred writings, and they nowhere speak of any Scripture as uninspired, and there is no reason for supposing that Paul implies such a thing in the passage above. But this point will come up again.

Thus we have the testimony of the Apostles to the *fact* that the Bible as we have it is inspired. We come now to their evidence as to the extent of this inspiration.

II.—THE EXTENT OF INSPIRATION.

Some regard certain books and parts of books as inspired and others as not. Others hold that while the Bible as a whole is inspired, it nevertheless contains more or less matter erroneous or otherwise for which the Holy Spirit is not responsible. Some also contend that while the Spirit guided in the selection of matter, the authors were left to themselves in choice of words and sentences through which to communicate it. But the testimony of the Apostles is—

First. That inspiration attaches to all the books in all their parts. This appears in the testimony already produced. There is nothing in all they say that would cast a suspicion on any book or any part of a book. To them it

was all "Holy Scripture." Of the thirty-nine books of the Old Testament they quote or refer to all but five, namely, Ruth, Ezra, Nehemiah, Song of Solomon, and Obadiah. When we remember that they were not quoting to prove inspiration, nor even to show that they recognized it, this wide range of quotations is remarkable, and demonstrates their settled belief in the full inspiration of all the books. Those they omit to quote represent the historical, prophetic, and poetical portions, proving that no class of writings was especially slighted.

Second. That inspiration attaches to each and every thought and expression contained in the Bible as originally given. This means that whatever was written down, even to the smallest details, was in accordance with the will and direction of the Holy Spirit. So that the writers put in nothing that was erroneous, nothing that was irrelative, and nothing that was unprofitable. Each expression had an object which the Holy Spirit wished to conserve. Thus, John testifies that not a word could be added to or taken from his book of Revelation without God's severest displeasure. Peter does not intimate that the "some things hard to be understood," written by Paul, might be erroneous theories of his own, and need give no one any trouble. He clearly implies that he wrote nothing except what the Spirit moved him to write. Paul declares, in a passage noticed above, that "every Scripture inspired of God is also profitable," etc. In the margin of the New Version is the reading: "Every Scripture is inspired of God, and profitable," etc. This translation of "*pasa graphe*"—every Scripture—is undoubtedly the correct one, and must embrace every sentence of all Scripture. According to the marginal rendering, we have Paul's testimony clear and indisputable to the inspiration of everything in detail that the sacred writers penned. According to the rendering in the text, there may be two

interpretations. One is, that every Scripture *that is inspired* is also profitable. The other, every Scripture, *since it is inspired*, is also profitable. The marginal reading, the context, and the general tenor of Scripture, would certainly favor the latter interpretation. The Apostle commends Timothy for his familiarity with the Scriptures, which, being known by him in every part, would make him *wise* unto salvation, and thoroughly furnish him unto every good work. And what he really says in this text is, that every Scripture is profitable, because inspired of God. In the expression, "sacred writings," he refers to what Timothy knew, as a whole. In the "every Scripture inspired of God," he advances to what Timothy knew in detail. The "sacred writings" are the Old Testament, "every Scripture" of which, being inspired of God, is profitable.

The Apostles surely assume this truth in all their quotations. The only evidence needed for the divine authority of a passage of Scripture was, that "it is written." The only criterion for the selection of a passage was, that it was applicable to the point in hand.

Third. Their testimony is, that inspiration attaches to the very words of Scripture. That is, that the Holy Spirit "moved" the writers, not only in the selection and production of thought, but also in the choice of language for its expression. This they assume when they quote and insist on particular words as divine authority for a doctrine or statement. Thus, in Galatians, iii. 16, Paul argues that the promise to Abraham and his seed, had reference to Christ, because the term, *seed*, as of one, and not *seeds*, as of many, was used. The Holy Spirit had clothed the thought with its proper word.

It is true they often vary from the original in their quotations. But they vary under the guidance of the Spirit, who, of course, is not always confined to a particu-

lar word or sentence for the expression of a particular thought.

But Paul clearly testifies to verbal inspiration in 1 Cor. ii. 13. "Which things," he says, the things revealed and taught by the Spirit, "which things, also, we speak, not in words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Spirit teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual." There it is, plainly. The Spirit taught the words to be used. There are different translations of the last clause of the verse, but the meaning is evidently that of appropriately clothing thought given by the Spirit in words given by the Spirit. John, also, in warning against addition to or subtraction from the Revelation, makes his warning apply to the very words. None must be added. None must be taken away. None must be changed, for that would be taking away some and adding others. Why such warning, if the very words were not divine?

III.—THE NATURE OF INSPIRATION.

We consider, finally and briefly, the testimony of the Apostles as to the nature of inspiration. Some would make the Biblical writers mere machines in the hands of the Spirit, while others would define inspiration simply as spiritual illumination. But so far as the Apostles throw any light upon this subject, they show, *first*, that while the writers were controlled by the Spirit, they at the same time used their own faculties in the communication of truth. Thus, Paul claims to use his judgment in giving directions and advice to the Corinthian Christians, while at the same time he claims to be guided by the Spirit. According to Peter, the "will of man" was held in abeyance, while "men spake from God, being moved by the Holy Ghost." The original word for "moved" is *phero*, "to bear." The writers were *borne along* in their work by the Spirit. The Spirit's will, instead of their own, pre-

sided over their faculties. It was the men who spake—using their own faculties, their own style, their own tongue, and even their own vocabulary; but they spake as moved, not by their own will or reason, but by the Holy Spirit.

This same testimony also shows, in the *second place*, that inspiration is much more than spiritual illumination. This latter would not exclude the “will of man.” It might enable him to understand and speak the truth with fluency and power, but he would speak as elevated and influenced by the Holy Spirit, but not as moved thereby in such a way that the Spirit would be responsible for all that he should say.

The wisdom with which Paul wrote, according to his own testimony and that of Peter, was a wisdom not of this world; not even human wisdom illuminated. It was the wisdom of the Spirit that enabled him to write things future, things supernatural, and things perfectly adapted to human needs.

Still another point, in the *third place*, stands out clear enough in this testimony. It is that the *fundamental* idea in inspiration is that men were rendered infallible in the *communication* of matter, whether of truth revealed, truth discovered, sins and follies of devils and men, mere personal matters between the writers and others, or what not. They recognize the vast difference between receiving, whether by revelation or otherwise, and communicating to others. Men *spake* as they were moved. Paul *wrote* according to the wisdom given him. The things which he *wrote* were the commandments of God. They all *spake* or *wrote* as the Spirit gave them *utterance*. In many cases the inspiration embraces the receiving, but in every case it attaches to the communicating. Herein is the very soul of the great doctrine, as shown by all the apostolic testimony. This thought in

connection with the nature of inspiration also emphasizes the truth of verbal inspiration. To give up *verbal* inspiration would indeed be to give up the very soul of the doctrine. The Apostles clearly teach that the Holy Spirit has so inspired men as to make their *writings* His own.

We are left in the dark as to the exact method of the Spirit's operation on the mind in His work of inspiration. But it is sufficient for us that the apostolic testimony falls in with all other in assuring us a Bible that is without any mixture of error, and is for us a perfect rule of faith and practice.

We have said that in the very nature of the case this testimony of the Apostles is of the very highest value. Paul and Peter and John have been examined as the chief witnesses. If modern critics would look upon the two latter as unlearned men, not capable of taking a critical view of the subject, they certainly cannot so look upon Paul. Though they regard the human intellect of Jesus as untrained and unscientific, yet they cannot deny to Paul, both morally and intellectually, the ability to cope with any of them in the search after truth. He is their equal at least in social standing, in intellectual power, in mental training, in the love of truth, and in critical insight. He was a master in Roman law and learning. He had studied the Greek poets and was versed in her philosophy, and he certainly knew as much about the character and genius of the Hebrew language, which to him was a living tongue, as those in our day who pride themselves on being experts in the "higher criticism." Men talk about the light of the nineteenth century, as if wisdom had never entered the world before its dawn. There are many things which the world knows now that Paul was ignorant of; but upon a thousand things, and especially upon the subject in hand, he was by far more

competent to sit in judgment than any scientific or philological expert of the present day.

We listen to the jargon of biblical criticism of to-day that comes from the giant intellects on both sides of the waters. We admire the learning and research and respect the honesty of many of them; while we are left in utter confusion as to just how much Scripture we have, or whether indeed we have any or not. From these we turn to the great Apostle to the Greeks and Romans. In breadth of intellect, in sweep of vision, in consecration to the truth, and in originality of research, he is more than a match for all of them. While he speaks from the vantage-ground of a nearer and clearer view, and of a much "higher criticism" than any of their most able exponents, whose testimony shall we receive? For my own part, I would not exchange an uninspired opinion of the Apostle Paul on the things concerning the kingdom of Christ for the mature and unanimous verdict of all these modern critics combined. What the Apostle gives us is reasonable, clear, and convincing, and provides us with a sure foundation on which to stand. He seals to us the "faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance," that "all Scripture is given by inspiration of God." And while he and the other Apostles bear their perpetual testimony down through the ages, there comes also the ever-living, never-changing voice from above, "*These* are my witnesses, hear ye them."

THE WONDERFUL BOOK.

JAMES E. GILBERT, D.D.

THE honey-bee constructs a waxen cell and deposits therein its future food, made of sweet juices extracted from the flowers. Men marvel at the tiny store-house, its delicious contents, and the adaptation of each to the other, as exhibitions of an intelligence and skill possessed only by the provident insect. So our Bible is a depository of precious truths. Its structure is unique, well fitted to receive and preserve what is there laid up for the edification and comfort of mankind. The volume presents to the student of to-day a series of wonders—the marks of its superhuman authorship.

I. The first wonder which we shall mention is the unity of its Testaments.

The two great parts into which the book is divided were written to set forth two great systems of religion—the Jewish and the Christian. Outwardly these religions were totally dissimilar. The former was designed for a single people—the descendants of Abraham. It was in close relations with the civil government. Its ministers and houses of worship were supported chiefly from the public treasury, and were frequently used as political agencies. It had an elaborate and expensive ceremonial. It enacted many laws for the preservation of race purity, for the integrity and defense of the nation, for the good order of society, for the regulation of domestic life, for the government of the priesthood, for the observance of times and seasons, and for the administration of rites.

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The Christian religion was designed for all the posterity of Adam; it offered no barrier to the freest intercourse of the races; it required every disciple to be a world-wide propagandist. It sought no alliance with the State,—it allowed none; it openly proclaimed its kingdom as not of this world. It depended not upon taxes, but upon gifts, and it measured these not by tithes, but by ability. It prescribed no forms of worship; its only ordinances, the initiative baptism and the memorial supper, were not regulated by rules. It compressed all laws into two—love to God and love to man.

The Testaments are full records of these widely dissimilar religions—their rise, progress, and establishment; their doctrine, practice, and spirit. So perfect are the records that the devotee might have learned therein concerning all his duties and privileges, and, if both systems of religion were to perish from the earth, they might be reproduced, with all their distinguishing characteristics, from these same old documents. And yet the two Testaments, written by two classes of men for distinct and separate purposes, when brought together are found to be parts of one great whole. There is a vital and organic connection between them. Neither is perfect without the other. In fact the New is an expected outcome and product, the natural expansion and complement of the Old. And what is more remarkable—on reading the entire volume, whose two Testaments are bound together by delicate threads running through both—one discovers that in reality *there were not two religions, but one religion*; that Judaism was the preparatory and Christianity the final form of one great covenant between the eternal Father and His erring children.

How shall such unity be explained? It could not have been fortuitous. Neither could it have come through human wisdom alone. For who shall penetrate below the

surface of things and discover the purpose of the Almighty? And who shall so describe passing events that in the sequel they shall appear but parts of one plan covering the ages? And who is able to make dissimilar things agree? Besides, the conditions under which the Biblical writers performed their tasks precluded any concerted action among them. The Old Testament, completed four centuries before the Christian era began, could not have been shaped with reference to subsequent writings. The New Testament penmen, acting as mere men, had many reasons for laying an entirely new foundation. Christianity came to succeed or displace Judaism. It proposed to abolish venerable institutions as no longer needed, and change the customs and manners of the people. How natural the inference that with these institutions, customs, and manners, the books wherein they were taught should likewise be rejected! Many well-informed disciples have reached that conclusion: sects have been built upon it. Moreover, the founders of the Christian system were hated and persecuted by the dignitaries of the Jewish Church. Remembering the death of their Master, smarting under a sense of personal wrong, how could the writers of the New Testament become the authors of the second half of the sacred volume, ingeniously fitting it to the first half then in the custody of their enemies?

It may be replied that Christianity was evolved from Judaism; that Christ fulfilled Messianic prophecies; that the writers only recognized what had become historic; and that their only hope of success was to show the connection between the old and the new. Grant all this. But if there was an evolution, there must have been an involution. It follows that God established Judaism with such inherent properties that in the fullness of time it could be transformed into Christianity, and the essentials of spiritual life be retained. But how were a few men

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qualified to note the transformation? Jesus of Nazareth did not meet the Jewish expectation of the Messiah. The doctors of that time interpreted the prophecies as pointing to an earthly prince. Even the followers of Jesus, being Jews, imbibed these notions and held them tenaciously. Shortly after His crucifixion they cried in sorrow, "We trusted that it had been He which should have redeemed Israel," and after His resurrection they eagerly inquired of Him, "Lord, wilt Thou at this time restore again the kingdom of Israel?" It is evident that during the entire earthly career of Jesus, His followers knew Him not. To be sure, very early in the ministry, Andrew said, "We have found the Messiah," and Philip said, "We have found Him of whom Moses in the law and the prophets did write"; and, later, Peter exclaimed, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." But if they believed Him to be divine, the long promised one, it is certain that they regarded Him only as the deliverer of their nation from the Roman power.

How, then, were these men divested of such opinions? How did they afterward learn the spiritual mission of Jesus? How did they come at the true sense of the Old Testament which the learned men had failed to acquire by diligent study? And how, with these improved ideas, could they, unlettered and unknown, write treatises which, in after-ages, should be accepted as faithful expositions of the writings of the old prophets? There is but one reasonable answer to these questions, and that is given in the writings themselves—they were divinely helped. We are expressly told that Peter's imperfect faith was not by the unassisted exercise of his powers, for Jesus said, "Flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." Toward the close of His ministry, the Master informed His disciples that after His departure the Holy Spirit should come to them and lead them into

all truth, and added, "He"—that is, the Spirit—"shall testify of me." "He shall take of the things of mine, and show them unto you." Paul said, "It pleased God to reveal His Son in me"; and, in his first letter to the Corinthians, he declared, "No man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost." In short the new conception of Jesus which constitutes the chief feature of the New Testament, was obtained by inspiration. "Holy men spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."

II. This brings us to another Biblical wonder, the symmetrical growth of each Testament.

If, in a brief space of time, a man, or a company of men, had written a treatise on Judaism or Christianity, an orderly handling of either subject might be expected. But the Testaments were not produced in that way. They were formed gradually—they grew. About thirty different men, residing in Egypt, Arabia, Palestine, and Babylon, were employed on the Old Testament, and they were distributed over eleven centuries, beginning with 1500 B.C., very few of them being contemporary. The New Testament was written by eight men, scattered about the Roman empire, having but little association together, and they were occupied, from first to last, about sixty years. What might be expected under such circumstances? Just what always occurs in every department of purely human endeavor, provided these men wrote self-moved. Whatever man does is imperfect. They who come after discover and correct the mistakes of those who went before. Each Testament, therefore, if it was the work of men, ought to present a series of advances from error to truth, from lesser to fuller knowledge.

What did occur? Samuel did not correct Moses: Malachi did not dispute Samuel. The thirty writers of the Old Testament are in full accord throughout. The work of each,

perfect in itself, needed no revision. No one assumed superiority over another. Each accepted at its full original value what his predecessors wrote. Each had one and the same great theme, religion—the same religion, always the same religion. No one, however religion fared among the people, whether it was received or rejected, appeared to know any defect in religion, or dream of any change in it. Each taught with boldness the same great fundamental and saving truths, whether men would hear or forbear. Each had one end in view, to testify of the promised Saviour, who was coming through the seed of Abraham, and to prepare for His advent. And, when the last sentence was written, that purpose was as successfully accomplished as if, living in the same city at the same time, they had been permitted to hold frequent conference for the joint performance of such a task under specific directions, with the materials carefully collected and placed in their hands.

So it was with the writers of the New Testament. The Judaizing influence at Jerusalem, tending to ceremonial bondage,—the subtle speculations of Grecian philosophers, tending toward Gnosticism,—the abominations of Paganism, entrenched at the capital of the empire, working toward ecclesiastical imperialism,—the unrest and hatred of subdued provinces provoking revolt and tumult,—the intrigues of ambitious men seeking place and plunder,—the distinctions of race and rank, causing endless discussions concerning natural and acquired rights,—the persecutions of the followers of Jesus, breaking up their homes, and casting them out into the world as strangers,—these, and many other circumstances by which the early Christian Church was distracted, did not move those eight men from a common purpose. Working apart, they worked together. They were never diverted from their one theme, religion—the same religion taught in the Old

Testament, but that religion now a gospel, the promised Saviour having become historic. They never criticise or oppose each other. Each appears to have a definite part. Their completed writings show in an orderly and beautiful manner how the Christ came, how He established His kingdom, how He invited all men into it, how He treats those who enter, how finally that kingdom shall become universal.

The marvellous symmetry of the Testaments will further appear in the logical order of the books of which they are composed. Our English version exhibits a progress that is not only historical and dispensational, but natural. In each Testament there is first history, then doctrine, afterward prophecy,—not to say that any part is wholly destitute of any one of these elements, for then it would have been worthless in the period and polity to which it belonged, but that the chief characteristics are as indicated. The whole Bible, its two Testaments joined, is in six great sections,—history, doctrine, prophecy, history, doctrine, prophecy. And this is the order in which all truth must unfold. Facts must be gathered before principles can be discovered and stated. But every fundamental tenet, every governing law of conduct, prompts to the diligent search for more-extended applications, and this leads out into the realm of the unknown. Doctrine is the child of history and the parent of prophecy, and prophecy is only history written in advance. Thus, each Testament is built as a perfect mind might be expected to build it—the record of what has been, the rule of what ought to be, the promise of what shall be. Precisely so every science has its data, its laws, and its hypotheses.

The symmetry appears, also, in the adaptation of the form and dimensions of the several parts. This admits of very extended illustration. We have time for a few

points only. Consider the historical part. Its purpose is to show that back of all natural phenomena, and back of all human endeavor, there is a supreme intelligence, a benevolent spirit, working according to its own will. Men are represented as acting freely, but results are produced which human wisdom could never have conceived nor human power executed. Nature's forces, ordinarily operating according to an established method, are made at times to obey a superior force, handling them for a special end. Now, in the Old Testament, this exhibit is made in creation, in families, in tribes, and in nations. The condition of the ancient world required it to be made there first, and in that order. The individual must be delivered from the world of sense, from absolute subjection to father, and chief, and king, before he can assume his rightful place as a creature of God. The importance of this work would lead us to expect that it would not be hastily done. The seventeen books of Old Testament history, sketching thirty-five centuries, fully meet this expectation. The broader the generalization, the more reliable the conclusion. Passing over to New Testament history, we find the supernatural displayed, not in nature, not in families, not in tribes, not in nations, as in the Old Testament, but in man and in the church. The four gospels are four witnesses that God came into humanity, in the land of the Jews, and seeks to come into universal humanity. This exalts the individual from the creature to the child state. The Acts of the Apostles display the ecclesia, or congregation of individuals into whose lives God has come, whom He has united for His service. Is not such history marvellous?

Turn now to the doctrinal books, in which are given the principles and maxims drawn from the history. Here again we shall find progress, proportion, and beauty. Old Testament doctrine is in five books, all poetic in form.

Job taught the doctrines of Providence. David and others in the Psalms taught the doctrines of worship. Solomon taught the doctrines of righteousness in Proverbs and Ecclesiastes, and the doctrines of spiritual communion in the Canticles, under the symbolism of Oriental domestic life. Is not this a true order of instruction—Providence, worship, righteousness, communion? Was it not all the teaching possible on the basis of Old Testament history? But in the New Testament, after the history of God's entrance into the individual and of the union of such individuals in a body, other doctrine may be given. The history of all phases of the supernatural being complete, all doctrine showing man's relation and duty thereto may be unfolded likewise. See how large is the space now occupied! Five or six men are employed, men as unlike as men ever were. They proceed from various starting-points. They select occasions and adopt in the main the epistolary plan. Twenty-one pamphlets appear, addressed to churches, to individuals, and to peoples. They accept what Job, David, and Solomon had to say, but expand their teachings to apply to the child of God, to the individual who has experienced a new birth, and they explain many things long involved in mystery. Wonderful as all this is, it is more wonderful that the eight or nine teachers, Job, David, Solomon, Paul, Peter, James, John, Jude, all had one system of philosophy. They seem to have been perfectly agreed in the science of things human and divine, and the causes in which they are contained. They were not of the Garden, or the Porch, or the Lyceum, or the Academy, but of the Temple. Their great postulates were: God, the first cause, is a loving Father; man, the sinner, has been redeemed; salvation provided, must be accepted.

Look now at Bible prophecy. Is it not the necessary complement to the history and doctrine? Who can study

what God has done in the world of matter and in the world of mind without asking what He will do? Who can trust a superintending power, worship the supreme good and seek after righteousness and communion without desires reaching toward things beyond? After the death of Solomon, Old Testament history and doctrine being complete, there arose a very remarkable body of men. They were historians in the sense that they recorded passing events; they were teachers in the sense that they called their contemporaries to their duties. But they were more. They had their eyes on the future, to prepare for which was their chief mission. They wrote of the passing hour in the light of coming time. Seventeen pamphlets fell from their pens, awakening hope of a better day. In like manner, after the New Testament history and doctrine the spirit of inquiry would naturally arise. What shall be the outcome of this supernatural life lived in the land of the Jews? What reception will it have in the world? What awaits this Church established by Him? What effect will this doctrine have upon men? Prophecy alone can answer. One man, the beloved of Jesus, in his old age, exiled in Patmos, drew the curtain that hides the distant centuries and made known the ultimate universal triumph. That Apocalyptic vision, then humanly impossible, was absolutely essential. Anything more would have been superfluous; anything less would have doomed to oblivion all that went before.

It may be urged that the order of the books in our English Bible is not the order in which they were written, nor the order in which they were first arranged. That fact signifies nothing against the other fact of symmetry, but much in its favor. Suppose forty men, working in different quarries for sixteen centuries, hew out stone. The blocks are laid up as rapidly as they appear to serve a present purpose. But when all is done it is

discovered that they may be rearranged, and that without application of square or chisel they may be builded into a new form, more beautiful, as if each block had been expressly prepared for its particular place. Such is the Bible. History, doctrine, and prophecy are wrought together as no skilled human artist could fit them into their respective positions.

III. The last wonderful feature of the Bible to be mentioned at this time is its adaptation to human need.

It is well suited to man's intellect. Its truths are the most sublime that ever occupied or ever can occupy the mind, and their contemplation is fitted to exalt all the faculties. Besides, they are cast in such form as to make their acquisition both pleasing and profitable. Its pictorial representations engage the imagination. Its organic unity and symmetry, already described, commend it to the reasoning powers. Its seed-thoughts, deposited in extended narratives, require the analytic and the synthetic process for their separation and classification. Its grand perspective of the centuries and its lofty epochal characters awaken enthusiasm for study. Its steady march of events from the fall in Eden to the law on Sinai, and thence to the sacrifice on Calvary, and its commissioned Church going forth into the nations to testify until the promised Millennial morning, give meaning to earth's struggles and furnish an adequate basis for philosophical investigation. Its institutions, beginning in weakness, rising into power, and promoting man's highest good, fill the mind with awe and gratify the organizing and constructive disposition. Its types and symbols, surrendered at length for the prefigured substance, cultivate the habit of penetrating below the temporary and phenomenal to learn the permanent and the essential. Its uniform method, from fact to doctrine, from doctrine to duty, tends to invigorate the mind by exciting it to normal

activity. Its style—historic, poetic, didactic, argumentative, hortatory, and denunciatory—meets the varied mental states. To sum up all in one sentence, the Scriptures of the Old and the New Testament constitute a field in which the noblest intellect may expatiate forever with delight, and continually advance from strength to strength and from glory to glory.

Again, the Bible is adapted to man's social need. It fully recognizes all the earthly relations sustained by the individual, and defines and enjoins the duties of those relations. Its ideal home is that for which every true heart aspires. Without the Bible man has never made a home. Here the words husband, wife, father, mother, son, daughter, brother, sister, are encircled with imperishable glory. The family, as presented in the Bible, will never cease to be attractive, as the asylum of man, the sanctuary of woman, the nursery of the coming generation. The Bible contains the fundamental principles of civil government, so delivered that under any form of monarchy or democracy they are fitted to produce a perfect State. If constitutions and statutes could be made in harmony with the teachings of this Book, every grievance might be redressed, order and tranquillity secured, and every man might sit with safety and peace under his own vine and fig-tree, none daring to molest or make afraid. The Bible seeks to regulate all the daily intercourse of man with his fellow, whether for friendship or business, in matters of which the civil law takes no cognizance, by requiring truthfulness, honesty, justice, mercy, and charity, and all those other virtues which ennoble the possessor and are essential to the best interests of every association.

The Bible is adapted to man's spiritual need. His deep conviction of duty, so constant and authoritative; his sense of ill-desert, filling his mind at times with forebodings of evil; his weary and often vain search for the

way of peace ; his long struggle against inward and outward foes ; his earnest desires after a supreme power in which he may repose, whose aid he may invoke ; his perpetual yearning for the sympathy of a great Heart, for a communion without which there must ever be an aching void ; his painful consciousness of imperfection, disclosed to him more and more as he advances ; his unspeakable aspirations that cannot be satisfied with earth's treasures, howsoever they may be heaped together ; and his steady outreaching for another life where hope shall be exchanged for fruition,—these exercises and states exhibit man's spiritual necessities, all of which are met in the Scriptures, and there alone. The whole race may come and here find its wants supplied.

The Bible is adapted to every age and condition of human life. The young may read with ever increasing delight and profit its matchless biographies, especially those of Joseph and Samuel and Daniel, of Jesus and John and Timothy—object-lessons these of “the good, the true, and the beautiful” ; and into the memory of the forming mind may be cast those golden texts, the maxims of imperishable worth, which shall be germs of exalted character. They who are in middle life will find here precious words for every hour of joy or sorrow, for every duty or trial ; words “profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.” The aged, “when the keepers of the house shall tremble, and the strong men shall bow themselves, and the grinders cease because they are few,” may turn to these pages and forget their physical infirmities, while they meditate on truths that lift their souls to heaven. The ignorant, the learned, the poor, the rich, the bond, the free, the low, the high, will find in this volume the record of those whose lot was like theirs, and who showed how their several stations may be best filled,—how adversity may be

borne, how prosperity may be blessed, and "how all things may work together for good." This Book has a voice of warning for the sinner, a voice of invitation for the penitent, a voice of pity for the unfortunate, a voice of caution for the exalted, a voice of hope for the despondent, a voice of exultation for the dying.

The adaptation of the Bible to human need increases with the flight of time. Other books grow old and require revision, and are finally laid aside for others that contain fresher thought in recent dress. The text-books of the schools, used fifty years ago, have all been rejected. Histories of nations and of epochs, biographies of men, statements of doctrine must be rewritten at frequent intervals to meet the change in public opinion. How pompous and imperious is Modern Thought! Who dares to resist its dictum must endure odium. Even the few classics, the products of master minds in a former age, are no longer printed as they were written. Expurgated copies alone are tolerated in our families. But the Bible, the oldest, is at the same time the newest of books. No one seeks to make it other than it was at the beginning, in the hope of improving it or readjusting it to the spirit of the times. The universal desire is to preserve the original and make all transcripts conform to that. This Book, begun thirty-three centuries ago and completed after fifteen centuries, occupies to-day in the esteem of mankind a larger place than at any previous time. And it holds that position, not because of the decrees of any church council, not because of any legislative enactments, not because of any penalties proclaimed against those who reject it, nor yet because its writers are believed to have been inspired, but because the men of the nineteenth century have discovered in it what they need. And, whatever may be said of its origin, it will never be surrendered, so long as its exalted ministry continues.

And now for the "conclusion of the whole matter." Here is a very ancient volume, produced by many hands working without concert. In structure it is a masterpiece; its parts, like some beautiful mosaic, are laid together as if according to a preconceived pattern. Its truths, varied and far-reaching, meet the needs of every soul in every land, under every circumstance of life. They are "seed to the sower and bread to the eater." He who feeds on this bread, exclaims with Israel's songster, "I have eaten my honey-comb with my honey." The centuries come and go; times and seasons change; institutions rise and fall; civilizations grow old and perish—but this Book liveth and abideth forever. It leads humanity onward and upward, and at each stage of progress points to better things to come. It is, indeed, a lamp unto the feet and a light unto the path of the toiling millions who seek to know that which is highest and best. What shall we say concerning such a marvellous volume? Is it not the **BOOK OF GOD?**

THE BEARING OF PROPHECY ON INSPIRATION.

RT. REV. WM. R. NICHOLSON, D.D.

My theme is the Inspiration of the prophets. But I must limit my theme. For prophecy is a word of large meaning. The prophet had to declare God's will on whatever subject. As occasion required, and as the Lord directed, he laid down principles of religious belief and ethical obligation, he counselled, he rebuked, he comforted, he exhorted, and he foretold future events. It is this last-mentioned one of his God-given functions, that the formula of my subject intends. The prophet, as predicting future events, is his sole identity as now he comes before us.

In the utterance of their predictions, were the prophets supernaturally inspired? Was their inspiration not only Divine, but miraculously Divine? Did they speak only from an immediate afflatus of God the Holy Ghost? While it was they who spoke, were they yet but mouth-pieces of God, who was Himself speaking in and through them, infallibly, and for mankind's authoritative guidance? Were their predictions such as that they were superhuman, and were the words of their predictions, although being, at least in most instances, unrepressedly their own words, just such as God meant them to be? These are our questions.

But even our restricted theme, merely predictive prophecy, is so large a subject, the predictions being so numerous, the details so diversified, it would require no small

volume to give a commensurate exhibit of its bearings on Inspiration. In the time allotted, I shall only be able, after stating the principles of the argument, to apply those principles to a few of the predictions.

The argument is twofold. There are predictions fulfilled, and there are predictions unfulfilled. Each class has its place in the discussion.

In the first place, as to prophecy fulfilled.

Here, the general structure of the argument is simple, exceedingly. It is the following syllogism :

Not man, but solely God, can foretell events and circumstances of a distant future.

But precisely this is what the Hebrew prophets have done.

Therefore, the Hebrew prophets were not self-moved in their predictions, but God did move them.

The major premise of this syllogism is self-luminous and irresistible. That no man can discern what events and circumstances distant years shall bring forth—that God alone can do this—is what all men instantly see to be absolutely true. The efforts of infidels to make it appear that the alleged predictions of the Bible were written after the events, are a concession that, if the Bible prophets did really foretell remote and improbable events, then were they supernaturally inspired of God. It is the minor premise that we need to discuss. Did the prophets really predict hidden things of the future ?

This brings us to the question, How shall it be ascertained whether or no the prophets did lay open unguessable secrets of long years to come ? In other words, What are the criteria of a genuine prediction ?

First, the alleged prediction *must have been made known prior to the event*. This is a principle self-evident. Only, it must be shown that the precedence of the prediction is an historical fact. In literature, fancy is sometimes

put for history; as when Spenser, in his *Faery Queene*, in order to give vivacity to his narrative, puts in the form of prediction descriptions of events in English history, and so takes occasion to make complimentary allusions to Queen Elizabeth. Let it be proved that the prophecy has gone before the event.

Secondly, the event claimed to have been foretold *must be such as is wholly remote from human view*. If it is such an occurrence as is deducible from probability or experience, the utterance beforehand might have been either a sagacious anticipation or a fortunate guess; but it could be no expression of a supernatural influence. Seneca foretold, that at some future time the mariner, urging his ship into unknown seas, would be the discoverer of new territories. This anticipation of Seneca's has been paraded as a prophecy of the discovery of America by Columbus. But the anticipation was uncircumstantial, and wholly indefinite. Neither America nor Columbus is identified. It was only a vivid picture of mere probability, suggested by ships and oceans and adventurous sailors. The Roman poet made another guess that was not so fortunate, that the people of Hindostan should occupy Armenia, and the region of the Rhine be colonized by Persians. Dr. Erasmus Darwin, a poet of the eighteenth century, and also a man of science, wrote:

“Soon shall thy arm, unconquer'd steam, afar
Drag the slow barge, or drive the rapid car.”

But the subsequent realization of those triumphs of steam is not such an event as was at all remote from a scientific prevision. And Lord Bacon, in his description of the “House of Solomon,” in the “New Atlantis,” anticipated, with remarkable discernment, many of the prodigies of intellectual and social advancement that, since his time, have distinguished our civilization. He did but infer,

however, from his improved method of studying nature, what the world would be, when, as he said, his philosophy should have enlarged the bounds of human empire.

Anticipations that spring out of a collection of the probabilities of present conditions are radically different from a foresight of things to which no sign in the present is pointing, and betwixt the foretelling and the occurring of which there may be the distance of many years, sometimes of even ages. The prescience of an experienced politician or statesman is of no deeper principle than is that of the skilful chess-player. Moreover, the anticipative calculations of probability do about as often miss as hit the mark. The proverbial weather-prophet may be taken perhaps as an adequate type of all who would cast a horoscope of even the near future. And, as regards a remote period, deductions from present causes cannot be carried so far forward, because new causes spring up that are as yet unknown. To foretell events that are far removed from human view—far removed as well in probability as in time,—this is what no human observation and skill can do; but this is just what is essential to a genuine supernatural prediction.

Thirdly, in the language of the prediction, *there must be no ambiguity*. When Cræsus consulted the oracle at Delphi about his intended war with the Persians, he was told that he should destroy a great empire. This he naturally interpreted of his overcoming the Persians, although the language admitted of the meaning that the Persians should overcome him. In either case, his war should destroy a great empire. He made the war, and was ruined. A genuine prediction must not be ambiguous. More or less of obscurity, indeed, may attach to the exact meaning of a prophecy before its fulfilment, but it must not be susceptible of two interpretations. Its meaning, whatever that may be, must be definite.

Fourthly, the genuine prophet *must utter his prediction as being expressly from God.* For if God reveal to one a certain item of foreknowledge for the very purpose of inspiring him to announce it, God would certainly mean to have it announced as coming from Himself; since, if not so announced, it could only be regarded as the man's own vague conjecture, and could have, therefore, no weight with his contemporaries. Nor could a future generation regard the fulfilment of a prediction that had not been announced in the name of God, if perchance it should be fulfilled, otherwise than as having happened as a chance of one in many billions. Hence, we cannot conceive of a really inspired prophet as not professing to speak by the authority of the Omniscient.

Fifthly, there must be at the proper time *a clear and palpable fulfilment of the prediction.* This principle completes the criteria of genuine prophecy.

These five canons of prophetic identity, when concurrent in application to a given utterance, furnish an absolute demonstration of the supernaturalism of that utterance. If the prediction preceded the event, if the event is such as was remote from human view, if the prediction was unambiguous, if it was uttered in the name of God, then the realization of it in the event is the crowning of it as a genuine prophecy, and the glory of that crown is God's miraculous inspiration of the prophet.

We now proceed to apply these principles in a few instances of Bible prophecy.

That the prophets did speak in the name of God, I need not waste time in showing. Just open the Bible, and he that runs may read.

As regards the other four canons, we must test their applicability by an induction of particulars.

First, let us take for the examination certain predictions concerning Nineveh, Babylon, Egypt, and the Four Em-

pires. The prophets in question are Nahum, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Zephaniah, Ezekiel, and Daniel.

What are some of the things claiming to have been foretold of those cities and kingdoms?

That the great cities of Nineveh and Babylon should be captured. That each of the two cities should be taken when in a condition of revelry and intoxication. That the rivers on which the cities respectively stood (Nineveh on the Tigris, Babylon on the Euphrates) should be instrumental in their being captured. That the two rivers should perform their parts in opposite ways—the Tigris by an inundation, the Euphrates by drying up. That the cities should ultimately pass under an exterminating desolation, and become receptacles of wild beasts (see the prophets Nahum, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Zephaniah).

That Egypt should become a base kingdom—the basest of kingdoms. That God would so diminish it that it should no more rule over nations and never more have a prince of its own. That while Nineveh and Babylon should be depopulated, Egypt, still retaining its population, should be degraded and made helpless (Ezekiel xxix. 13–15).

That the Babylonian Empire, during whose time of splendor the prophet Daniel claims to have made his predictions, should come to an end. That it should be succeeded by the Medo-Persian, the latter by the Grecian, and this by the Roman. That, with the fourth—the Roman—the succession of universal empires should cease. That each of the Four Empires should have its leading characteristics, each one being differentiated in character from all the others. That not only the Babylonian, whose salient features were before the eyes of Daniel, was delineated as to the quality of its power and the constitution of its government, but equally distinctively the other three, all the three as yet unborn, all unlike one another,

though all should be universal empires; the Roman, the last link of the Imperial succession, being described by the prophet as the most terrible of all, and the transcendent bruiser of the nations (Daniel ii. and vii.).

You will have noticed in all these alleged predictions how distinct and definite they are. How utterly free from ambiguity. How impossible to give to any one of the statements two interpretations. Indeed, these alleged predictions read like very history.

Now, supposing for the moment that these alleged predictions were published as long before the events as they claim to have been, and that the events have been realized as predicted, were the events themselves such as, in the nature of the case, are remote from human view? Was it possible for mind of man to have foreseen them? How circumstantial are the statements. How minutely detailed. How vividly depicted. What contingencies of human action are involved. How different the destinies of the different peoples. How many unknown causes, causes variant one from another, yet strangely falling into their places, would have to arise in the future, when the prophets themselves who uttered the predictions had long passed away, to bring about exactly these events and circumstances. Is human prevision equal to an achievement like this? The question is its own answer. What man, however gifted and experienced, could foresee, the foresight turning out to be true, that within 200 years from now the river Thames should inundate the city of London, and the Delaware River should dry up at Philadelphia, and that, in consequence, each of the two cities should be taken by an enemy? Or, that the United States Government should come to an end, and be succeeded by a government of another people, and this by a third people, and the third by a fourth people, either naming or characteristically describing each people, and then that the fourth

in the succession should ultimately break up into a number of separate nationalities—can it be conceived of any man that he should make this prophecy, the prophecy being at length fulfilled? The probabilities never existed, that could enable a man to forespeak a long and contingent future so positively, so circumstantially, so effectually. If the Hebrew prophets did speak before the events, and if the events were exact counterparts of their utterances, then were they supernaturally inspired of God.

It is commonly objected by disbelievers, since it is the fate of empires to rise and fall, and their mutability and decay is a matter of experience, that, to shrewd observers of affairs, it was but a natural suggestion to anticipate their downfall. But you will have noticed that the predictions of the Hebrew prophets, a mere specimen of which I have given you, were not of so vague and indefinite a kind. Rather, they foretold *how* the cities and kingdoms should fall. Their prevision was minutely circumstantial, rich in details. Their forespeech was discriminating, contradistinctive, and even, as in Daniel's characterizations of the several empires, politically observant and profoundly analytical. If their predictions did indeed precede the events, and if the events were the realization of the predictions, only God's prescience could have availed to their utterance. No human genius, no happy conjectures, no sagacious anticipations, could possibly write out beforehand the most surprising details of history. Did they make their predictions, then, prior to the events? And have the events exactly answered to the predictions? The latter of these questions we attend to first. It is simply notorious that these statements of the prophets have their precise counterparts in actual occurrences. For Nineveh and Babylon, we have the attestations of profane history, even the reproduction in its narratives of the minute and distinctive circumstances declared by the proph-

ets. As regards Egypt, we know it has been in a state of degradation for many centuries, and continues, to this day, to have no prince of its own. With respect to the Four Empires, all history assures us that the succession has been just as Daniel described it, that the salient features of each of the empires have corresponded to the letter of his description, that the fourth in the succession has been the last of the universal empires, and that it has been succeeded by a number of separate governments. I need not stop to quote from Diodorus Siculus and others, in attestation of what is so notorious, and is universally conceded.

This brings us to the other question—Did the prophets make these predictions prior to the events? The disbeliever says, No. His only refuge is to try to make it appear that the predictions were published after the events. But what facts has he to found on? Not one. It is purely a fabrication. He has done nothing to establish his position. He reasons in a circle. These are not real predictions, because they were written after the events; they were written after the events, because they speak of the events. Thus, the denial of the predictions is made to rest on their being posterior to the events; and their being posterior to the events is made to rest on the denial of the predictions. He further attempts to bolster his position by saying, that, admitting the prophets to have written at the dates claimed by them, yet these predictions were not in the original writings, but were interpolated by some forger or forgers after the events, as is indicated by the language and sentiments, associated with the predictions, not being in the characteristic style of the prophet to whom they are ascribed. But how unsatisfactory is this kind of a contention is shown in the fruitless discussion, as to whether Lord Bacon is not the real author of the tragedies and comedies of Shakespeare. The result is simply intangible. Besides, in the case of the Hebrew

prophets, this is the absurdest possible criticism. Whoever adopts this theory must believe, not only that the forgers were men of the loftiest genius, since some of the passages pronounced spurious—as for instance, certain chapters of the latter part of Isaiah—are the very masterpieces of Hebrew literature; but also that the Jews were phenomenally careless about their sacred books, even allowing them to be recklessly tampered with by literary adventurers. We know how jealously all nations that have sacred books watch over their integrity, and we specially know with what reverence the Jews regarded their Scriptures. The almost superstitious dread with which they viewed the omission or alteration of a single jot or tittle in the writings—their actual counting up of the words and letters—the wearing of their phylacteries, slips of parchment on which were written words of their law—all this renders absolutely incredible the forgery theory. No such spurious additions could conceivably have been palmed off upon such a people.

On the other hand, positive testimony we have for the priority of the predictions to the events. The witness of Josephus, not only to the deep-felt sacredness of the Old Testament Scriptures and their unexceptionally recognized integrity in his day, but as well to the unbroken tradition on these points that had come down from the fathers; the Septuagint translation of the Hebrew books into Greek, which took place along the interval from 280 years B.C. to 150 years B.C., which translation is itself evidence of a prior ancientness; the reverential allusions of the apocryphal books to those of the sacred canon; the witness of successive books of the Bible to preceding ones from century to century; the centering of the national unity, as far back as authoritative notices will take us, in the people's peculiar estimate of the law of Moses, and in their attachment to the sublime Messianic hopes taught by the

prophets; and above all, the public judgment and decision of the Jewish Church and people, as declared in their earliest history;—all these facts, and others, unite to show that, for claimed antiquity of the Hebrew books, and for their unmarred original contents, we have the sanction of centuries of unquestioned authority. And recurring, in connection with these facts, to what we have already said of the reverence of the Jews for their Scriptures, we are obliged to feel that it is reasonably impossible to doubt either the dates severally claimed by the books, or their inviolate identity.

Moreover, let us take Daniel as a test case. Let us accept for a moment the latest date that disbelief has dared to assign to his prophecies. Say that he exercised his prophetic office as late as Antiochus Epiphanes—that is, in the period of the third of the Four Empires, namely, the Grecian. Now, at that time, the Roman power had not made itself known beyond the confines of Italy. What human sagacity could even then have conjectured the things that Daniel predicted concerning it? Who could have foreseen that the then comparatively insignificant community on the banks of the Tiber was to become that great world-power, strong as iron, which should break in pieces and tread down the nations? Who could have foreseen that, after attaining to the splendid summit of its greatness, it should be the last of the universal empires, and that in its decadence, it should branch out into a multitude of separate kingdoms? How was it that Daniel could so accurately fix the limit to that line of empires, and that he did not rather, in view of the already four-fold imperial succession, go on to anticipate further changes of the like kind? Was not all that supernatural? What, then, has disbelief gained by its violent endeavors to wrench the predictions out of their proper dates? It cannot put Daniel's writings posterior to the rise of Rome.

Contrive as it may, it cannot get rid of the priority of certain predictions to the event. Even granting to disbelief, for argument's sake, its whimsical demand as to the date of Daniel's prophecies, we are able to say to it, Thou hast slain thyself!

In these predictions of the prophets, then, concerning Nineveh, Babylon, Egypt, and the Four Empires, we do find the supernatural inspiration of God. Their utterances were prior to the events. The events were remote from human view. Their utterances were not ambiguous. They did speak in the name of God. Their predictions were literally and minutely fulfilled. Therefore the subject-matter of their utterances was immediately from God, just as certainly as that Nineveh and Babylon have fallen, as that Egypt has been degraded, as that Rome became a universal conqueror.

But not only the fact of their inspiration, the fullness of it also is clearly set forth. Their very words were divinely controlled. Not that they were merely as a pen in a writer's hand, or as a machine under the control of a machinist, but rather as a child learning to walk; the child doing its own walking, meanwhile the mother's hand is upholding and guiding. The prophet's mind was actively at work, his own style of thinking and speaking was self-expressive; but the hand of the Holy Ghost was guiding his mental individuality, and holding him up against stumbling. For, if Nahum had said of Nineveh, that it should be taken by means of a drying up of the Tigris; or Isaiah had said of Babylon, that it should be taken by means of an inundation of the Euphrates, thus reversing the revelations given—and certainly, if left to themselves in the work of expression, this might have been from what we know of infirmities of impression and lapses of memory; or if Ezekiel had said of Egypt, that it should be depopulated, and Isaiah had said of Babylon, that it should

be simply degraded, thus again reversing the revelations ; or if Daniel, in depicting the several characters of the Four Empires, had got them mixed, and had given to Greece the character of Rome ;—why, then, in all these cases, the inaccuracies of the prophets would have emerged at the time of the events, and the credit of prophecy had been destroyed. The revelations God gave them were circumstantial, distinctive, discriminative ; wherefore the expression of said revelations was meant to be equally circumstantial, distinctive, discriminative. The mind of man, however, is liable to get confused, and words are but the outcome of the mind. Therefore that, in the predictions about those cities and kingdoms, there were, as we see from the events, no inaccurate words, is demonstration that, while not interfering with the natural play of the prophet's mind, the Holy Ghost did have a care of the prophet as actually writing ; whether that care was exerted in making the impression, at the instant of giving the revelation, so minute and vivid as to preclude the prophet's thoughts from wandering, or whether it was not exerted till the prophet had pen in hand. In either way the desired accuracy of expression might have been secured. And thus, while the words were the prophet's own, at the same time they were the words of the Holy Ghost ; the very words that were divinely meant, according to the prophet's peculiar mental structure, to be used. Nahum, and Isaiah, and Jeremiah, and Ezekiel, and Zephaniah, and Daniel, each one, in the predictions we have been examining, did deliver his God-given message in language that came leaping out of his own intellect and sensibilities and temperament, and yet, by the intelligent control of the Spirit, no word was said that should not have been said, no mistake was made in the statement of the Spirit's revelations.

Look now at a second class of predictions—some of

those concerning the Jews. Are our canons of genuine prediction accomplished therein?

What is it that the prophets say?

Moses said that they should be "scattered among all peoples, from the one end of the earth, even unto the other end of the earth" (Deut. xxviii. 64). That, nevertheless, they should keep their Jewish identity and their separateness as a community in whatever age or clime (Lev. xxvi. 44). Amos said they should be "sifted among all nations, like as corn is sifted in a sieve"—so thoroughly scattered and mixed up with all peoples they should be; that, nevertheless, "not the least grain should fall upon the earth"—should be lost (ix. 9). So that, while the Jewish body politic should be swept from the face of the earth, and the Jewish people be hurled hither and thither all through the nations of the earth, yet they should always remain a distinct Jewish people.

Now, are these statements at all ambiguous? No expressions could be plainer or more definite.

Again, do these statements accurately represent the events of Jewish history? Look around you and you will see. Read the news from all parts of the world, consult the annals of the last 1,800 years, and you will learn. The Jew is everywhere, and has been so for centuries and centuries; still a Jew he remains. He is not a body politic, has no civic community of his own; but not the less he is a national unit. Unlike the gipsies, who have never had a recognized importance, and are not a factor either in society or in government, and neither the extent nor the duration of their dispersion nor their petty persecutions are to be brought into comparison, the Jew is not insignificant. He lives, not because the world has let him alone, but by virtue of a mysterious energy of perpetual rebound; for his sufferings, only as half told, have been more than enough to exterminate any other people. Up-

rooted from the fatherland, driven and lashed throughout the world, he has starved, he has writhed, he has burned, he has died by means of the most relentless persecutions that maddened power could invent. Exceptionally unfortunate as he has been, however, he has not stood on a dead level of misfortune, since, in spite of experiencing every conceivable calamity, he has elevated himself to the high places of the earth. If he has drank the bitterness of poverty, he has also feasted in affluence boundless. If he has been lined off and cooped up in quarantined wards of contempt, as though the plague had stricken him, he has lived also in the full communication of public intercourse. If he has painfully elbowed his way in the crowded marts of commerce, he has warbled the sweetest melodies and created the sublimest music that ever entranced the listening world. If he has been set at naught as a proverb and a by-word, he has been amongst the foremost in literature, in learning, in theology—the acknowledged peer of the greatest. If he has fled from country to country, as though he had been the football of nations, he has sat in the chair of the Minister of State, and has ruled the nations in which he is an exile. In short, he has actually exemplified just those adversities and those prosperities, just those relations and those habitudes of life, that do most effectually obliterate original distinctions of lineage and country. Still he is a Jew. For now near two thousand years, present in all countries, having a home in none; intermixed everywhere, separate everywhere; never amalgamated, never lost; like the distinctive current of his own Jordan in the upper part of the Dead Sea. Could correspondence be more perfect than between these events and the predictions of the prophets?

But, again, were those predictions prior to the events? When, then, did the dispersion of the Jews take place?

They did have a country; they were a body politic. When did they begin to be rooted up out of their land and be blown everywhere as upon the winds? Tangibly, we put the finger on the date of the conquest of Jerusalem by Titus. Were the books of Moses and other prophets prior to that date? Jesus Christ was prior thereto by nearly forty years, and those books were prior to Him. Nay, further back and up along the course of time till the period of the Maccabees, we know them to have existed; and still upward we trace them till the Babylonish captivity; and even thence further and further, till the oldest of them we find lying in the tent of Moses, amid the wilderness, in the shade of the pillar of cloud by day and in the glory of the pillar of fire by night. The predictions prior to the events? Aye, by 1,500 years. But if we were only able to trace them back to a hundred, to fifty, to twenty-five, to ten years, before the overthrow of Jerusalem, it were priority enough for demonstrating the prescience of God in predictions of such events as these.

For, again, are they not such events as were remote from human view? Self-evidently such, are they not? Six months before they began to occur—nay, a single day—would not that have been priority of prediction more than sufficient to have baffled the keenest sagacity? For had there ever before been a history of any people like this history? Has it ever been reduplicated? When was such a dispersion known to mankind? When such a preservation? What experience, then—what probability, what cunning at guessing, even so late as when the walls of the sacred city were actually tumbling—could have availed to foretell so transcendent phenomena? When Germans and others migrate to this country of ours, only a few generations are required for utterly blotting out their respective nationalities and merging them in our own; like

tributary waters unifying with the ocean and becoming lost in the rolling waves. Thus, what was predicted of the Jews is wholly opposed to experience. Their immortality as a landless nation is unique, prodigious. The concentrated wisdom of the world could not have guessed it. Ages have seen them as we see them to-day; and to-day, countryless, cosmopolitan, and, for all that, by themselves, Jewish, identical, resilient, vigorous, they are the miracle-people of mankind. Who could have foretold it one hour before it began to be? Who could have foretold its continuance even after it had begun to be? And yet Moses foresaw it through the vista of fifteen centuries; he, their own founder and legislator; he, while on his triumphal march to lay the foundations of their kingdom in Canaan, and when the natural enthusiasm of the occasion would have shut out any croakings of pessimism. What, then, have we in these predictions of the prophets? Scarce anything in a man's life, that it is necessary for him to know or believe, transcends in certainty the answer to this question. It is next, in evident truth, to one's consciousness of his own existence. It is SUPERNATURALISM. God's prescience alone could have supplied the prophets with a prevision so superhuman.

But precisely as was the revelation, so they uttered themselves. How accurately, and to a pin's point, they reproduced in writing what God had given them, is seen in the correspondence of the events. While Nahum said that Nineveh should be destroyed, Isaiah and Jeremiah that Babylon should be destroyed, and Ezekiel that Egypt should become a base kingdom, not so did the prophets say of the Jews. Of that people, as well as of Babylon, prophesied Isaiah and Jeremiah; but, as attested by the events, they never got things mixed. This fact, viewed alongside of the tendencies of men to make mistakes, assures us that the Holy Spirit, somehow, no matter how,

did see to it, that, while not interfering with the idiosyncrasy of the writer, there yet should be no word of misstatement. God's inspiration of the holy men of old was as well a protection against error in writing, as a prompting to write at all.

Once more as to prophecy fulfilled. Consider certain predictions relative to Jesus Christ. What are they?

That a certain illustrious Personage should come, whom the prophets referred to as the Messiah: the promised and commissioned one from God who should be the Bringer of salvation from sin, and of light and glory, to men. That He should be born of a virgin mother. That He should be born at Bethlehem. That He should appear while the Second Temple would be standing, and within a stated number of years. That He should be of the tribe of Judah, and of the family of David. That He should be an exceptionally pure and holy servant of God. That He should be a marvellous teacher; having the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord; knowing how to speak a word in season to him that is weary, preaching good tidings, binding up the broken-hearted; teaching as one having authority, teaching as the infallible guide of men. That He should be a friend of the wretched. That He should give eyes to the blind, ears to the deaf, a tongue to the dumb, feet to the lame. That He should be meek, and gentle, and tender, and loving. That He should be a rebuker of sin, incorruptible, the supreme champion of righteousness. That He should claim to be God. That He should have a following from among the poor and lowly. That He should not be an attractive object to the world. That He should have many enemies, who would hate and persecute Him. That He should be a great sufferer. That His visage

should be marred, being a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief. That He should be betrayed by one in whom He had trusted. That He should be sold for thirty pieces of silver. That the thirty pieces of silver should be paid to a potter. That He should give His back to be scourged, and His cheek to be smitten. That He should be spit upon. That He should be silent and submissive, like a sheep before its shearers. That He should be pierced in His hands and feet. That He should be put to death. That not a bone of Him should be broken. That His enemies would taunt Him in the midst of His sufferings with words of reproach and derision. That in His thirst they would give Him vinegar to drink. That His clothing should be divided into parts and be distributed, except that for His coat or tunic they would cast lots. That, in addition to His physical sufferings, His agony of soul should be intense, being wounded even of God, wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities. That He should cry out, "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?" That, therefore, He should forgive sins, and justify many. That He should die as a malefactor, but should have His grave with the rich. That He should rise from the dead, and should ascend to heaven.

Such as these are the predictive statements pervading the Old Testament Scriptures. Are they free from ambiguity? This idea of the Messiah was an established monopoly of interests. It was not shadowy, but luminous; not diminutive, but mountainous. It was underneath and over and all through the whole grand structure of the teachings of the prophets. They allowed no two interpretations of their announcement of the coming of Messiah. And then what variety and multiplicity of particulars. How definite, and minute, and all-embracing. A long chain of tangible links. And then the character they delineated—its purity and holiness, its wonders of deed and speech, its adorable

wisdom, its authority, its incarnation of love and sweetness, its condemnation of sin, its graciousness to the sinner, its claim of being God, its meekness in suffering, its confidence in the Father, its conquest of death and the grave, its triumphal ascension to heaven—what unmistakable elements of power, and beauty, and excellence, and majesty. Oh! here, if anywhere in the world's literature, are limpid thought and transparent definiteness of meaning.

And was Jesus Christ the actual correspondence to these statements of the prophets? Let the world answer. Let the infidels attest, who, despite of their want of sympathy with Him, are yet fascinated by Him, as the moth by the candle. Let the admiration and the reverence of eighteen centuries bear witness. Let the advancement of the Christian peoples, even though but partially Christianized, decide; their freedom from debasing ignorance and superstition, their high sense of the principles of morality, their monumental benevolences. Whence have come such blessings to them, and not to the non-Christian peoples? And there stand the Gospels. There stand the Apostolic Epistles. There stands the Christian Church. There stand the folios and the octavos, breathing the testimonies, and thrilling with the faith, of Christian fathers, and Christian thinkers, and Christian workers, and Christian heroes, and Christian martyrs, all whose memories have suffused with their fragrance the circling ages. It is history that declares, with a thousand voices, the fulfilment of the prophets in Jesus the Christ. Meanwhile, our own consciousness, turning to that supernatural character as needle to the pole, becomes experimentally assured, since thereby we steer clear of both Scylla and Charybdis, the rock of agnosticism and all intellectual unrest, and the whirlpool of secularism and all unspirituality.

Were these statements of the prophets, then, prior to Jesus Christ? We need not stop to prove it again. The

question is its own answer. Do two and two make four? Daniel, Zechariah, Malachi, Jeremiah, Isaiah, Micah, Moses, and all of them, were household words in the Jewish nation, when Jesus loomed up to view, and drew to Himself the confidence of the humble, and the hate of the proud.

But were the things thus foretold remote from human view? Why, some of them were seemingly almost contradictory. That Messiah should die as a malefactor, and yet that He should have His grave with the rich; that not a bone of Him should be broken, and yet that He should be pierced in His hands and feet, just where the bones are so numerous; that He should be pierced in hands and feet, while yet it was a mode of punishment unknown to the prophets, and involved that the Jewish people should have become subjected to the Romans, a nation not heard of when the prediction was written; that He should be, as well as pure, of a benevolence so loving, of a beneficence so active and effective, and yet be so hated, and be murdered; that He should be God, and yet be put to death by men—such a series of the seeming conflict of facts no sane mind could have anticipated.

And some of the things were contingent on human caprice; on incalculable impulses of men living in the distant future. That Messiah should be born in Bethlehem, while yet, as matter of fact, His mother was residing in Galilee, the prediction being fulfilled only by reason of an imperial whim of Rome; that His clothing should be cut up and distributed, while yet one of the garments should be excepted from that process; that He should be put to death as well as be scourged, although, as a matter of fact, the scourging was inflicted by Pilate in order to forestall the violent savagery of His death;—could such freaks of men's wills have come within the mental range of the far-distant prophets?

And all the circumstances were of a kind utterly unguessable. Very especially so, the Virgin Motherhood, the measured number of years, the just thirty pieces of silver. A foresight of details like these was indisputably miraculous.

But, leaving the circumstances, what shall we say of the Messianic conception itself? True, the foremost man of Greece felt the need, and longed for the coming, of some Great Unknown, exclaiming, "Oh, when shall that time come? How greatly do I desire to see that man who he is." But Plato had no means of identifying the Great Unknown. It was only a vague, indeterminate yearning for some adequate personage to intervene between mankind and their wretchedness. Whence, then, were the Hebrew prophets enabled to describe so circumstantially, and both mentally and morally, the Great Coming One? How was it that, as accomplished limners, they drew His portrait, sent it down the ages, and astonished the later world, when the Original had appeared, by the perfection of the likeness? Messiah's personal character,—how did they divine it? The sages of mankind had never thought within sight of such goodness and greatness. Their uttermost imaginings had never hinted at anything so peerlessly exceptional, so supremely enravishing. And Messiah's official character,—where did they get their ideas of it? By what means were they able to delineate Him as the embodiment of the spontaneous mercy to men, of the just, sin-hating God? How did they conceive of His sufferings at the hand of the Almighty Father, of His consequent redeeming death, His power to forgive sins, His being mighty to save? How transcendent their flight of sublimity in Messiah's resurrection: a celestial conception, the blaze of whose glory no Icarus of human genius did ever gaze on; the waxen wings of genius invariably melting before attaining that heaven of thought. This rounded

immensity of Messiah's character, personal and official,—how did they get at it? With what eyes of flame did they see into the darkness of coming time, and forewrite the veritable history of Jesus the Christ?

On the whole, remote to the prophets, exceedingly remote, remote in time, remote in probability, were the Messianic events! No calculus of human thought could pierce so far. It is supernaturalism, therefore, that we have in their prophecies; supernaturalism burning and shining throughout.

Yea, throughout their words as well. For how else could they have threaded their ways of speech so narrowly amid particulars so many, so minute, so seemingly almost contradictory, so contingent on unaccountable impulses of men centuries off, so sublime, so far above the farthest possible flight of human conception? A single misty impression, one lapse of memory, a moment's effervescence of feeling, might easily have dropped into an erroneous expression, thus falsifying the record and damaging the evidences of the Christ. No, the prophets wrote just what the Holy Ghost had taught them; for also He stood guard over them, and their pens, although moving at their own wills, made no false entries.

And now as regards our second division of the subject—Prophecy unfulfilled. Do those predictions of the Bible that are as yet unaccomplished exemplify Inspiration? I say, Yes. But the argument to prove it is different in kind from that we have been pursuing. An alleged prediction, professedly not fulfilled, cannot of course be brought as yet to the final test of fulfilment. But the test of fulfilment is the consummate point of our five canons of genuine prediction. Those canons, accordingly, we now lay aside, and shall seek to supply their place with another principle of reasoning.

We turn our attention to the class of prophecies relating to the kingdom of the Christ; of which a large proportion is unfulfilled. They are to be found in the writings as well of the New Testament as of the Old. The principle of the argument is this—the phenomenal *unity* of the prophets in their teachings concerning the kingdom.

In so long a succession of prophets—from Moses to John inclusive—they have all taught in unison. And yet their predictions were written, from time to time, throughout a period of fifteen hundred years. The writers, too, were men of different habitudes of mind, different temperaments, different surroundings, and belonging to widely separated ages of the world. Such being the circumstances, it is incredible that, on a subject hidden in the future, of vast proportions and superhuman grandeur, they could have prophesied in harmony, except they had been under an all-superintending influence from God. If on this subject they did speak in harmony, if what each prophet said fitted to its place in one grand scheme, if all the contributions of thought, from end to end of the fifteen hundred years, had only the effect to make the plan grow without contravening it, then, beyond a peradventure, they were spokesmen of God; they spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. This is the principle of our reasoning; and now for the verification of it.

What, then, is a bird's-eye view of the predictions themselves?

First, Moses' description of God's covenant with Abraham. The land in which the patriarch was sojourning was pledged both to himself and to his seed, as an inheritance forever. From amongst his seed or posterity there should come forth kinghood, as well as the subjects of kinghood. And the blessedness of all the nations of the earth was identified with him. These promises were the laying of foundations; the beginnings of a kingdom, a

glorious kingdom. Territory, kingdom, subjects—all were provided for. The kingdom should be realized only within the posterity of Abraham. So also as to the subjects of the kingdom; since the territory of the kingdom should be occupied by his posterity alone. And yet all nations of the earth should be beneficiaries of the kingdom even to the extent of finding their very blessedness in their connection with Abraham. Such was the plan of the kingdom as revealed in the Abrahamic covenant. But Moses did himself expressly connect this covenant with a Great Promised One—a Prophet like himself, whom the Lord should raise up, and whose authority should be supreme: thus identifying the Abrahamic kingdom, at least in its ultimate form, with that Coming One.

Secondly, Moses' description of the institution of the Theocracy at Sinai. Jehovah dwelt in His royal residence, the Holy of Holies of the tabernacle. He was civil ruler, as well as the object of worship. And the High-Priest of Israel was His minister of state. Now, the territory over which the Theocracy was set up was identically the same as what had been covenanted to Abraham; and identically the same were the subjects of the Theocracy. It was, accordingly, an outgrowth of that covenant, and was, therefore, the Abrahamic kingdom showing itself as an earnest. And thus in the Shechinah Glory of the Holy of Holies, it was symbolically shown that the ultimate promised kingdom of the Abrahamic covenant should be a Divine Kingdom; that the King, the Great Coming One of Moses, should be God, although being of the seed of Abraham, and ruling in person on earth.

Thirdly, Moses' prediction of the temporary overthrow of the Theocracy for the wickedness of the nation, and of its eventual restoration: which restoration should be the Kingdom in its consummate and final form.

So far, the great plan of the Kingdom as given by Mo-

ses. Its salient features were these: an earthly land—the posterity of Abraham its subjects—all peoples of the earth brought within its blessed power—a King, at once a descendant of Abraham and God reigning in person—a true Theocracy, therefore—the overthrow of the Theocratic Kingdom as established at Sinai—its glorious re-establishment.

Now, see how this plan developed in the long ages following.

First, as recorded by Samuel, the prophet Nathan's account, 400 years after Moses, of God's covenant with David. The Theocracy was incorporated with the line of David. The Theocratic Kingdom was established in the person of David, as progenitor and type of Him, of whom this covenant said, "He shall be the Son of God," and of whom, instantly afterward, David said, "The Adam from above, God Jehovah." In Him, David's descendant and royal heir, the Theocratic Kingdom should be established forever. Thus, God's Kingdom on earth should coincide with David's Kingdom, transmitted to, and magnified in, David's greater Son. This was additional information, but in nothing was the Davidic covenant out of harmony with what went before. David and, through him, the Adam from above, were both of the children of Abraham. Still the same territory and the same subjects, the same promised One, the same final consummation. Only, the Theocracy was now plainly expressed in words, and, in wedlock Divine, was married forever to the lineage of David.

Secondly, Isaiah's prediction, near 300 years after Nathan's time, that He, who should be Virgin-born, and whose name should be Wonderful, Counselor, the mighty God, the Father of eternity, the Prince of peace, should take the government, and exercise it upon the throne of David, to order it, and to establish it, with judgment and

justice, from henceforth, even forever; and that of the increase of his government and prosperity there should be no end. So, though hundreds of years have passed, the same great plan; but with increasing clearness. How much more fully and strongly the Theocracy is stated. And what an illumination is thrown back, through 700 years, on that Abrahamic blessedness of all nations of the earth predicted by Moses; for, according to Isaiah, that universal blessedness should be brought about by the enlargement of the Theocracy, and its universal extension over the nations.

Thirdly, a succession of many prophets, whom we cannot stop to specify, living at different times, all repeating one or another of these same features of the great plan, some giving further development to one or another of them, some dwelling on the disastrous condition of the Jewish people, the result of the temporary overthrow of the Theocratic kingdom, some exulting in the final rehabilitation of the Theocracy in the revived kingdom of David.

Fourthly, Luke's record of the angel's substantial recitation to the Virgin Mother of Isaiah's prediction: wherein the prophet-evangelist gave evidence, that Isaiah's conceptions of the Theocratic kingdom in the line of David, which were at one with the Abrahamic covenant described by Moses 700 years before Isaiah's time, were still, now 700 years after his time, definite and vivid in the mind of the nation.

Fifthly, Jesus himself, the veritable Son of David, son of Abraham, in the earlier part of His ministry, making the offer of the kingdom to the Jews, saying, "The kingdom of heaven is at hand," and, "The kingdom of God is come nigh to you." Whereas, in the later months of His ministry, because of His rejection by the nation, and as soon as the representatives of the nation, in council assem-

bled, had conspired to put Him to death, expressly withdrawing the offer, and postponing the kingdom to a future period; as, for instance, when, "because they thought that the kingdom of God should immediately appear," He spoke the parable of a certain nobleman going into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return, and who, having received the kingdom, did return. Wherein, the revival of the Theocracy was fixed for the time of his Second Advent. Meanwhile, by reason of this postponement, the predictions of the prophets concerning the disasters of the Jews had their opportunity of fulfilment. How perfectly the great plan is preserved, and yet how it lengthens and widens under this increase of light.

Sixthly, Paul predicting that all Israel should be saved, and rehearsing the old promise that Abraham should be the heir of the world (Rom. iv. 13; xi. 26). Also announcing the Gospel principle of the grafting of Gentile believers into the Jewish olive-tree, and of their adoption as children of Abraham (Rom. xi. 17; Gal. iii. 29). And so, in the long development of the plan, was at length explained how it could be, that, while the kingdom is Abrahamic, and is exclusively appropriated to the children of Abraham, all the nations of the earth should come to be equal sharers in the same kingdom. The whole evangelized world, by means of faith in Christ, should become incorporated with the family of Abraham.

Seventhly, John's prophecy of "the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David"; of "the New Jerusalem"; of "the tabernacle of God with men." The same plan to the very end. And now it stands complete. The Christ, at length the Lion conqueror for Abraham's people. The Root of the Davidic covenant—having caused that covenant to grow, till, in the end, it shall have blossomed into David's own Messianic ideal, "The Just One ruling

over men, arising upon the world as the light of the morning, of a morning without clouds." The New Jerusalem coming down from God out of heaven—a bride adorned for her Davidic husband. The tabernacle of God with men: God in personal residence on the earth, the Theocracy re-established, all tears wiped away, no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, no more pain; and when, in the words of Jesus, the Father's will shall be done on earth, as it is done in heaven.

Such is a meagre outline of the unity of the prophets in their teachings of the kingdom. A large proportion of their predictions are as yet unfulfilled. The government from the throne of David is not now being exercised. The Theocracy is not in existence. The universal religious prosperity, spoken of by the prophets, has not come to pass. Infidels have seen that these things are connected with the prophetic kingdom most expressly, most positively, most inseparably, and have taken occasion, because of their not being fulfilled, to deny the truth of all prophecy. But they have confounded the publication of Christianity with the kingdom; neglecting the fact that Jesus himself has expressly postponed the kingdom. The Church is not the kingdom. But do not these unfulfilled predictions vindicate their own truth? Is not their eventual accomplishment already casting its shadow before?

For what sort of a fact is this unity of the prophetic teachings? Was there ever anything like it? Fancy the wise men of Greece, all along the successive centuries of its history, writing on one and the same subject, thinking the same thoughts of it, maintaining and developing the same plan of it. Fancy them,—whether they be a Solon, a Socrates, an Aristotle, poets, orators, tillers of the soil, herdsmen—whether they write from among the cultured newsmongers of Athens, or from lonely dell or mountain

—whether in adverse or in prosperous circumstances, in the early dewy morning of their national life, or when the lassitude of the nation's evening is settling upon them,—fancy them as joining voices across the ages, and encircling their country's history with a chorus of sweetness and sublimity. Would not that be a phenomenon, at which the philosophers would bow down and worship? And yet, just this is what has been done by the Hebrew prophets. How shall it be accounted for? In view of the differences of minds, and of the different influences of successive times, how was it that one dominant plan, one dominant hope, ran throughout 1,500 years? that the Abrahamic covenant was the one golden thread on which the prophets, from Moses to John, strung their pearls? that each one brought his contribution to the ever-growing architecture of so long a period, and fitted it to its place, as beveled edge is mortised into its socket?

See yonder gorgeous palace. What a multitude of workmen have been connected with it from first to last. The diggers with their mattocks; then they that carry the hod, and they that lay the stone; next, the carpenters, with plane and saw; and last, the painters, the carvers, the upholsterers. Through several years the building has continued to grow, till now, from foundation to pinnacle, it stands before us in finished beauty and grandeur. How was it that there was no confusion among the workmen? How came it that each stone lay in its proper place, and each timber filled the space waiting for it? that each stroke of the decorator's art is just where it should be? How could so many ever-changing hands have combined to create a work, whose effect upon us, as a whole, is as though it were a piece of music in wood and stone? Only because all the operations, from beginning to end, have been under the control of one master Mind.

Look now at this plan of the kingdom. What relays of

prophets. What various tasks. What changes of epochs and surroundings. Through fifty generations they wrought, and they died. On and up the vast structure grew. Each thought of each writer was built into one grand scheme. And now it stands in the pages of John a perfected whole—a vision of the glory of God. How was it that fifty generations of writers so wrought in unison? Only because they were all presided over by one master Mind—God the Holy Ghost. Yea, “the goodly fellowship of the prophets praise Thee, O God”! They all spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.

Aye, spake as well as thought. If any workman on yonder palace had not *actually placed* the stone and the timber just where the architect had planned for it to go, what derangement would have supervened, notwithstanding the architect had given his instructions. Hence the appointment of a master-workman to watch and make sure. Now the using of words was the prophet’s *actual placing* of the instructions of the Spirit. If His words had been wrong, the instructions had been wrongly placed, and the plan had been damaged. Hence the Spirit’s supervision of his words. The workman, however, although watched and guarded, exerted his own strength in placing the stone; and the prophet, although secured against error in his words, did yet use his own words in writing out the thoughts of the Spirit. If, therefore, the inspiration of the Spirit, like an aureole, encircled his speech, yet within that circle of light were the sparkles of his own individuality.

I have done. We have but glanced at our subject. But could I have arrayed before you the whole mighty mass of the argument from prophecy, it would have been only one of the many lines of proof of the full inspiration of the Bible. What greater assurance could we desire?

When, therefore, the Bible tells me, that man was not evolved from the brute, but directly created of God, I believe it; for thus *saith* the Lord. When it tells me, that I *can* know God's will concerning me, and that Agnosticism is false, I believe it; for thus *saith* the Lord. When it tells me, that I am a sinner and helpless; that God will fearfully punish sin, yet that He loves me and would save me; that Christ hath redeemed me from the curse of the law, being made a curse for me; that whosoever trusts in Christ hath everlasting life;—all of it I believe, for thus *saith* the Lord. And when, on whatever subject, it teaches me God's thoughts, that I may have the honor and the felicity of thinking with God; when, especially, it opens up to my view enchanting visions of goodness and glory in the kingdom of the Christ;—all its teachings, most reverently, most thankfully, I welcome to my heart of hearts. For the Book is itself God's own voice out of the heavens; and "just as the thunder of heaven is even-toned, and is always like itself in awful grandeur, and is unlike other sounds of earth," so God's voice in the Scriptures is always majestic and commanding, always true and trustworthy, always unlike the babbling voices of men.

“ Each word of Thine a gem
 From the celestial mines,
 A sunbeam from that holy heaven
 Where holy sunlight shines.
 A thousand hammers keen,
 With fiery force and strain,
 Brought down on it in rage and hate,
 Have struck this gem in vain.
 It standeth and will stand,
 Without or change or age,
 The word of majesty and light,
 The church's heritage.”

JESUS THE SUPREME WITNESS AND EXAMPLE OF INSPIRATION.

HOWARD OSGOOD.

HISTORICAL investigation is founded on monuments and documents. The monuments of Jesus Christ are, primarily, His people in all the ages; they are His witnesses, they are the cities set on hills. The documents of Jesus are, primarily, the gospels and the other writings of the New Testament. And according to the strictest law of historical criticism, the ultimate decision as to the character and import of documents rests, not upon the fine mold of mere criticism of words, not upon rightful conception of historical relations, however useful these may be, but upon the firm bed-rock of the character of the witness testifying in the documents. This character, if honest, intelligent, thoroughly informed, disinterested, faithful, finds its echo in man, who can recognize and be attracted by noble character, however far from it he may know himself to be.

In all ages there has risen before men, as they have read and reread the gospels, the character of Jesus. This character is not found more in one part than in another of the gospels. But as the vapor, with healing on its wings, rises from every part of the ocean and forms the clouds, bringing life and refreshing to the earth and man, so, from the words, the acts, the incidents of daily life, all the minutiae of artless narrative, as well as from the doctrines taught, from the doctrine of simplicity and love, illustrated by the infant taken in His arms, to the doctrine of infinite, eternal power and Godhood, from each and

every part of the gospels there arises a character, stamped with the traits of honesty and intelligence, of high principle and goodness, of fortitude and love.

This character, which is the effulgence of the gospels, and the impress of their substance, is not the result of the cunning art of a tax-gatherer, two fishermen, and a physician. The evangelists frequently remind us that they did not understand this character. They were slow to appreciate it. They simply tell in unadorned language what they saw and heard, or learned by testimonies they could not doubt. They stand as far below this character revealed in their writings, as when, "over against Bethany," "while He blessed them, He parted from them, and was carried up into heaven," they stood "looking steadfastly into heaven as He went." The evangelists show every mark of the spirit of their age; but only the extreme school, who deny the supernatural, deny to Jesus what every one else sees in Him, absolute freedom from the spirit of His age. This character was not, as it could not be, the art of men whom their contemporaries styled "unlearned and ignorant," nor could it be the device of fraud or enthusiasm. Under the supreme law of historic criticism, as well as according to the consciousness of men in every age, under every clime, of every color, this character becomes, as it ever has been and will be, the highest proof and plainest seal of the gospels that reveal it.

This character is marked in all its lineaments with honesty, that is, with "fairness and straightforwardness of thought, speech, act, purpose." However men have interpreted His acts or words, and differed from them, the centuries have been free from the accusation of insincerity or unfairness or dishonesty in Jesus. He was sincere in His convictions, and proved His sincerity against the appeals of friends, and the last resort of foes. This

honesty shone out in the native, imperturbable dignity of His bearing ; it was both a principle and a habit. And 1,800 years of criticism have failed to find the flaw which proved that at any moment He was derelict to the principles of the purest, loftiest morality. But there seems to be, on the part of a few, at the present day, a tendency to deny to Jesus the highest powers of mind. He is said to be of uncompromising honesty, our Master in the practical religious life ; but as to the evidences in Jesus of those powers of mind which deal with the highest forms of knowledge—that is, what we style intellect, as distinguished from intelligence and understanding—we are told that the learning of this day has shown that He did not possess them. Let us consider this denial for a moment.

What is the highest realm of mind ? Is it not that where the mind grasps and deals with ultimate principles of the material world, or of the world of intellect, affections, will ? If we find a writer that has made even one ultimate principle his theme, and upon that theme has given to the world some advance of sound thought, we praise him as a master among men. Look back over the history of man : how few have been the men who have advanced the thought of the world on any single great principle, and how slight has been the advance made by any single mind. But grant that many minds may think freshly and truly upon ultimate principles, and that the conscious purpose of this thinking is the highest known, the glory of God and the benefit of man, what is the final complex, the concrete result of such thinking, on which man has set his seal as the utmost reach of human powers ? Is it not the embodiment of the simplest, ultimate principles in the noblest characters ? Shakespeare remains one of the few master-minds of all the centuries. Plato's thinking, in most concrete form, is embodied in his conception of the character to which he has given the name of Soc-

rates. Yet in these, and the few other world-masters of thought, we look in vain for the drawing of a perfect character. Was it the defect of their thought, or the incongruity of putting a perfect character into a world so full of all that is contrary to it, that has resulted in the imperfections of their creations? There is no evidence that Plato or Shakespeare ever imagined a perfect character. And the difficulty of making a perfect character at home in the world, was clearly perceived by both.

This overmastering reach of mind is patent in Jesus Christ. That perfect character, which is the last analysis and synthesis of the gospels, to which the writers give their testimony, but in which they had no part; that character, simple, pellucid, without a flaw, itself the home and exhibition of every ultimate principle, recognizable by the human mind—that character, in its principles, its acts, its purposes, was “the clear conception, the permanent realized ideal of Jesus, and of Him only.” That character was wholly unknown to the world before, and, hence, like every advance of thought which condemns the hoary inherited errors of the present, the mistakes and misconceptions and fond ideals of friends or foes, it was misunderstood and doubted by His dearest friends, and by His foes it was gibbeted on Calvary for the scorn of the world.

Granted the possibility of the conception of a perfect character, an ideal never lost, there is still a difficulty no human mind has ever even attempted to overcome, that is, to exhibit such a character radiant in the smallest acts of daily life, in the homeliest duties, in the lowliest condescension and ministry of deed and doctrine; and to bear it successfully through the scoff of the worldling, the keenest antagonism of the refined dialectics of the self-righteous, through the misunderstandings and betrayal by friends, the awful sufferings of a prolonged death in full

sight of men. Yet this is just what Jesus has done in His own life, not in the less difficult task of portraying that life in another. The conception of this character was that of Jesus alone. This conception in all its minutiae and in its entirety was ever before Him, so that there is no discordant trait, and He was this character in this very world, in which no human brain has ever before or since even attempted to introduce a perfect character. If the universal canon of human judgment as to the possession of the highest powers of intellect, the capacity for the highest forms of knowledge, the analytic and synthetic powers in the utmost stretch of their capacity,—if this canon is of avail, then Jesus must be credited with the possession of mental powers beyond any other being who ever lived on this earth.

It is now rather the fashion in some circles to compare Jesus with Sakia-Mouni, Confucius, Mahomet, to the advantage of these last. Let any one compare Jesus' conception of His character with the conceptions of character by other men, and, by all the laws of intellect, Jesus moves above them as far as the sun above its reflex on the wavelet.

The critical school of the present day that denies to Jesus anything but a "restricted intellectual outfit and outlook," affirms that His views were totally at variance with the teachings of the Old Testament rightly understood. Suppose we grant this for the moment. Then we must say that His plan for the good of mankind was wholly His own.

This Man of thorough honesty of principle and life, of mental power beyond all others, who alone held the conception of a perfect life and alone realized it,—this One had a definite plan before Him.

History is full of the names of leaders of men, warriors, statesmen, philanthropists. Their names have come down

to us, not because they were the children of fortune, but because of their plans conceived by minds of immense grasp and carried out by their power over men. It is this evidence of superior mental vigor and grasp that has enthroned Thotmes III., Alexander, Cæsar, Napoleon, among kings over the kings of earth. But these men planned for dominion, wealth, glory. No one denies that self occupied the first place in these vast schemes. Their steps to power were the multitudes of their slain. With each of them their plans perished also. If these plans, which filled the world with the glare of war and carnage and perished with their authors, are yet accounted the sure evidence of intellectual powers of the highest order, what shall be said of the plan of Jesus? This plan embraced not a part of men, but men in all ages, of all climes, the whole habitable globe. Its aim was to bring men of all nations to the love and service of God, to the love and service of each other, to turn the world from its ceaseless moan of sin and anguish, to "righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit," which is "the kingdom of God." And this was to be accomplished by those who loved Him just telling the story of the life and death and resurrection of Jesus, that men, believing this, should, by love for Him, be led to live as Jesus lived, for God and for man. This plan overtops all other plans of the greatest of men, as far as the whole world exceeds any of its parts. Here is entire absence of self, for the plan includes as its first step the death of Jesus, and He affirmed that ages must pass before His plan should attain its end in the hands of others. This plan in its infinite, beneficent reach, in the absence of all self-seeking, in the utter simplicity of its motive and means of accomplishment, in its absolute contradiction of the most firmly entrenched beliefs of His day, this plan was original with Jesus, and is to-day, 1,800 years after His death, in greater vigor of extension than

ever before. Surely, if the highest powers of mind, all permeated with love and benevolence and disinterestedness, ever appeared on earth, they are found only in Jesus.

The thoughtful, reverent lovers of their fellow-men have in all ages awarded the highest places among the teachers of men to the sound thinkers on, and teachers of, morals. Confucius has on this ground held his place of teacher to one-fourth of the inhabitants of the globe for more than 2,000 years. But among all who have thus been exalted, Jesus Christ is the Supreme Master. Even the denial of intellectual outfit to Jesus is accompanied with the acknowledgment that He is our Master in His practical religious teaching.

With what ease Jesus moved as at home in the highest ethical problems is shown by the lightning flash of His reply to the insidious query of the Pharisees: "Is it lawful for us to give tribute unto Cæsar or not?" "Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and unto God the things that are God's"; which determines forever man's duty to the State and to God. Or consider that digest of law on the widest possible field of human activity: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind"; "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." Or take the precept, applicable wherever man meets man, "As ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise." These few examples are sufficient to prove the possession by Jesus of the highest powers of abstract thought on the subtlest relations of man, and of the power, quite as marvellous, of concentrating that thought in the simplest propositions, so that a child can understand them.

In addition to all these high qualities Jesus was also Master in the learning, which is the result of serious study and accurate thought, on the main subject of all His teaching, the Scriptures of the Old Testament. He was the

Son of a mother "highly favored" of God, the sanctified temple of the Holy Spirit. Her husband was also one who had found favor with God. Under the care and teaching of these two holy servants of Jehovah, Jesus passed His earliest years. At twelve years of age He was intimately acquainted with the Scriptures of the Old Testament, their only Bible. When, eighteen years after this, He enters on His life-work, He proves how diligent had been His study of the Old Testament. He knew it in both the original Hebrew, and in its accepted translation, the Greek. Whenever He had gone as a listening child to the synagogue, He had heard read only the Hebrew text followed by the spoken Aramaic paraphrase; and whenever, in later life, He entered the synagogue and read from the Bible, as He did in the synagogue at Nazareth, He read the Hebrew text only. Though, in speaking to the people in popular address, He always quotes the Greek translation because it was the one read and best known by the people, yet in His quotations in Greek His knowledge of the Hebrew appears. But beyond this familiarity with the outward form of the Scriptures He shows the most intimate acquaintance with both the proximate and ultimate thought of all its parts; not only with the course of narrative, or with discourse of prophet, or song of the enraptured psalmist, but with the grand fundamental thought and purpose which bound all together. He had read that collection of writings so deeply that He saw but one doctrine of the perfect life in "all the Law and Prophets" (Matt. vii. 12; xxii. 40; Luke vi. 31), one succession of holy prophets, from the righteous Abel, slain by a brother's hand in the gleaming light of the gate of Eden, to the prophet slain before the curtain that veiled the glory of God in the temple, "slain between the temple and the altar" (Matt. xxiii. 35; Luke xi. 51). For three years in the thick of the sharpest dialectical controversy the world

has ever known, Jesus is never found at fault in a quotation, or in an interpretation of the meaning of the Scriptures. His opponents saw in Him only a man; but when they tried all their wisdom and ingenuity to entangle Him in the most intricate webs they could weave of Scripture difficulties, His simple and clear answers put them to complete silence, "for they durst not any more ask Him any question" (Mark xii. 34; Luke xx. 40). He taught the meaning of the Scriptures "as having authority" (Matt. vii. 29; Mark i. 22), that is, the authority and power of the Scriptures themselves were concentrated in all His words, and "not as the scribes," whose knowledge of the words was accurate, but who were utterly ignorant of the real meaning of these words and of the significance of the Scriptures as an organic whole.

Now we say that if ever a witness was qualified by the possession of the highest intellectual gifts, by a life in which no flaw has ever been detected, by impregnable honesty, by integrity of principle, thought, speech, life, purpose, by the clearest vision of all ethical truth and conformity in life to it, by the most transparent disinterestedness, by study and learning—if ever a witness was qualified to give true testimony on all subjects connected with Himself and with the purpose of His life, then Jesus stands out far above all other men as this witness. To refuse to believe Him, after having all the proofs of His character before us, is in effect to deny point-blank that there is sufficient evidence to prove any point to the human mind. To deny His lofty mental powers and to profess to revere His ethical teachings, is to deny the sun while striving to get warmth from its beams; to deny that there is light while we walk only by it. And it is fully as great blindness in friends of Jesus to seek a refuge from attack, or a shield for the Shechinah of God, in denial of His mental power while they praise His life and teachings.

Before this peerless character, this witness "faithful and true," the soundest, grandest minds of the centuries have bowed in deepest reverence, and, by their love for Him, have shown forth a life bearing some semblance to His. The leader of these grand minds and holy lives, the Apostle Paul, has, with his eye set upon Jesus, given us an extended description of prophecy and the prophet in the 12th, 13th, and 14th chapters of First Corinthians. Prophecy, he tells us, was the immediate effect wrought by the Holy Spirit, in persons specially chosen by God (1 Cor. xii. 7, 11, 28, 29). The outward seal of the prophecy, spoken by God through His chosen servant, was the character of the prophet; and the celebrated 13th chapter of 1st Corinthians was written as a delineation of the character of the true prophet of God. He should be a man of humility and love, not puffed up by his gift, living for the good even of the men who most opposed him. This character was of greater importance to the prophet personally and as a guarantee to others, than the gift of prophecy (1 Cor. xii. 31; xiii. 2, 8, 9; xiv. 1; Rom. xii. 1-9; Eph. iv. 1-16).

Jesus was this character. He calls Himself a prophet (Matt. xiii. 57; Mark vi. 4; Luke iv. 24; John iv. 44; Luke xi. 50; xiii. 33, 34), and frequently affirms of Himself that He was sent by God to teach only what God taught Him to say, and that He never taught anything else; that He had not come to do His own will, but the will of Him that sent Him, and this will He always performed. He thus affirms His own inspiration, as He also does in numerous explicit statements, for all of which these clear words may stand as the example: "I spake not from myself; but the Father which sent me, He hath given me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak. And I know that His commandment is life eternal: the things therefore which I speak, even as the Father hath said unto me, so I speak" (John xii. 48-50).

We might stop here and ask if the witness of a prophet thus prepared with character and learning to attest His deliverances would not be sufficient? But by the witness of this very prophet, Jesus, we cannot stop here. He was not only the single perfect man this world has seen since the visible gate of Eden was closed, but He was far more. The elements and the features of His life before men were perfectly natural, and yet a world in sin cries out with truth that so perfect a character must be supernatural; and Jesus agrees here with the world. Listen to this honest mind and heart in prayer to His Father at the supreme moment of His life: "And now, O Father, glorify Thou me with Thine own self with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was." "For Thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world." Again, just as He ceases prayer, "All things have been delivered unto me of my Father; and no one knoweth the Son, save the Father; neither doth any know the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son willeth to reveal Him." Again to the Jew, in whose Scriptures God had revealed Himself as the Eternal "I Am," and who bowed in reverential, though superstitious awe with mute lips before the very letters of "The Name," and to whom his forefather Abraham seemed to be on the horizon of time, the beginnings of the grace of God—to the Jew, Jesus most solemnly declared, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am. They took up stones therefore to cast at Him"; but Jesus never modified the assertion. Nay, in all the variety of change, He makes the same assertion, and crowns all with the clear words in His last discourse with His disciples: "Ye believe in God, believe also in me." "If ye had known me, ye would have known my Father also: from henceforth ye know Him and have seen Him." "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." And these words He stamps, with all the guarantee of His

character and inspiration, as the very words of His Father in Him; "How sayest thou, Show us the Father? Believest thou not that I am in the Father and the Father in me? the words that I say unto you I speak not from myself; but the Father abiding in me doeth His works." This Jesus, the Son of God, "the effulgence of His glory and the very image of His substance, and upholding all things by the word of His power," gave the most striking illustration that "all things were made by Him. . . . In Him was life; and the life was the light of men," when, in reference to that first creation of man by Jehovah God, who "breathed into his nostrils the breath of life and man became a living soul," Jesus "breathed on His disciples and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Spirit."

Before this perfect character, this greatest, lowliest of all ethical teachers, this wondrous complex of man and God over all blessed forever, we bow in deepest adoration, and confess with Paul, that He "is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of all creation; for in Him were all things created, in the heavens and upon the earth, things visible and things invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers; all things have been created through Him, and unto Him; and He is before all things, and in Him all things consist." Or, with John, we say: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." "No man hath seen God at any time; the only-begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him."

These are the qualifications of Jesus Christ, "the faithful and true witness," for testifying upon that most important of all questions for sinful man, whom He came to save by the sacrifice of Himself, Where shall man find God speaking to him the words of eternal life? His answer is as clear as day.

The whole century, in part of which Jesus lived, is

filled by the testimony of two most competent Jewish witnesses to the Scriptures, which they held as distinct from all other books, because given by a succession of prophets through whom God spoke. Their Scriptures agree with our present Old Testament in Hebrew, barring the mere minutiae of criticism. From that century to this, these Old Testament Scriptures have come to us by two streams of transmission, (during fifteen centuries entirely dissociated from each other,) the Jewish and Christian. So that, if documentary testimony is of any worth, we know to what Jesus referred as "The Scripture," "The Law," "The Law and the Prophets," "The Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms"; it was the identical collection of writings which we possess in the Hebrew Old Testament.

These Scriptures were, alike in all their parts, the word of God to Jesus. He mingles together the most diverse parts as equally valid history and proof. Take the twelfth chapter of Matthew, and there we find, 1 Sam. xxi. 3-6, Numb. xxviii. 9, 10, Lev. xxiv. 5-9, Hos. vi. 6, Jon. ii. 1, iii. 1-10, 1 Kings x. 1-10, directly quoted as all equally true; or, Matt. xix., where Jesus quotes Gen. i. 27, ii. 24, Ex. xx. 13-16, Lev. xix. 18, and Deut. xxiv. 1—thus running the whole scale of the Pentateuch, (which some learned men of the present day have decided is not the word of God): all quoted as God's words; or, Matt. xv., where Jesus asserts that Ex. xx. 12, xxi. 17, and Isa. xxix. 13, were all equally the word of God; or, Matt. xxiii. 35, Luke xi. 51, where He spans the extreme limits of the Hebrew Bible, by quoting Gen. iv. 3-8, and 2 Chron. xxiv. 18-22.

Or, consider John x. 34, 35, where Jesus calls the whole Old Testament the Law, the Word of God, the Scripture. "Is it not written in your Law, I said, Ye are gods? If He called them gods unto whom the word of

God came (and the Scripture cannot be broken),” etc. These words, written in their “Law,” are found in Ps. lxxxii. 6, a Psalm of Asaph, and yet Jesus takes out those words, from what some now suppose to be an insignificant, post-exile composition, and makes them a touchstone for the whole Scripture which He declares “cannot be broken,” the word of the omnipotent God.

This collection of writings, these Scriptures, were to Jesus an organic whole. They had one common teaching of the life of God in the soul of man; “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.” “Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hangeth the whole law and the prophets” (Matt. xxii. 37-40; Mark xii. 29-31). “All things, therefore, whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, even so do ye also unto them; for this is the Law and the Prophets.” They also had one common supreme testimony, not to a shadowy hope, not to a mere human postulate of faith, but to a person, the Saviour, who should live and die and rise again for the salvation of man. “The Scriptures . . . these are they which bear witness of Me.” “Moses . . . wrote of Me.” “All things must needs be fulfilled which are written in the law of Moses, and the prophets and the psalms, concerning Me. . . . And He said unto them, Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer, and rise again from the dead the third day; and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name unto all the nations.”

Jesus has left us in no doubt as to the sense in which He understood the word of God; all these Scriptures had God for their author: John v. 38; x. 35; Matt. xv. 6; Mark vii. 13. Between the author and the result, the spoken and written word of God, there was, by Jesus’ teaching, the free, perfect co-operation of God’s chosen

servants. The type and example of all God's speaking through man, and so conveying the very words God would have spoken and written, is Jesus himself. He was the perfect Servant—not a mere pen, or flute, or mechanical intermediary—but the most commanding intellect of all the ages, at home in the solution of the subtlest problems of man's highest good, Himself free as the very mind of God, and yet He tells us many, many times that He spoke only what God commanded Him to speak. "My teaching is not mine, but His that sent me." "The word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's who sent me." "I spake not from myself; but the Father, who sent me, He hath given me a commandment, what I should say and what I should speak. . . . The things, therefore, which I speak, even as the Father hath said unto me, so I speak." And in the solemn rendering of the account of His life unto His Father in prayer, He recurs to this most free and happy service, "These things I speak in the world, that they may have my joy fulfilled in themselves. I have given them Thy word."

This reiteration of His own inspiration from God His Father, which covers His whole life, is the rule by which we understand what Jesus means when He says, it "was spoken of through Daniel the prophet" (Matt. xxiv. 15); "David in the spirit calleth Him Lord"; or when it is indifferent to Him whether He says "Moses said" or "God said," or when He merely quotes by the formula "It is written," which takes the impress of His meaning from His repetition of it thrice in the first great conflict of His life with Satan in the desert (Matt. iv., Luke iv.). He rested His soul with absolute confidence on the written word of God in that typical contest with the enemy of all souls, as He rested His soul on that word amid the cyclone of death in Gethsemane, the Prætorium, and on Calvary.

Jesus is the perfectly qualified witness to the inspiration

of the Bible, as He is also the perfect example of conveying to man the very words God would have Him speak. What has been done by the Head of the Church has also been done by members of the Church specially chosen and fitted by God for this purpose.

Are we Christians? Jesus has left us His test of His true followers. "O Father, . . . I manifested Thy name unto the men whom Thou gavest me out of the world: Thine they were, and Thou gavest them to me, and they have kept Thy word. Now they know that all things whatsoever Thou hast given me are from Thee: for the words which Thou gavest me I have given unto them; and they received them, and knew of a truth that I came forth from Thee, and they believed that Thou didst send me."

THE MORAL GLORY OF JESUS A PROOF OF INSPIRATION.

W. G. MOOREHEAD, D.D.

THE glories of the Lord Jesus Christ are threefold—essential, official, and moral. 1. His essential glory is that which pertains to Him as the eternal Son of God, co-equal with the Father, Himself God. To His personal and uncreated glory, Jesus himself refers when He says: “And now, O Father, glorify Thou me with Thine own self with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was” (John xvii. 5). To it the Spirit bears witness when He says: “Who is the effulgence of His glory, and the very image of His person” (Heb. i. 3), words which suggested the phrase of the Nicene Creed, “Light of Light.”

2. His official glory is that which belongs to Him as the God-man, the Mediator. It is the reward conferred upon Him, the august promotion He received when He had brought His great work to a final, satisfactory, and triumphant conclusion. And with what clusters of official dignities is the Son of Man now invested. All power in heaven and on earth is given Him (Matt. xxviii. 18); God hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name (Phil. ii. 9); He is crowned with glory and honor (Heb. ii. 9). Once He trod this earth, the poor Man, despised and rejected, His face covered with shame, a stranger to His brethren, an alien to His mother’s children, the song of the drunkard (Ps. lxx. 7, 8, 12; Jno. i. 10, 11). Earth once cast Him out as unfit to live here. But God raised Him from the dead,

and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality and power and dominion and might, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come; and hath put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him that filleth all in all (Eph. i. 20-23). No name is surrounded with such splendor, or commands such veneration as His. He has no superior and no rival. No sphere, however high or distant, is exempted from His control: no creature, however mighty, has a co-ordinate jurisdiction. And other glories await Him when He shall come to be glorified in His saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (2 Thess. i. 10).

3. The moral glory of the Lord Jesus consists of the perfections which marked His entire life on earth; perfections which attached to every circumstance in which He was found, to every relation He sustained whether toward God or man. His essential and official glories were commonly hid as He passed on through His earthly course. He did not walk through the land either as the Divine Son from the bosom of the Father, or as the authoritative Son of David. These glories He veiled, save where faith discovered them, or occasion demanded their display. But His moral glory could not be hid: He could not be less than perfect in everything: it belonged to Him: it was Himself. It now illumines every page of the evangelists, as once it did every path He trod here on earth.

This moral glory of Jesus, as it is exhibited in the four Gospels, we are to contemplate—not as an example most worthy of our imitation, nor to call forth our devout admiration and love, nor yet as an evidence of Christianity, though to all these ends it is most admirably fitted—but for a single purpose, viz., as a proof of the inspiration of the Scriptures.

In this discussion the Lord's person is assumed—God and man in one Lord Jesus Christ. His work is also assumed—His atoning sacrifice by which reconciliation was effected, and which is now preached for the acceptance and joy of faith.

The proposition which we undertake to illustrate and establish is this: That the character of Jesus Christ, as delineated in the Gospels, cannot be the product of the unaided human mind.

The portrait of Him which the authors of the Gospels have drawn is that of a subject too majestic and too sublime ever to have been idealized by uninspired men. He stands before us arrayed in a beauty and a grandeur which dwarf "the starry heavens above us, and the moral law within us." He shines forth with the self-evidencing light of the noonday sun. He is too great, too pure, too perfect, to have been invented by any sinful and erring man or set of men. His moral glories, which glow through all the pages of the Gospels with a deathless lustre, tell us of the presence of One in this dark and tearful world who is more than man; and they tell us, also, that the pen which traced them was an inspired pen. We shall have occasion to verify the words of the infidel Rousseau: "It is more inconceivable that a number of persons should agree to write such a history, than that one should furnish the subject of it. The Jewish authors were incapable of the diction, and strangers to the morality, contained in the Gospel. The marks of its truth are so striking and inimitable, that the inventor would be a more astonishing character than the hero." Manifold are the external proofs in favor of the integrity of the evangelistic narratives; but greater far and more manifold are the internal evidences of their inspiration. Jesus Christ herein portrayed as a divinely perfect character; perfect as a Child and as a Man; perfect in all His

ways, and words, and service; in wisdom and knowledge, in grace and holiness, in nearness and distance, among friends and enemies, in life and death: Jesus Christ, in all that He was while sojourning in the flesh, and in all that He now is in the highest heavens, is the one unailing and unanswerable proof that the Gospel is from God, that it reveals God.

The discussion of this great theme falls into two parts: I. A brief survey of Christ's character, as disclosed in the Gospels. II. The application of the argument.

("The character," and "The moral glory of Jesus," are not quite convertible terms. We consider the latter as the more comprehensive; but to avoid repetition both are used.)

1. The moral glory of Jesus appears in His development as Son of Man. The nature in which He appeared among men was our nature with all its needs, weaknesses, and limitations, sin and sinful propensities only excepted. His was a true and real humanity. As man, He possessed a perfect and penetrating community of nature with the lot of humankind. He displayed a genuine humanity which could deem nothing human, strange—which must pass through the various stages of growth like any other member of the race.

It has been said of the Lord that "His manhood was perfectly natural in its development." The words of Luke justify the statement: "And the child grew, and waxed strong (in spirit), filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon him" (Lu. ii. 40, 52). Man is not at once what he must be, but becomes so by slow gradations: and He who in His matchless grace came down into all the circumstances of our actual humanity voluntarily subjected Himself to the same laws of growth. From infancy to youth, from youth to manhood, there was steady increase both of the powers of His human

body, and the faculties of His human soul : but the progress was natural and orderly. No unhealthy precocity marked the holiest of infancies. His wisdom kept pace with His age. He was a child first, and afterward a man, not a man in child's years. His wisdom, wonderful as it must have been, was childlike still, growing as His years grew, and deriving its increase from all the common sources that lay open to it. We know that He was childlike as other children : for in after-years His brethren and townsmen thought His fame strange. They could not believe that One who had gone in and out among them, who had often toiled for them, and whom no doubt they had often seen covered with the dust and shavings of His trade (Mark vi. 3), could wield such marvellous powers : He had given no token of their possession during the thirty years He had dwelt at Nazareth. Artists paint Him as a child in His mother's arms, His brow encircled with a halo of glory ; but in point of fact no glory shone around that holy person. "He was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not."

As the Son of Man He is represented as compassed about with all the sinless infirmities which belong to our nature. He has needs common to us all : need of rest, of food, of drink, of human sympathy and Divine assistance. That He may escape the murderous hate of Herod, Joseph and Mary must bear Him swiftly and secretly into a place of safety. That His precious life may not be endangered from the jealousies of the reigning dynasty, He is withdrawn into the obscurity of Nazareth. He is habitually subject to His parents ; He recognizes the authority of the State. The scattered and fainting multitude melts Him to compassion ; He weeps human tears of sorrow at the grave of Lazarus, and over the impenitent city. He is a worshipper in the Synagogue and the

Temple : He marvels at the unbelief of men, is indignant at their captiousness. He expresses His dependence on God by prayer, and loves the society of those who love Him.

Nothing is more obvious than the significant fact that throughout the gospel narratives Jesus is presented to us as a true man, a veritable member of our race. But we no sooner recognize this momentous truth than we are confronted with another that sets these records alone and unapproachable in the field of literature. This second fact is this : At every stage of His development, in every relation of life, in every part of His service, He is absolutely perfect. Whatever He is, and whatever He does, while it is borne and done in a purely human manner, is nevertheless altogether superhuman. While His love, His pity, His sympathy, His grace, are genuinely human, they are still all Divine. His human development is free from all one-sidedness, even in temperament and character ; He is always Himself and the same, because He is always perfect. To no part of His life does a mistake attach, over no part of it does a cloud rest, nowhere in it is there found defect or perversion. "There is an unbroken unity in His life and endeavor, which stands forth in the sharper contrast as compared with the conflict and discord around Him." Those who are most closely related to Him—His neighbors and kinsmen—fall immeasurably below Him. We feel as we read, we cannot but feel, that the people of Nazareth, the people of Galilee, nay, the very best in Jerusalem itself, cannot furnish one solitary person whom for a moment we dare compare with Him. All fade away in His presence, even as the stars fade before the majestic splendors of the sun. The disciples are full of prejudice and ignorance, of misapprehensions and errors, and He must constantly correct them. The purest and most austere man that lived on earth in

that day, John the Baptist, fails in the time of trial. Even the mother, herself, though she "pondered" things in her heart, is often beset with clouds and doubt and darkness, and He must correct and rebuke her. He knows when to own her claims as she makes them; when to resist them though she makes them; when to recognize them unsought. "He trod each path and filled each spot in that mind which was according to the character He bore under God's eye."

Thus the moral glory of Jesus shines in its seasons; and the same glory gets other seasonable expressions in other features of His life.

2. The Gospels do not only assert the real incorporation of the Lord Jesus with our kind: they do much more than this. They exalt Him infinitely above us all as the representative, the ideal, the pattern man. They clothe Him with the character, the attributes, and the distinctions of the universal Man, the One whose human life does justice to the most exalted idea of humanity.

Nothing, in the judgment of historians, stands out so sharply distinct as race, national character—nothing is more ineffaceable. The Jew was marked off from all mankind; he still is to this day. Wherever he wanders over the earth, the tell-tale face he wears proclaims him the descendant of Abraham. The Frenchman differs widely from the Englishman and the Oriental, the German from all three. Notwithstanding our boasted cosmopolitanism, we Americans are fast making for ourselves a national type which distinguishes us from other peoples. The very greatest men are unable to free themselves from the influences in the midst of which they have been reared and educated. Peculiarities of race and the spirit of the age leave in their characters traces which are imperishable. To the last fibre of his being, Luther

was German, Calvin was French, Knox was Scotch. Augustine bears the unmistakable impress of the Roman, and Chrysostom is as certainly Greek. Even Paul, with his large-heartedness, his wonderful affection for every class and condition of men, is nevertheless a Jew, always a Jew. As with men, so with the great religious books of the world. Each is tinged with a local coloring, each moves within a narrow circle of thought, and is accordingly limited in its influence. The sacred books of Persia and of India have never had other than a local reception. Even the Koran could never attain a permanent hold on the notions of the West. Of universal religious books there is but one—the Bible. It alone finds a welcome among nations of every region and of the most diverse habits of life and thought, because it is the word of God, and therefore speaks to the universal heart of man.

As the Bible stands alone among the books of the world, so the Author of Christianity occupies a pre-eminent place among the children of men. Jesus Christ is the only One who is justly entitled to be called the Catholic Man. Although He was born and reared in the midst of the most exclusive people on earth, nothing local, transient, individualizing, national, or sectarian dwarfs the proportions of His world-embracing character. "He rises above the parentage, the blood, the narrow horizon which bounded, as it seemed, His Human Life; He is the Archetypal Man in whose presence distinctions of race, intervals of ages, types of civilization, degrees of mental culture are as nothing" (Liddon). In Him there is no national peculiarity, no individual idiosyncrasy. The comprehensiveness of His manhood is such that no age or nation can claim Him as its own: He belongs to all ages, is related to all men, whether they shiver amid the snows of the Arctic Circle, or pant beneath the burning heat of the Equator; for He is the Son of

Man, the Son of mankind, the genuine offspring of the race.

Van Oosterzee thinks that a deep seriousness underlies the jest of the heathen philosopher when he kindled his lantern at midday in order to seek for men. "Poor Diogenes! men, that fully deserve this name, you could not find around you; because the perfect Man, the Restorer of our race, had not yet appeared upon earth." The ideal of the true Sage, as the Greeks and the Romans depicted him, was as little perfect as attainable. One sought for him in the contempt and scorn of the world, and in the stern repression of the voices of nature within him; another, in sensual enjoyment and unbridled license. Socrates united traces of moral greatness with the most melancholy littleness: and Plato looked in vain for the coming of a perfectly wise and righteous one.

At length He appears who is the desire of all nations, in whom all nations find their ideal and their Redeemer. Although born in Judea, He is not a Jew; born in Asia, He is not an Oriental; much less is He a Greek, and still less a Roman. He is the Son of Man, the Friend and Brother of all men; like the first man Adam, but more than he; for He is also the Son of God. Higher than the highest, His infinite tenderness and pity flow out to the lowliest and the most abandoned. He is no poet, and yet a world of poesy slumbers in His matchless parables: no philosopher, yet wisdom discloses her divinest oracles by His lips: no conqueror, yet He wins the most stupendous victory the world has ever seen or will see. It is not too much to say with another, "that as the fullness of the Godhead dwelleth in Him, so we may add, in Him dwelleth all the fullness of humanity bodily."

3. His moral glory appears in His unselfishness and personal dignity.

The entire absence of selfishness in any form from the

character of Jesus is another remarkable feature in the Gospel narratives. He had frequent and fair opportunities of gratifying ambition had His nature been tainted with that passion. But "even Christ pleased not Himself": He sought not "His own glory": He came not "to do His own will." His body and His soul, with all the faculties, the activities, the latent powers of each, were abandoned for the glory of God and the good of His people. His self-sacrifice included the whole range of His human thought and affection and action: it lasted throughout His life: its highest expression was His death on the cross.

This complete renunciation of all that has no object beyond self on the part of Jesus touches every relation of His human life—everything, in short, that men hold dear: it extends to His relatives, His home, His pleasure, His reputation, His repose. Dear to Him is the solitude in which He can hold undisturbed communion with the Father; but no sooner do the disciples announce to Him that the multitude seek Him, than He is moved with compassion toward them, without the slightest trace of vexation at the interruption. When from His nocturnal sanctuary He beholds the distress of His followers upon the stormy waves, He quits it at once to hasten to their relief. Welcome to Him is the refreshment prepared for Him by love and friendship: but this sweet luxury of life He allows Himself only at those rare moments when no higher duty makes demand upon Him. He imposes on Himself, as has been truly said, greater toil and more steadfast self-restraint, when the things which men most prize, and for which they most eagerly long, are pressed upon Him by the admiring and enthusiastic multitudes. Whether He labors or reposes, whether He suffers or enjoys, speaks or is silent, grants or refuses, comes or remains away—always and everywhere He is the obedient One.

The strange beauty of His unselfishness is that it never seeks to draw attention to itself: it deprecates publicity: it loves to disclose itself to the eye of God alone, and to those who can understand and appreciate it. He seems, in His unselfish humility, as one naturally contented with obscurity; as wanting the restless desire for eminence which is so common in really great men; as disliking competition and disputes as to who should be greatest; as eager and careful that even His miracles should not add to His reputation.

But amid all His self-sacrificing humility, He never loses His personal dignity, and the noble self-respect which becomes Him. He would receive ministry from some godly women out of their substance, and yet minister to the need of all around Him out of the treasures of the earth. He would feed thousands in the desert places, and yet Himself be an hungered, waiting for the return of the disciples from a neighboring village. But while thus poor, needy, and exposed, nothing that in the least savored of personal degradation or the loss of self-respect is ever seen attaching to His condition. He never begs though He have not a penny; for when He wanted to see one (not to use it for Himself) He must ask to be shown it. He may request a cup of water at the well of Sychar, but it is that He may save a soul. He never flies from enemies, though, as we speak, His life be in jeopardy. He withdraws Himself, or passes by unseen. He never takes advantage of the violence of factions or the strife of rival schools to protect Himself from the fury of the mob. He is always calm, serene. He seems to care little for Himself, but everything for the honor and glory of the Father. If it be defilement of His Father's house, He will let zeal consume Him: if it be His own wrongs at the hands of Samaritan villagers, He will suffer it, and pass on. If multitudes, eager and expectant, press upon

Him, shouting "Hosanna," He is not elated; if all fall away, stunned by His words of power, He is not cast down. For He sought not a place among men; quickly veiled His glory, that He might be the Servant—the girded, not the arrayed One.

And yet through all His amazing humility and self-renunciation, there glances ever and anon something of the majesty and supreme dignity which belong to Him alone who is over all God blessed forever. The beautiful words of a great theologian who not long ago passed away from earth are profoundly true: "It is the same King's Son who to-day dwells in the palace of His Father, and to-morrow, out of love to rebellious subjects, in a remote corner of the kingdom, renouncing His princely glory, comes to dwell amongst them in the form of a servant—limiting of His own free will the prerogatives of His original rank, which He has never laid aside—and is known only by the dignity of His look, and the star of royalty on His breast, when the mean cloak is opened for a moment, apparently by accident!" (Van Oosterzee).

4. The moral glory of Jesus is exhibited by His superiority to human judgment and intercession.

When challenged by the disciples or by enemies, as the Lord often was, He never apologizes, never excuses Himself. On one occasion the disciples complain, "Master, carest Thou not that we perish?" But He does not think of vindicating the sleep out of which the summons awakes Him, as one of ourselves would assuredly have done. On another, Martha and Mary say each in turn to Him, "Lord, if Thou hadst been here, my brother had not died." There is not a minister of the Gospel the world over who would not in similar circumstances explain or try to explain why he could not at once repair to the house of mourning when summoned thither. But Jesus does not excuse His not having been there, nor His delay of two

days in the place where He was. In the consciousness of the perfect righteousness of His ways He simply says, "Thy brother shall rise again." Peter takes it upon him to admonish Him: "This be far from Thee, Lord; this shall not be unto Thee." But Peter has to learn that it is Satan who had prompted the admonition. The officer in the palace of the high-priest would correct Him, smiting Him on the cheek. But he is convicted of breaking the rules of judgment in the very place and face of judgment. The mother rebukes Him, when, after three days' search, she finds Him in the Temple; but instead of making good her charge, she has to listen to Him convicting the darkness and error of her thoughts.

And thus it is on every occasion: whether challenged, or admonished, or rebuked, Jesus never recalls a word nor retraces a step. Every tongue that rises in judgment against Him, He condemns.

Nor does He recall a word when the Jews rightly inferred from His language that "He being a man, made Himself equal with God." He pointed out the application of the name Elohim to judges under the Theocracy, and yet irresistibly implies that His title to the name is higher than, and distinct in kind from, that of the Jewish magistrates. He thus arrives a second time at the assertion which had given so great offence. The Jews understood Him. He did not retract what they accounted blasphemy, and they again sought His life. He is never mistaken, and never at fault.

So, likewise, He is superior to human intercession. In Gethsemane He asked the disciples to watch with Him; He did not ask them to pray for Him. He could claim human sympathy: He prized it in the hour of weakness and sorrow; and this is no small proof of the human perfection that was His. But while He felt this and did this, He could not ask them to stand in the Divine Presence

as in His behalf. He would have them give themselves to Him, but He could not ask them to give themselves to God for Him. Paul writes to his fellow-saints, "Brethren, pray for us"; "pray for me." But such was never the language of Jesus. It is worthy of note that He never places His people on a level with Himself in His intercessions. He maintains the distance of His own proper dignity and exalted relations with the Father between Himself and them. He never uses plural personal pronouns in His prayers. He always says, "I," and "me," and "these" and "them" that "thou hast given me"; never "we" and "us," as we speak in our petitions. He is solitary, unique, the heavenly Stranger in the world.

5. The sinlessness of Jesus witnesses to His moral glory.

The Gospel narratives record that during His earthly manifestation, from beginning to end, He preserved Himself absolutely pure and free from all sins. No more can be done now than to name the witnesses, and the general tenor of their evidence.

We have the testimony of His enemies. For three long years the Pharisees were watching their victim. As another writes, "There was the Pharisee mingling in every crowd, hiding behind every tree. They examined His disciples: they cross-questioned all around Him. They looked into His ministerial life, into His domestic privacy, into His hours of retirement. They came forward with the sole accusation they could muster, that He had shown disrespect to Cæsar. The Roman judge, who ought to know, pronounced it void." There was another spy—Judas. Had there been one act of sin, one failure in all the Redeemer's career, in His hour of awful agony Judas would have remembered it for his comfort; but the bitterness of his despair, that which made his life insufferable, was that he had "betrayed the innocent blood."

There is the testimony of His friends. His disciples tell us that during their intercourse with Him His life was unsullied. Had there been a single blemish, they would have detected it, and, honest historians as they were, they would have recorded it.

Nor is His own testimony to be overlooked. Jesus never once confesses sin. He never once asks for pardon. Yet is it not He who so sharply rebukes the self-righteousness of the Pharisees? Does He not seem to ignore all human piety that is not based upon a broken heart? But yet He never lets fall a hint, He never breathes a prayer which implies any, the slightest trace of personal blameworthiness. Never does He associate Himself with any passing experience of that dread of the penal future with which His own solemn words must needs fill the sinner's heart. If He urge sorrow and tears upon others, it is for their sins: if Himself sorrow and groan in agony, it is not for sins of His own, it is for others'. He challenges His enemies to convince Him of sin. Not only has He done no evil, but the good in Him is so pure and holy that the hatred of His foes is all the more inexcusable and criminal. "They hated me without a cause," He could say at the end of His life.

Nor is this all. "The soul," it has been said, "like the body, has its pores"; and the pores are always open. "Instinctively, unconsciously, and whether a man will or not," says Canon Liddon, "the insignificance or the greatness of the inner life always reveals itself." From its very centre and essence the moral nature is ever throwing out about itself circles of influence; encompasses itself with an atmosphere which discloses the inner life. In Jesus this self-revelation was not involuntary, or accidental, or forced: it was in the highest degree deliberate.

He surrounds Himself with an air of superior holiness and moral elevation of being that still lingers in the world,

and that is encountered in every page of the Gospels; and yet He is felt to be the most gracious and accessible of men. We observe in His ways a tenderness never seen in mere men, yet we instinctively feel that He is a Stranger: a Stranger so far as revolted man was filling the scene, but intimately near so far as misery and need demanded Him. The distance He took and the intimacy He expressed were perfect. He did more than look upon the misery that was around Him: He entered into it with a sympathy which was all His own; and He did more than refuse the pollution that was around Him: He kept the very distance of holiness itself from every touch and stain of it. He is near in our weariness, our hunger, our danger. He is apart from our tempers, our selfishness, and our sin. "His holiness made Him an utter stranger in such a polluted world; His grace kept Him ever active in such a needy and afflicted world." He was like a ray of light, which, coming from the fountain of light, can pass through the most defiling medium and still be untainted and unstained. Such was the mystery of His person, such the perfection of His manhood, that the temptation in Him was as real as was the undefilableness.

He had God's relation to sin. He knew evil, but was in divine supremacy over it—knowing it even as God knows it. But yet His perfect knowledge of man in all his wickedness detracts nothing from His matchless compassion for sinners. His pity goes forth as freely to the publican, the harlot, the demoniac, the thief, as to the most exemplary among men. His life on earth is one stately hymn, which ceaselessly rises heavenward, and runs through all the scales, without being interrupted by a single jarring note.

6. The exquisite assemblage and correlation of virtues and excellences in the character of Christ form another very remarkable feature of the Gospel narratives.

There have been those who have displayed distinguished traits of character; those who, by reason of special endowments and extraordinary gifts, have risen to heights which to the mass of men are inaccessible. But among the mightiest of the sons of men, which one has shown himself to be evenly balanced and rightly poised in all his faculties and powers, so that he maintains his equilibrium under every condition of life? In the very best and greatest, inequality and disproportion are encountered. Generally the failings and vices of men are in the ratio of their virtues and powers. The tallest bodies cast the longest shadows. In Jesus Christ there is no unevenness. There is in Him no preponderance of the imagination over the feeling, of the intellect over the imagination, of the will over the intellect. There is in Him an uninterrupted harmony of all the powers of body and soul, in which that serves which ought to serve, and that rules which ought to rule, and all work together to one adorable end. In Him every grace is in its perfectness; none in excess, none out of place, none wanting. In Him justice never suffers from the exercise of the most amazing mercy, truth is never overshadowed by His peerless love, and the freest pardon never for an instant clouds His holiness. In Him firmness never degenerates into obstinacy, or calmness into stoical indifference. His gentleness never becomes weakness, or His elevation of soul, forgetfulness of others. In His best and most beloved servants, virtues and graces are uneven, and often clash and jostle with each other. In their very attempts to live and die for Him who loves them, they only show how unlike Him they are, how far below Him they fall.

Moreover, the account of Jesus' life on earth becomes all the more unapproachable and unique when it is observed that it is made up of a union of excellences which seem at first sight irreconcilable, but which, when

blended and duly proportioned, constitute moral harmony of the sublimest kind. One who did not receive the testimony of Scripture as do we, clearly saw this feature in Him, and spoke of it in words we may use: "He joined strong feeling and self-possession; an indignant sensibility to sin, and compassion for the sinner; an intense devotion to His work, and calmness under opposition and ill-success; a universal philanthropy, and a susceptibility of private attachments; the authority which became the Saviour of the world, and the tenderness and gratitude of a son" (Channing). His immovable equanimity is such that He is just as little elated when He is above measure extolled, as disappointed when He is without cause humiliated. In Him one day's walk never contradicts another, one hour's service never clashes with another. While conscious that He is from God and will soon return to God, His unfeigned sympathy makes Him accessible to all. While He shows He is master of nature's tremendous forces and the Lord of the unseen world, He turns aside and lays His glory by to take little children in His arms and to bless them. While everywhere He must endure the contradiction of sinners, must walk amid the snares His foes have privily spread for His feet, He is always equal to every occasion; is in harmony with the requirements of every moment. He never speaks where it would be better to keep silence; never keeps silence where it would be better to speak; but ever leaves the arena of controversy a conqueror!

Bred a Jewish carpenter, He issues from obscurity and claims for Himself a divine office, a superhuman dignity, such as had never been imagined, and in no instance does He fall below the character. He talks of His glories as one to whom they are familiar, and of His intimacy and oneness with God, as simply as a child speaks of his connection with his parents. He speaks of saving the world,

of drawing all men to Himself, and of giving everlasting life, as we speak of the ordinary powers which we exert. This unaffected majesty, so wonderfully depicted in the Gospels, runs through His whole life, and is as discernible in the midst of scorn and poverty, in Gethsemane and at Calvary, as on the mount of Transfiguration and the triumphant resurrection from the dead.

7. We observe, lastly, that the moral glory of Jesus, as it is delineated in the Gospels, exerts a boundless influence upon the world.

Unbelief has been compelled to confess that "all the philosophers have had no perceptible influence on the morals of the street in which they lived; but Jesus Christ has new-created the world." This witness is true. What moral power do the ancient philosophies now wield among men? When the awful conviction takes hold on a man that he must face God about his sins, will he turn to these for relief and help? Who cares what Plato or Seneca, Socrates or Epictetus, thought and taught? We read into them, if we read at all, with a feeling akin to that which prompts us to inspect a museum of antiquities. Somehow the memorials of the Lord Jesus contained in the Gospels are ever young and fresh. Somehow, like their exalted Subject, they retain the dew of their youth. Somehow they yield as profound instruction, as pure joy, as holy and transforming power now as when they were first sent forth into the world. Let us hear the opinion of one who was neither a pietist nor weak-minded—Napoleon Bonaparte. "The Gospel possesses a secret virtue, a mysterious efficacy, a warmth which penetrates and soothes the heart. . . . The Gospel is not a book; it is living being, with a vigor, a power which conquers everything that opposes." Let us hear the verdict of history, as it is summed up by Mr. Lecky: "The brief record of three short years of active life has done more to soften and re-

generate mankind than all the disquisitions of philosophers, and than all the exhortations of moralists." The European, the Asiatic, the African, the aboriginal American, even Darwin's Patagonian savage, have alike confessed its power. This brief record has surmounted all the peculiarities of race and temperament. Men of the greatest minds have bowed to it; men of the greatest moral elevation have been raised still higher by its influence. It has raised up "the poor out of the dust, and lifted up the beggar from the dung-hill, to set them among princes, and to make them inherit the throne of glory" (1 Sam. ii. 8).

What is the secret of this power, this perennial vigor, which the Gospels possess? The answer to the inquiry is not difficult—Christ is in them, reveals Himself through them. It is He whose perfect character and whose faultless life are here recorded, who gives these incomparable narratives all their potency and all their charm. In the four Gospels One is presented to us who transcends the actual Christianity of every age. No branch of the Church, nor all the branches combined; not the whole body of believers, even when they have most of His mind and Spirit, can approximate Him. Some rays of His glory they may reflect, but not Himself. The Scriptures alone do that. And the effect of the unveiling of His person, just as He is depicted by the Evangelists, ever has been and ever will be the source of a renewal of vitality to the Church, and of turning multitudes from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God.

Such are some of the beams of Christ's moral glory as they shine everywhere on the pages of the four Gospels. A very few of them are here gathered together. Nevertheless, what a stupendous portrait do they form! Nothing next to or like it is to be found in the annals of the whole race. Here is One presented to us who is a true

and genuine man, and yet He is the ideal, the representative, the pattern man; claiming kindred in the catholicity of His manhood with all men; sinless, yet full of tenderness and pity; higher than the highest, yet stooping to the lowest and the most needy; perfect in all His words and ways, in His life and in His death!

Who taught the Evangelists to draw this matchless picture? The pen which traced these glories of Jesus—could it have been other than an inspired pen? This question leads us to the second part of our task, which can soon be disposed of—II. The application of the argument.

Nothing is more obvious than the very commonplace axiom, that every effect requires an adequate cause. Given a piece of machinery, complex, delicate, exact in all its movements, we know that it must be the product of a competent mechanic. Given a work of consummate art, we know it must be the product of a consummate artist. None but a sculptor with the genius of an Angelo could carve the "Moses" of the Vatican. None but a painter with the hand, the eye, the brain of a Raphael, could paint the "Transfiguration." None but a poet with the gifts of a Milton could write "Paradise Lost."

Here are four brief records of our Lord's earthly life. They deal almost exclusively with His public ministry: they do not profess even to relate all that He did in His official work (cf. John xxi. 25). The authors of these memorials were men whose names are as household words the world over, but beyond their names we know little more. The first was a tax-collector under the Roman government; the second was, it is very generally believed, that John Mark who for a time served as an attendant on Paul and Barnabas, and who afterward became the companion and fellow-laborer of Peter; the third was a physician, and the devoted friend and co-

worker of Paul; and the fourth was a fisherman. Two of the four—Matthew and John—were disciples of Jesus. Whether the others, Mark and Luke, ever saw Him during His earthly sojourn, cannot be certainly determined.

These four men, unpracticed in the art of writing, unacquainted with the ideals of antiquity, write the memoirs of Jesus' life. Three of them traverse substantially the same ground, record the same incidents, discourses, and miracles. While they are penetrated with the profoundest admiration for their Master, they never once dilate on His great qualities. All that they do is to record His actions and discourses with scarcely a remark. One of them indeed, John, intermingles reflective commentary with the narrative; but in doing this, John carefully abstains from eulogy and panegyric. He pauses in his narrative only to explain some reference, to open some deep saying of the Lord, or to press some vital truth. Yet, despite this absence of the smallest attempt to delineate a character, these four men have accomplished what no others have done or can do—they have presented the world with the portrait of a Divine Man, a glorious Saviour! Matthew describes Him as the promised Messiah, the glory of Israel, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham; the One in whom the covenants and promises find their ample fulfilment; the One who accomplishes all righteousness. Mark exhibits Him as the mighty Servant of God who does man's neglected duty, and meets the need of all around. Luke depicts Him as the Friend of man, whose love is so intense and comprehensive, whose pity is so divine, that His saving power goes forth to Jew and Gentile, to the lowliest and the loftiest, to the publican, the Samaritan, the ragged prodigal, the harlot, the thief, as well as to the cultivated, the moral, the great. John presents Him as the Son of God, the

Word made flesh; as Light for a dark world, as Bread for a starving world, as Life for a dead world.

Matthew writes for the Jew; Mark for the Roman; Luke for the Greek; John for the Church; and all of them write for every kindred, and tribe, and nation, and tongue, and people of the entire globe, and for all time!

What the philosopher, the poet, the scholar, the artist, could not do; what the statesman, the warrior, the prince, could not do; what men of the most colossal minds, the most stupendous genius, have failed to do, these four unpracticed men have done—they have presented to the world the Son of Man and the Son of God, in all His perfections and glories!

How comes it to pass that these unlearned and ignorant men (Acts iv. 13) have accomplished so great a feat? Let us hold fast our commonplace axiom: every effect must have an adequate cause. What explanation shall we give of this amazing effect? Shall we ascribe their work to genius? But multitudes of men both before and since their day have possessed genius of the very highest order; and these gifted men have labored in fields akin to this of our four Evangelists. The mightiest minds of the race—men of Chaldea, of Egypt, of Greece, of China, and of India—have essayed to draw a perfect character, to paint a godlike man. And with what result? Either he is invested with the passions and brutalities of fallen man, or he is a pitiless and impassible spectator of the world's sorrows and woes. In either case, the character is one which may command the fear, but not the love and confidence of men.

The Christ of the Gospels is the true God-man. He is the eternal Son of God. Yet He is genuinely human: a sharer of our nature; tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin.

Again we ask, How did the Evangelists solve this

mighty problem of humanity with such perfect originality and precision? Only two answers are rationally possible: 1. They had before them the living model—the personal and historical Christ. Men could no more invent the God-man of the Gospels than they could create a world. The almost irreverent words of Theodore Parker are grounded in absolute truth: “It would have taken a Jesus to forge a Jesus.” 2. They wrote by inspiration of the Spirit of God. It cannot be otherwise. It is not enough to say that the Divine Model was before them: they must have had something more, else they never could have succeeded.

Let it be assumed that these four men, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, were personally attendant on the ministry of Jesus—that they saw Him, heard Him, companied with Him for three years. Yet, on their own showing, they did not understand Him. They testify that the disciples got but the slenderest conceptions of His person and mission from His very explicit teachings. They tell us of a wonderful incapacity and weakness in all their apprehensions of Him. The Sun of Righteousness was shining on them and around them, and they could see only the less! And yet these four men, once so blind and ignorant, write four little pieces about the person and work of Jesus which the study and research of Christendom for eighteen hundred years have not exhausted, and which the keenest and most hostile criticism of the world cannot shake.

But this is not all. Others have tried their hand at composing the Life of Jesus. Compare some of these with our four Gospels.

The Gospel narrative observes an almost unbroken silence as to the long abode of Jesus at Nazareth. Of the void thus left the Church became early impatient. During the first four centuries many attempts were made

to fill it up. Some of these apocryphal gospels are still extant, notably two, entitled the Gospel of the Infancy; and it is instructive to notice how those succeeded who tried to lift the veil which covers the earlier years of Christ. Let another state the contrast between the New Testament records and the spurious gospels: "The case stands thus: Our Gospels present us with a picture of a glorious Christ, the mythic gospels with that of a contemptible one. In our Gospels He exhibits a superhuman wisdom; in the mythic ones a nearly equal superhuman absurdity. In our Gospels He is arrayed in all the beauty of holiness; in the mythic ones this aspect of character is entirely wanting. In our Gospels not one stain of sinfulness defiles His character; in the mythic ones the Boy Jesus is both pettish and malicious. Our Gospels exhibit to us a sublime morality; not one ray of it shines in those of the mythologists. The miracles of the one and of the other stand contrasted on every point" (Row).

These spurious gospels were written by men who lived not long after the apostolic age; by Christians who wished to honor the Saviour in all they said about Him; by men who had the portraiture of Him before them which the Gospels supply. And yet these men, better taught, many of them, than the Apostles, with the advantage of two or three centuries of Christian thought and study, could not attempt a fancy sketch of the Child Jesus, without violating our sense of propriety and shocking our moral sense. The distance between the Gospels of the New Testament and the pseudo-gospels is measured by the distance between the product of the Spirit of God, and that of the fallen human mind.

Let us take one other illustration. The present century has been very fruitful in the production of what are commonly called "Lives of Christ." Contrast with the

Gospel records four such "Lives"; perhaps the completest and best, taken altogether, of those written by English-speaking people, are Andrews', Geikie's, Hanna's, and Edersheim's.

The authors of our Gospels had no models on which to frame their work. The path they trod had never before been pressed by human feet. The authors of the "Lives" have not only these incomparable narratives as their pattern and the chief source of all their material, but numberless other such "Lives" suggestive as to form and construction, and the research and culture of eighteen centuries lying behind them. But would any one venture for a moment to set these "Lives" forth as rivals of our Gospels?

Much information and real helpfulness are to be derived from the devout labors of these Christian scholars. If an opinion of the relative value of them may be expressed, it may be said that Andrews' "Life" excels for accuracy in questions of chronology and topography; Edersheim's and Geikie's, for thorough acquaintance with the Times of the Advent; and Hanna's, for spirituality and clear insight into the character of Jesus. But how far below our Gospels each and all of them fall, it is needless to show.

Let the contrast likewise be noted as to size or bulk. Hanna's book contains over 2,100 pages; Edersheim's, 1,500; Geikie's, over 1,200; and Andrews', 615 pages. The four combined have no less than 5,490 pages—enough in these busy days to require months of reading to go but once through their contents.

Bagster's Bible prints the four Gospels in 82 pages; the Oxford, in 104; and the Revision (Old and New Testaments, 8vo,) in 88 pages. In the Bagster, Matthew has but 23; Mark, 15; Luke, 25; and John, 19. Less than one hundred pages of the four Gospels against

more than five thousand four hundred of the four "Lives"!

Countless volumes and tomes, great and small, in the form of commentary, exposition, notes, harmony, and history, are written on these four brief records. How happens it that such stores of wisdom and knowledge lie garnered in these short pieces? Who taught the Evangelists this superhuman power of expansion and contraction, of combination and separation, of revelation in the words and more revelation below the words? Who taught them so to describe the person and work of the Lord Jesus as that the description satisfies the most illiterate and the most learned, is adapted to minds of the most limited capacity, and to those of the widest grasp? Where did they derive the infinite skill they display in grouping together events, discourses, and actions in such fashion, that vividly before us, is the deathless beauty of a perfect Life? There is but one answer to these questions, there can be no other. The Spirit of the living God filled their minds with His unerring wisdom, and He controlled their human speech. To that creative Spirit who has peopled the world with living creatures so minute that only the microscope can reveal their presence, it is not hard to give us in so brief a compass the sublime portrait of the Son of Man. To men it is impossible.

Now, if the Holy Spirit be the real Author of the four Gospels, He is as certainly the Author of the rest of the New Testament. For all the later communications contained in the Acts, the Epistles, and the Apocalypse are found in germ form in the Gospels, just as the Pentateuch holds in germ the rest of the Old Testament. The revelation contained in the Gospels does not bear the character of finality. It seems to need and to promise further light to be given without which our knowledge of Jesus and

His perfect work would be slender indeed. The immense significance of His life, death, resurrection, and ascension could no more be drawn out by the unaided human mind, even with the Gospels in its possession, than could man grow a seed into perfection without sun, earth, and moisture. He who created the seed is alone competent to unfold it into mature fruit.

The opening words of Acts are striking and deeply suggestive: "The former treatise have I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and to teach, until the day in which He was taken up":—words the plain import of which is, that what Jesus *began* in His ministry on earth He continued after He was taken up. His teaching while here was not final: it was, we may reverently say, introductory. Its completion awaited His glorious ascension. And when He went on high He fulfilled His promise and sent down the Holy Spirit, whose great office it was to finish the revelations of the Lord Jesus, and to inaugurate and carry forward the Christian dispensation.

Furthermore, if we admit the inspiration of the New, we must likewise concede the inspiration of the Old Testament. For, if any one thing has been established by the study and research of Christian scholars beyond peradventure and beyond dispute, it is this: that the Scriptures of the Old Testament contain in germ form the entire revelation of the New. That epoch-making man, Augustine, spoke as truly as profoundly, when he said: "*Novum Testamentum in vetere latet, Vetus in Novo patet*"—"The New Testament lies concealed in the Old, and the Old stands revealed in the New."

If any man deny the inspiration of the Old Testament, logically he must also deny that of the New; for the two are inseparably bound up together. If one fall, so must the other. A body started upon a sloping path is not likely to stand still.

Christ is the centre of all Scripture as He is the centre of all God's counsels. The four Evangelists take up the life and character of Jesus as these actually appeared among men, and they place them alongside of the Messiah as sketched by the prophets, the historical by the side of the prophetic, and they show how precisely and exactly the two match. So long as the four Gospels remain, so long is the doctrine of the inspiration of the Scriptures unassailable.

God spake to the fathers in the prophets: He now speaks to us in His Son. In either case, whether by the prophets or by the Son, the Speaker is God.

THE CANON OF SCRIPTURE.

TALBOT W. CHAMBERS, D.D.

THE question I am to treat is the Canon of Scripture, or in other words, what books actually belong to the Bible. The subject is of no small importance, for if the Scriptures be, as all evangelical men admit, the rule of faith and the guide to practice; if they be or contain a revelation from God, we need to know whether the book which we receive and hold as the Bible really deserves that character. Error or even uncertainty here would be a serious drawback on Christian peace and progress. And the more, as it is not infrequently asserted that the confidence of believers is misplaced; that the different works embraced in the sacred volume have found admission there on insufficient grounds, while some have been left out which had as good a right as any others to be in the collection; and that therefore there is need of a critical estimate in each case in order to revise our conclusions and determine afresh what is and what is not part and parcel of the Bible. That this view, by whatever great names it is sustained, is shallow and unscientific, will, I trust, be made to appear in the course of the discussion that follows.

Among Christians, opinions are divided first and mainly by the answers they give to the question, What is the rule by which we are to determine the canonical authority either of the Scripture as a whole or of any part of it? The answers may be reduced to three. Some say it is the Church that gives the requisite authority to the Canon;

others maintain that it is *divina fides*, or the witness of the Holy Spirit, the author of the word, in the heart of the believer; while a third class insist that historical tradition is the only sufficient basis. And it is clear that these views are mutually exclusive. If a man holds one, he must renounce the others. If one claim that the Church has authority in the premises, he cannot consistently impeach that authority by appealing to something else. So, if he hold to the witness of the Spirit and insists that thus his faith has a divine foundation which alone is adequate, he is debarred from any support that is distinctively human; otherwise he renounces his principle. In like manner the effort to establish the Canon by an appeal to the testimony of those who first received the sacred books and their successors implies that neither the objective ground of the Church's authority nor the subjective ground of *divina fides* is a sufficient basis for our faith that what we receive as Scripture is really entitled to that name.

I. It is an opinion widely diffused through Christendom that we depend upon *the authority of the Church* for the determination of the Canon. This is the view of the Greek and Roman Catholics, and of not a few in the Church of England and its daughter in this country. The great Latin father, Augustine, is on record as saying, "For my part I should not believe the Gospel except as moved by the authority of the Catholic Church" ("*Contra Epis. Manich. Quam Vocant Fundamentum*," chap. 5), and although Calvin endeavors ("Institutes," I., vii. 3) to show that Augustine is speaking only of a supposed case of a person knowing nothing of the matter and therefore dependent upon human testimony, he hardly makes out his position.* Yet, in another of his writings ("De Doct.

* Prof. Henry B. Smith says that the saying "is fairly interpreted as meaning, not that the Church gave authority to the

Christ," ii. 12, 13), Augustine certainly speaks of the canonical Scriptures as depending not on the authority of the Church, but on the witness of the several churches, the weight and influence of which as well as their numbers are to be counted by whoever wishes to be a wise student of the divine Scriptures. And Jerome seems to have been of the same opinion. But the Council of Trent settled the question for Rome in a summary way, and pronounced the usual anathema against all who held the contrary. And all Romanists now would say, as the learned Dr. Doyle once said in regard to another matter, "The Church has spoken at Trent, *causa est finita*." It is to be observed that the reference here is not to the testimony of various bodies of believers in different places as witnesses in respect to the writings which they received as apostolic and inspired, and which therefore were regarded as having a divine sanction, for this is a matter upon which there need be no difference of opinion. But when men speak of receiving the Scriptures on the authority of the Church, what they mean is the deliberate voice of the Church as a great corporate organization, acting through the decision of its chief officials, which may be a general council, or the Bishop of Rome as successor of Peter. (1). The first and obvious objection to this theory is that it is a notable specimen of what is called reasoning in a circle. For we cannot determine the claims of the Church except by the declarations of Scripture, and yet we are to go to the Church to learn what Scripture is. Clearly, no progress can be made by proceeding in this way. In each case the question is begged in advance, and at the conclusion we are just where we were at the beginning. (2). We desire to know how the heads of the Church, whether one or many, reach their conclusion and are able

Scriptures, but gave to Augustine his authority for receiving them" ("Introduction to Christian Theology," p. 192).

to pronounce authoritatively upon the subject. It must be by an immediate revelation from heaven or by their study of the facts in the case. If it be the former, then it is a private matter, known only to themselves and not established to us by any proof, and therefore in no degree entitled to our confidence or obedience. If it be the latter, then the same sources of information are open to us, and we may apply ourselves to them humbly and patiently in the expectation that the divine guidance and blessing will not be withheld. (3). We find nowhere in what purports to be Scripture any reference to the Church as the arbiter of such a question. As the mystical body of Christ, the Church is inexpressibly dear to Him, but He has committed to her no such authority as is here claimed. The oft-quoted expression, "Hear the Church" (Matthew xviii. 17), has reference to the settlement of a private dispute between individuals, and is merely a statement as to the exercise of discipline and one that is essential to the preservation of a society, but it bears not even remotely upon the determination of points of faith. (4). Moreover, if the voice of ecclesiastical authority is to settle the Canon, one may well wonder why it was not heard at any earlier period. No such voice was uttered for the first fourteen centuries of the Christian era. Numerous œcumenical councils were held from Nicæa to Basle, yet not one of them took up the subject. It was not until 1441 that Pope Eugenius broke the long silence of ecclesiastics by promulgating on his own authority a list of the books of Scripture, being impelled to this doubtless by the terrible confusions of that period. This list was faithfully reproduced a century afterward by the Council of Trent. But these were novel procedures. During all the fourteen centuries that preceded, the people of God, whatever their conflicts and trials, seem never to have felt any need of an authoritative decision on the limits of Scrip-

ture. The question was often discussed and there were various opinions, but no one thought of having an exact definition imposed upon clergy or laity. And if before the division of Christendom a decree of this kind was not sought or made, still less is there need to look for it in the stormy days which succeeded the revival of letters in the fifteenth century. All that any number of churches could do now would be to reaffirm a conclusion already reached on other and independent grounds.

II. When the Reformers, in the 16th century, broke with Rome, they of course rejected the authority of the Church as an arbiter of the Canon. What they adopted instead of this was *divina fides*, or the spiritual perception of the believer. The view was formulated in the Gallican Confession in these words. After stating the books by name, it says: "We know these books to be canonical and the sure rule of our faith, not so much by the common accord and consent of the Church as by the testimony and inward illumination of the Holy Spirit which enables us to distinguish them from other ecclesiastical books upon which, however useful, we cannot found any articles of faith." It was thought that in this way the faith of the Church in its sacred books was taken off from any human foundation, and placed upon one that was simply and purely divine. But such a notion certainly confounded things that differ. It is one thing to know by the immediate action of the divine Spirit upon the heart that the great features of the Gospel are true, so that plain men, comparing their own experience with what is stated to them, may feel as sure of the saving truths of the Gospel as if they heard them announced by a voice from heaven; but it is quite another thing to be convinced that *all* the books of the Bible are divine, and to be able, by the inward witness of the Spirit, to discriminate the canonical books from the apocryphal. The for-

mer is a matter of every-day experience, and has been seen times without number in all ages of the Church; but the latter has never been verified, indeed is incapable of verification. Most candid men would agree with Richard Baxter, who said ("Saint's Rest," Preface to Part II.): "I confess for my own part I could never boast of any such testimony or light of the Spirit, nor reason neither, which, without human testimony or tradition, would have made me believe that the Book of Canticles is canonical, and written by Solomon, and the Book of Wisdom apocryphal, and written by Philo, as some think. Nor could I have known all or any historical books, such as Joshua, Judges, Ruth, Samuel, Kings, Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, etc., to be written by divine inspiration, but by tradition. Nor could I know any or all of those books to be God's word, which contain mere positive constitutions, as Exodus, Leviticus, etc., were it not for the same tradition."

The same point has been expressed in this way, by an American divine of the last generation: "Suppose that a thousand books of various kinds, including the canonical, were placed before any sincere Christian, would he be able, without mistake, to select from this mass the twenty-seven books of which the New Testament is composed, if he had nothing to guide him but the internal evidence? Would every such person be able, at once, to determine whether the book of *Ecclesiastes*, or of *Ecclesiasticus*, belonged to the canon of the Old Testament, by internal evidence alone? It is certain that the influence of the Holy Spirit is necessary to produce a true faith in the word of God; but to make this the only criterion by which to judge of the canonical authority of a book, is liable to strong objections."* The truth is, that, while

* The late Archibald Alexander, D.D., in his work, "The Canon of the Old and New Testaments Ascertained."

professing to base the acceptance of the Canon upon a divine foundation, it really puts it upon one that is essentially human, and therefore variable and uncertain, because men differ so widely in their states of mind at different times and places.

The Reformers were illustrious servants of God, and accomplished a most important work in His service. But even they did not learn "all the truth." Almost without exception they maintained that it was the duty of the civil magistrate to uphold and defend the interests of religion, and yet now it is one of the commonplaces of Christians that the alliance of Church and State is injurious to both. It is not presumptuous, therefore, to challenge any one of their opinions, and subject it to a close examination in the light of Scripture, reason, and experience. The test of canonicity which they felt themselves constrained to adopt in their controversy with Rome, is, we think, open to very grave objections.

1. It needlessly disparages the principle of exercising faith upon adequate evidence, by which we arrive at the knowledge of the existence of God (a point which is assumed in the Scriptures, as indeed it must be in whatever claims to be a revelation from heaven), and by which the whole business of life is carried on. If such faith be stigmatized as merely human, and therefore imperfect and unsatisfactory, what else is this but a reflection upon Him who so constituted us that our lives are governed by conclusions drawn from probable evidence,—*e. g.*, as to the facts of history, the laws of the land, the existence of persons or places we have never seen, etc. The objective evidence in favor of the Canon, as furnished in the writings of the primitive believers, in the general voice of Christendom, in the confessions of acknowledged heretics, and in the attacks of pagan opposers of the truth, is a solid basis of faith, which it is very unwise either to depreciate

or to ignore. As Dr. William Cunningham says: "The evidence of the Canon,—*i. e.*, the proof of the canonical authority of the particular books of Scripture,—is analogous to the evidence of the truth of Christianity. They are both, in a sense, matters of fact, and to be investigated and decided, in the first instance, upon the ordinary principles and grounds applicable to matters of fact" ("Theological Lectures," p. 444). Any theory which sets aside this method of arriving at truth as invalid or untrustworthy, weakens the foundations of all faith, and plays into the hands of the adversary.

2. Practically, this rule makes each individual believer the framer of his own Canon, for it says that the divine authority of Scripture is self-evidencing, only a man must be renewed to see and feel this evidence. But all truly regenerate men are not equally enlightened, and it is quite conceivable that a difference in the degree of their spiritual perception would make a difference in the number of the books they would receive. Personal conviction, on the *divina fides* theory, is all in all, and where this fails, divine authority and binding obligation fail with it, for each man has a right to appeal to the witness of the Spirit in his own heart. Others may differ from him, but this fact gives them no right to dictate to him. So that, in its ultimate result, this theory really sets up the intuitions of man above what is claimed for the written revelation of God. Such a result was not contemplated by its framers, and would have been rejected by them with horror, yet it is a legitimate outcome of the principle.

3. The theory, again, denies any certain Bible to the unregenerate. The evidence for the Canon is, indeed, abundant and clear, but he, in the nature of the case, is unable to see it. His spiritual eyes have not been clarified by grace, and all the abundant indications of the

divine origin and claims of the Bible are to him just as though they did not exist. Surely, this is not in accordance with fact. There are now, as for a long time there have been, many persons destitute of a saving interest in Christ, and yet intellectually convinced that the common Bible is what it claims to be. Such persons have no difficulty at all with the Canon. Whether from early training, or reflection, or observation, or the operations of natural conscience, they have become perfectly satisfied that the Scriptures are a revelation from God, and worthy of all acceptance, although they do not personally accept and confess the Lord Jesus; surely, one has no right to say that these persons are not believers in the Canon. And if we do say it, at what a sore disadvantage are we placed when pressing upon them the claims of the Gospel! All that is necessary for them to say in reply to the most urgent appeal, would be to affirm that they, not having the testimony of the Holy Ghost in their hearts to the divine authority of the Canon, had not, and could not have, any reason to accept a conclusion which can be reached only in this way.

It was an error in the same direction when Coleridge made it a test of the divine word whether it appealed to his moral and spiritual nature with sufficient force. "Whatever finds me," he said, "bears witness for itself that it has proceeded from a Holy Spirit." But this subjects the divine to the human, and makes every man a judge in his own case. Is a doctrine, a precept, a sentiment, a narrative unwelcome to him? Then all that it is necessary for him to say is, that he does not feel it, it does not *find* him. But the fault may be his own. He is so depraved or perverted, so sensual or worldly-minded, that the truth has no power over him, and thus sin becomes its own excuse. This is the inevitable difficulty whenever the Bible is to be tried simply by a subjective

test. Such tests have their use in particular instances, and often render a strong confirmation to a believer's faith, but they cannot of themselves furnish the basis of decision, and settle the question once for all.

The *divina fides* theory was, as has been said, adopted by all, or nearly all, the Reformers, and incorporated more or less distinctly into all the confessions of the sixteenth century. But it by no means continued to have the same acceptance in subsequent times. Stillingfleet ("Origines Sacrae," ii. 8) maintains, distinctly in opposition to any such requirement, that, "where there is any infallible testimony, there is sufficient rational evidence going along with it, to make it appear that it is from God." The judicious Hooker expresses himself to the same effect in his "Ecclesiastical Polity," Book 3, chap. viii. (*ad finem*). I have already cited the opinion of Baxter, and of Principal Cunningham, the latter of whom also says that "the sentiments of Baxter on this subject are quoted and sanctioned by Dr. Chalmers." In Principal Hill's "Lectures in Divinity," the Canon is treated, but not a word is uttered regarding the divine-faith theory. In the "Lectures" of Dr. John Dick, it is expressly repudiated. He does not deny that men may have the witness in themselves of the truth of the Gospel. "But observe," he adds, "that this evidence could go no farther than to satisfy them that those doctrines and promises were from God, by which they were enlightened, sanctified, comforted, and inspired with more than human courage, and with the triumphant hope of immortality. How could it convince them that all the books of the Bible are divine? How could it enable them to distinguish, as the French Church pretends, between the canonical and the apocryphal books?"

Contemporary writers on dogmatics hold the same view. Thus, Van Oosterzee ("Christ. Dogm.," i. 174),

after citing the words of the Belgic Confession on the point, says: "But, as we have seen, the Holy Ghost gives, indeed, testimony to the believer as to the saving revelation contained in the Scripture, yet not on this account necessarily to every single part, and just as little to the Bible *en bloc*. For us, therefore, the question as to the value to be attached to the collection contained in the Canon is, and remains, a purely historical question; the Church, through the medium of which we received it, exists for us, not as an infallible authority, but as a venerable witness to the truth." Dr. Harold Brown, the Bishop of Ely, in his "Exposition of the XXXIX Articles," says on this subject (vi. 2): "We have only to inquire what writings were apostolical; and for this purpose we have recourse to testimony, or, if the word be preferred, to tradition." . . . "The Church of England is not satisfied to rest her faith solely on the authority of any council; neither can she consent to forego all external testimony, and trust to an internal witness alone, knowing that, as Satan can transform himself into an angel of light, so it is possible that what seems the guidance of God's Spirit may, if not proved, be really the suggestion of evil spirits."

The testimony of theologians of our own country is to the same effect. Dr. Enoch Pond, of Bangor, in his "Lectures," treats the whole subject on a historical basis. The eminent Dr. Charles Hodge says ("Theology," i. 153), after giving the usual argument for the Old Testament: "The principle on which the canon of the New Testament is determined is equally simple. Those books and those only which can be proved to have been written by the apostles, or to have received their sanction, are to be recognized as of divine authority." His distinguished son, the late A. A. Hodge, who so worthily filled his father's place, upholds this view in the posthumous

volume, "Popular Lectures on Theological Themes" (pp. 76-7). He says that the rule is that any book written by an apostle, or received generally as canonical by the Church during the age in which it was presided over and instructed by the apostles, is to be regarded as canonical. He expressly denies the validity of "Christian consciousness" in the matter, and says no book can be admitted to the Canon except on the ground of explicit and sufficient historical proof. Nor in the whole context is there any reference whatever to the subjective ground. The equally eminent Dr. Henry B. Smith ("Introduction to Christian Theology," pp. 190-191) says as to the proof of canonical authority: "What we must regard is the specific evidence from competent sources that such and such books and no others have been received as being the word of God to man." In regard to the witness of the Spirit, he asks: "How do we know that we have the Spirit? The Spirit must be tried by the Word. The conviction as to the divine authority of certain writings, which spread itself through the primitive Church, and which furnishes the leading proof of the canonicity of those writings, should not be confounded with the inward persuasion of their authority which the Holy Spirit produces on individual minds." The latest important work on Systematic Theology, produced in our country, that of Dr. A. H. Strong, (Rochester, 1886,) takes the same ground. "We do not receive the Scriptures upon the authority of Fathers or Councils, but only as the Fathers and Councils received them, because we have evidence that they are the writings of the men, or class of men, whose names they bear, and that they are also credible and inspired." "We show their genuineness as we would show the genuineness of other religious books, like the Koran, or of secular documents, like Cicero's Oration against Cataline."

Indeed, the consensus of modern divines in all the evangelical bodies seems to be complete in the rejection of the view of the Reformers, who took no account of the general voice of Christendom, and acted as though each solitary man were brought to weigh for himself the claims of a new book. The only exception of importance is Professor C. A. Briggs, who, in his recent acute and learned work, entitled "Biblical Study," (pp. 108, 123, 203,) reaffirms, in the strongest form, the subjective principle, calls it "the true Puritan mystic," and declares that "this was the so-called formal principle of the Reformation, no less important than the so-called material principle of justification by faith." We have no disposition to question its claim to the former character, whatever that may mean, but the latter part of the assertion is an evident mistake. The formal principle of the Reformation was not any particular method of settling the Canon, but the Bible itself, the living oracles of God, as distinguished on one hand from the traditions of men, however learned or wise or venerable, and on the other from all forms of visionary enthusiasm in men claiming to have an immediate personal revelation from heaven.* All the Reformers,

* "Luther was led to the *material* principle of Protestantism, viz., justification by faith, which is the central point for the right understanding of the development of the whole Protestant system of theology. With this is connected the breaking away from the authority of the Church, and the subjection to the authority of Scripture, or the *formal* principle of the Reformation. Both principles belong together." (Hagenbach's "History of Doctrines," vol. ii., p. 141).

"The doctrinal principle of evangelical Protestantism as distinct from Romanism, is twofold—objective and subjective. The *objective* (generally called the *formal*) principle, maintains the absolute sovereignty of the Bible as the only infallible rule of faith and life, in opposition to the Roman doctrine of the Bible *and tradition*, as co-ordinate rules of faith. Tradition

with one voice, declared this to be the only norm, and the primary source of saving truth, and for this they contended to the last, and with the greatest vehemence. But, surely, it is a sad confusion to substitute for this great granite foundation, upon which everything rests, a mere statement of the way to determine what books belong to the Old Testament and the New. The latter is, indeed, interesting and important, but the former was the logical basis of the whole movement, that without which the Reformation would have died in its cradle.

III. The true method of ascertaining the Canon is that of *Historical Tradition*. This was the course pursued for centuries by the early Church, and what answered their purposes will surely answer ours. The same rule applies to both Testaments. We learn from the Christian Scriptures the existence and character of the Old Testament, but they furnish no list of the books of which it is composed. But this deficiency is completely supplied from trustworthy sources, one of which is Josephus, a native historian, who lived in the first century of our era, and who gives an exact statement of the sacred books, which he claims have come down from their authors without increase, diminution, or alteration, and which, he says, "all Jews are instinctively led from their birth to regard as the decrees of God, and to abide by them, and, if need be, gladly to die for them." The catalogue which he gives corresponds with the one now current among us. The

is not set aside altogether, but subordinated, and its value made to depend upon the measure of its agreement with the Word of God. The *subjective* (commonly called the *material*) principle, is the doctrine by the free grace of God through a living faith in Christ as the only and sufficient Saviour in opposition to the Roman doctrine of (progressive) justification by faith and good works as co-ordinate conditions of justification." (Schaff's "Creeds of Christendom," vol. i., p. 206).

same account is given by the other witness, Philo, an Alexandrian Jew, who flourished in the same century, and is well known by his philosophical writings. Neither of these men was ignorant that there were numerous other writings which made some claim to biblical authority, but they drew a sharp line of distinction between them and the genuine sacred books. These testimonies, strong and sufficient in themselves, are sustained by other considerations drawn from Jewish tradition, from the language of the so-called apocryphal books, from their substance and character, and from the utterances of the Christian Fathers; but it is not necessary to go into details on this point or discuss the many interesting questions it brings up. The Old Testament is so largely sustained by the New, not only as the latter involves the former throughout, but also in the way of various and repeated quotation, that it is of primary importance to maintain the canonical authority of the Greek Scriptures, since this carries with it that of the Hebrew.

In regard to the New Testament the case is by no means so simple as it is with the older book. The rule to be applied here is, that "Every book is genuine which was so esteemed by those who lived nearest to the time when it was written, and by the ages following in a continued series." There are not many who dispute the intrinsic reasonableness of this rule, but there are many who deny that its application will bring out the result which we claim—*i. e.*, the indisputable canonicity of the New Testament as we have it to-day. Every inch of ground in the first three centuries has been fought over again and again, and the din of battle has not yet ceased, nor indeed is it likely soon to come to an end. Passions and prejudices are enlisted, and so much depends upon the issue that it can hardly be pursued with an impartial mind. Of course, in a paper of this kind, a full and minute dis-

cussion cannot be carried on. All that is aimed at is to give an outline of the argument.

We maintain that the Canon can be successfully established from the testimony of those to whom the various inspired writings were originally delivered. By this, of course, it is not claimed, as some seem to have imagined, that there was an official list of sacred writings made by the apostles themselves or the last survivor of them. The books of the New Testament came into existence at various times and places under the guidance of Providence. The propagation of the Gospel was, in the first instance, and for many years, made orally, and with the use only of the Old Testament as written Scripture. In the course of time there grew up a series of compositions, whether narrative or epistolary, which were regarded by those into whose hands they came as of divine origin and authority. By these they were communicated to others, and thus gradually they came to be universally recognized as the standard of faith and practice. These writings were all completed by the end of the first century, having proceeded from the pen of apostles, or of apostolical men; that is, men under the influence and guidance of the apostles. But there was no official determination of their number or character made at that early period. As Reuss tells us, "There is not the least doubt that the apostles, and, as a rule, the Christians of their time, held the law and the prophets to be divinely inspired, and therefore held the words of Scripture to be not the words of men, but the words of God."* This fact, indeed, is apparent on the face of the New Testament, and becomes the more certain the more carefully its pages are studied. And the notion of inspiration then held included all the elements of excellence and of absoluteness which have been given

* "History of the Canon," Eng. trans., p. 12.

to it in any later definitions. Now, it was just this notion of the inspiration of the *Old* Testament that came in time to be attached to the *New*. No central power that we know of regulated or controlled the circulation of the documents belonging to the early Church. But it is natural to suppose that Christian people would desire to possess authentic memorials of the wonderful life of Him whose name they bore, and copies of the letters written by His apostles; and neither the cost of manuscript copies nor the difficulty of communication between different parts of the Roman world was so great as has sometimes been supposed.

We have some remains of what were called the Apostolic Fathers, Clement of Rome, Polycarp of Smyrna, and Ignatius of Antioch, between the years 90 and 130, by which we learn that the writings of the apostles had not only extended beyond the narrow circle of their origin, but were already exercising a marked influence on the teaching. In them we find mention of certain Epistles of Paul, and also of the evangelic history and of certain words of Jesus, the two being commonly called the Gospel and the Epistle. In this appeal to written records is the fruitful germ of the deference subsequently paid to the New Testament writers. It is not contended that these Apostolic Fathers had a complete Canon in their hands. That may or may not have been the case. The recognition of the Canon was doubtless as gradual as its formation had been. All that we are concerned to establish is that these Fathers had New Testament authorities to which they referred as genuine and decisive. The Old Testament was already in their possession, and they had long been accustomed to use it in public and in private; but now they had something more, to wit, the Christian truth contained in Christ's life, whether conveyed orally or in writing, and the instructions of the apostles as given

either in epistles or the traditional arrangements they had made in the churches.

Passing from these fathers to their successors, the Apologists of the second century (from 130 to 180), we find explicit testimony to the existence of distinct parts of the sacred Canon. Papias refers to the Gospels of Matthew and Mark, to the first Epistles of John and of Peter, and to the Apocalypse of John. He is said indeed to have been, although bishop of Hieropolis, a weak-minded and garrulous old man, which may be the fact, but does not affect his testimony, for "weakness of intellect does not enable one to speak of books as existing which are not in existence." The author of the beautiful relic of antiquity known as the Epistle to Diognetus, refers distinctly to the Gospels as, along with the law and the prophets, a regular source of faith and instruction. He also refers, though less distinctly, to the apostles in the same way. From Justin Martyr, the first of the apologists, we learn that there were extant in his day memoirs written by the apostles and their companions, that these were called Gospels and were regarded as authoritative, and that it was a common custom in Christian congregations to read these memoirs on Sunday along with the Old Testament prophets. Living as he did only forty years after the death of the last apostle, his testimony is particularly valuable as proving that at least the first two Gospels were in his day in general circulation and use. As he is simply making a defensive argument against the calumnies under which Christians were suffering, he does not quote the Gospels by the titles in use among Christians, because that was not required; but he certainly does refer to these productions, and his testimony as that of a man of liberal culture who travelled far and wide to spread the truth, must have great weight. Contemporaneous with Justin is a document known as the Muratorian Fragment, first

published in 1740. It was found in the Ambrosian Library, at Milan, in a volume of Latin fragments which dates apparently from the eighth century. This one was copied from a MS. of much higher antiquity, the writer of which speaks of himself as a contemporary of Pius, bishop of Rome in the second century, and it is now admitted on all hands that the date is somewhere between 160 and 170 A.D. It is written in barbarous Latin, and is mutilated at both ends. But its scope is clear. It gives a list of the sacred writings which were then acknowledged in the churches. It begins with Luke, but calling him "the third," plainly shows that the earlier portion, which has been torn off, contained Matthew and Mark. After giving account of the Gospels and the Acts, it proceeds to enumerate thirteen epistles of Paul, nine of them addressed to churches and four to individuals. Then it mentions two epistles of John and the epistle of Jude, and also the Apocalypse of John. Thus it includes every book of the existing Canon, save the epistle to the Hebrews, the epistle of James, the first one of John and the first and second of Peter. Why these are omitted it is not easy to say, for it is certain that in his notice of John's Gospel, he quotes a passage taken from his first epistle, yet he does not mention it by name. The incomplete statement may be owing to the mutilation of the text, which seems to be made up of detached pieces. But whatever be the cause, the fact itself deducts but little from the value of this first catalogue of the sacred books of the New Covenant. Whoever the author was, he is not setting forth his own individual views, but stating what is the usage in his ecclesiastical sphere, naming the books which were received in the Catholic Church, and some of those (Ep. to the Laodiceans and another to the Alexandrians, etc.) which were rejected. It is true the document is in no sense official, but is simply the account

of a witness. But this fact does not derogate from its value as a trustworthy representation of the common opinion of believers of its day.

There are those who insist that if there be a Canon at all, it shall be one regularly drawn up by the apostles, and given to the world with their official sanction. But we answer, that this was not God's method in the composition of the Old Testament. Its constituent parts were given to the people from time to time, in each case with satisfactory testimonials of the authority of the narrator or prophet or singer, to speak in behalf of God. But when these were once sent forth, it was left to the Church in its own discretion to gather them into a roll, or a volume, as the complete disclosure of God's will. This was done, and that in a very satisfactory manner. We have the living oracles as the Jews received and still hold them, nor is there any reason to fear that anything has been omitted that ought to have been inserted, or that the book contains anything that has no right to be there. Why should any different mode of procedure be anticipated in the new economy? So far as appears, it has pleased God to pursue precisely the same course with the Greek Scriptures as with the Hebrew. The apostles and their companions (Mark and Luke, and the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews), were led, under divine direction, to execute their various writings, which were authenticated satisfactorily to their first receivers (as we infer from the words of Paul, "The salutation of me, Paul, with my own hand"—1 Cor. xvi. 21; "The salutation of me, Paul, with my own hand, which is the token in every epistle"—2 Thess. iii. 17), and then were sent abroad among the various bodies of believers, to make their way by force of their own intrinsic worth and validity. It was not at all necessary to their authority or usefulness that they should be collected into a volume, or

obtain the special imprimatur of some ecclesiastical assembly. Nor was such a notion thought of until after many centuries. In the early period, churches and church fathers were cited, not as authorities to say what should or should not be done, but as witnesses to declare what had been done, to bear testimony that, as a matter of fact, certain writings had been received as apostolic and inspired, and certain others had not been. It nowhere appears that the New Testament writers had the design of conveying to their readers a full statement of the Faith. Their works are, so to speak, casual and fragmentary, designed simply to meet an existing want, as it revealed itself in the circle of their activity. And yet, as we know, those writings, taken together, form a unique and symmetrical whole, from which no part could be withdrawn without impairing the unity and richness of the rest. This, of course, was not apparent at first. Experience, diversities of opinion, doctrinal errors, corruption of life, turned the attention of the churches more and more to the original depositories of saving truth; and partial collections of apostolic writings began to be formed. The Fragment of Muratori shows how far this movement had proceeded in his day. But in the course of the last quarter of the second century the matter took a wider and more general development. Here we find no less than five great witnesses to the determination of the Canon. (1). First is Irenæus, born in Asia Minor, and trained there under Polycarp, who was a pupil of the apostle John. He removed to Gaul, and became Bishop of Lyons, where he exerted a wide influence. He quotes as Scripture all our present Canon, save James, Jude, 3 John, and 2 Peter. (2). Clement of Alexandria was a man of varied training and extensive knowledge, and famous alike for his ability and for his position as head of the catechetical school of his city. He quotes

as Scripture all our Canon, save Philemon, James, 2 and 3 John, and 2 Peter; but besides these, gives his sanction to a number of writings now deemed apocryphal. (3). In the neighboring province of North Africa was Tertullian, an able and eloquent orator, notable for his fiery zeal. He quoted almost identically the same books as Clement, and with the same respect. (4). Contemporaneous with them was the old Latin version of the S.S., known as the *Itala*, which was made in North Africa, but two centuries afterward being superseded by Jerome's revision, called the Vulgate, only fragments of it now remain. This Old Latin version did not contain Hebrews, James, and 2 Peter, but otherwise was like the present Canon. (5). Besides this was a still older version, made in the far East, the *Syriac Peshitto*, which contained Hebrews, but omitted Jude, 2 and 3 John, 2 Peter, and the Apocalypse. Now, here are five witnesses, covering the greater part of the known world, from Lyons in Gaul, to Edessa near the Euphrates, and representing four or five of the great divisions of the Ante-Nicene Church, and they are all in substantial agreement as to the chief parts of the Canon. The Gospels, the Acts, and the Pauline Epistles are accepted by them as the work of apostolic men, as inspired of God, and as furnishing the rule of faith. Surely, the force of truth, some divine instinct, or the overruling hand of Providence, guided them to this remarkable unanimity. For no force was laid upon them, no external authority controlled them, but they were left to choose their course as seemed to them right. Yet living so far apart, and differing as they did in outward circumstances and inward characteristics, they still reached practically the same result—a result which, so far as its positive features are concerned, must be accepted. That is, the books which they all receive as divine, must be accepted by us in like manner. No valid, no

plausible reason can be assigned why we should distrust these concurring witnesses, and no explanation of their substantial agreement can be given, apart from the fact that they drew from a common source, viz., the first receivers of the inspired books.

Now, in regard to the books which these parties rejected, we have a full and clear statement in the words of Eusebius, the friend of Constantine, and the first of the long line of Church historians. He gives a catalogue of the writings of the New Testament, viz., the Gospels, the Acts, the (fourteen) Epistles of Paul, 1 John, 1 Peter, and the Apocalypse. These, he says, are the *Acknowledged* Books, received by all. Then he enumerates James, Jude, 2 Peter, and 2 and 3 John, as *Disputed* Books, which, although well known (and used) by most, were yet felt to be lacking in authority. Then he mentions a third class (*Spurious*), such as the Revelation of Peter, the Epistle of Barnabas, etc., which are pious and useful, but not canonical. To these he adds a fourth class, about which there was no dispute whatever, but they were to be set aside as worthless and impious. It is not necessary to trace the matter farther. As time went on, the settlement of vexed questions on the subject became more clear and harmonious. Less than half a century after Eusebius, we find the great Athanasius giving a catalogue which in all respects is the same as our own, and after a century all differences of opinion died out, and the whole Christian body was of one mind on the point. The veteran critic and scholar, Reuss of Strasburg, recounts the list made by Eusebius, and then says: "This division is certainly very far from being scientific; as a matter of theory and dogma it is even absurd." It is somewhat hard to see what room there is for science in settling a question of fact of the nature of this one, or how Eusebius lies open to reproach for pursuing the very course followed by all

the lights of the Church from the beginning. Nothing is more certain from all the evidence in the case than that individuals and churches in accepting any writing as divinely inspired, were governed by their conviction as to its origin. The only question they asked was: Did it come from men who were themselves apostles, or so associated with apostles as to be under their influence? And the fact of its reception by any number of churches was of weight only as it bore upon this point. In fact, for a thousand years there was no conciliar action in the matter. The provincial council of Laodicea (363 A.D.), which acted on the subject, only decreed that canonical books alone should be read in the churches, but did not determine what these were. Afterward at Carthage, in 397, through Augustine's influence, there was a decree which named the books, and limited their ecclesiastical use, but this was not repeated anywhere else, much less sanctioned by any act of an œcumenical body. The whole question was regarded as out of the domain of conciliar action. The appeal was always made to tradition, to usage, to antiquity, and not to any decree of any ecclesiastical body, large or small.

As to the Disputed Books, it does not appear that the doubt or hesitation in their case arose from the nature of their contents, but from circumstances which admitted of an adequate explanation and afterward received the same. Thus, the Epistle to the Hebrews was circulated without the name of its author, as it still is, and this fact, of course, made men chary of acknowledging its apostolical authority. The second and third Epistles of John were very short, were addressed each to an individual, and, therefore, might easily escape notice for a considerable time. The Epistle of James was addressed to the believers of the Diaspora, who were widely scattered, but were mainly found in the East, and so it would naturally

be a long time in coming to the knowledge of the Church in the West. The second Epistle of Peter and the Epistle of Jude were apparently directed to Jewish believers, and were full of Hebrew memories and allusions, and so might have drifted into corners where they escaped attention. But whether these explanations be sufficient or not, the existence of the *Antilegomena*, or Disputed Books, is not a thing to be regretted. Rather the fact stands out as an undeniable evidence that the formation of the Canon was not a hasty enterprise, undertaken without deliberation, and concluded without reason, but, on the contrary, was conducted with all conceivable care. Not every writing claiming to be from an apostle's hand was welcomed and forthwith admitted, but there was delay and investigation, and in some cases two centuries elapsed before the case was closed. But it may be added, that even if the result had been other than it actually was, and the entire body of disputed books had been dropped as uncanonical, while our loss would have been serious and greatly to be lamented, it would have been anything but fatal. The body of the faith would have remained the same; the creed would have lost none of its articles, and the ethics of the New Covenant would still have maintained their pure and lofty standard. But, blessed be God, we have not a mutilated Bible. The book contains all that it was intended to have. We have no reason to think that any inspired book was lost. The early believers were faithful to their high calling, and carefully preserved the precious deposit of living oracles committed to their hands, and oftentimes at sore risk and cost. Eusebius says that when he was young he saw, at Cesarea, under the persecution of Diocletian, the houses of Christians razed to the ground, and the sacred Scriptures consigned to the flames in the open market-place. The enemies of the truth were as quick then as in former

days to see the value of written documents in conserving the faith, and they made desperate efforts to destroy these title-deeds of the Christian hope. Not a few of the early disciples suffered death for refusing to deliver up their sacred books. Some, indeed, overcome by the terrors of a fierce persecution, did, in the hour of temptation, consent to surrender their treasures, but they bore ever afterward the odious name, *traditores*; and it was with the utmost difficulty that any of them could be received again into the communion of the Church, even after a long repentance and the most humbling confession of their fault. We may, therefore, well believe that the effort of Diocletian failed as entirely as did that of Antiochus Epiphanes, who, centuries before, sought to accomplish a similar purpose in respect to the sacred volume of the Jews. In neither case did threats and tortures succeed. Neither the Old Testament nor the New, nor any portion of them, was obliterated. We have all that our gracious God intended us to have—nothing more, nothing less.

Our existing Canon of the New Testament is, then, a complete whole, varied indeed in its parts, but all bound together in a harmonious unity, and it thoroughly merits the encomium which its chief penman pronounced upon the Old Testament: "Every Scripture inspired of God is also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness; that the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work." This admirable excellence is perceived whenever the book is faithfully studied; it is demonstrated by its influence in all the past upon individuals, families, and nations; it is shown yet more convincingly by comparison with any or all of the apocryphal writings. These are many and various. Not all of them have come down to us, but enough have survived to satisfy us that the early Church did not accept whatever offered

itself as apostolic and divine, but employed a wise and discriminating criticism, and was as distinctly guided from above in what it rejected as in what it adopted. There is a number of gospels intended to fill supposed gaps in the works of the four evangelists, but not one of them can for a moment stand a comparison with the canonical record. They are puerile in style and substance, make no addition to our real knowledge, and are every way worthless. The same is true of the Acts of Pilate, the Letters of Paul to Seneca, the Letter of Abgarus to Jesus, and of all the rest. It would seem as if they were allowed to be produced and to survive in order to furnish all coming time a convenient test by which to determine the distance between the genuine productions of an apostolic pen and those that are spurious. A similar remark may be made concerning other productions written in good faith, but of simply human origin, which yet, in more than one case, were temporarily mistaken for apostolic, and classed with the legitimate Scripture. Such are the Shepherd of Hermas, the Epistle of Barnabas, etc. These are not silly and superstitious like the apocryphal books, but serious, and having a definite purpose. Yet they are written on a low, human, earthly plane, without any definite grasp of revealed truth and wholly destitute of the intense spiritual power of the genuine Word. Hence it is not strange that after being for a time mixed up with the genuine accents of inspiration their true character became known, and they were quietly dropped from the position to which they had no claim, and now serve no purpose save that of showing how great is the difference between a religious teacher who writes in dependence upon his own resources and one who is under the guidance of the Holy Ghost. There is nothing in the whole range of antiquity which any competent authority would wish to add to the existing Canon, nothing which, if so added, would be anything

else than a drawback — something that had to be explained and apologized for.

It may then be said in conclusion, that the external evidence is fully corroborated by the internal, leaving us no room to doubt that the existing Canon of Scripture as recognized by Protestant Christendom is strictly accurate, having nothing superfluous and nothing lacking, but containing the whole mind of the Spirit so far as it has been revealed. God, having been pleased to make a revelation of Himself to our race and to inspire holy men to make an exact record of that revelation, has also seen fit in His wise and holy Providence to guard the transmission of it down through the ages so that it comes to us in all its original integrity, and we believe and are sure that we are not following cunningly-devised fables, but possess the living oracles of the living God. The external evidence and the internal combine to justify this conclusion in which the Church of God has calmly rested for centuries. From time to time portions of the Canon have been violently attacked, and the assailants often raised a shout of triumph, but the triumph was short. After the smoke had cleared away it was seen that the foundations of revealed truth had not suffered in the least, but only displayed anew their immovable solidity.

PREACH THE WORD.

HOWARD CROSBY.

ONE of the latest injunctions of the aged Paul, just before his martyrdom, was that to Timothy, which constitutes the text of my address—"Preach the Word." Thirty years of Christian experience, fifteen years of apostolic survey, and the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, all spoke in those words. It was a command from heaven itself, not to Timothy only, but to all who fill the office of evangelists or preachers in the New Testament Church. The order, thus succinctly given, is a condensation of all that Paul had said to Timothy or to the Church on the subject of preaching. The sound or healthy doctrine on which he lays so much stress, and the avoidance of fables and the world's wisdom, are both included in this curt command. There has been a tendency from the very beginning to conform the doctrine of Christ to the philosophy of man, to fuse the two together, and to show that all religions have the same divine element at their roots. This was seen in Gnosticism, in the Alexandrian school of Clement and Origen, and in a score of heresies that sprang up within the later Church. The distinctive character of Christianity has displeased the philosophic mind, and men have sought to explain away many of its features from the stand-point of the human consciousness and by an appeal to the teachings of nature. These efforts have certain marks in common. They diminish the heinousness of sin, they exaggerate the powers of man, and they suggest a uniformity of destiny. Sin is a defect, perhaps a disease. The defect can be supplied, the disease can be cured by

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human applications, the divine help being valuable as encouragement to the human effort. High civilization and moral reform are what man needs, and these can be obtained by the use of general principles common to our race, of which Christianity is only one of the forms.

It is natural and inevitable that, with this teaching, the written Word of God should be neglected, if not ignored. No one can study that Word and then use it for so broad and indiscriminating a purpose. No one can study that Word and then be contented with a superficial polish of society, and a universal brotherhood founded on such a scheme. Paul saw this tendency in his own day, and he warns the Church earnestly against it. "Beware" is his language—"Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ" (Col. ii. 8). The evil principle is ever at work. Human nature is ever the same. The Church is always subject to the same efforts of human nature within itself to remove the foundations of grace and substitute the inventions of pride. Whether it appear in the form of hierarchical assumption, or in the character of rational inquiry and scientific research, the evil principle hides, mutilates, or contradicts the Holy Scriptures. The Scriptures, as they are, with their divine claim and their uncompromising teachings, it cannot endure, and the appeal to Scripture it counts as a mark of credulity and an exhibition of ignorance. One of the saddest sights in the Church of Christ is the yielding to this spirit of pride on the part of the ordained preachers of the Word. Many modern *Timothys* use the pulpit for discourses on art and literature, others take the opportunity for the display of rhetoric and oratory, others proclaim an ethics of expediency, while still others seek only to tickle the ears of an audience that desire to be amused. In all this you look in vain for the Gospel.

Plato or Aristotle, and in some cases Lucian, could have said it all. Churches are filled by appealing to carnal desires and æsthetic tastes. Brilliant oratory, scientific music, sensational topics, and fashionable pewholders, are the baits to lure people into the churches, and a church is called prosperous as these wretched devices succeed. The preacher delights to get himself into the newspaper, and he accommodates his preaching to the newspaper level. Such churches will, of course, have worldly-minded officers and a worldly-minded membership, while godly souls either flee from them, or else mourn in secret, if they are not themselves chilled by the lack of Gospel heat.

It is directly against all this that the holy apostle utters his clarion cry down through the ages: "Preach the Word." What is the Word? It is not man's philosophy nor man's rhetoric. It is the divine revelation. It is called the Word of God, because it is not of man. As God's, it has both authority and power—authority to demand attention, and power to convert and save the soul. It is not to be pounded in man's mortar, nor run into man's mould. It is not to be twisted and fitted to man's preconceived ideas. It is not to be filtered through man's strainer, nor mixed with man's conceits. It is God's, and *as* God's, let no man dare add *to* it, or take *from* it, or alter it in any way. The Lord Jesus stands by His cross, where He offered up the sacrifice for sin, and points backward to the Old Testament, and forward to the New, as alike the Word of God. Of the former He cries, "Search the Scriptures"; of the latter He tells His apostles that the Paraclete would come and teach them all things, and they should bear witness. This Old and New Testament is one Revelation of God—one Bible—one unerring rule of faith. God has not given us a doubtful and deceitful light for our path. He has not given us a bundle of truth and fable tied up together. He has not left us to our

weak and discordant reason, and thus made revelation superfluous. He has given His people a "sure word of prophecy" as the only reasonable guide for our weak reason and our sinful natures; and on this sure word is His Church built. The doctrines of grace have neither human origin nor human support. They are altogether divine, and are received only by the soul that becomes partaker of the divine nature. To go, therefore, to human philosophy or to man's inner consciousness for their confirmation or explanation, is to go to the sentenced criminal to understand the excellences of criminal law. The error of errors is the seeking for the truths of religion from man. It is but the adaptation of religion to the carnal heart. It is the essence of pride and rebellion against God. Thousands of tomes have been written by men who called themselves Christian scholars and Christian philosophers, which are but volumes of confusing metaphysics and specious rationalizing from the basis of natural experience, and which have undermined faith in the Word of God, and utterly perverted the Gospel of Christ. Students of Christian theology waste precious time in studying the works of these conceited thinkers, whose names are lauded as those of giants in the Church, while they are corrupting the pulpit and secularizing the pew.

It is a favorite charge of the advocates of this looseness, that we are worshipping a Book. "Bibliolatry" is the formidable word that they cast at us. But we worship no Book. We *do* worship God, who sent the Book, and it is no true worship of God that slights the Book which He gives. If we honor God, we shall honor the Word He has sent, and we shall be jealous for that Word, that not one jot or one tittle of it be disturbed by the vagaries of dreamers or the impious hands of boasting critics. It is the Word of God, and, as such, we shall not allow, for a moment, the speculations, imaginings, and guesses of men

ever so learned, to weigh a feather's weight against it. They have been convicted over and over again of grossest fallacies in their hot endeavor to detract from the influence of the Holy Word, and their criticisms have returned upon themselves to their confusion. This brief hour gives me no time to catalogue some of the absurdities which have been promulgated by these learned enemies of Revelation. Myth, romance, the fiction of poetry, a patchwork of traditions, contradictory records, pious fraud, these are some of the labels that the strutting pride of man has affixed to the books of the Bible, while not one of his sneers has been sustained in the light of honest criticism. No scientific truth has been found opposed, and no historic truth misstated, in all the sacred writings, from Moses to John. The most microscopic investigations have been made by the most eager and learned enemies of the truth, in order to find some inaccuracy, but not one has been discovered, except those necessarily resulting from the process of transcription, and those imaginary ones which are perfectly resolvable by ordinary common sense. Apply these tests to the Vedas, the Avesta, or the Koran, and the contrast is overwhelming. These fairly bristle with error and falsehood, but the Bible comes out from the crucible without spot, as the pure Word of God. Men just as learned as the inimical critics, and just as thorough in their investigation, men known and revered in the world of letters, have accepted the Bible, the whole Bible, as the inerrant truth of God. If the verdict of the inimical critics can be thus set aside in an equally learned court, the result shows that their learning goes for nothing in the matter.

But far above all this testimony to the letter is the witness of millions who have found the joy unutterable and the peace which passeth all understanding in the sacred volume, and who are drawn to it as a child is drawn to its

father without question regarding his worth and authority. They never suppose (and the position is a right one) that the fountain that refreshes their souls is defective or corrupt, but they value its every drop as a gift of the divine grace. They go constantly to its blessed waters, and always derive strength from the draught. To such the carping critics are as unworthy of regard as those who would argue against the sunshine. The knowledge of the heart is a profounder thing than the knowledge of the head, and, in the Spirit-led disciple, can correct and rebuke the errors of the latter. Now, it is this holy Word, thus spotless and thus powerful for righteousness and comfort, that the Christian preacher is to preach. The preacher is a proclaimer, a herald, not a college professor or an originator of theories. He has the Word given him, and *that* he is to proclaim. He is not to draw from the wells of human philosophy, but from the stream that flows directly from the throne of God. He is to tell the people what God has said. He is to hide himself behind his message, and to receive it equally with those he addresses. Not only is he not the inventor and expounder of a philosophy, but also he is not the mouthpiece of a church to issue ecclesiastical decrees and fulminate ecclesiastical censures. This is as far from preaching the Word as the other. As a herald of Christ, while there is nothing before him but human hearts and consciences to appeal to, there is nothing behind him but the revealed Word of God to utter and enforce. All church commands laid upon him as to his preaching are as nothing except as they are conformed to that Word. He is responsible as a herald to God and not to the church. He is God's herald and not the church's. The same reason that forbids him from making the people's approbation the guide to his preaching will forbid him from making church authority the guide. He will be happy to please both people and authorities, but he cannot make that pleas-

ing a criterion or standard. His duty is above all that. His allegiance is higher.

In thus limiting himself to the preaching of God's Word, the preacher is not circumscribing his power, but enlarging it. By the jealous use of that Word alone he will accomplish far more for the kingdom of Christ and the salvation of men than by mixing human expedients with the Word. Human expedients are very specious and attractive, and, alas! many preachers betake themselves to them. They think they will attract the multitude and fill up the pews and produce a larger rental; and so they may, but these are not the objects for which the Lord sent out His heralds. Success is not to be reckoned by full houses and popular applause, but by convicted and converted hearts, and by the strengthening of the faith and piety of God's people. A holier life, a more pronounced separation from the world, a stainless integrity in business pursuits, a Christly devotion to the interests of others, a more thorough knowledge of the Word—these are the true signs of success which the preacher may justly seek, even though he wear homespun and his people meet in a barn. These are the glorious results which the consecrated soul will pray for, and in them he will rejoice with a purer, holier joy than that which comes from numbers, wealth, or popular admiration. If the preacher preaches the Word only, then he will teach his people to handle the Word—to follow him in his reading and expounding—to study over the Scripture lesson at home, and to pray its blessed truths into their souls. A people will, in this way, become mighty in the Scriptures; and he who is mighty in the Scriptures is a mighty power for Christ and salvation, and in his own soul will have a full experience of the power of divine truth, deriving it directly from its source, and proving how the entrance of God's word giveth light.

Still again, if the preacher preach the Word only, he

will himself be a diligent student of the Word. He will bathe in God's revelation and be permeated by it, and so be proof against all the shafts of ignorance and conceit. He will become familiar with every detail of the sacred history, chronology, ethnology, geography, prophecy, precept, and doctrine, and will take nothing at second hand. He will not go to Pope or Council, nor to Calvin or Schleiermacher to know what to preach, but his delight will be in the law of the Lord, and in His law will he meditate day and night.

It is a lamentable fact, that in too many of our seminaries where preachers are prepared for their work, the Word of God is not taught, but in its stead the philosophic schemes of so-called "fathers" and great divines are given as the basis of doctrinal belief. It is true, that these schemes are brought to the Scripture for support, and texts are quoted in their defence. It is true also that some of these schemes are consonant with Scripture more or less. But, with these admissions, the mistake still exists, that the Word of God plays a secondary part in the instruction. It is not taught; that is, it is not made the authoritative text-book. It is even sometimes introduced as a subject for criticism, and men like Reuss and Robertson Smith are brought in as the critical guides or, at least, helpers. As if a school of the prophets was intended to examine the credentials of God's Word, and not to take it humbly and gratefully for personal use and for use before the people. Some theological schools might, without exaggeration, be called "schools for turning believers into doubters." The excuse, that men who are going to be preachers should know all that is said against the credibility, genuineness, and authenticity of the Scriptures, is a flimsy one. If that were the object, these objections would be considered only by way of parenthesis, and the overwhelming evidence of the Scriptures would

be the main current of thought; but this is not the way it is done. On the contrary, the objections are magnified, and their authors are commended to the students for their perusal, and the hint is often thrown out that conservative views of the inspiration of God's Word are antiquated, obsolete, and marks of ignorance. We have thus, in the very places where, most of all, we should expect to see the profoundest reverence for God's Word, and its faithful study for the understanding of the Divine will, the machinery for undermining the doctrine of Scripture inspiration and authority, on which all Christian truth rests, and that, too, in the young minds which are being prepared to become Christ's preachers to a sinful and dying world. It is a most painful thought, and it becomes the Church of Jesus Christ to arise to a sense of the evil, and to correct it before the whole Church is poisoned by this insidious influence.

We wish our young Timothys to go out to their work with the one controlling desire to put God's Word before the people and to avoid questions and strifes of words which do not minister to godly edifying, knowing that the power to convert and edify is not the wisdom of man, but the power of God.

In these days when so much is made of science, let them leave science alone. All the knowledge of the material world, which science deals in, has nothing to do with the soul's salvation. That is in a different sphere altogether.

While it is in accordance with propriety that a preacher should have a general acquaintance with life and things about him, which would include the main principles of natural science (which is simply to say that he ought to be an educated man), yet it is not through material science that he is to teach heavenly truths, nor is he to waste his time on protoplasm, bathybins, and natural selection, into which and like subjects Satan would gladly draw him, that he

may not present the subjects of sin and the cross of Christ. If a preacher illustrate Scripture doctrine from facts in the natural world, it is well. He follows the Master's example. But if he puts the natural world in its scientific aspects forward as the text of his discourse, he is using a Bible of a very weak and uncertain sort, and of which he knows very little, and he is making the Word of God subordinate to his own inferences and guesses from nature. Science and Religion are too often spoken of as if they occupied the same plane. Both those who say they are antagonistic, and those who say they are at one, equally talk of the two as on a level. You might as well talk of bread-baking and religion as if they were co-ordinates. Of course there is a connection between science and religion. So there is between bread-baking and religion. The scientific man ought to be religious. So ought the bread-baker. Science can furnish examples of God's wonders in nature. So can bread-baking. But such connections cannot put the subjects on the same level. Science is merely the study of matter, an examination into natural sequences; but what has that to do with man's immortal soul, and the Word of God to that soul? Who dares to bring the latter down to the level of the former? What has the analysis of any body and its division into carbon, oxygen, and hydrogen, to do with my eternal relation to God as a responsible and sinful being? Why mingle things so utterly diverse? And yet this babble about science and religion (where science is always ever put first), is heard *ad nauseam* from those who are commissioned to preach the Word. Is this Paul's way? Is this John's way? Is this Christ's way? Then why should it be the way of our modern Timothy's? Science, at its utmost reach, can never touch the sphere of the soul's pressing wants. All its truths together can make no impression on a guilty conscience needing the divine pardon. Nature is as dumb

as any of its own stones in the matter of the soul's salvation. Then why meddle with it in the pulpit? Why bow to it as a teacher? Why be guilty of the blasphemy of putting it on a level with the Word of God?

It is as preachers depart from that Word that their preaching becomes barren and fruitless. The Divine Spirit will only accompany the Divine Word. His mighty power will act only in His own way and by His own means. The Word is supernatural, and woe to the preacher who leaves the supernatural for the natural; who sets aside the sword of the Spirit to use in its stead a blade of his own tempering!

It is a happy feature of our day, as over against the evils of which we have spoken, that God has caused His people to study the Bible as never before, and they are gathering in Sunday-schools and Bible-classes to counteract the mischief which so many pulpits are making. The faithful study of the Word will be blessed to the overthrow of the foes of the truth, and a new generation will arise strong in the Scriptures to purify the Church and rid it of its false teachers. God's truth needs no human additions. It is ample in itself to fit all the needs of the soul. One deeply versed in that truth is armed against all enemies, however formidable, however insidious. Let us do all we can to make the Bible the constant study of the Church of Christ, knowing that in this study is the safety of the Church and the hope of the world.

THE SPIRIT AND THE WORD.

EVANG. GEO. C. NEEDHAM.

THE Holy Spirit sustains varied relations to the Holy Scriptures. He is independent of them in personal sovereignty, yet identified with them in official ministry. The Spirit is known only through His word, even as a man is known by his words, which are the outward expression of his thoughts. "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he." Yet not always is the man hereby fully known. Not so, however, with the Spirit, for through the revelation of Himself, we have accurate knowledge of Him—the Holy Spirit. For He wears no mask, adopts no disguise, is not hypocritical, is no trickster, but is transparent as the sea of glass before the throne, clear as the sunbeam, in whom is no darkness at all. Through the mirror of His Word, He reflects His pure nature, His manifold characters, and the purposes of His ministry. By that Word, also, by the thunder of its power, by the sharpness of its blade, by the sweetness of its taste, by the richness of its mines, by the comfort of its promises, and by the nourishment of its doctrines, do we further know the Spirit in the majesty of His person, and in His multiform ministry. For, whatever may have been His modes of revelation in former ages to patriarchs and prophets, and however varied his operations shall be in the age to come, He seems to have limited the instrument of His ministry during this church dispensation to that Word, of which He is both Author and Finisher.

There is, however, a *First Word*, who is from the beginning, who in the fullness of time became incarnate, and there is *another Word*, called "living Epistles," with each of whom, also, the blessed Spirit has entered into close and vital relations. There is, besides, a correspondence between such relations, and those He sustains toward *the written Word*, which is, to us, the source of all spiritual knowledge of things past, present, and to come. With each, the Incarnate Word, the living Epistles of Christ, and the written Scriptures, is the Holy Spirit organically connected, therefore vitally related. It was He who prepared that Temple of our Lord's body, which concealed, yet revealed, the glory of the only-begotten Son of God. It was He, who, in dove-like appearance, descended upon Jesus on the banks of the Jordan, and *abode* upon Him. Thus He came, as the Father's seal of divine authentication, upon the Beloved Son. Priests and prophets He visited, endowed, inspired, but with none of them could it be said that He abode. And, so, throughout our Lord's earthly life, in preparation for His unique mission, He was anointed of the Spirit, led of the Spirit, empowered by the Spirit, comforted through the Spirit, He offered Himself a sacrifice for sin by the same Spirit, yea, was finally raised from the dead by Him—who is the quickening Spirit.

Again, observe the very intimate relations which the Holy Spirit holds to the believer. For the Christian is one born of the Spirit, sealed with the Spirit, led of the Spirit, empowered by the Spirit, quickened by the Spirit, first in his inner life, and finally in his resurrection from the dead.

Thus, also, do we perceive like relations between the letter of Scripture, and the living Spirit. May we not say truly that *it* is born of the Spirit, *it* has been baptized with the Spirit, *its* genuineness is attested by this divine

seal upon it? *It* is anointed with the Spirit, *it* is made quick and powerful, a living resurrection word, by the same Spirit. As Jesus was author and finisher of His own personal faith, so is He, the Spirit, author and finisher of that "word of faith," which is our warrant of faith, our ground of faith, our instructor in faith, our incentive to faith, and our rule of faith.

I. First proposition: THE HOLY SPIRIT IS SOLE AUTHOR OF HOLY SCRIPTURE.

1. He is the author of revelation in its totality. The Bible is not of man, neither by men, even as the stream is not of the river channel. Yet as channel and stream are closely related, and identified one with another, so are the human writers and the writings in close identity. But only forth from the fountain-mind of the Eternal Spirit, who is independent, sovereign, original, and originating, have these Scripture streams descended through their human channels to us.

2. The Holy Spirit is the author of Scripture in its thoughts and words. We do not indeed attribute to Him every recorded utterance. There are phrases in the book entirely alien to the Spirit of God. The words of Satan—words of demons—words of heathen poets—words of scribes, pharisees, hypocrites—words of bad men, and mistakes of good men, are not divine words. It suited the purpose of the Spirit, however, to have them recorded; and He accordingly inspired holy men to write them, "for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God might be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."

The mission and office of the Spirit was thus announced by Jesus: "Howbeit when He the Spirit of truth is come, He will guide you into all truth: for He shall not speak of Himself; but whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak: and He will show you things to come" (John xvi.

13). The Holy Spirit must make use of human language, not because of His impotence, but because of our infirmities. "He shall speak." He gave the writers words, which words are the original Scriptures. It has been frequently stated that the Holy Spirit had for the object of His mysterious inspiration, not the writers, but the writings. The writers were fallible men; the writings infallible communications. The words employed by the Spirit are human words, and may form the vehicle of ordinary human intelligence, but when selected by the Spirit to convey divine revelations they become divine words. Therefore, in this relation are they called the words of the Spirit. "Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth."

As the body of the primal man was made out of the earth, into which God breathed the breath of life, and man became a living soul; so the Holy Spirit has taken the earthly words of human language out of which He forms the body of Scripture, and into which He breathes the living thought, and thereby the Book becomes a Book of Life. "Every Scripture is God-breathed."

Let us consider the testimony of Jesus on this point. In Mark xii. 36, our Lord's words are recorded, where He quotes from Ps. cx. Not accidentally does He refer to the author of that Psalm, when rebuking the secularized scribes of the temple, in the words, "David himself SAID BY THE HOLY GHOST." The Psalm is the language of David. David himself said it, for David was mouth-piece, or penman. But it is emphatically the language of the Holy Ghost who spake through David, and whose word was on his tongue (2 Sam. xxiii. 2).

Again, when Peter, in Acts i. 16, refers to the forty-first Psalm, prophetic of Judas Iscariot, he makes this application of it: "Men and brethren, this Scripture must

needs have been fulfilled, which the Holy Ghost **BY THE MOUTH OF DAVID SPAKE** before concerning Judas, which was guide to them that took Jesus." Thus does Peter attribute the authorship of the words of the Psalm to the Holy Spirit of God. Nay, more, it is His own testimony to Himself, through Peter, as the original source of sacred Scripture.

So also in Acts iv. 25, the language is most expressive, "Who by the mouth of Thy servant David **HAST SAID.**" Paul, likewise having been taught the source of that wonderful communication to Isaiah recorded in chap. vi., declares, "**WELL SPAKE THE HOLY GHOST** through Isaiah the prophet." Nor must we forget that climacteric statement of Peter who was inspired to write, "No prophecy ever came by the will of man; but **MEN SPAKE FROM GOD**, being moved by the Holy Ghost."

How misleading, therefore, is any theory of Inspiration which allows the admixture of human mistakes with divine communications; the mistakes of human speech coupled to divine thought. And how flattering to human pride that intellect, intuition, or consciousness shall determine which is truth and which is fable. No true lover of God's Word will permit the majesty of that Word to be thus degraded, in order that the perverted, distorted, and corrupted reason of man shall be exalted. Nor will any Christian believer having due reverence toward the Holy Spirit entertain such rationalistic and unscriptural doctrine. The higher critics and the lower critics would not manifest their dislike of the complete inspiration of the words of Scripture, were it not for the insane passion of the natural man to regard reason as the touchstone and test of revelation. Calmly and wisely has Professor Gausson written of the Bible: "Its first line and its last, with all the instruction (whether understood or not) which it contains, are by the same Author. Whatever the sacred

penmen may have been—whatever their circumstances, their impressions, their comprehension of what they wrote, and the measure of their individuality brought into operation by this divine and mysterious power—they have all, with a faithful and directed hand, written in the same volume, under the guidance of the same Master, in whose estimation ‘a thousand years are as one day,’ and the result is—the Bible. Let us not lose our time, then, in vain questioning, but study the Book. It is the word of Moses, of Amos, of John, and of Paul, but it is the thought of God, and the word of God. It is therefore erroneous language to say, Certain passages of the Bible are those of man, and others those of God. No; every verse therein, without exception, is of man, and they are also all, without exception, those of God.” Even so. The humble, devout believer recognizes the divine Author in every verse and word of Scripture, and values it as an integral part of the great volume of Revelation, stamped from Genesis to Apocalypse with the impress of divine life, and light, and power, even as the thoughtful naturalist sees in every trembling leaf the mark of intelligent design, and understands its relation to the whole forest.

II. Second proposition: THE MINISTRY OF THE SPIRIT AND OF THE WORD IS A CO-ORDINATE MINISTRY. He who is the author of the word is pleased to use it as the instrument of His diversified operations in this dispensation of the Spirit.

1. The identity of the Spirit and Word is recognized in the *names* given to each. As for instance: “Spirit of God,” “word of God”; “Spirit of truth,” “word of truth”; “Spirit of grace,” “word of His grace”; “Spirit of life,” “word of life”; “Spirit of wisdom,” “word of wisdom”; “Spirit of Christ,” “word of Christ”; “Spirit of power,” “word of power”; “The good Spirit,” “the

good word of God"; "Spirit of prophecy," "word of prophecy"; "The Comforter," "comfort one another with these words."

2. In the use of *emblems* common to the Spirit and Word.

(1) *Dew*. In Hosea xiv. 5, we find the promise, "I will be as the dew unto Israel," a favorite and appropriate emblem of the Spirit. In Deut. xxxii. 2, Jehovah declares, "My speech shall distil as the dew."

(2) *Rain*. Ps. lxxii. 6: "He shall come down as showers upon the mown grass, as showers that water the earth" (comp. Isaiah xlv. 3). Deut. xxxii. 2: "My doctrine shall drop as the rain . . . as the small rain upon the tender grass, and as the showers upon the earth."

(3) *Water*. John vii. 37: "He that believeth on me, out of his belly (heart or inward parts) shall flow rivers of living water. This spake He of the Spirit that they which believe in Him should receive." Eph. v. 25: "Christ loved the Church and gave Himself for it, that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word."

(4) *Light*. 2 Sam. xxiii. 4: "He shall be as the light of the morning, when the sun riseth." Ps. cxix. 105: "Thy word . . . is a light." Prov. vi. 23: "The law is light."

(5) *Fire*. When the Holy Spirit descended on the day of Pentecost, "there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire . . . and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost" (Acts ii. 3, 4). Jer. xxiii. 29: "Is not my word like as fire? saith the Lord."

3. Proof of co-ordinate ministry of the Spirit and the Word by the effects produced.

(1) *In regeneration*. "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration and renewing of

the Holy Ghost" (Titus iii. 4-6). Regeneration by the Holy Spirit is a foundation creed in all evangelical churches. It is a primal Bible doctrine. For "except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." This is also the office of the Word. "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever" (1 Pet. i. 23). The Holy Spirit begets the soul anew through the word. The Spirit regenerates, and the word regenerates; hence the necessity of preaching the word in order to give the Spirit the opportunity He seeks to make men wise unto salvation. While human speculation, natural philosophy, culture, politics, or science, form the substance of so many sermons, we are not surprised that regeneration is practically ignored, and its deep need forgotten. The Spirit's injunction to the ministry of every age is, "Preach the word."

(2) In *sanctification*. The Holy Spirit enters the believing heart as the sanctifier (1 Pet. i. 2). But also in the Lord's prayer we note the petition, "Sanctify them through Thy truth, Thy word is truth"; *i. e.*, the whole of truth (John xvii. 17). There are various aspects of sanctification which cannot now be discussed, such as sanctification through the blood of Christ, sanctification by faith, etc. Our present work is to call attention to the fact that the Spirit of God sanctifies the regenerated man, making use of the word of God for his cleansing and purification. "Now are ye clean through the word which I have spoken unto you" (John xv. 3).

(3) The Holy Spirit *testifies of Jesus*. "But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth which proceedeth from the Father, He shall testify of me" (John xv. 26). But it is co-ordinate testimony. "Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they

which testify of me" (John v. 39). The Scriptures our Lord refers to, are those of the Old Testament. Moses in the Law, David in the Psalms, and all the Prophets testified of Him. Jesus Himself rebukes every reviler of Moses. "And beginning at Moses and all the prophets He expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself. . . . And He said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the Psalms, concerning me. Then opened He their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures."

(4) The Spirit and the Word work unitedly *in the edification of the Church*. The Holy Spirit is builder. He hews out the living stones from the quarry, fitting them into the spiritual temple, which groweth up as the habitation of God (Eph. ii. 22). Yet Paul, in his farewell address to the Ephesian elders, commended them to the word of God's grace, "which is able to build you up" (Acts xx. 32). Through the Holy Spirit's gracious ministry of the divine word is the Church, whether viewed as a structure, or as the mystical body of Christ, truly edified.

(5) The work of *revival* is the work of the Spirit. When the promised dew descends, revival begins (Hosea xiv. 5). No intelligent Christian will designate the most effective preacher a "revivalist"; and no man taught of the Spirit will arrogate to himself this distinguishing title. Revivals may be simulated, but the work when real is the product of the quickening Spirit. The Word however, has also its place in every genuine revival. In Neh. viii. 1-9, we have an example of the reviving power of the preached Word. The Levites read out of the law distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused the people to understand the

reading. And the word was applied in power by the Spirit. So also in Ezek. xxxvii. 1-10, we discover the co-operation of these two in the revival of the dry bones, who stood upon their feet an exceeding great army. And thus, as the prophecy foretells, shall Israel be revived in the next age of millennial blessedness, when the Spirit is poured forth upon them, and they are found hearing the words of the Lord.

(6) *Guidance.* The promise of Jesus is, "He will guide you into all the truth." Thus does our Lord comfort His disciples, in assuring them that after His departure, the Holy Spirit would come and be their guide. Also in Prov. vi. 22, guidance is attributed to the word; "When thou goest, it shall lead thee." Here, then, is provision for our journey; an infallible guide flashing on our pathway this unfailing light. No feeble light of nature nor flickering light of consciousness can illumine the path from earth to heaven. Only the Holy Spirit's clear, steady, noonday light of Scripture will prove sufficient.

(7) Co-operation in *producing pure and spontaneous worship.* "Be filled with the Spirit, speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your hearts to the Lord, giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Eph. v. 18, 19). Thus the highest expression of worship is the product of the divine Spirit in the soul. And herein does the Word also fulfill its mission. "Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord" (Col. iii. 16). Such are the divine effects of the indwelling word when received in the Holy Ghost. It is the true basis of spiritual experience and the strongest incentive to spiritual worship.

Thus have we traced the unity of both. The Word is

the Spirit's word and the Spirit's instrument. Therefore, their action is one and the same in regeneration, sanctification, testimony, edification, revival, guidance, worship, and every experience of that new creation in Christ Jesus—the true Christian believer. Sadducean sceptics denied the supernatural element in the Scriptures and brought upon themselves the deserved rebuke of Jesus, "Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures nor the power of God." In that declaration does our Lord affirm that divine, superhuman, omnipotent power is linked with the written word of God.

Is it not our privilege, then, to receive that word in its totality and in its tittles; to bow with becoming reverence before its divine claims; to recognize that every type, prophecy, history, parable, doctrine, is given of God; that every word of God is pure; that it has been tried and not found wanting, and that He from whom it came will abide with it forever?

III. Third proposition: **THE HOLY SPIRIT ALONE CAN GIVE US A RIGHT UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORD.**

The natural man may by the power of unaided intellect throw side-lights upon the human element of Scripture. We are deeply indebted to the geologist, botanist, historian, grammarian, archæologist, to compilers, and to critics. But to none of them, as merely intellectual men, not having the Spirit themselves, do we owe aught in the matter of spiritual interpretation, "For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the Spirit of man which is in him? Even so, the things of God knoweth no man but the Spirit of God. Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God, that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God" (1 Cor. ii. 11, 12). There are, of course, men of intellect, who, thank God, have also the Spirit of God, to whom the Church is deeply indebted for spiritual

interpretation and exposition of the Bible. And also there are natural men who reverently aim to exalt the Bible from a merely human stand-point, who endeavor to account for discrepancies, and who seek to explain difficulties. "But the natural man understandeth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, for they are spiritually discerned" (1 Cor. ii. 14).

And alas! there are writers of another school who disparage the written testimony and deny the Holy Ghost, while they irreverently discuss the Christ in art, in poetry, in story, and in philosophy; whose darkened understanding and sceptical tendencies can only lead their disciples into the mazes of doubt and infidelity. Some of these would fain boast that they compliment Jesus as the Ideal Man, while they rob Him of His inherent glory as "God manifest in the flesh." Truly, "no man can call Jesus LORD, but by the Holy Ghost." So, also, "if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His."

Let it, then, be our glad homage, brethren in the Lord, to give the Holy Spirit that honor due to Him. It is His prerogative to enlighten our minds, and to illuminate the Word, that we may behold wondrous things therein. "We have an Unction from the Holy One," that we might know divine things. He will teach us, He will prophesy to us, He will bring past spiritual knowledge to our remembrance. He will reveal Christ to our inner life, when, through patient, diligent study of the divine Book we wait upon His ministry, and prayerfully seek His proffered help.

IV. Fourth proposition: THE HOLY SPIRIT INVARIABLY HONORS THE DIVINE WORD.

The promises are abundant insuring its success. "For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh

it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower and bread to the eater : so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth : it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it " (Isa. lv. 10, 11). We read in the book of Acts : " While Peter spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them that heard the word." What words? Simply Old Testament words, rightly interpreted. The Apostles preached the word. Their sermons were Bible-readings. When Christ is exalted according to the Gospel, and by its announcement, the Holy Spirit will glorify Him in those that believe. He presents to them by the Gospel the things of Jesus, and thus Jesus becomes to the believing soul both real and personal. It need scarcely be added that pastors, evangelists, missionaries, and other preachers who trade largely with the Scriptures, and who earnestly invoke the Spirit's anointing, are the men and women whom the King delights to honor.

In conclusion : The knowledge of this relation between the Spirit and the Scriptures will save us from a twofold danger. 1. First, from searching the Word for purely mental gratification—from an intellectual pursuit after truth. It is possible to be adepts in biblical science, and yet be as dry in our spiritual life as Gideon's fleece when no dew from heaven fell upon it. Gathered truth, unfelt in the soul, unknown by spiritual apprehension, can only corrupt like the unused manna. It is possible to preach biblical doctrine and be strangers to its vitalizing power. Such preaching is dreary, is drudgery, is delusive. The heart, not the head, is the home of the Word. It seeks admittance there. Confession with the mouth, or outward testimony, if real, must be the outflow of a believing heart (Rom. x. 9). Heart-knowledge of the Word must be sought after by every Christian who would know

more of Jesus, who seeks to know the will of God, and who gladly recognizes the prerogative of the Spirit as the supreme, qualified, and infallible Bible-teacher.

2. Secondly: bearing in mind the relations of both, will also guard us from a dreaded mysticism, or a dead sentimentalism. Seeking revelations, or experiences from the Holy Spirit, outside of, and apart from, the Holy Scriptures, leads to fanatical extravagances. He needs a keen and watchful eye who can readily distinguish the operations of the Spirit from human fancies outside of the Word. And when the voice of God in His word is considered too feeble, and a more pronounced voice is demanded by the listening soul, let it be remembered that Satan can mimic to deceive, even as he can adopt the guise of a good angel for a like purpose. The canon of Scripture is closed and is complete. Within its range we may freely roam in search of truth, our trembling hand held in the strong hand of the Holy Spirit, our guide. Its pastures are our feeding-places; its still waters will slake our thirst. Rapt visions, celestial dreams, or mysterious inward impressions, must not be heeded when antagonistic to the revealed will of God, and the true teaching of the Spirit in the Bible. It is an evil work to attribute to the Spirit monitions and emotions for which He is not responsible. He has given us the Scriptures. By these He will teach us, and comfort us. In our study of the same, we shall have His promised aid; in our Christian work, we shall have His needed help. And in distinguishing His personality, as co-equal with the Father and the Son, from the instrument of His official ministry in the Church, namely, His thoughts and words, let us not seek their divorce. For of the Spirit and the Word it may be truly said, "What God hath joined together, let not man put asunder."

THE ORGANIC UNITY OF THE BIBLE.*

ARTHUR T. PIERSON, D.D.

THE Armageddon—the final, decisive battle of the ages—draws nigh. Out of the mouth of the Dragon, the Beast, and the False Prophet, issue the unclean spirits of demons, working wonders; and the kings of the earth rather for a last assault upon the religion of Jesus.

From every quarter come the foes of Christ and His Church. The kings of power, with the riches of empires at their command; the kings of science, with their atheistic philosophy; the kings of oratory, with the poison of asps under their silver tongues; the kings of letters, with their golden pens dipped in blasphemy, are marshalling their hosts unto the battle, while atheists and nihilists, the secretly hostile and the openly profane, unbelievers and disbelievers, the polished sceptic and the politic liberalist, the foes of manly sobriety and the betrayers of womanly virtue, the dynamite fiends and the traffickers in souls, swell the ranks of Satan's great army.

In this crisis, all that is precious to the believer is at stake; and because the Bible, as the Book of God, and Jesus Christ, the Son of God, are vital to our holy faith, they are the centre of assault. All controversies as to other issues are of minor importance, mere skirmishes along the line of the outposts. Strifes about forms of church polity and statements of church doctrine, the use

* This address was delivered entirely without manuscript, but is essentially reproduced in all important particulars.—EDITOR.

of uninspired hymns and elaborate ritual, clerical orders and laymen's prerogatives—these are only wars of words, often bitterest among disciples who, in face of such foes, should forget that in which they differ, and remember only in what they agree. A delegate to the Great Council at Belfast said: "I find you engaged in animated controversy over the lawfulness of singing Psalms: meanwhile, in France, our people are asking whether there be a God!"

The enemy is seeking to undermine the Word of God, to demolish the Gibraltar of our Christianity. Upon the Inspiration and Infallibility of the Holy Scriptures rest, also, the Divinity and Redemptive work of the Lord Jesus. They stand or fall together.

The argument I am to present is that drawn from the unity of the Bible. This unity may be seen in several conspicuous particulars, upon some of which it will be well to dilate.

1. The unity is structural. In the book itself appears, on close study, a certain archetypal, architectural plan. The two Testaments are built on the same general scheme. Each is in three parts: historic, didactic, prophetic, looking to the past, the present, and the future. The symmetry of structure appears even in details, as in the Old Testament, where five books of Moses are succeeded by twelve others, historical; then by five poetic, five of the major and twelve of the minor prophets.

Here is a collection of books; in their style and character there is great variety and diversity: some are historical, others poetical; some contain laws, others lyrics; some are prophetic, some symbolic; in the Old Testament we have historical, poetical, and prophetic divisions; and in the New Testament we have historic narratives, then twenty-one epistles, then a symbolic, apocalyptic poem in oriental imagery. And yet this is no artificial arrangement of fragments. We find "the

Old Testament patent in the New; the New latent in the Old."

In such a book, then, it is not likely that there would be unity; for all the conditions were unfavorable, all the circumstances disadvantageous to a harmonious moral testimony and teaching. Here are some sixty or more separate documents, written by some forty different persons, scattered over wide intervals of space and time, strangers to each other; these documents are written in three different languages, in different lands, among different and sometimes hostile peoples, with marked diversities of literary style, and by men of all grades of culture and mental capacity, from Moses to Malachi; and when we look into these productions, there is even in them great unlikeness, both in matter and manner of statement; and yet they all constitute one volume.

Imagine another book, compiled by as many authors, scattered over as many centuries! Herodotus, in the fifth century before Christ, contributes an historic fragment on the origin of all things; a century later, Aristotle adds a book on moral philosophy; two centuries pass, and Cicero adds a work on law and government; still another hundred years, and Virgil furnishes a grand poem on ethics. In the next century, Plutarch supplies some biographical sketches; nearly two hundred years after, Origen adds essays on religious creeds and conduct; a century and a half later, Augustine writes a treatise on theology, and Chrysostom a book of sermons; then seven centuries pass away, and Abelard completes the compilation by a magnificent series of essays on rhetoric and scholastic philosophy. And, between these extremes, which, like the Bible, span fifteen centuries, all along from Herodotus to Abelard, are thirty other contributors, whose works enter into the final result—men of different nations, periods, habits, languages, and education. Un-

der the best conditions, how much real unity could be expected, even if each successive contributor had read all that preceded his own fragment? Yet here all are entirely at agreement. There is diversity in unity, and unity in diversity. It is "*e pluribus unum.*" If, at first sight, there be apparent divergence, a further search shows real harmony. As in a stereoscope, the two pictures sometimes appear as distinct, and will not come together, but, as we continue to look, and as the eye rests on some particular point, one view is seen; so in the Word of God. The more we study it, the more do its unity and harmony appear. Even the Law and the Gospel are not in conflict. They stand, like the cherubim, facing different ways, but their faces are toward each other. And the four gospels, like the cherubic creatures in Ezekiel's vision, facing in four different directions, move in one. All the criticism of more than three thousand years has failed to point out one important or irreconcilable contradiction in the testimony and teachings of those who are farthest separated—there is no collision, yet there could be no collusion!

How can this be accounted for? There is no answer which can be given unless you admit the supernatural element. If God actually superintended the production of this book, so that all who contributed to it were guided by Him, then its unity is the unity of a divine plan and its harmony the harmony of a supreme intelligence and will.

As the baton rises and falls in the hand of the conductor of some grand orchestra, from volin and bass-viol, cornet and flute, trombone and trumpet, flageolet and clarinet, bugle and French horn, cymbals and drum, there comes one grand harmony! There is no doubt, though the conductor were screened from view, that one master mind controls all the instrumental performers. But God makes

His oratorio to play for more than a thousand years; and where one musician becomes silent, another takes up the strain, and yet it is all one grand symphony—the key is never lost and never changes except by those exquisite modulations that show the master composer; and when the last strain dies away it is seen that all these glorious movements and melodies have been variations on one grand theme! Did each musician compose as he played, or was there one composer back of all the players?—“one supreme and regulating mind” in this Oratorio of the Ages? If God was the master musician planning the whole and arranging the parts, appointing player to succeed player, and making one strain to modulate or melt into another, then we can understand how Moses’ grand anthem of Creation glides into Isaiah’s oratorio of the Messiah; by and by sinks into Jeremiah’s plaintive wail, swells into Ezekiel’s awful chorus, changes into Daniel’s rapturous lyric; and, after the quartette of the evangelists, closes with John’s full choir of saints and angels!

The temple, first built upon Mt. Moriah, was built of stone, made ready before it was brought thither; there was neither hammer nor ax nor any tool of iron heard in the house, while it was in building. The stone was cut, squared, polished, and fitted to its place in the quarry, before it was brought to the temple platform—the beams and boards were all wrought into the desired form and shape in the shops; and when the material for the temple was on the ground nothing was necessary but to put it together. What insured symmetry in the temple when constructed, and harmony between the workmen in the quarries and the shops, and the builders on the hill? One presiding mind planned the whole; one intelligence built that whole structure in ideal before it was in fact. The builders built more wisely than they knew, putting together the ideas of the architect and not their own. Only

so can we account for the structural unity of the Word of God. The structure was planned and wrought out in the mind of a divine Architect who, through the ages, superintended His own workmen and work. Moses laid its foundations, not knowing who should build after him, or what form the structure should assume. Workman after workman followed; he might see that there was agreement with what went before, but he could not foresee that what should come after would be only the sublime carrying out of the grand plan. And yet no one disputes the singular unity of the structure, though during all those sixteen centuries through which the building rose toward completion, there was no sound of ax or hammer, no chipping or hacking to make one part fit its fellow. Everything is in agreement with everything else, because the whole Bible was built in the thought of God before one book was laid in order. The building rose steadily from corner-stone to cap-stone, foundations first, then storey after storey, pillars on pedestals, and capitals on pillars, and arches on capitals, till, like a dome, flashing back the splendors of the noonday, the Apocalypse spans and crowns and completes the whole, glorious with celestial visions.

You cannot look on that cathedral at Milan, whose first stone was laid in 1386, March 15th, and which after these five centuries is yet incomplete, without instinctively knowing that it must have been the product of one mind, however many workmen may have helped to rear its marble walls and pinnacles. Its unity of design cannot be the result of accident. No, the workmen were not the architect. Every stone was shaped and polished to fit its place in the plan. And so of the Bible: that cathedral of the ages! Whoever the workmen were, the architect was God!

2. The unity is historic. The whole Bible is the his-

tory of the kingdom of God. Israel represents that kingdom. And two things are noticeable. All centres about the Hebrew nationality. With their origin and progress the main historical portion begins; and with their apostasy and captivity it stops. The times of the Gentiles filled the interval, and have no proper history; prophecy, which is history anticipated, takes up the broken thread, and gives us the outline of the future, when Israel shall again take its place among the nations.

3. The unity is dispensational. There are certain uniform dispensational features which distinguish every new period. Each dispensation is marked by seven features, in the following order: (*a*). Increased light; (*b*). Decline of spiritual life; (*c*). Union between disciples and the world; (*d*). A gigantic civilization worldly in type; (*e*). Parallel development of good and evil; (*f*). Apostasy on the part of God's people; (*g*). Concluding judgment. We are now in the seventh dispensation, and the same seven marks have been upon all alike, showing one controlling power—*Deus in Historia*.

4. The unity is prophetic. Of all prophecy, there is but one centre: The kingdom and the king. 1. Adam, the first king, lost his sceptre by sin. His probation ended in failure and disaster, wreck and ruin. 2. The second Adam, in his probation, gained the victory, routed the tempter, and stood firm. The two Comings of this King constituted the two focal centres of the prophetic ellipse. His first coming was to make possible an empire in man and over man. His second coming will be to set that empire up in glory. All prophecy moves about these two advents. It touches Israel only as related to the kingdom; and the Gentiles only as related to Israel. Hence, in the Old Testament, Nineveh, Babylon, and Egypt loom up in the prophetic horizon as the main foes to the kingdom, as represented by the Hebrews; and in

the New Testament, the Beast, Prophet, and Dragon are conspicuous as the gigantic adversaries of that kingdom, after Israel again takes her place in history and prophecy.

There are some six hundred and sixty-six general prophecies in the Old Testament, three hundred and thirty-three of which refer particularly to the coming Messiah, and meet only in Him.

5. The unity is therefore also personal :

“In the volume of the Book
It is written of Me.”

There is but one Book, and within it but one Person. Christ is the centre of the Old Testament prophecy, as He is of New Testament history. From Genesis iii. to Malachi iii., He fills out the historic and prophetic profile. Not only do the three hundred and thirty-three predictions unite in Him, but even the rites and ceremonies find in Him their only interpreter. Nay, historic characters prefigure Him, and historic events are the pictorial illustrations of His vicarious ministry. The Old Testament is a lock of which Christ is the key. The prophetic plant of renown becomes a burning bush, as twig after twig of prediction flames with fulfilment. The crimson thread runs through the whole Bible. Beginning at any point, you may preach Jesus. The profile—at first a drawing, without color, a mere outline—is filled in by successive artists, until the life tints glow on the canvas of the centuries, and the perfect portrait of the Messiah is revealed.

6. The unity is symbolic. I mean that there is a corresponding use of symbols, whether in form, color, or numbers. In form, we have the square, the cube, and the circle, throughout, and used as types of the same truths. In color, we have the white for purity, the lustrous white for glory, the red for the guilt of sin and the sacrifice for

sin, the blue for truth and fidelity to promise, the purple for royalty, the pale or livid hue for death, and the black for woe and disaster. In numbers there is plainly a numerical system. One seems to represent unity, two correspondence and confirmation or contradiction, three is the number of godhead, four of the world and man. Seven, which is the sum of three and four, stands for the combination of the divine and human; twelve, the products of three and four, for the divine interpenetrating the human; ten, the sum of one, two, three, and four, is the number of completeness; three and a half, the broken number, represents tribulation; six, which stops short of seven, is unrest; eight, which is beyond the number of rest, is the number of victory. All this implies one presiding mind, and it could not be man's mind.

7. The unity is didactic. In the entire range and scope of the ethical teaching of the Bible, there is no inconsistency or contradiction or adulteration. But we need to observe a distinction maintained throughout as to natural religion and spiritual religion. There is a natural religion. Had man remained loyal to God, the universal fatherhood of God and the universal brotherhood of man would have been the two great facts and laws of humanity; the broad, adequate basis of the natural claim of God to filial obedience, and of man to fraternal love. But man sinned. He fell from the filial relationship; he disowned God as his Father. Hence, the need of a new and spiritual relationship and religion. In Christ, God's fatherhood is restored and man's brotherhood re-established, but these are treated as universal only to the circle of believers. A new obedience is now enforced, resting its claim, not on creation and providence, but on new creation and grace. Man learns a supernatural love and life.

Upon this didactic unity we stop to expatiate.

In not one respect are these doctrinal and ethical teachings in conflict, from beginning to end; we find in them a positive oneness of doctrine which amazes us. Even where at first glance there appears to be conflict, as between Paul and James, we find, on closer examination, that instead of standing face to face, beating each other, they stand back to back, beating off common foes.

We observe, moreover, a progressive development of revelation. Bernhard devoted the powers of his master mind to tracing the "Progress of Doctrine in the New Testament." He shows that although there could have been no such intent or intelligence in the writers' minds, and although the books of the New Testament are not even arranged in the order of their production, that order could not, in one instance, be changed without impairing or destroying the symmetry of the whole book; and that there is a regular progress in the unfolding of doctrine from the Gospel according to Matthew to the Revelation of St. John.

A wider examination will show the very same progress of doctrine in the whole Bible. Most wonderful of all, this moral and didactic unity could not be fully understood till the book was completed. The process of preparation, like a scaffolding about a building, obscured its beauty; even the workmen upon it could not appreciate its harmony; but, when John placed the cap-stone in position and declared that nothing further should be added, the scaffolding fell and a grand cathedral was revealed.

8. The unity is scientific. The Bible is not a scientific book, but it follows one consistent law. Like an engine on its own track, it thunders across the track of science, but is never diverted from its own.

(1). No direct teaching or anticipation of scientific truth is here found. (2). No scientific fact is ever mis-

stated, though common, popular phraseology may be employed. (3). An elastic set of terms is used, which contain, in germ, all scientific truth as the acorn infolds the oak.

These statements deserve a little amplification, as this has been supposed to be the weak side of the Bible. Yet, after a study of the Word on the one hand and natural science on the other, carried on for thirty years, I believe we may safely challenge any living man to bring one well-established fact of science against which the Bible really and irreconcilably militates!

God led inspired men to use such language, as that, without revealing scientific facts in advance, it accurately accommodates itself to them when discovered.

The language is so elastic and flexible as to contract itself to the narrowness of ignorance, and yet expand itself to the dimensions of knowledge, like the rubber bandage, so invaluable in modern surgery, which stretches about an inflamed and swollen limb, yet shrinks as the swelling abates. If there be terms or phrases which, without suggesting puzzling enigmas, shall yet contain within themselves ample space for all the demands of growing human knowledge; if the Bible may, from imperfect human language, select terms which may hold hidden truths till ages to come shall disclose the inner meaning, that would seem to be the best solution of this difficult problem. And now, when we come to compare the language of the Bible with modern science, we find just this to be the fact.

For example, we are told that the Bible term "firmament" is but an ancient blunder crystallized. Modern science says: "Ye have heard it hath been said by them of old time, there is a solid sphere above us which revolves with its starry lamps; but this is an old notion of ignorance, for there is nothing but vast space filled with ether above us, and stars have an apparent motion because the earth turns on its axis."

But this word "firmament," which has been declared "irreconcilable with modern astronomy," we find, on consulting our Hebrew lexicon, means simply an "expanse." If Moses had been Mitchell, he could not have chosen a better word to express the appearance, and yet accommodate the reality. He actually anticipated science. This is one of the "mistakes of Moses" to which the modern blasphemers do not refer!

The general correspondence between the Mosaic account of creation and the most advanced discoveries of science, proves that only He who built the world built the Book.

As to the order of creation, both Moses and geology agree. Both teach that at first there was an abyss, or watery waste, whose dense vapors shut out light. Both make life to precede light; and the life to develop beneath the abyss. Both make the atmosphere to form an expanse by lifting watery vapors into cloud, and so separating the fountains of waters above from the fountains below. Both tell us that continents next lifted themselves from beneath the great deep, and brought forth grass, herb, and tree, the three orders of primeval vegetation. Both teach that the heavens became cleared of cloud, and the sun and moon and stars, which then appeared, began to serve to divide day from night, and to become signs for seasons and years. Both then represent the waters bringing forth moving and creeping creatures, and fowl flying in the expanse, followed next by the race of quadruped mammals, and, last of all, by man himself.

There is the same agreement as to the order of animal creation. Geology and comparative anatomy combine to teach that the order was from lower to higher types. First, the fish, in which the proportion of brain to spinal cord is as 2 to 1; then reptiles, in which it is as $2\frac{1}{2}$ to 1; birds, 3 to 1; mammals, 4 to 1; man, 33 to 1. Now,

this is exactly the order of Moses. Who told him what modern science has discovered, that fish and reptiles belong below birds? As Mr. Tullidge says: "With the advance of discovery, the opposition supposed to exist between Revelation and Geology has disappeared; and of the eighty theories which the French Institute counted, in 1806, as hostile to the Bible, not one now stands."

Take an example of this scientific accuracy from astronomy. Says Jeremiah: "The host of heaven cannot be numbered, neither the sand of the sea measured."* The vast host of stars is a matter of modern discovery. Hipparchus, about a century and a half before Christ, gave the number of stars as 1,022, and Ptolemy, in the beginning of the second century of the Christian era, could find but 1,026. We may, on a clear night, with the unaided eye, see only 1,160, or in the whole celestial sphere, about 3,000. But when the telescope began to be pointed to the heavens, less than three centuries ago, by Galileo, then, for the first time, men began to know that the stars are as countless as the sand on the seashore. When Lord Rosse turned his great mirror to the sky, lo! the number of visible stars increased to nearly 400,000,000! They are like shining dust scattered on the black background of the heavens. John Herschel, at the foot of the dark continent, resolves the nebulae into suns, and, as with the eye of a Titan, finds in the cloudy scarf about Orion, "a gorgeous bed of stars," and the very Milky Way itself, which floats its streaming banner across the vault of heaven, proves to be simply a grand procession of stars absolutely without number. And so, the exclamation of the prophet, 600 years before Christ, 2,200 years before Galileo, "the host of heaven cannot be numbered," proves to be not a wild, poetic exaggeration.

* Jer. xxxiii. 22.

tion, but literal truth. Who was Jeremiah's teacher in astronomy?

Let us take an example from natural philosophy. Moses accords with modern discoveries as to the nature of light, in not representing this mystery as being made, but "called forth"—commanded to shine. If light be only "a mode of motion," how appropriate such phraseology!

In Job, we read of the dayspring that it "takes hold of the ends of the earth; it is turned as clay to the seal, and they stand as a garment."* The ancient cylindrical seals rolled over the clay, and left an impress of artistic beauty. What was without form, before, stood out in bold relief, like sculpture. So, as the earth revolves, and brings each portion of its surface successively under the sun's light and heat, what was before dull, dark, dead, discloses and develops beauty, and the clay stands like a garment, curiously wrought in bold relief and brilliant colors. Considered either as science or poetry, where, in any other book of antiquity, can you find anything equal to that? That phrase, "takes hold of the ends of the earth," conveys the idea of a bending of the rays of light, like the fingers of the hand when they lay hold; and this is spoken of the "ends of the earth." When the sunlight would touch the extremities of the earth, it is bent by the atmosphere so as to secure contact, and, but for this, vast portions, out of the direct line of the sun's rays, would be dark, cold, and dead. Who taught Job, 1,500 years or more before Christ, to use terms that Longfellow or Tennyson might covet to describe refraction?

"When the morning stars sang together"† has been always taken to be a high flight of poetry. And when in the Psalms‡ we read: "Thou makest the outgoings of

* Job xxxviii. 13, 14.

† Job xxxviii. 7.

‡ lxxv. 8.

the morning and evening to rejoice," the Hebrew word means to give forth a tremulous sound, or to make vibrations—to sing. In these poetic expressions, what scientific truth was wrapped up! Light comes to the eye in undulations or vibrations, as tones of sound to the ear. There is a point at which these vibrations are too rapid or delicate to be detected by our sense of hearing; then a more delicate organ, the eye, must take note of them; they appeal to the optic nerve instead of the auditory nerve, and as light and not sound. Thus, light really sings. "The lowest audible tone is made by 16.5 vibrations of air per second; the highest, by 38,000; between these extremes lie eleven octaves. Vibrations do not cease at 38,000, but our organs are not fitted to hear beyond those limitations. Were our ears delicate enough, we could hear even up to the almost infinite vibrations of light." And so it is literally true that "the morning stars sang together." Here is divine phraseology that has been standing there for ages uninterpreted, waiting for an intelligence that could take it in. And now we may read it just as it stands: "Thou makest the outgoings,—or light radiations,—of the morning and evening to sing," *i. e.*, to give forth sound by vibration.

Solomon has left us a poetic description of death.* How that "silver cord" describes the spinal marrow; the "golden bowl," the basin which holds the brain; the "pitcher," the lungs; and the "wheel," the heart!

The circulation of the blood was discovered twenty-six hundred years afterward by Harvey. Is it not very remarkable that the language Solomon uses exactly suits the fact—a wheel pumping up through one pipe, to discharge through another?

9. Last of all, the unity of the Bible is organic. And

* Eccles. xii. 6.

this means it is the unity of organized being. Organic unity implies three things: first, that all parts are necessary to a complete whole; secondly, that all are necessary to complement each other; and thirdly, that all are pervaded by one life-principle.

Let us apply these laws to the Word of God

1. All the parts of the Bible are necessary to its completeness. Organic unity is dependent on the existence and co-operation of organs. An oratorio is not an organic unit. Any part of it may be separated from the rest, or displaced by a new composition.

The unity of a building is not organic: it is a unity of plan, of construction, of material; but you may take down the wall and put up another; replace the windows by memorial panes, making each a crystal monument of some departed friend; change all the woodwork in the interior; and yet the unity and completeness of the building are not affected. But if this body of mine loses an eye, a limb, or the smallest joint of the finger, it is forever maimed: its completeness is gone; its unity violated; and nothing can ever supply the lack of that lost portion however insignificant.

Not one of all the books of the Bible could be lost without maiming the body of truth here contained. Every book fills a place. A single glance may not discover its use, or its necessity to the plan of the book, but it is the fault of our ignorance.

Here is one complete whole, and twenty-five years of study of this one book satisfies me that nothing can be omitted. Genesis is the book of beginnings; Exodus of departure and redemption; Leviticus of sacrifice and service; Numbers is the marshalling of God's hosts, and Deuteronomy is the emphasizing of obedience by which only this redeemed, separated, elect people can have success and victory. And so the doctrine finds illustration

and enforcement all through the Old Testament, and every book has its own witness to add, its own purpose to serve.

In the New Testament, the Gospels lay down the broad basis of facts of Redemption; the Acts apply those facts historically; the Epistles unfold the germs of doctrine previously presented, and the Apocalypse is the outlook of the great future.

For example, the book of Esther has long been criticised as not necessary to the completeness of the Canon, and particularly, because "it does not even once contain the name of God." But that book is the most complete exhibition of the Providence of God. It teaches a divine hand behind human affairs; ultimate and certain awards to the evil and the good; the uncertain and unsatisfactory prosperity of the wicked, and the ultimate prosperity that comes to the good even out of adversity; it shows retribution poetically exact in the very forms of punishment; unbiased freedom of resolution and action as consistent with God's overruling sovereignty; and all things working together to produce all grand results, the most minute matters furthering Providential plans. The book that thus exhibits God's Providence does not contain the name of God; perhaps because this book is meant to teach us of the Hidden Hand that, behind the scenes, unseen, moves and controls all things.

"Ruth" seems to be only a love-story, to some; but how rich this book is in foreshadowings of Gospel truth, especially illustrating the double nature of the God-man, our Redeemer.

Boaz is a type of Christ—Lord of the Harvest, Dispenser of Bread, Giver of Rest, He is GOËL—the Redeemer. Two things must unite in the redeemer of a forfeited estate: 1. He must be a kinsman, to have the right to redeem. 2. He must be of a higher branch of the family,

not involved in its calamities, to have power to redeem. Boaz, the near kinsman, buying back the lost inheritance and marrying Ruth, suggests Jesus, the God-man, our near kinsman, yet of a higher family, the redeemer of our lost estate, and bridegroom of the redeemed Church.

The Epistle to Philemon seems at first only a letter to a friend about a runaway slave. But this letter is full of illustrations of Grace. The sinner has run away from God and robbed Him besides. The law allows him no right of asylum; but grace concedes him the privilege of appeal. Christ, God's partner, intercedes. He sends him back to the Father no more a slave but a son, and says: "I beseech Thee, receive him; if he hath wronged Thee aught, put that to mine account."

The second law of organic unity is that all parts are necessary to complement each other.

Cuvier has framed in scientific statement this law of unity. Organized being, in every case, forms a whole—a complete system—all the parts of which mutually correspond; none of these parts can change, without the others also changing; and consequently each taken separately indicates and gives all the others. For instance, the sharp-pointed tooth of the lion requires a strong jaw; these demand a skull fitted for the attachment of powerful muscles, both for moving the jaw and raising the head; a broad, well-developed shoulder-blade must accompany such a head; and there must be an arrangement of bones of the leg which admits of the leg-paw being rotated and turned upward, in order to be used as an instrument to seize and tear the prey; and of course there must be strong claws arming the paw. Hence from one tooth, the animal could be modelled though the species had perished.

Thus the Four Gospels are necessary to each other and to the whole Bible. Each presents the subject from a

different point of view, and the combination gives us, like a series of concentric mirrors, not an outline picture or a mere image, but a divine Person reflected, projected before us, like an object with proportions and dimensions.

Matthew wrote for the Jew, and shows Jesus as the King of the Jews, the Royal Lawgiver, the Lion of the tribe of Judah. Mark wrote for the Roman, and shows Him as the Power of God, the Mighty Worker, the Ox for service and sacrifice. Luke wrote for the Greek, and shows Him as the wisdom of God, the human Teacher and Friend, the man Christ Jesus. John, writing to supplement and complement the other gospels, shows Him as Son of God, as well as Son of man, having and giving eternal life, the Eagle soaring to the sun, undazzled by its splendor.

These Four Gospels are the counterpart of the Four Living Creatures (*Zōa*) of Ezekiel, Daniel, and the Apocalypse. Marvellously joined, intertwined with coincidences, yet separated by differences, they face different ways, yet move in one direction, as one Spirit guides; wing with wing, wheel within wheel, full of eyes, the scope of their wings dreadful, and their speed like that of lightning.

These are not Gospels of Matthew, etc., but one Gospel of Christ, according to Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. The first three present the person and work of Christ from the outward, earthly side; the last, from the inward and heavenly. In the beginning of each gospel we find emphasized, in Matthew, Christ's genealogy, in Mark His majesty, in Luke His humanity, in John His divinity. So, in the close of each: in Matthew His resurrection, in Mark His ascension, in Luke His parting benediction and promise of enduement, and in John the added hint of His second Coming.

The Epistles are likewise all necessary to complete the

whole and complement each other. They form the "church-section" of the New Testament. The Church, now founded both among Jews and Gentiles, needs the germs of doctrine, found in the Gospels, amplified and applied, for fuller instruction of believers, solution of practical problems, and exposure of errors. This is done in the twenty-one Epistles.

There are five writers, each having his own sphere of truth. Paul's great theme is FAITH, and its relations to justification, sanctification, service, joy, and glory. James treats of WORKS, their relation to faith, as its justification before man. He is the counterpart and complement of Paul. Peter deals with HOPE, as the inspiration of God's pilgrim people in the temptations and trials of the wilderness. John's theme is LOVE, and its relation to the light and life of God as manifested in the believer. In his gospel, he exhibits eternal life in Christ; in his epistles, eternal life as seen in the believer. Jude sounds the trumpet of warning against apostasy, which implies the wreck of faith, the delusion of false hope, love grown cold, and the utter decay of good works. What one of all these writers could we drop from the New Testament?

The unity of the Bible is the unity of one organic whole. The Decalogue demands the Sermon on the Mount. Isaiah's prophecy makes necessary the narrative of the Evangelists. Daniel fits into the Revelation as bone fits socket, or as those strange bones in the vertebral column mutually form the axis at the neck. Leviticus explains, and is explained by, the Epistle to the Hebrews. The Psalms express the highest morality and spirituality of the Old Testament, and anticipate the clearer beauty of the New; they link the Mosaic code with the divine ethics of the gospels and the epistles. The Passover foreshadows the Lord's supper, and the Lord's supper inter-

prets and fulfils the Passover. Even the little book of Jónah makes more complete the sublime gospel according to John; and Ruth and Esther prophetically hint the Acts of the Apostles. Nay, look more closely, and after following the course of history and prophecy, gospels and epistles, when you come to the last chapters of Revelation, you find yourself mysteriously touching the first chapters of Genesis; and lo! as you survey the whole track of your thought, you find you have been following the perimeter of a golden ring; the extremities actually bend around, touch, and so blend, that no point of contact is detected. You read in the first of Genesis of the first Creation; in the last of the Revelation, of the new Creation—the new heaven and the new earth; there, of the river that watered the garden; here, of the pure river of the water of life, clear as crystal; there, of the Tree of Life in the first Eden; here, of the Tree of Life which is in the midst of the Paradise of God; there, of the God who came down to walk with and talk with man; here, we read that the Tabernacle of God is with men; there, we read of the curse that came by sin, of the serpent whose trail is over all human joys; here, we read: “And there shall be no more curse; nothing shall enter that defileth or maketh a lie!”

The third and last law of organic unity is, that one life-principle must pervade the whole. The Life of God is in His Word. That Word is “quick”—living; it “liveth and abideth forever.” Is it a mirror? yes, but such a mirror as the living eye; is it a seed? yes, but a seed hiding the vitality of God; is it a sword? yes, but a sword that omnisciently discerns and omnipotently pierces the human heart. Hold it reverently; for you have a living book in your hand. Speak to it, and it will answer you. Bend down and listen; you shall hear in it the heart-throbs of God.

This Book, thus one, structurally, historically and prophetically, symbolically and scientifically, dispensationally and didactically, personally and organically, we are to hold forth as the Word of Life and the Light of God, in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation. We shall meet opposition. Like the birds that beat themselves into insensibility against the light in the Statue of Liberty in New York Harbor, the creatures of darkness will assault this Word, and vainly seek to put out its eternal light. But they shall only fall stunned and defeated at its base, while it still rises from its rock pedestal, immovable and serene!

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