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I. THE TESTIMONY OF GOD.*

WHEN Paul wrote to Timothy concerning "the holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus," adding in the next verse the supplementary statement, "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God," the Old Testament had been completed, and the New Testament was in process of composition. These two Testaments are the Holy Scriptures—the sacred writings—of the Christian church. They are the product of the inspiration of God. They are able to make wise unto salvation. They are infallibly and inerrantly correct in every detail of statement. These are high claims for these particular writings.

I. As to literary form, these Scriptures are a *record of testimony*. They purport to be testamentary documents—the authentic record of the witness-bearing of the Three Persons in the Godhead upon the questions which are embraced as their subject-matter. (1). They are the testimony of the Father: "And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God." (1 Cor. ii. 1.) (2). They are the testimony of the Son: "Even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you." (1 Cor. i. 6.) (3). They are the testimony of the Spirit: "And it is the Spirit that

*The substance of this article was originally delivered as an extemporaneous sermon, and its publication has been requested by some who heard it. It has been recast for THE QUARTERLY under the special request that its *sermon* features should not be wholly removed.

II. THE DOCTRINE OF INSPIRATION OF THE WESTMINSTER DIVINES.

“CONTROVERSIALISTS in general,” says the late Principal Cunningham, in one of his essays, “have shown an intense and irresistible desire to prove that their peculiar opinions are supported by the Fathers, or by the Reformers, or by the great divines of their own church, and have often exhibited a great want both of wisdom and of candor in the efforts they have made to effect this object.” This device has in no sphere of doctrinal discussion been made more use of than in recent controversies concerning the inspiration of the Scriptures. “The theory of a literal inspiration and inerrancy was not held by the Reformers,” is the first remark which Dr. Schaff makes in a recent incidental attempt to controvert this doctrine,¹ and it is the first remark that falls to be made by most writers of his school. It was so good and learned a man as Tholuck who has, as Professor Pieper points out,² “*sit venia verbo*,—deceived a whole generation of scientific theologians” into so unhistorical an assertion. Tholuck misquoted and misinterpreted Luther in the article on inspiration in the first edition of Herzog’s *Encyclopædia*, and has been copied ever since.

A certain palliation may be admitted for this particular error. There is a difference between the Reformers’ treatment of Scripture and that of the theologians of the seventeenth century, a difference arising from the differing points of view from which they approach the subject. The Reformers, striving for very life, had little time or heart to do more than to insist on the sole divine authority of Scripture, and the facts involved in and underlying that authority. The Systematists of the seventeenth century, intrenching a position already won, sought to give these facts an indefectible foundation in a special theory of the mode of inspiration, the theory of dictation. The Reformers, though using language

¹ *The Independent*, July 20, 1893.

² *The Presbyterian and Reformed Review* for January, 1893, pp. 261-263.

conformable to, or even suggestive of, the theory of dictation, do not formally present that theory, as do the Systematists of the seventeenth century, as the fixed ground-work of their doctrine of Scripture. They were concerned rather with the facts which the seventeenth century writers put this theory forward to explain and safeguard; and their thinking concerning Scripture appears, indeed, to be rooted in a theory of *concursus* or *synergism* rather than in one of *dictation*. Observing this, over-eager controversialists may be possibly misled into supposing that the Reformers were no more strenuous as to the facts involved—the facts as to the plenary or verbal inspiration and infallibility or inerrancy of the Scriptures—than as to the theory of the mode of inspiration which would best safeguard these facts. It is a prodigious historical blunder so to suppose. The fully-developed theory of dictation as applied to inspiration seems to be a product of seventeenth century thought; but the Reformers are as strenuous as the Quenstedts and Buxtorfs as to the facts of detailed divine authority and inerrancy which that theory was intended to secure. Yet one can at least conceive how such a blunder can be made, especially by men who are accustomed to assert that it is only on a theory of verbal dictation that detailed divine authority and inerrancy can be defended for the Scriptures. For us to understand the origin of their error, gross as it is, it is only necessary to suppose that they imagine the doctrines of verbal inspiration and inerrancy to be corollaries of the theory of dictation, instead of the theory of dictation to be, as it was historically, an attempt to supply for these necessary doctrines a firm and impregnable basis.

It is otherwise with the desperate contention which has lately been put forth by Dr. Briggs that the seventeenth century divines themselves were adherents of the modern "liberal" doctrine of Scripture. Such a contention as this, as the French say, brings us stupefaction. Pressed with the obvious fact that the Westminster Confession teaches the verbal or plenary inspiration and infallibility or inerrancy of the original Scriptures, Dr. Briggs seeks on the one hand to explain away the obvious meaning of the docu-

ment, and on the other to undermine it by the round assertion that the British theologians of the Westminster age did not believe the doctrine of the verbal inspiration and inerrancy of Scripture. He has given himself repeatedly to the justification of this extraordinary assertion—the assertion, in effect, that the Reformed theologians of Britain were in violent (though assuredly unconscious) opposition to their brethren on the Continent, in the most fundamental postulate of their system. The most formal attempt to supply proof for it is to be found, however, in two sections in *Whither?*¹ entitled respectively, “Verbal Inspiration” and “Inerrancy of the Scriptures,” where Dr. Briggs represents the doctrines so described as “false doctrines,” which are not only extra-confessional, but wholly shift the ground of confessional doctrine. These assertions he supports by quotations from seventeenth century and especially Westminster divines.

As to verbal inspiration, he presents a catena of six quotations under the caption: “We shall give the opinions of a few Presbyterians of the seventeenth century on this subject, in order to show how far modern divines have departed from the Westminster doctrine of the Bible.” It is perhaps not altogether clear to what immediate antecedent the words “this subject” here refer. The subject of the section is “verbal inspiration,” and the subject of the immediately preceding sentences is the outcry of certain modern divines against rationalizing critics for destroying the “scholastic theory of verbal inspiration.” In any event, the catena of citations is meant to show that the Scriptures were not esteemed by the men who influenced the formulation of the Westminster doctrine of the Bible, as inspired in their “verbal expression,”—a mode of statement which Dr. Briggs for himself also declares to be “entirely false.” The doctrine of the inerrancy of the Scriptures, he declares, to “come into conflict with the historical faith of the church,” on the basis of two quotations. One of these, from Rutherford, is introduced by the statement: “The Westminster divines did not teach the inerrancy of the original autographs. The saintly Rutherford thus expresses their views.” The other is from Baxter and is introduced with the statement:

¹ Pp. 64-68 and 68-73.

“Richard Baxter was the leading Presbyterian of his time. He knew what he was about in his warning”—which is then quoted.

In all these quotations, without exception, Dr. Briggs falls into what has been called the “Fallacy of Quotations,” which a recent writer describes as one of the most dangerous of fallacies, because one of the most difficult to detect. “It consists,” this writer continues, “in alleging passages from well-known authors as proving some disputed point, when they do not prove it at all, but something resembling it as far as the words go, but quite different from it in reality.” It may perhaps be worth our while to exhibit the fallacy of these quotations. It might indeed be safely left to the general impossibility of the position asserted, to refute even so formal a presentation of proof. But as it appears that men unacquainted with the history of the doctrine of inspiration, and specifically with the writings of the Puritan divines, may be and have been misled; and as it is in any case a matter of considerable interest to observe how tolerably careful and logically exact writers can be misunderstood and made to testify against their fundamental convictions; it may be useful to subject Dr. Briggs’ proof-passages to a sufficiently close scrutiny at least fully to understand them.

DR. BRIGGS’ QUOTATIONS EXAMINED.

Let us take up the catena on verbal inspiration first, and (on the principle of *ex pede Herculem*), let us begin with the last quotation. It is from John Ball’s *Catechism*, a famous work of great repute among the Puritans, and reads as follows:

“The testimonie of the Spirit doth not teach or assure us of the Letters, syllables, or severall words of holy Scripture, which are onely as a vessell, to carry and convey that heavenly light unto us, but it doth seale in our hearts the saving truth contained in those sacred writings into what language soever they be translated.”

In adducing this as a proof that the seventeenth century divines did not believe in verbal inspiration, Dr. Briggs has obviously been misled by his own point of view. For there is a single assumption on which such a passage might seem to assert that only the matter of Scripture is inspired, or, at least, that we can be

¹ R. F. Clark, S. J., in *The Nineteenth Century*, for January, 1893, p. 85, while reviewing Mr. Mivart on *The Happiness in Hell*.

assured only of so much,—the assumption that the sole conclusive evidence that the Scriptures are the word of God, is the witness of the Holy Spirit in the heart. But though this may be Dr. Briggs' point of view, it is not John Ball's. The very object of the passage quoted is rather to guard against this overworking of the testimony of the Spirit: it is one of six rules which are given professedly "to prevent mistaking" in the use of this evidence. The immediately succeeding rule warns us that "the Spirit doth not lead them in whom it dwelleth, absolutely and at once into all truth, but into all truth necessary to salvation, and by degrees"; and one of the previous ones warns us not to forget that it is "private, not publique; testifying only to him that is endued therewith." Ball's object, thus, is not to suggest that the Scriptures are not verbally inspired, but only to deny that this can be proved by "the testimonie of the Spirit." By other forms of testimony, however (he teaches), it can be proved; and resting upon them as giving a "certainty of the mind," he unhesitatingly teaches verbal inspiration. Let us hear his statement of it:—

"Q What call you the word of God ?

A. The holy Scripture immediately inspired, which is contained in the Books of the Old and New Testament.

Q. What is it to be immediately inspired ?

A. To be immediately inspired is to be as it were breathed, and to come from the Father by the Holy Ghost without all means.

Q. Were the Scriptures thus inspired ?

A. Thus the holy Scriptures in the Originals were inspired both for matter and words."

Examination of the other quotations given in this catena would lead to similar results. Let us take the first. It is drawn from William Lyford's *Plain Man's Senses Exercised*, and runs as follows :

"All language or writing is but the vessel, the symbol, or declaration of the rule, not the rule itself. It is a certain form or means by which the divine truth cometh unto us, as things are contained in words, and because the doctrine and matter of the text is not made unto one, but by words and a language which I understand; therefore I say, the Scripture in English is the rule and ground of my faith, and whereupon I relying have not a humane, but a divine authority for my faith."

Here, again, the fault in quotation arises from the fact that a passage is given in which the writer is not speaking to the specific

subject for which he is quoted. Lyford is not here discussing directly the matter of inspiration at all, but is arguing the widely different question of the value of translations of Scripture—whether the word of God, that is, as he defines it (p. 46), “the mind and will of God,” is so competently conveyed in translations that the unlearned may have in them a divine foundation for faith. But though he holds that “Divine Truth in English is as truly the word of God as the same Scripture delivered in the Originall Hebrew or Greek,” he feels bound to add: “yet with this difference, that the same is perfectly, immediately and most absolutely in the Originall Hebrew and Greek, in other Translations, as the vessels wherein it is presented to us, and as far forth as they do agree with the Originalls.” The difference between the originals and the translations arises from the fact that “the Translators were not assisted immediately by the Holy Ghost,” while “such extraordinary assistance is needful to one that shall indite any part of Scripture” (p. 50). With all his tendency to defend the value of translations, therefore, he does not assimilate the inspiration of the originals to the divine element common to the two.

This enhancement of translations is carried, perhaps, a step higher by another of Dr. Briggs’ witnesses, Richard Capel, whom we may take as our third example, representing the middle of the catena. The following is the passage which Dr. Briggs quotes:

“Now what shall a poor unlearned Christian do, if he hath nothing to rest his poore soul on? The originals he understands not; if he did, the first Copies are not to be had; he cannot tell whether the Hebrew or Greek copies be the *right Hebrew* or the *right Greek*, or that which is said to be the *meaning of the Hebrew or Greek*, but as men tell us, who are not *Prophets and may mistake*. Besides, the transcribers were men and might err. These considerations may let in Atheisme like a flood.”

The effect of this quotation is somewhat spoiled, as Dr. Briggs gives it, by the omission of the italicizing (restored here), which indicates words borrowed by Capel from his opponent. For Capel is not stating his own view here, as the unwary reader of this extract only might be misled into believing, but controverting another’s view. He is inveighing against the carelessness of the welfare of human souls which is shown by those who dwell upon the uncertainties of copies and the fallibilities of scribes and translators, as if the saving word of God did not persist through all

these dangers. It is this mode of procedure which he says "may lead in Atheisme like a flood"; the passage quoted by Dr. Briggs being a positing of difficulties which he at once sets himself "to help" by laying down a series of contrary propositions. Accordingly he had said at an earlier point (p. 38):

"I cannot but confesse that it sometimes makes my heart ake, when I seriously consider what is said, *That we cannot assure ourselves that the Hebrew in the Old Testament and the Greek in the New are the right Hebrew and Greek, any further than our masters and tutors, and the general consent of all the learned in the world do so say, no one dissenting, all infallibility in matters of this nature having long since left the world.* And to the like purpose is that observation, *That the two tables written immediately by Moses and the Prophets, and the Greek copies immediately penned by the Apostolical men are all lost, or not to be made use of, except by a very few. And that we have none in Hebrew or Greek, but what are transcribed. Now transcribers are ordinary men, subject to mistake, may faile, having no unerring spirit to hold their hands in writing.*

"These be terrible blasts, and do little else when they meet with a weak head and heart, but open the doore to Atheisme and quite to fling off the bridle, which only can hold them and us in the wayes of truth and piety: this is to fill the conceits of men with evil thoughts against the Purity of the Originals: And if the Fountains run not clear, *the Translation cannot be clean*"

Capel's purpose, in a word, is not to depreciate the infallibility of the autographs, but to vindicate the general purity of the transmission in copies and translations. The originals were in his view "the dictates of the Spirit," and their writers being "indued with the infallible Spirit," "might not erre" (cf. *Remains*, pp. 12, 38, 43, 55). His tendency was thus not to lower the autographs towards the level of the translations, but to elevate the translations, so far as may be, towards the originals, claiming, in effect, for them a kind of secondary (providential) inspiration. Accordingly, although he would confess that the transmitters of Scripture had "no unerring spirit to hold their hands in writing," he yet asserted that God so assisted them "that for the main they should not erre," and "so held the hands and directed the pens of the Translators, that the translations might well be called the Word of God" (p. 31). No student of the history of doctrine need be told that the affinities of this view are with the highest, even the most mechanical theory of inspiration. (Cf. Ladd, *Doctrine of Sacred Scripture*, Vol. II. pp. 182 sq.)

The remaining three quotations in the catena on verbal inspira-

tion, taken from Poole, Vines and Wallis, are of precisely similar character to those already investigated, and we need not spend time in showing what must now be obvious to every careful reader, that they do not bear at all on the point in support of which they are quoted. Let us turn rather to the passages quoted to prove that the "Westminster divines did not teach the inerrancy of the original autographs." The first of these is from Samuel Rutherford, who proves to be only another representative of the same type of thought that Capel stands for. Indeed, if the reader will read the long passage given in *Whither?* with an eye to the italics which mark the phraseology borrowed from John Goodwin, whom Rutherford is here refuting, or the longer passage given in *The Bible, the Church and the Reason* (pp. 221, etc.), with the same care, he will not fail to catch a hint of Rutherford's high doctrine. And if he should read with those passages the preceding and succeeding contexts, and the intervening omissions, so as to catch the drift of the whole argument, he would scarcely be able to repress his astonishment that Dr. Briggs could have so misapprehended his author. Rutherford here, in a word, is almost bitterly attacking Goodwin's assertions of the fallibility of the transmission of Scripture; over against which he posits an "unerring and indeclinable providence" (p. 370) presiding over it. So far is he from suggesting that the autographs are not inerrant that he is almost ready to assert that all the copies and translations are inerrant too. He evidently feels himself to be making a great concession, and to be almost straining the truth, when he admits that there may be "errors of number, genealogies, etc., of writing in the Scripture as written" [*i. e.*, in the manuscript form] "or printed." Though God has used means which, considered in themselves, are fallible in transmitting the Scriptures, yet he has not left the transmission to their fallibility, but has added an unerring providence, keeping them from slipping. He urges that Goodwin's argument "makes as much against Christ and his apostles as against us," for they too had but copies of the Old Testament, the scribes and translators of which were "then no more than now, *immediately* inspired *Prophets*," and were consequently liable to error; so that "if ye

remove an unerring providence, who doubts but men might add or subtract and so vitiate the fountaine sense? and omit points, change consonants, which in Hebrew and Greek both might quite alter the sense?" Yet both Christ and the apostles appeal to the Scriptures freely, with such phrases as "as David saith" and the like, staking their trustworthiness on the true transmission. Nor will he allow the argument that it is the inerrancy of the quoters, not of the text quoted, which is our safeguard in such cases. This, he says, presumes "that Christ and his apostles might and did finde errors and misprintings even in written" [*i. e.*, maunscript] "Scripture, which might reduce the church in after ages to an invincible ignorance in matters of faith, and yet they gave no notice to the church thereof."

To Rutherford, therefore, all the Scriptures, whether in matters fundamental or not, were written by God (p. 373); he quotes them with the formula, "The Holy Ghost saith" (pages 353, 354 *bis*); he declares that the writers of the New Testament were "immediately inspired" (p. 361), a phrase of quite technical and unmistakable meaning; represents it as the part of an apostate to deny "all the Scriptures to be the word of God" (page 349); and looks upon them as written under an influence which preserved them from error and mistake (pp. 366, 369, etc.), and as constituting a more sure word than an immediate oracle from heaven (p. 193). In the immediately preceding words to those which Dr. Briggs extracts, he declares that: "The Scriptures resolve all our faith on *Thus saith the Lord*," which is "the only authoritie that all the prophets allege, and Paul"; and adds that, if it were so as Mr. Goodwin averred, "all our certainty of faith would be gone"; wherefore he praises God that "we have *βεβαϊότερον λόγον*, a more sure word of prophecy, surer than that which was heard on the Mount, for our direction and the establishment of our faith"

It is an interesting indication of the universality of high views of inspiration, that John Goodwin, Rutherford's adversary in this treatise, himself held them. So far as the points we are here interested in are concerned, indeed, the dispute was little more than a logomachy, since Rutherford and his friends admitted that the providential preservation of Scripture is not so perfect but that

some errors have found their way into the several copies, and that the translations are only in a derived sense the word of God, and only so far forth as they truly represent the originals; while Goodwin was ready to allow that God's providence is active in preserving the manuscript transmission substantially pure, and that the truth of God is adequately conveyed in any good translation. In Goodwin's reply to his assailants it is made abundantly apparent that he, too, believed in the inerrancy of the autographs, his objection to calling copies and translations the word of God, in every sense, turning just on this,—that no one extant copy or translation is errorlessly the word of God (see his *The Divine Authority of the Scriptures*, pp. 8, 9, 11, 12, 13).

But what about Richard Baxter? Dr. Briggs tells us that he "was the leading Presbyterian of his time," and that "he knew what he was about in his warning," which is quoted as Dr. Briggs's final proof that "the Westminster divines did not teach the inerrancy of the original autographs." But the passage that is quoted has again really nothing to do with the inerrancy of the autographs. It is only one of Baxter's frequently repeated statements of his sound apologetical position as to the relative value of different portions of Scripture, and the relative importance of the sense and the letter. It is partly on account of his firm grasp and clear expression and defence of this apologetical position, that we think of Baxter as one of the wisest and soundest writers on the subject of Scripture in his day. Here is the passage:

"And here I must tell you a great and needful truth, which, . . . Christians fearing to confess, by overdoing tempt men to Infidelity. The Scripture is like a man's body, where some parts are but for the preservation of the rest, and may be maimed without death: The sense is the soul of Scripture; and the letters but the body, or vehicle. The doctrine of the Creed, Lord's Prayer, and Decalogue, Baptism and the Lord's Supper, is the vital part, and Christianity itself. The Old Testament letter (written as we have it about Ezra's time) is that vehicle which is as imperfect as the Revelation of these times was: But as after Christ's incarnation and ascension, the Spirit was more abundantly given, and the Revelation more perfect and sealed, so the doctrine is more full and the vehicle or body, that is, the words are less imperfect and more sure to us; so that he that doubteth of the truth of some words in the Old Testament, or of some circumstances of the New, hath no reason therefore to doubt of the Christian religion, of which these writings are but the vehicle or body, sufficient to ascertain us of the truth of the History and Doctrine."

This is admirably said, we say, and despite the fact that it is quoted by Dr. Briggs in *The Bible, the Church and the Reason*, to show that Baxter allows errors in the Scriptures, it really has no bearing on that question. Not that it is at all doubtful what attitude Baxter held on that question. He has been frequently misunderstood and misquoted, but most gratuitously. He did not for a moment doubt the verbal inspiration and autographic inerrancy of Scripture. It is one thing to refuse to make the verbal inspiration of Scripture the ground of all religion; another to deny its reality or importance: and it is the former of these that Baxter did, and the latter that Dr. Briggs says he did. Baxter's chief works are accessible to all in Duncan's London edition of his practical writings, published in 1830, so that we may content ourselves here with the adduction of a passage or two, which will put his position on the exact point at issue beyond doubt, leaving it to the interested student to work out the details for himself. This is Baxter's pervasive testimony:

"Those that affirm that it was but the doctrine of Christianity, that was sealed by the Holy Ghost, and in which they were infallible, but that their writings were in circumstantial and by-passages, and method and words, and other modal respects, imperfect and fallible, as other men's (in a less degree), though they heinously and dangerously err, yet do not destroy or hazard the Christian religion by it."—Vol. xx. p. 95.

"Though the Apostles were directed by the Holy Ghost in speaking and writing the doctrines of Christ, so that we know they performed their part without errors, yet the delivering down of this speech and writing to us is a human work, to be performed with the assistance of ordinary providence."—Vol. xx. p. 115.

"All the credit of the gospel and Christian religion doth not lie in the perfect freedom of the Scriptures from all error; but yet we doubt not to prove this their perfection against all the cavils of infidels, though we can prove the truth of religion without it."—Vol. xx. p. 118.

"All that the holy writers have recorded is true (and no falsehood in the Scripture, but what is from the error of scribes and translators)."—Vol. xv. p. 65.

"No error or contradiction is in it but what is in some copies, by the failure of preservers, transcribers, printers and translators."—Vol. xxi. p. 542.

"If Scripture be so certainly true, then those passages in it that seem to men contradictory, must needs be true; for they do but seem so and are not so indeed."—Vol. xx. p. 27.

THE REAL WESTMINSTER DOCTRINE.

The Westminster doctrine of inspiration has probably emerged before this from the confusion into which Dr. Briggs' unfortunate

quotations would immerse it. Doubtless it will be more satisfactorily visible, however, if we adjoin a clear and succinct statement of it from the pen of some representative writer. Probably no one man has a better right to be quoted as an exponent of the doctrine of the Westminster divines as a body, on this subject, than "the Patriarch of Dorchester," John White. He was chosen by them at the outset of their labors to serve as one of the two assessors, whose activity was expected to supplement the little public capacity of Twisse. His book—*Directions for the Profitable Reading of the Scriptures* (1647)—was introduced to the world by one of the leading Westminster divines, Dr. Thomas Goodwin, in a glowing eulogy. And Baxter (Vol. xxii. p. 335) names it among the works on the divine authority of the Scriptures which he especially recommends to the English reader. It is, therefore, a truly representative book. We cannot do better than to adduce White's general statement as a fair representation of the prevalent view of his time. He founds his remarks on 2 Pet. i. 20, 21, and writes as follows:

"The Apostle . . . describes the kinde of assistance of the Holy Ghost in the delivery of the Scriptures, two ways, *First*, by way of negation, that they were neither of private interpretation, nor came by the wil of man. *Secondly*, he describes the same assistance affirmatively, testifying that they spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."

"In the former of these, wherein he expresseth their manner of delivering the Scriptures by way of negation, the Apostle excludes the working of the naturall faculties of man's mind altogether: *First*, the understanding, when he denies that the Scripture is of any private interpretation, or rather of men's own explication—that is, it was not expressed by the understanding of man, or delivered according to man's judgment, or by his wisdom. So that not only the matter or substance of the truths revealed, but the very forms of expression, were not of man's devising, as they are in Preaching, where the matter which men preach is not, or ought not to be, the Minister's own that preacheth, but is the word of truth (2 Tim. ii. 15), but the tearms, phrases, and expressions are his own. *Secondly*, he saith that it came not by the wil of man, who neither made his own choice of the matters to be handled, nor of the forms and manner of delivery. So that both the understanding and the wil of man, as farre as they were merely naturall, had nothing to doe in this holy work, save onely to understand and approve that which was dictated by God himselfe unto those that wrote it from his mouth, or the suggesting of his Spirit.

"Again, the work of the Holy Ghost in the delivery of the Scriptures is set down affirmatively, when the Penmen of those sacred writings are described to speak as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, a phrase which must be warily un-

derstood. For we may not conceive that they were moved in writing these Scriptures, as the pen is moved by the hand that guides it, without understanding what they did; for they not only understood, but willingly consented to what they wrote, and were not like those that pronounced the Devil's oracles, rapt and carried out of themselves by a kinde of extasie, wherein the Devill made use of their tongues and mouths to pronounce that which themselves understood not. But the Apostle's meaning is that the Spirit of God moved them in this work of writing the Scriptures, not according to nature, but above nature, shining into their understandings clearly and fully by a heavenly and supernatural light, and carrying and moving their wils thereby with a delight and holy enhancing of that truth revealed, and with a like desire to publish and make known the secrets and counsels of God, revealed unto them, unto the church.

"Yea, beyond all this, the Holy Ghost not only suggested unto them the substance of that doctrine which they were to deliver and leave upon record unto the church (for so far he usually assists faithful ministers in dispensing of the word in the course of their gospel ministry), but besides, has supplied unto them the very phrases, method, and whole order of those things that are written in the Scriptures, whereas he leaves ministers in preaching the word to the choice of their own phrases and expressions, wherein, as also in some particulars which they deliver, they may be mistaken, although in the main fundamentals which they lay before their hearers, and in the general course of the work of their ministry they do not grossly erre. Thus, then, the Holy Ghost not only assisted holy men in penning the Scriptures, but in a sort took the work out of their hands, making use of nothing in the men but of their understandings to receive and comprehend, their wils to consent unto, and their hands to write down that which they delivered. When we say that the Holy Ghost framed the very phrase and style wherein the Scriptures were written, we mean not that he altered the phrase and manner of speaking wherewith custome and education had acquainted those that wrote the Scriptures, but rather speaks his own words, as it were in the sounds of their voice, or chooseth out of their words and phrases such as were fit for his own purpose. Thus upon instruments men play what lesson they please, but the instrument renders the sound of it more harsh or pleasant, according to the nature of itself. Thus amongst the Pen-men of Scriptures we finde that some write in a rude and more unpolished style, as *Amos*; some in a more elegant phrase, as *Isay*. Some discover art and learning in their writings, as *S. Paul*; others write in a more vulgar way, as *S. James*. And yet with all the spirit of God drew their natural style to a higher pitch in divine expressions, fitted to the subject on hand." (Pp. 59-62.)

It is almost pathetic to observe White's efforts to mitigate the effects of his somewhat mechanical conception of the mode of inspiration in the matter of the style of the authors. Others made similar efforts and sometimes with more success. But the time had not yet come when the true *concursus* of inspiration, by which we may see that every word of Scripture is truly divine and yet every word is as truly human, had become the common property

of all. In this, too, White is a fair exponent of his day, and reminds us anew that so far from denying verbal inspiration and the inerrancy of Scripture, the tendency to error of the time was in the opposite direction; and in the strenuousness of its assertion of the fact of an inspiration which extended to the expression and secured infallibility, it was ever in danger of conceiving its mode after a mechanical fashion. That this was the ruling attitude of the middle of the seventeenth century among the Continental theologians, whether Reformed or Lutheran, everybody acknowledges. It is clear from what we have seen that the English Puritans and Scotch Presbyterians were not an isolated body cut off from the currents of thought of their day; but were in harmony with the best theologizing and highest conceptions of their Continental brethren.

With this result we might fairly close the present discussion as, in a sense, formally complete. We are loath to leave the subject, however, without completing it still further by adjoining a tolerably full exposition of the doctrine of inspiration as it was held by some one of the Westminster men, who was more of a biblical scholar than a dogmatist. In such a one, if in any one, we might expect to find a different view as to the origin and character of the Bible from that which had become the common property of the Protestant systematists of the day. No one offers himself for such a study more favorably than John Lightfoot, who was probably the greatest biblical scholar that took any large part in the discussions of the Assembly, and who does not appear to have busied himself much with studies in technical dogmatics. If in any one, in him we might expect, then, to find that lowered view of Scripture which Dr. Briggs declares to belong especially to biblical scholars, and wishes us to think characteristic of the Westminster men. Certainly Lightfoot's distinguished services to biblical study should make him an honored teacher to even our later and, we would fain believe, wiser age; while his general eminence, ability and learning will give us increased confidence in appealing to him to tell us just what was the doctrine of inspiration recognized by students of the Bible in his day as scriptural.

A subordinate interest in ascertaining Lightfoot's attitude to-

wards and thought of Scripture is added by the facts that Dr. Briggs thinks highly of him as an exegete¹, and has included his name among those to whom he bids us look for a lower and (in his view) truer doctrine of inspiration than that which esteems the Scriptures as in the fullest sense the utterances of God, and as such free from all error.² "The Westminster divines," Dr. Briggs writes in the latter of these passages, "knew as well as we do that the accents and vowel points of the Hebrew text then in their possession did not come down from the original autographs pure and unchanged. They were not in the original autographs at all. . . . They knew as well as we know that there were variations of reading and uncertainties and errors in the Greek and Hebrew texts in their hands They knew that there were errors of citation and of chronology and of geography in the text of Scripture. Luther and Calvin, Walton and Lightfoot, Baxter and Rutherford, and a great company of biblical scholars recognized them and found no difficulty with them." There are some things about this passage, indeed, which might justify one in paying it no attention. It is not clear from it just what is intended to be asserted as to Lightfoot's view of Scripture and its fallibility. Is it of the Scriptures "as God gave them," or of the Scriptures "as we have them" that Dr. Briggs means his final assertion to be taken? The company in which Lightfoot is here placed is certainly a company who did not recognize errors of any sort in the genuine "text of Scripture,"³ but labored to explain all apparent inaccuracies which the enemies of the Bible pretended to find in it—not how-

¹ *Biblical Study*, p. 344.

² *The Bible, the Church, and the Reason*, p. 96.

³ This has been sufficiently shown as to Baxter and Rutherford above. For Luther, see *The Presbyterian and Reformed Review* for April, 1893, pp. 249, sq. For Calvin, see *The Presbyterian and Reformed Review* for January, 1893, pp. 49, sq. We have been less careful to ascertain the exact opinions of Bryan Walton on this subject; but a somewhat close familiarity with the *Prolegomena* to his Polyglot and with his reply to John Owen's ill-considered attack upon it, leads us very strongly to doubt whether he held any lower view of Scripture than that of his fellows in this list. He represents himself to have "labored to assert the *purity, integrity, and suprem authority of the Originall Texts,*" and speaks of the matters more especially alluded to by Dr. Briggs thus: "The *Hebrew points* (that is, the

ever without "finding difficulty with them." Moreover, Dr. Briggs himself has elsewhere recognized the fact that Lightfoot held the highest conceivable doctrine of verbal inspiration. "Relying upon them"—i. e., apparently the book Zohar and other Cabbalistic writing—he tells us,¹ "the elder Buxtorf with his great authority misled a large number of the most prominent of the Reformed divines of the Continent to maintain the opinion of the divine origin and authority of the Massoretic vowel points and accents. In England, Fulke, Broughton and Lightfoot adopted the same opinion. These rabbinical scholars exerted in this respect a disastrous influence upon the study of the Old Testament." Were our impulse to be taken from Dr. Briggs's representations, therefore, we might be a little puzzled to know what we are bidden to look into Lightfoot to find. He is, however, worthy of our study for his own sake, and for the sake of the history of the doctrine of inspiration in Britain in the Westminster age; and one of the incidental results of our study will be to inform us which of Dr. Briggs's Lightfoots is the true one—the Lightfoot who freely recognized errors in the text of Scripture, or the Lightfoot who held that even the Hebrew vowel points

modern forms now used, not the vowels and accents themselves, which are acknowledged to be coeue with the other Letters, and that the reading of the text was never arbitrary, but the same before and after the punctuation) were devised and fixed by the Masorites about five hundred years after Christ. "The whole *Prolegom.* 7 is spent in proving that the *Originall Texts* are not corrupted either by Jews, Christians or others, that they are of supream authority in all matters, and the rule to try all *Translations* by, That the copies we now have, are the true transcripts of the first *ἰν-ὁ-γραφα* written by the sacred Penmen, That the special providence of God hath watched over these books, to preserve them pure and uncorrupt against all attempts of Sectaries, Hereticks and others, and will still preserve them to the end of the world, for the end for which they were first written, That the errors or mistakes which may befall by negligence or inadvertency of Translators or Printers, are in matters of no concernment (from whence various readings have arisen), and may by collation of other copies and other means mentioned be rectified and amended." "I do not only say, that all saving fundamentall truth is contained in the Originall Copies, but that all revealed truth is still remaining entire; or if any error or mistake have crept in, it is in matters of no concernment, so that not only no matter of faith, but no considerable point of Historicall truth, Propheties or other things, is thereby prejudiced, and that there are means left for rectifying any such mistakes when they are discovered." (*The Considerator Considered*, 1659, pp. 2, 11, 14, 66.)

¹ *Biblical Study*, p. 142.

and accents were from God. At all events, we invite our readers to a tolerably full exposition of Lightfoot's doctrine of inspiration as a proper close to our study of the doctrine as held by the Westminster men. We shall make this exposition by means of a copious series of quotations from Lightfoot's works,¹ arranged in an order which will bring his doctrine of Scripture before us in something of a systematic form.

LIGHTFOOT'S DOCTRINE OF SCRIPTURE.

The *canon of Scripture*, according to Lightfoot's conception, was *determined, both in its extent and its details, by the inspiration of God*, Scripture being nothing other than the revelation of God's will to man. He says:

"So that the Spirit of God inspired certain persons, whom he pleased, to be the revealers of his will, till he had imparted and committed to writing what he thought fit to reveal under the Old Testament, and when he had completed that, the Holy Ghost departed, and such inspiration ceased. And when the Gospel was to come in, then the Spirit was restored again, and bestowed upon several persons for the revealing further of the mind of God, and completing the work he had to do, for the settling of the Gospel, and the penning of the New Testament: and that being done, these gifts and inspirations cease, and may no more be expected than we may expect some other Gospel yet to come." (III. 371.)

The Scriptures are thus the product of the energy of God operating on certain selected men endowed for their production. It follows, of course, that they contain all the will of God.

"When the inspired penmen had written all that the Holy Ghost directed to write, 'all truth was written.'" (III. 369.)

And it follows equally that no further revelations are to be expected.

"Now was the whole will of God revealed and committed to writing, and from henceforth must vision and prophecy and inspiration cease forever. These had been used and imparted all along, for the drawing up of the mind of God into writing." (III. 368.)

On this latter matter he was led to speak fully and repeatedly in opposition to the "new spirits" of the sectaries of his day. Thus he writes in another place when commenting on Judges xx. 27:

¹ Quotations will be designated according to the volume and page in Pittman's octavo edition of Lightfoot's *Works*.

“How may Christians inquire of God in their doubtings, as Israel did, here and elsewhere, in theirs? I must answer briefly, and that in the words of God himself, ‘To the law and to the testimony’: to the written word of God, ‘Search the Scriptures.’ As you might appeal to Balaam to bear witness concerning the blessedness of Israel, whereas he was called forth to curse them;—so for the proof of this matter,—viz., that there is now no other way to inquire of God, but only from his word,—you may appeal to those very Scriptures, that they produce, that there are revelations and inspirations still, and that God doth still very often answer his people by them. . . . To speak fully to this matter I should clear this,—I. That after God had completed and signed the Scripture canons, Christians must expect revelations no more. . . . II. I should show that the Scripture containeth all things necessary for us to know or to inquire of God about.” (VI. 286.)

He did speak “fully to this matter” in his disputation for the Doctor’s degree, delivered in 1652, in which he defended the thesis, *Post Canonem Scripturæ consignatum, non sunt novæ Revelationes expectandæ* (V. 455 sq.) As to the sealing of the canon, he treats the three matters of the canon that is sealed, and the time and the mode of its sealing. The *time* of the close of the canon, he teaches, was determined by the withdrawal of the inspiring Spirit; which also determines the *mode* in which it was done: “*quod nempe ipsa ultimi calami, per ultimum hunc Spiritus Sancti amanuensem, scriptis inspiratis appositio, fuerit ipsissima consignatio*” (p. 457.) The canon had been written at the impulse of God, through instruments selected from time to time for the revelation of his will; and as they wrote it, it gradually grew to its completion.

“Prophetæ sancti, et divino Spiritu afflati, in unoquoque seculo a Deo ad conscribendum sacrum canonem ordinati et edocti, ab impiis et nefariis hominibus licet pro ludibrio et derisu haberentur, a piis tamen et deum timentibus pro veris prophetis et habiti sunt et honorati. Quaecumque ergo illi ex dictamine Spiritus Sancti conscripserant, in manus piorum hominum ab ipsis tradita, pro divino verbo et canone ab illis recepta, æstimata et servata.” (V. 457.)

So, too, with the New Testament: “When the last of the theopneustic writers had applied the last pen to his writings, the canon was, as it was completed, so also by this very act, sealed” (p. 457.) Thus “the New Testament grew gradually, just as the Old Testament had grown” (p. 457–458.) The whole truth was therefore written, the canon of Scripture sealed, and revelations were no longer to be expected, *cum scripsissent illi omnia ea quæ ab*

eis scribi voluit Spiritus Sanctus" (p. 458.) This happened, as a matter of fact, when John wrote the Apocalypse, which Lightfoot makes the latest-written of New Testament books, while yet placing its composition before the destruction of Jerusalem. He says:

"The last of those celestial writers was John the Evangelist and Apocalypticist. He wrote the Apocalypse last of all his writings; and when it was completed as a crown, the canon of the New Testament was perfected and sealed, and that of the whole Scriptures as well" (p. 459).

It necessarily results from this doctrine of the canon, as we have already seen, not only that no new revelations are to be expected, but also that it is to Scripture itself, and to it alone, that we are to go for spiritual guidance; and that we are to treat it with due reverence and to approach it with all confidence:

"Divinæ Scripturæ oracula pro oraculo colimus, extra quod nihil vel sciendum, vel expectandum, vel æstimandum, quod ad fidem pertineat, aut mores, aut bonam conscientiam. Sacrosanctum hunc canonum veneramur, ut verum, solum, perfectum omnium fidei articulorum pennarum, perfectam omnium actionum nostrarum regulam et normam." (p. 460.) "Illi [*i. e.*, Pontificii] 'ecclesiam' statuerunt, nos 'ipsam Scripturam'; atque hoc non sine summa ratione, ac summa ipsius Scripturæ auctoritate. Ad hoc nempe oraculum, quasi ab ipso Dei digito, diriguntur homines ad omnia quærenda et cognoscenda, quæ ad Deum cognoscendum, et ad salutem acquirendam, faciunt" (p. 461.) "At nos firmissimum habemus verbum Scripturæ, ad omnia hæc, quæ nobis scitu opus est, deligenda, et aptum, et datum." (V. p. 462.)

Inspiration having been thus made the principle of the canon, it becomes at once *the criterion of canonical books*. An instructive passage occurs when Lightfoot is commenting on the prologue of Luke's Gospel:

"From those men's sermons and relations, many undertook to write Gospels, partly for their own use, and partly for the benefit of others: which thing though they did lawfully and with a good intent, yet, because they did it not by inspiration, nor by divine warrant; albeit what they had written were according to truth, yet was the authority of their writings but human, and not to be admitted into the divine canon. But Luke had his intelligence and instructions from above (*ἀνωθεν*, ver. 3.)" (III. 19).

This criterion is applied of course, however, especially to *the exclusion of the Apocryphal books*:

"The Apocrypha speaks for itself, that it is not the finger of God, but the work of some Jews. Which got it so much authority among Christians; because it came from them, from whom the lively oracles, indeed, came also. But the

Talmud may be read to as good advantage, and as much profit, and far more." (II., p. 9.)

"The words of the text are the last words of the Old Testament,—there uttered by a prophet, here expounded by an angel; there concluding the law and here beginning the Gospel. . . . Thus sweetly and nearly should the two Testaments join together, and thus divinely should they kiss each other, but that the wretched Apocrypha doth thrust in between. . . . It is a thing not a little to be admired, for this Apocrypha could ever get such place in the hearts and in the Bibles of the primitive times, as to come and sit in the very centre of them both. . . . But it is a wonder to which I could never yet receive satisfaction, that in churches that are reformed, they have shaken off the yoke of superstition, and unpinned themselves from off the sleeve of former customs, or doing as their ancestors have done,—yet in such a thing as this, and of so great import, should do as first ignorance, and then superstition, hath done before them. It is true, indeed, that they have refused these books out of the Canon, but they have reserved them still in the Bible: as if God should have cast Adam out of the state of happiness and yet have continued him in the place of happiness." (VI., p. 131.)

The *unity* of the canon which is touched on in the last extract is in another place largely dwelt upon. He is commenting on Luke ix. 30, 31:

"Remember that Moses here is the law, and Elias the prophecy: and you have an emblem of the Scriptures, which is, that 'lex atque omnis prophetarum chorus Christi praesentat passionem.' . . . Marcion, the heretic, did once maintain, that the Old Testament was given by one God, and the New by another; the Old by a God of cruelty,—the New by a God of mercy. . . . If he will but take the Bible and read, he shall evince his own conscience of this truth,—that both Testaments breathe from one Spirit; that both mainly aim at one thing; though the letter of the Old be different from the letter of the New, as death from life, yet that the Spirit of both is the same, as there is a life under death; that the Old is the New under a cloud, and the New is the Old with sunshine; that not only upon this mount, but even throughout the Old Testament, Moses and Elias, law and prophecy, talk to Christ, 'and speak of his decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem.'

Moses' law is the ground of all divinity; so was it to Israel, so must it be to us; the rest of the Old Testament was a divine exposition of Moses' law; so was it to Israel, and so must it be to us. The New Testament is a sweet commentary upon both; so should it be to us, and so in time shall it be to Israel. God, when he had left in writing as much as his divine wisdom knew to be necessary for Israel's salvation under the law; and when the Holy Ghost (for his familiar expressions) ceased from Israel and departed; when now they had neither vision nor prophecy to instruct them, till He should come who should seal vision and prophecy,—God by this last prophet sends them back to remember the law of Moses. . . . These [the five books of Moses, the Prophets and the Hagiographa] were Israel's Evangelists, instructing them concerning Christ, and all things of Christian religion necessary to their salvation. And all these were not only written for them, but also for us, upon whom the ends of the world are come; even as they, so must

we lay herein, Moses and Elias, law and prophets, the groundwork of all our religion, and, in Christ, or the Gospel, finish it: in the law to make the seed-plot of all doctrines necessary to salvation; in the prophets to water it,—and in the Gospel, to gather the increase. God himself hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what the law doth require of thee, in the manner of reading of Scripture, even by his matter of writing it. As Moses, or the law, begins, so the Gospel ends; and as Elias, or prophecy, ends, so the Gospel begins; 'Atque in se solvitur,' God rolling the Scripture even in itself, and showing us Moses, and Elias, and Christ, talking together on the outside of the tabernacle; much more do they within. . . . Thus God even by His own method, hath showed thee, O man, what is good, and what method the Lord requireth of thee in thy reading of the Scriptures; he brought Moses and Elias to talk to Christ in Scripture, even before Christ came; he set Moses, and Elias, and Christ to talk together in person upon this mountain; and he hath left Christ to talk with Moses and Elias in Scripture again ever since, and 'Quos Deus conjunxit nemo separet,' and, 'those whom God hath thus joined together let no man put asunder.' As oft as thou takest the Scripture in hand to read, thou goest up into a mountain to see Christ in glory; if Moses and Elias talk not to him there, if thou seest him in glory, thou seest more than did his own disciples. Thou mayst hear them talk together, if thou wilt; for God hath put them together." (VI. 200, *sq.*)

The *nature of the inspiration* which Lightfoot thus made the pinciple of the canon of Scripture must already have appeared in general outline in the extracts which have been given. We have seen him speaking of it as a special gift to specifically chosen men: "The Spirit of God inspired certain persons, whom he pleased, to be the revealers of his will" (III. 371), who, therefore, wrote what he directed to be written (III. 369), at his dictation (V. 457). The Scriptures are thus naturally looked upon as the "drawing up of the mind of God in writing" (III. 368), and the writers as the "amanuenses" of the Spirit (V. 457); their work is the "finger of God" (V. 462, II. 9), and God's oracle, He having committed to writing what He saw fit to reveal" (III. 371), or "left in writing what his divine wisdom knew to be necessary" (VI. 203). Let us look a little more narrowly at Lightfoot's conceptions thus brought before us. In his doctorate thesis, of which we have already spoken, he dwelt largely on the two contentions, that inspiration was a gift to specially chosen men, and that it was specifically different both from sanctifying grace and that illumination of the Spirit common to Christians by which God leads them into truth, and which may be loosely called "revelation." We may have new illumination of Scripture

doctrine, he taught, but not by immediate revelation, but only through deeper study of Scripture; we are certainly given the same Spirit of wisdom and of revelation which the apostles possessed, but not to make new revelations through us, but only to quicken divine knowledge in us through the medium of the word; we are to have to the end of time the guidance of the Spirit, but not by means of direct revelations of duty to us, but only through the prescriptions of the written word—for, “*nos firmissimum habemus verbum Scripturæ, ad omnia hæc, quæ nobis scitu opus est, deligenda, et aptum et datum*” (V. 462). This distinction is necessarily much emphasized in opposition to the pretensions of the sectaries of the day to “inner light.” It is very strongly asserted in the following passage:

“I might observe ‘obiter’ how great diversity there is betwixt the Spirit of prophecy and revelation, and the Spirit of grace and holiness. The same Spirit, indeed, is the author of both; but there is so much diversity in the thing wrought, that a Balaam, a Caiaphas, have the Spirit of prophecy, who are as far from having the Spirit of sanctification as the east from the west, hell from heaven.” (VII. 308.)

The need of revelations is superseded by the gift of the Scriptures, for—

“As the great Prophet he [Christ] teacheth his church himself, by giving of the Scriptures, and instructing his holy ones by his Spirit.” (VI., p. 261.)

The whole case is argued at length at VI. 235 sq., from which we extract as much as will serve our purpose:

“For the prosecuting this argument, you must distinguish between the false pretence to the Spirit of sanctification, and to the Spirit of revelation. By the former, men deceive themselves,—by the latter, others. . . . I shall strip this delusion naked, and whip it before you, by observing these four things:—1. No degree of holiness whatsoever doth necessarily beget and infer the Spirit of revelation, as the cause produceth the effect. . . . I clear this: . . . First; from the nature of the thing. The Spirit of holiness and revelation are far different: therefore the one is not the cause of the other. . . . 1. They are impartible to different subjects: holiness only to holy men; the Spirit of revelation sometimes to wicked men. So it was imparted to Balaam; so likewise to Judas and Caiaphas. 2. They are bestowed upon different ends:—holiness for the good of him that hath it; revelation for the benefit of others. 3. They are of different manners and operations. The Spirit of sanctification changeth the heart; Paul is a Saul no more: revelation doth not; Judas is a Judas still. 4. They are of different diffusion in the soul: sanctification is quite through,—revelation only in the understanding. 5. They are of different effect: sanctification never produceth

but what is good; revelation may produce what is evil; knowledge puffeth up. . . .

II. The Spirit of revelation is given indeed to saints, but means little that sense, that these men speak of, but is of a clean different nature. The Apostle prays, 'That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him,' Eph. i. 7. And God gives this Spirit; but in what sense? Not, to foresee things to come; not to understand the grammatical construction of Scripture without study; not to preach by the Spirit: but the Apostle himself explains, verse 18, 'The eyes of your understanding being enlightened, that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints.' So that the revelation given to the saints, is this,—that God reveals the experience of those things, that we have learned before in the theory from Scripture,—a saving feeling of 'the hope of his calling, and the riches of the glory of his inheritance.' Here let me speak three things:—1. To feel the experience of grace is not by a new light, that was never known before, but by application of what was known before. . . . As common grace is called grace because it is above the ordinary working of nature,—so this is called revelation, because above the work of common light. 2. How do men come to assurance of pardon and salvation? Not by the Spirit of revelation in their sense; not by any immediate whisper from heaven; but another way: as in Romans xv. 4. . . . In Scripture is your comfort, and in your own conscience; and in them is your assurance. A saint makes this holy syllogism. Scripture, major, 'He that repents, believes, loves God, hath the pardon of his sins.' Conscience, minor, 'Lord, I believe; Lord, I love thee.' Saint, from both, makes the conclusion, 'Therefore, I am assured of the pardon of my sins, and my salvation.' . . . 3. I may add, A saint in heaven finds nothing but what he knew before in little. . . . III. There is no promise in Scripture whereupon the Spirit of revelation is to be expected after the fall of Jerusalem. . . . At the fall of Jerusalem, all Scripture was written, and God's full will revealed; so there was no further need of prophecy and revelation. IV. The standing ministry is the ordinary method that God has used for the instruction of his church." (VI., pp. 236-240, cf. vi. 211.)

The common *distinction between revelation and inspiration, in the stricter senses of those words*, which confines the former to the direct impartation of truth from God, and the latter to the divine work of securing the correct communication or record of the truth, is not drawn by Lightfoot. The obvious distinction which this usage of the words is intended to express, is not, however, overlooked by him; he draws it in his own way as follows:

"But we may observe a double degree in rapture; as inspired men may be considered under a double notion; viz. those that were inspired with prophecy, or to be prophets and to preach,—and those that were inspired to be penmen of divine writ, which was higher. John [in Revelation] hath both." (III. 334.)

This may not mean, precisely, that "inspiration" is a higher notion than "revelation" in the now current senses of those words:

but it does mean that there was a superadded grace of the Spirit above the impartation of the truth, when it was granted to one to fix the truth in written form for the instruction of all ages. The dignity of Scripture as the word of God fixed in written form, is the underlying conception; and Lightfoot is never weary of insisting on this. Take but a single example. When commenting on John v. 39, he says:

“In what he addeth, ‘They are they which testify of me,’ the emphasis may not be passed by unobserved. He saith not only, ‘they testify of me,’ but ‘they are they that do it:’ as intimating that the Scriptures are the great, singular, and intended witnesses of Christ, the fullest and the highest testimony of him (as 2 Peter i. 19). . . . And thus doth Christ read unto us: 1. The dignity of the Scriptures as his choicest witness. 2. The end of them, himself. 3. Their work to bring men to him. And 4. The fruit of all, eternal life.” (V. 273.)

Upon this conception of the origin of Scripture, *the matter of it is looked upon as a dictation from heaven*. This comes out repeatedly. For example, when speaking of the prologue of Luke’s Gospel, he writes:

“He maketh his own undertaking of the like nature with theirs, when he saith, It seemed good ‘to me also’:—but he mentioneth these their writings, as only human authorities (undertaken without the injunction of the Holy Ghost), which his divine one was to exclude. . . . Verse 3: ‘It seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things *from above*.’ For so might *Ἀνωθεν* be best translated; and so it signifieth, John iii. 3, 31, and xix. 11; James i. 17, &c. And, thus taken, it showeth Luke’s inspiration from heaven, and standeth in opposition to the many gospels mentioned, verse 1;—which were written from the mouths and dictating of men, verse 2; but his intelligence for what he writeth was ‘from above.’” (IV. 114–115.)

Here inspiration is made to include an injunction from God to write, and the reception from above of what is to be written; so that the writing is “from the mouth and dictating” of God. This is the conception everywhere cropping out more or less fully, *e. g.*:

“Now, why the three evangelists should be so unanimously silent in so great a matter, for so long a time, needs not be questioned, since the Holy Ghost hath provided that, by a fourth, that should be supplied which they had omitted.” (IV. 386.)

“Neither can I, nor dare I think of any such superiority and inferiority in the writings of the evangelists.” (IV. 429.)

(On 1 Kings xv. 14), “A human chronicler is not able to say, ‘Such a one’s heart was perfect with God’; because he is not able to discern what the heart is. He

writes the story of a man's actions; he cannot write the story of his heart, because he cannot know it. But he that held the pen, and wrote these sacred chronicles, the Holy Ghost, saw the carriage of all actions, saw the secret frame and temper of all hearts; and he was able to give judgment of them whether they were good or evil; and he could not but give true judgment." (V. 376.) . . . "That his heart was so, is confirmed by the mouth of two witnesses, the Book of Kings and Chronicles; and the mouth of the Holy Ghost hath spoken it twice over, here and there; and his word is truth and no falsehood in it." (V. 378.)

The conception here is of course not merely an inspiration of the matter of Scripture, but such a divine gift of Scripture that it is *in its matter and form alike, down to its words and even letters, from God*. This is constantly illustrated in Lightfoot's writings. Take such a passage as the following as an instance. He is speaking of Balaam, in 2 Pet. ii. 15, and animadverts on the fact that he is called the "son of Bosor," whereas the Old Testament has it "son of Beor." He says:

"Those that are apt to tax the originals of Scripture of corruption and interpolation, may chance to think it is so here; and that some carelessness or unhappy dash of the pen, made it Bosor here, where it should have been Beor." He then adduces the Chaldee sentence in Jer. x. 11, saying that it "came not into the Chaldee by chance, or any inadvertency, but by sound wisdom," and so it is here. "The change of the name *Beor* into *Bosor* relishes of the Chaldee language too. . . . And our Apostle doth neither mistake himself in so pronouncing the name, nor hath any transcriber miswritten it after him: but he altered it according to the Chaldee idiom and propriety; and, by this very word gives intimation that he was in Chaldea, when he wrote this epistle." From this he draws three observations, of which the second and third are the following: "*Secondly*: That no tittle in Scripture is idle, but ought to have its consideration: according to the saying of the Jews, 'That there is no tittle in Scripture, but even mountains of matter hang upon it': and, as our Saviour saith, 'one jot or tittle of the law shall not perish;' so not one jot or tittle in Scripture but hath its weight. Here is one poor letter, which, one would think, was crept in by some oversight, yet that carries with it matter of important and weighty consideration. *Thirdly*: How necessary human learning is for the understanding and explaining of Scripture, which is so much cried down and debased by some." . . . (VII. 79-81.)

There are a number of points brought out in this extract which should interest us. We perceive that Lightfoot was not unfamiliar with the science of textual criticism, though he himself was a critic of conservative tendency. We see that he was zealous for the value and necessity of human learning in the interpretation of Scripture, as over against the enthusiasts who expected to accomplish all by the inner aid of the Holy Ghost. But our present

concern is to observe that his doctrine of inspiration led him to attribute everything in Scripture to the Holy Spirit, whose inspiring influence extended to the very words, and even to the several letters in them. To Lightfoot *the Spirit of God was, in the highest and strictest sense, the author of Scripture*; and therefore everything in it, down to the very letters, was held to be significant and important. Let us observe, somewhat in detail, how he deals with Scripture under this conception. One of the commonest of his locutions is to quote the Scriptures as the words of the Holy Ghost. Here are a few scattered examples which will exhibit his usage:

"Search and study the Scripture, because it is the Scripture, the writing of God." (VII. 207.)

"The Holy Ghost that gave the Scriptures." (VII. 212.)

"The Holy Ghost hath spoken" Rom. xiii. 2. (VII. 109.)

"The Holy Ghost, in that story, bids us look on him," *i. e.*, Cain. (VII. 339.)

"And the Holy Ghost doth point as it were with the finger," quoting Rev. vii. (VII. 356.)

"And here the Holy Ghost, to hint his distaste of such idolatry, blots out his children to the third, nay, fourth generation, out of the line and genealogy of our Saviour." (VII. 357.)

"In reading of the New Testament, never take your eye off the Old; for the New is but again that in plainer phrases. God himself hath taught us by the writing of the Scripture, what is the best way to read: for he hath folded the two Testaments together; so that as the law begins, so the Gospel ends; and as the prophets end, so the Gospel begins; as if calling upon you to look still for the one in the other." (II. 44.)

"Notwithstanding the Holy Ghost would conclude the story of their offering altogether." (II. 125.)

"The Holy Ghost doth tell us when it was that he [Hezekiah] began his reign." (II. 258.)

"The Holy Ghost setteth a special mark upon these forty years of his [Jeremiah's] prophesying, Ezek. iv. 6." (II. 275.)

"And the Holy Ghost tells us," Psalm lxxiii. 56. (V. 292.)

"When ye rehearse this, 'The Holy Catholic Church' in the Creed, —let your thoughts first recoil to your Bibles, and see how the Holy Ghost pictures them there. . . . Nay, yet the divine limner lays on more precious colours" (VI. 51-52.)

"And so I have given you the sense of this place; and, as I conceive, the very sense of the Holy Ghost." (VI. 175.)

"As it was foretold by the Holy Spirit in the Prophets, . . . so was it also foretold by the same Spirit." (VI. 231.)

"And thus you have the words unfolded to you, and I hope according to the meaning of the Holy Ghost." (VI. 260.)

"For so doth the Holy Ghost himself explain it," Rev. xix. 8, and vii. 14. (VL 296.)

"It is not unprofitable to observe, how the Holy Ghost, at the story of great actions, doth often intimate the Trinity: 'Let us make man.' 'Let us confound their language.' And at Genesis xviii. you read of three men that stood by Abraham, who are called afterwards Jehovah. And at the setting of the service of the tabernacle, the form of blessing that was prescribed to the priests to use, intimated a Trinity. . . . But to spare more instances, at Christ's entry into the ministry, the Trinity is at his baptism; and now at the end of it he proclaims it, and requires it to be professed at every baptism." (VI. 405)

"The Holy Ghost intendeth, in this book [the Acts], to show. . . . The Holy Ghost should tell us. . . . The Holy Ghost, which in all the Bible, never, . . . no, not when he was intentionally writing of . . . should do it now, when he is purposely upon a story of. . . ." (VIII. 71.)

"The second Psalm, which owns not its author in the title, the Holy Ghost ascribeth here to David." (VIII. 74.)

"That the Holy Ghost, reckoning the porters as they were disposed after the return," 1 Chron. ix. 23, 24. (IX. 231.)

This constant usage exhibits the fact that, to Lightfoot, to say the Scripture says, was equivalent to saying the Holy Ghost says: the two locutions were convertible. This identification of the Scripture and the Holy Spirit comes out very plainly in cases where he passes from the one to the other mode of speech, as it were, unconsciously. Thus when speaking of the anticipation in the narrative at Joshua xv. 8, he says it was "because *the Holy Ghost* would take special notice of . . .," while just below, on the same page, with reference to a similar difficulty, his mode of speech is that it was, "because *the text* would give account of their whole inheritance together, now it is speaking of it" (II. 141). Hence also such passages as the following:

"*The Holy Ghost* hath given a close intimation, that Uzziah's left him in the last year of his reign and not before, 2 Kings xv. 50 . . . Why, here is the hint that *the Holy Ghost* giveth of the time of Uzziah's being struck leprous . . . for here, by *this very expression*, is showed; . . . and *the text* plainly expresseth the occasion." (II., p. 247.)

"Therefore *the Holy Ghost*, in the New Testament, sets himself to speak to this thing, and to show who these 'sons of God' are. *John* shows who are and who are not . . . (John i., 12, 13.) . . . *The Holy Ghost* sets the regeneration in opposition to natural generation." (V., p. 323.)

"Unless the *Spirit of Christ himself in Scripture* tell us." (VI. 10.)

"Behold a greater than Aristotle is here, and sets me a copy,—and that is *the Holy Ghost in the mouth of Joshua*: Joshua xxiv. 19, 'Ye cannot serve the Lord' (*said Joshua*)." (VII., p. 211.)

“The *Evangelist hath done it*” (*i. e.*, written Acts) “with a divine pen.” “How sparing *the Holy Ghost* through all that book to express the circumstance of the time, with the relation of the things.” (VIII., pp. iv. and v.)

No wonder then that Lightfoot calls the Scriptures “the divine oracles,” and cautions men not to pick and choose among them or read their own fancies into them (VII., 288): to him *they were all, in all their elements and parts, the utterances of the Holy Ghost*. Observe how he ascribes every element and detail of Scripture to the Holy Spirit.

Is he studying the *chronology* of the Bible? It is cared for by the Spirit:

“For the Holy Ghost reckons by round sums,”—quoting Daniel xii. 13, 13. (VII. p. 217.)

“The Holy Ghost draws up a chronicle of times from the creation to the redemption.” (VII. p. 221.)

“See how the Holy Ghost reckons the year of the flood.” (II. p. 4.)

“The Spirit hath given undoubted helps,” to draw up a chronological order. (II. 4.)

“Now the Holy Ghost reckoneth from that date rather than any other, because. . . .” (II. p. 244.)

“For I cannot but conclude that the Holy Ghost, naming the several years of these kings, hitherto, intendeth” (II. p. 326.)

“Here is the standard of time that the Holy Ghost hath set up in the New Testament; unto which, as unto the fulness of time, he hath drawn up a chronicle-chain, from the creation; and from which, as from a standing mark, we are to measure all the times of the New Testament, if we would fix them to a creation date.” (III. 34.)

“When he shall also see (and that, I suppose, not without admiration) the wondrous and mysterious, and yet, always, instructive style and manner of accounting, used by the Holy Ghost, in most sacred majestickalness, and challenging all serious study and reverence.” (IV. p. 98.)

“The Holy Ghost chooseth rather to reckon by holy Jotham in the dust, than by wicked Ahaz alive.” (IV. p. 108.)

“The Jews reckoned their year by the lunar months. . . . This computation made their years to fall eleven days short of the year of the sun; and this the Holy Ghost seemeth to hint and hit upon, when, in reckoning the time of Noah’s being in the ark, he bringeth him in on the seventeenth day of the second month, and bringeth him out on the twenty-seventh day of the same month, in the next year; and yet intendeth him there but one exact and complete year by the sun, but reckoned only by the lunar months.” (IV. p. 135.)

Or is it a question of *the order of the narrative*? This, too, in all its flexions, is attributed directly to the Holy Ghost. In the

preface to the *Harmony, &c., of the New Testament*, for example, he writes :

“I shall not trouble the reader with any long discourse to show, how the Scriptures abound with transposition of stories; how the Holy Ghost doth, eminently, hereby show the majesty of his style and divine wisdom; how this is equally used in both testaments; what need the student hath carefully to observe these dislocations; and what profit he may reap by reducing them to their proper time and order.” (III. p. vi.)

So, elsewhere :

“The Holy Ghost hath, in divers places, purposely and divinely, laid stories and passages out of their proper places, for special ends.” (II. p. 3.)

“The same Spirit, that dictated both the Testaments, hath observed this course in both the Testaments alike; laying texts, chapters, and histories sometimes out of the proper place, in which, according to natural chronological order, they should have lain. And this is one of the majesticknesses wherewithal the Holy Ghost marcheth and passeth through the Scriptures. Not that these dislocations are imperfections,—for they ever show the greatest wisdom: nor that to methodize these transposed passages, is to correct the method of the Holy Ghost;—for it is but to unknot such difficulties as the Holy Ghost hath challenged more study on; nor that it is desirable that our Bibles should be printed in such a methodized way, and such Bibles only to be in common use,—for the very posture of the Bible, as it now lieth, seemeth to be divine, and that the rather from Luke xxiv. 44.” (II. p. lxii.)

Accordingly, in his detailed explanations of the order of Scripture, he uniformly ascribes it to the Holy Ghost, and seeks a divine reason for it. For example :

“The Holy Ghost, as soon as he had related how Shimei had obtained his pardon, comes and relates this conference betwixt David and Mephibosheth;” giving “us a hint by this strange placing of this story.” “This is not done at random, or by any oversight, as if the Holy Ghost had forgot himself, as we poor fumbling creatures are many times lost in our tales; but the sacred Spirit hath purposely thus methodized the story with such a dislocation, for our own more narrow observation and clearer instruction.” (VII. p. 203.)

“But about this we need not much to trouble ourselves; since as to the understanding of the stories themselves, there can be but little illustration taken from the time. . . . We shall not, therefore, offer to dislocate the order of the stories from that wherein they lie; the Holy Ghost, by the intertexture of them rather teaching of us, that some of them were contemporary, than any way encouraging us to invert their order.” (III. p. 207, on Acts xii. and xiii.)

Arranging Exod. xviii. between Numbers x. 10, 11, he says: “Now that the Holy Ghost might show that Jethro,” &c. (II. p. 127.)

“Now the reason why the Holy Ghost hath laid these stories, which came to pass so soon, in so late a place, may be supposed to be this.” (II. p. 150.)

"But the Holy Ghost hath laid it in the beginning of his (Solomon's) history, that—". (II. p. 199.)

"Because the Holy Ghost would mention all Solomon's fabrics together." (II. p. 201.)

Jeremiah xxxix. 15–18 is placed after the story of the taking of the city, though Jeremiah prophesied it before, "because when the Holy Ghost hath showed the safety of Jeremiah in the destruction, he would also show the safety of Ebed-melech, according to Jeremiah's prophecy." (II. p. 296.)

The institution of the Sabbath is mentioned before the fall of Adam, "partly because the Holy Ghost would mention all the seven days of the first week together." (VII. 378.)

The principle thus employed in the matter of the order of the narrative is extended to *all the phenomena of Scripture* which may cause the reader difficulty; they are all part of the majesty of Scripture, and occur by design of the Holy Ghost for good and sufficient reason. Thus we are told in a comment on 2 Peter iii. 15, 16:

"He citeth Paul's Epistle to the Hebrews, and giveth an honorable testimony to that, and to the rest of his epistles: but acknowledgeth that, in some places, they are hard to be understood, and were misconstrued by some unlearned and unstable ones, to their own ruin; yet neither doth he nor Paul, who was yet alive and well-knew of this wresting of his epistles, clear or amend these difficulties, but let them alone as they were: for the Holy Ghost hath so penned Scripture as to set men to study." (III. p. 327.)

"It became the Holy Ghost, the penner of Scripture, to write in a majesty." . . . "If the Holy Ghost wrote the Scriptures, we must needs conclude, that he wrote them like the Holy Ghost, in a divine majesty" . . . (VII. 212.)

Just because, however (as this last extract expresses it), the Holy Ghost is "the penner of Scripture," who "wrote the Scriptures" in his own way, not merely the special disposition of the matter and the general contents and mode of presentation is from him, but *the very style is determined by the Holy Ghost*. This is very clearly brought out in a passage parallel to one already quoted, based on Peter's commendation of Paul's epistles:

"The Holy Ghost hath purposely penned the Scriptures so as to challenge all serious study of them,"—quoting Matt. xxiv. 15 . . . "Peter tells us that there are divers things in Paul's epistles hard to be understood; and why did the Holy Ghost dictate them so hard by Paul? . . . Because the Holy Ghost hath penned Scripture so as to challenge all serious study. He could have penned them all so plain that he that runneth might have read them; but he hath penned them in such a stlye that he that would read them, must not run and read, but sit down and study." (VII. p. 208.)

"Observe that passage, Mt. i. 8, and see whether the style of the Holy Ghost

Ghost do not hint the very same thing" . . . "These and other things of the like nature, may be observed in the very style and dialect the Holy Ghost useth in Scripture. Whereby he setteth a brand upon idolatry." (VII. 357.)

The "style and dialect" of Scripture is the Holy Ghost's, because he dictated Scripture. Accordingly, *the very words of Scripture are the words of the Holy Ghost*. This is, of course, capable of copious illustration:

"The Helps that it" [*i. e.*, Scripture] "affordeth for explaining of itself are various. The first to be looked after is the 'language:' the Spirit of God, upon the same occasions, using the same words in the original" (II. 3.)

"The Holy Spirit seldom or never using these" [*i. e.*, other languages than Hebrew or Greek, as, *e. g.*, Chaldee], "but intimating something of note, if our eyes be but serious." For example, in Hosea v. 5, "He" [*i. e.*, the Spirit] "useth the Chaldee form, to teach when that affliction and seeking must be." (II. 3.)

"Abijah is also called 'Abijam,' and his mother is both called 'Maacah' and 'Michah;' and his grandfather by his mother's side is called 'Absalom' and 'Uriel.' Such changes in names are frequent in Scripture: and sometimes so altered by the Holy Ghost, purposely to hint something to us concerning the person; and sometimes so altered by the people among whom such persons lived." (II. 209.)

"The Virgin had obtained the highest earthly favour that ever mortal did, or must, do,—to be the mother of the Redeemer: and the Holy Ghost useth a singular word to express so much."—Luke i. 28. (IV. 161.)

On the word 'repentance': "The word which the Holy Ghost hath left us in the original Greek, μετάνοιη, is exceeding significant and pertinent to that doctrine and occasion." . . . "Now the Holy Ghost, by a word of this significancy, doth give the proper and true character of repentance, both against the misprisions which were taken up concerning it by their traditions in those times, and those that have been taken up since." (V. 157.)

"So when the Holy Ghost proclaimeth in the words of the text:" John v. 16. (V. 331.)

The *very letters are from the Spirit*. We have already quoted from VII. 9, a passage so asserting with reference to the spelling of "Bosor" in 2 Peter ii. 15 (see above, p. 44). The following is a similar one. Speaking of Ezra ix. and x. he says:

"This matter was done in the seventh year of Darius, . . . as the text seemeth to carry it on; unless by the strange writing of the word שִׁרְיֹן ver. 16, the Holy Ghost would hint Darius's tenth.—Let the learned judge." (II., p. 324.)

Indeed, Lightfoot goes further, and *attributes directly to the Holy Spirit the very pointing of the Hebrew text*, as it stands in the current copies:

"It cannot pass the eye of him that readeth the text in the original, but he must observe it, how in [Deut.] chap. xxix. verse 29, the Holy Ghost hath pointed

one clause, **לנו ולבנינו** "to us and to our children belong the revealed things," after an extraordinary and unparalleled manner; to give warning against curiosity in prying into God's secrets; and that we should content ourselves with his revealed will." (II., p. 137.)

He expresses disbelief in the vowels and accents having been invented by the Massorettes (IV. 19), and argues their antiquity (IV. 50), adducing our Lord's declaration that not "one iota shall pass away" as evidence that the vowels were there in his day, and urging that it would be beyond the skill of man to point the Ten Commandments, the "pricking" of which would puzzle the world. At a later point he expresses himself on the last matter thus:

"I omit the exquisiteness of the pricking of this piece of Scripture, of the commandments, extraordinarily: some special thing in it." (IV., p. 84.)

He even doubts if "the marginals," *i. e.*, the various readings placed by the Massorettes in the margin of the Hebrew Bible, "are not only human corrections." (IV., p. 14; cf. XI. 103.)

The primary fact in Lightfoot's doctrine of Scripture is, then, that it is God's word, in such a sense that the Divine Spirit is the author of it in its minutest detail. On this hangs all his thought concerning the Scriptures. It is because they are divine that they are *authoritative*. The authority of Scripture is to him incontestable, and is allowed by Christ himself, though he was God. In commenting on Matt. iv. 4, "It is written," he writes:

"This is the first speech, that proceeded from our Saviour's mouth, since his entrance into his ministerial function, that is upon record; and though it be very short, yet it is very material for observation of these things:

1. That the first word spoken by Christ in his ministerial office, is an assertion of the authority of Scripture.
2. That he opposeth the word of God as the properest encounter against the words of the devil.
3. That he allegeth Scripture as a thing undeniable and uncontrovertible by the devil himself.
4. That he maketh Scripture his rule though he had the fulness of the Spirit above measure." (IV., p. 362.)

This authority of the Scriptures *rests on nothing else than on their divine origin and character.*

"The Scriptures are to be believed for themselves, and they need not fetch their credit from anything else, Dan. x. 21. . . . They are the truth.—See John

v. 39. . . . Observe the bent of Christ's discourse. . . . He concludes in Scripture, as the most undeniable testimony. . . . See also 2 Peter i. 17-19. . . . A voice from heaven might possibly deceive; the Jews feigned such; but the word of prophecy is sure; that is a 'more sure word.' The reason of the Scriptures' credibility is because they are the word of God: 1 Thess. ii. 13. . . . They received it as the word of God. How knew they that? From the Scriptures themselves.—Therefore it is said that they are the formal object of faith, as well as the material. They contain what is to be believed, and the reason why to believe them; and that is especially two-fold: I. The majesty of the Spirit of God speaking in them. II. Their powerful working. I. The majesty of the Spirit of God speaking in them such things, as man cannot speak. . . . 1. How impossible is it for man to reveal the deep mysteries of salvation, *i. e.*, the mind of God. 1 Cor ii. 16. . . . In Scripture we have it; and ver. 7-9 of that chapter. 2. The majesty of the Spirit in Scripture appears in that it reveals the very thoughts, and commands the very heart, of man (Heb. iv. 12). . . . 3. The majesty of the Scriptures appears in that it discovers the very subtleties of Satan. . . . Thus doth the Scripture reveal itself to be the very word of God, by its divine majesty, wherein it speaketh,—and by the wisdom wherein it shows itself. II. In its powerful working; breaking hearts, converting souls, conquering the kingdom of Satan. . . . Thousands of experiences have showed what the divine word of God in Scripture can do against him" [that is, the devil]. "And thus do they evidence themselves to be the word of God, and so to be believed for themselves, because they are the word of God." (VI. 56-59.)

After asking whether the church gives us the Scriptures, and answering that the Church of Rome rather sought to hinder us from having the Scriptures, he continues:

"No, it was the work of the Lord, and the mercy of the Lord; and it is marvellous in our eyes. . . . As far as we owe our receiving of Scripture to men, we are least beholden to the Romish Church. They put us off with a Latin translation, barbarous and wild. But we have a surer word, the sacred Hebrew, and divine Greek. And the Hebrew we owe to the Jews, and the Greek to the Greek Church rather than the Roman. . . . 'Unto them [the Jews] were committed the oracles of God.' And from them we received the Old Testament; and not from them, neither; for, could they have prevented, we had not had it. Consider how many copies were abroad in the world. The Old Testament was in every synagogue: and how many copies would men take of the New? So that it is impossible but still Scripture must be conveyed. Could all the policy of Satan have hindered, he had done it; for the word of God is his overthrow; so that it was owing to a divine hand. And our faith stands not on the church to believe the Scriptures; but God hath carried the authority of them from age to age." (VI. 60-63.)

"It is not proper to say, We believe the Scriptures are Scriptures, because of the church, without distinguishing upon believing. As Austin's 'Non credidisssem Scripturis,' &c., 'I had not believed the Scriptures, had not the church told me'; that is, while he was unconverted. But we may satisfy this by an easy distinction, betwixt believing that Scripture is Scripture, and believing that the church all

along hath taken them for Scripture. . . . A good soul desires to build up itself by the rule of faith and life. He finds that the church hath counted Scripture so; and that he believes. But as yet he believes not they are Scriptures on that account: but he reads, studies, meditates on them, finds the divine excellency, sweetness, power of them: and then he believes they are the word of God. And that now is not for the church's sake, but for themselves. The Church of England, in the Thirty-nine Articles, hath determined such books canonical. Why? Because the church hath ever held them so? That is some furtherance to their belief, but not the cause of it. They first believed the church held them so, but they saw cause and reason in the books themselves to believe they were so. . . . So we believe the church owns the Scriptures; but he is a poor Christian who believes the Scriptures are Scriptures on no other account." (VI. 62-63).

"God gives his word; and whether men will hear, or whether they will forbear, it is, and will be, the word of God forever. And if men will not believe it, God will not be beholden to them to believe it: let them believe it at their own peril. A Papist will not believe the divine authority of the Scriptures for themselves; God and the Scriptures will never be beholden to him to believe it; but let him look to it, if he do not believe it. . . . When God gave the Scriptures he never intended that they should stand at the courtesy of every curious, carping atheist, whether they should be of authority, and be believed, or no: but God gives them in their divine authority and majesty: and laid them a sure foundation in Sion, elect, precious and glorious; and he that will build upon them, may build and prosper. But if any cross, or quarrelsome, or wilfully blind, Bayard, will stumble at them when he might walk plain,—let him take his own hazard, and stumble, and fall, and be broken, and snared and taken: while, in the meantime, the foundation of God remaineth sure, and the divine Scriptures will be the divine Scriptures, and retain their truths and Author, when such a wretch is dashed all to pieces. . . . 'God will be God, whether thou wilt or no,' as Scripture will be Scripture, whether thou believest it or no." (VI. pp. 351-352.).

That is, as Lightfoot held the doctrine of inspiration which was universally taught by the Reformed theologians of his day, so he held likewise the common Reformed doctrine of the authority of Scripture, founded on its divine origin and character. The extracts we have just given teach the precise doctrine taught in the Confession of Faith, I. 4 and 5, and constitute an excellent commentary on those sections, from the pen of one of the Westminster men.

To him and them, the Bible, and the Bible only, is the religion of Protestants. We have found him so saying in his Doctorate disputation:

"Illi [pontificii] 'ecclesiam' statuunt, nos 'ipsam Scripturam'; atque hoc non sine summa ratione, ac summa ipsius Scripturæ auctoritate. Ad hoc nempe oraculum, quasi ab ipso Dei digito, diriguntur homines ad omnia quaerenda et cognoscenda, quae ad Deum cognoscendum, et ad salutem acquirendam, faciunt." (V. p. 461.)

So again he writes :

“The other [*i. e.*, the Church of Rome] brags of antiquity, universality, visibility, succession, and other bravadoes; whereas the Protestant church has but this to glory of, (and it is enough), That she is built upon the prophets and Apostles. Ingenious was that picture: in one scale you see all the trinklements of Popery, and the pope and friars hanging on; in the other the Protestants put the Bible, and it outweighs them all. This is the glory and sure friend of a church, to be built upon the Holy Scriptures, although there be no visibility of that church to the eyes of men at all. . . . That church which is built more on traditions and doctrines of men, than on the word of God, is no true church nor religion. . . . The foundation of the true church of God is Scripture.” (VI. pp. 44, 45.)

The *infallible truth of Scripture* which is thus strongly insisted on is treated everywhere as a first principle (see above, page 43):

“It is not all to believe a thing is true; but farther to believe so as the soul may have advantage. Take one instance: one of the first things in religion to be believed is, ‘That the Scriptures are the word of God and divinely true.’ This, who believes not? The devil himself cannot deny it: nay, he cited Scripture as the word of God to our Saviour. And there are thousands in hell that never made a doubt of this. Therefore the believing of this must have a further reach, that the soul may receive benefit upon so believing.” (VI. 50.)

“Whosoever speaks not according to the truth of God in Scripture, he is but a liar, and the truth is not in him. You understand that I speak of things of faith and religion. In historical, natural, civil, moral things we deny not but that they¹ speak much truth. But that is to be tried by our reading and reason. But in the things of divine discernment there is no truth, but that of Scripture, or what speaks agreeable to it.” (VI. p. 59.)

This is, of course, the common Reformed doctrine of the *completeness, perfection, or sufficiency of the Scriptures* as taught in the Westminster Confession, I. 6, or Q. 2 of the Shorter Catechism. In full harmony with these formularies, Lightfoot teaches :

“The Scriptures contain all things needful for faith and life; as that in Isaiah viii. 19, 20. . . . so may I say also in this case: if they say to you, Seek to councils, fathers, canons, determinations of the church,—‘To the law and to the testimony;’ to Scripture and holy writ: that contains everything you need to inquire after for salvation; what is to be believed, and what to be done. . . . Whithersoever you need to walk for the pleasing of God doing your duty to men,

¹“They,” *i. e.*, “men,” according to the context. Lightfoot is not confining the truth of Scripture to matters of “faith and religion,” but confining the truth which men may acquire apart from Scripture to matters of history, nature, etc. There is truth to be had outside of Scripture on these matters, but Scripture is the sole rule of faith and practice.

or to your own souls, the word of God is a light sufficient. . . . Prophecy was then ceasing. People might complain, 'What shall we do for instruction?'—Why, go to the word of God, which you have in your hands, to the law of Moses, that will teach you.—Dives desires Abraham to send one from the dead to teach his brethren, that they might escape that place of torment. No, that needs not: Moses and the prophets will teach all things needful. . . . The Apostle speaks this fully, 2 Timothy iii. 16, 17." (VI. pp. 54, 55.)

He, of course, also held and teaches the common Reformed doctrine of the *perspicuity of Scripture*. "Scripture," he tells us, "is plain." (VI. 10.) But he is more concerned, in opposition to the sectaries of the time, with the other side of this doctrine—the need of careful *interpretation*. In harmony with the Confession of Faith I. 9, he holds that Scripture is to be interpreted by Scripture: "But the Scripture, which is ever the sure expositor of itself." (IV. 215.) And he lays down several rules of interpretation, as *e. g.*: "The Scripture word is to be interpreted according to the Scripture idiom," (IV. 217); "It is the best rule to come to the understanding of the phrases of Scripture, to consider in what sense they were taken in that country and among that people where they were written" (VI. 414.) Here are two sound and scholarly rules which Lightfoot, the Talmudist, was especially bound to dwell on. The scholar Lightfoot is also very naturally concerned to show against the sectaries, the need of human learning in interpreting Scripture. He says, for example :

"The greatest difficulties of the Scripture lie in the language: for unlock the language and phrases, and the difficulty is gone. And, therefore, they that take upon them to preach by the Spirit, and to expound the Scripture by the Spirit, let them either unlock to me the Hebrew phrases in the Old Testament, or the Greek in the New, that are difficult and obscure,—or else they do nothing. Now, to attain to the meaning of such dark and doubtful phrases, the way is not so proper to put on them a sense of our own, as to consider what sense they might take them in, to whom and among whom, the things were spoken and written in their common speech." (VI. 335.)

In expounding John x. 22, 23, he goes into the whole question of the *need of human learning in interpreting Scripture*, very fully:

"To the expounding of which, the very way that I must go, cannot but mind me to observe this to you:—*That human learning is exceeding useful, nay, exceeding needful, to the expounding of Scripture.* The text gives the rise of this observation,

and it gives the proof of it. Here is the mention of the feast of dedication, and not one tittle else in all the Scripture concerning it. And so there is the bare mention of Solomon's Porch; and, indeed, it is mentioned again in Acts iii. 11; but neither here nor there, any more but the bare name. Certainly the Holy Ghost would never have mentioned these things, if he would not have had us to have sought to know what they meant. But how should we know them? The Scripture gives not one spark of light to find them out; but human learning holds out a clear light of discovery. . . . Here is a text fallen into our hands occasionally (a thousand others of the like nature might be produced); let any of those that deny human learning to be needful in handling of divinity, but expound me this text without the help of human learning, and I shall then think there is something in their opinion. Two things lead them into this mistake:—1, Because they conceive the New Testament, (which part of the Bible Christians have most to deal withal) is so easy of itself that it needs no pains or study to the expounding of it. 2, And the less, Because, say they, the Spirit reveals it to the saints of God, and so they are taught of God, and can teach others. Give me leave, partly for our settlement in the truth about this point, and partly for the stopping the mouths of such gainsayers, out of many things that might be spoken, to commend these four unto you:—

“I. *That in the time when prophecy flourished, the standing ministry, that was to teach the people, were not prophets, but priests and Levites, that became learned by study.* . . . It is but a wild thing now, when prophecy has ceased so many hundreds years ago, to refuse learning and a learned ministry, and to seek instruction we know not of whom.

“II. *There is no ground in Scripture to believe, nor promise to expect, that God doth, or ever will, teach men the grammatical or logical construction of the Scripture text.* It is true, indeed, that he gives to a gracious saint, ‘the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Christ,’ as it is Eph. i. 17. But how? Revealing to him by experimental feeling, that which he knew, indeed, before in Scripture, but only by bare theory. As, for example,—a man, before his conversion, knows, by reading and hearing, what faith and repentance are in their definitions; but when he comes to be converted, the Spirit of grace reveals these to him in feeling and experience. And farther revelation, as to the understanding of Scripture, there is not the least groundwork in Scripture wherenpon to expect it.

“III. *When God had committed the New Testament to writing, he had revealed all that he would reveal to men on earth of his will and way of salvation.* . . .

“IV. *The main difficulty of the New Testament, requires study to unfold it, rather than revelation.* . . . The main difficulty of the New Testament is in the language; unlock that clearly and the sense ariseth easily. . . . Now certainly, it is more likely to obtain knowledge of languages by study, than to attain it by revelation; unless any one will yet expect that miraculous gift of tongues,—which I suppose, there is none will make himself so ridiculous, as to say he expects.” (VI., pp. 210-212.)

On the *preservation, or the integrity, of the Scripture-text*, Lightfoot also teaches the ordinary Reformed doctrine, as it is formulated, for instance in the Confession of Faith, I. 8. He was con-

servative, as a critic of the text; but as the fellow-worker of Walton in the preparation of the great Polyglot, he was in no ignorance of the facts as to the transmission of Scripture. He knew that no one copy of Scripture was perfect; but he believed that the correct text could not be lost. "Consider," he says:

"Consider how many copies were abroad in the world. The Old Testament was in every synagogue: and how many copies would men take of the New So that it is impossible, but still Scripture must be conveyed. Could all the policy of Satan have hindered, he had done it; for the word of God is his overthrow; so that it was owing to a divine hand." (VI. p. 60 *seq.*)

But though it was by the "singular providence" of God alone that Scripture has been preserved pure, yet God has accomplished its preservation through means, and we can observe the suitability of the means to the end. When speaking of the scribes, he tells us of the care they exercised in the preservation of the text:

"They were the men who took upon them to copy the Bible for those, that desired to have a copy. For so great and various is the accuracy and exactness of the Scripture text in the mystical and profound significance of letters, vowels, and accents, that it was not fit that every one should offer to transcribe the original, or that every vulgar pen should copy things of so sublime speculation. Therefore there was a peculiar and special order of learned men among the Jews, whose office it was to take care of the preservation of the purity of the text, in all Bibles that should be copied out, that no corruption or error should creep into the original of sacred writ: . . . some set apart for this office, which required profound learning and skill: namely, to be the copiers of the Bible, when any copy was to be taken; or at least, to take care, that all copies, that should be transcribed, should be pure and without corruption. . . ." (IV. 222.)

He praises the work of the Massorettes, and looks upon their methods and exactness as the guarantee of the text. Apropos of the *nun inversum*, at Numbers x. 35, he remarks concerning such phenomena:

"If they show nothing else yet this they show us,—that the text is punctually kept, and not decayed; when these things (that to a hasty, ignorant beholder might seem errors) are thus precisely observed in all Bibles." (IV. p. 19.)

"Admirable is their [the Massorettes'] pains, to prove the text uncorrupt, against a gainsaying Papist. . . So that, if we had no other surety for the truth of the Old Testament text, these men's pains, methinks, should be enough to stop the mouth of a daring Papist." (IV. p. 20.)

The marginal readings, may no doubt, "seem to tax the text

with so many errors." But these readings are only variant readings of different copies; and though Lightfoot is inclined to doubt if "these marginals are not only human corrections," yet he treats them with sobriety:

"A second question might follow concerning Keri and Kthib: and a suspicion might also arise, that the text of the law was not preserved perfect to 'one jot or tittle,' when so many various readings do so frequently occur. Concerning this business, we will offer these few thoughts only . . . It is, therefore, very probable that the Keri and Kthib were compacted from the comparing of the two copies of the greatest authority, that is, the Jewish and the Babylonian: which when they differed from one another in so many places in certain little dashes of writing, but little or nothing at all as to the sense,—by very sound counsel they provided that both should be reserved, so that both copies might have their worth preserved, and the sacred text its purity and fulness, while not 'one jot,' nor 'one tittle' of it perished." (XI. 103.)

That this result was attained, he thinks is attested by our Lord in Matthew v. 18. For though he considers it plain that our Saviour "did not only understand the bare letters, and the little marks that distinguish them" in this declaration, yet—

"It appears enough hence, that our Saviour so far asserts the uncorrupt immortality and purity of the holy text, that, no particle of the sacred sense should perish, from the beginning to the end of it." (XI. p. 99-100.)

He argues stoutly that the Jews could not, in the nature of the case, have corrupted the Scripture:

"[1.] It was their great care and solicitude . . . to preserve the text in all purity and uncorruptness . . . [2.] Yet could they not, for all their care, but have some false copies go up and down amongst them, through heedlessness and error of transcribers. . . . [3.] In every synagogue they had a true copy; and it was their care everywhere to have their Bible as purely authentic as possible . . . [4.] Had they been ever so desirous to have imposed upon Christians by falsifying the text, they could not possibly do it. For—

"First," [every synagogue having a true copy, and many Jews being converted, it could not be done]. "Secondly," [there were so many learned men in the Christian church that detection would have been certain].

"[5.] To which may be added, that the same power and care of God that preserves the church would preserve the Scriptures pure to it; and he that did, and could, preserve the whole—could preserve every part, so that not so much as a tittle should perish." (III. 405-408.)

We have already remarked that Lightfoot was a very conservative textual critic. He speaks somewhat impatiently of the bold critics, "who are apt to tax the originals of Scripture of corrup-

tion and interpolation" (VII. p. 79); who, whenever for want of knowledge they are "not able to clear the sense," "have been bold to say the text is corrupt, and to frame a text of their own heads." (III. vii.) And he consistently refuses to assume a textual corruption, at Matthew xxvii. 9 for example, in order to ease the difficulty of the text (III. p. 157 and XI. p. 344.) An example of his methods and powers as a textual critic may be found in the several passages where he discusses Mark i. 2 (IV. p. 246 and XI. p. 377.) In the former of these passages he argues against the reading "in Isaiah" on five grounds; and in the latter he conjectures as to the origin of the various readings, that the Jewish Christians introduced the reading "in Isaiah" in order to conform the mode of quotation to the Talmudic rules of quoting. His use of internal evidence is exhibited again, in a comment on Acts iii. 20, "Which was before preached unto you":

"The very sense of the place confirmeth this reading: for though Beza saith that all the old Greek copies that ever he saw—as, also, the Syriac, Arabic, and Tertullian—read it *προεχειρισμένον*, 'foreordained'; yet, the very scope and intention of Peter's speech, in this place, doth clearly show that it is to be read, *προεχειρουγμένον*, 'which before was preached unto you,'—namely, by Moses or the law; and by all the prophets." (VIII., p. 66.)

The same qualities and methods as a critic came out in several defences of the genuineness of the pericope of the adulteress intruded into John's Gospel (III., p. 112; VI., p. 302; XII., p. 312.) In the former passage he says:

"The Syriac wants this story: and Beza doubts it; a man always ready to suspect the text, because of the strangeness of Christ's action, writing with his finger on the ground: 'Mihi, ut ingenue loquor [saith he] vel ob hunc locum suspecta est haec historia.' Whereas it speaks the style of John throughout, and the demeanor of the scribes and Pharisees, and of Christ, most consonantly to their carriage all along the Gospel." (III., p. 112.)

In another place he accounts for its omission as follows:

"There is hardly any commentator upon the Gospel, or this chapter, but he will tell you that this story of the adulterous woman was wanting, and left out of some Greek Testaments in ancient times, as appears by this,—that some of the fathers setting themselves to expound this Gospel, make no mention at all of any part of this story. So Nonnus, turning all this Gospel into Greek verse, hath utterly left out this whole story; and so hath the Syriac New Testament first printed in Europe; and so Jerome tells us did some old Latin translations. When

I cast with myself whence this omission should proceed I cannot but think of two passages of Eusebius. The one is in his third book of Ecclesiastical History, the very last clause in that book,—where he relates that one Papias, an old tradition-monger, as he characters him, did first bring in this story of the adulterous woman, out of a book called the ‘Gospel according to the Hebrews.’ For so is that passage of Eusebius commonly understood. The other is in his fourth book of the Life of Constantine; where he relates that Constantine ‘enjoined him and committed to his trust to get transcribed *πεντήχοντα σωμάτια*’ Now, if Eusebius believed that this story was introduced by Papias, as he seems to do,—you may well conclude that he would be sure to leave out this story in all his ‘fifty copies,’ as having no better authority than the introduction of it by such a man. Or if the ages before Eusebius were of the same belief with him in this matter, you may see why this story might also be wanting in those times. But I shall not trouble you about this matter, which is now past all dispute. For I believe, it is hardly possible in all the world, to find now a printed New Testament, either in the original Greek, or in any other language, either Eastern or Western, wherein this story is not inserted without any question. Nor had the thing been ever disputed, if the story itself had been searched to the bottom; for then, of itself, it would have vindicated its own authority to be evangelical and divine.” (VI., p. 302.)

It is apparent that, though of an extremely conservative temper, Lightfoot was a remarkably well-furnished and able critic for his day. The school of criticism to which he would belong, indeed, has scarcely advanced beyond him in either resources or capacities since his time; and all that was known of the state of the text or of materials for its study in his day was in his easy control.

The difficulties of Scripture formed, in a sense, the main matter of Lightfoot’s studies. He has, indeed, formally treated the subject in a single sermon only (VII. p. 201, *seq.*) But all his Talmudic studies were undertaken and are justified by the light which he hoped and found that they would throw upon the obscurities of the Biblical text; and his several expository treatises are specially busy with expounding the difficult passages of Scripture. In fact, his chief interest, after the determination of what may be called the background of the scriptural revelation—the chronology, topography, geography, historical consecution, and the like, of the Biblical story—seems to have been what he would call the ‘clearing of scruples’ in the text of Scripture. There is hardly a difficulty which had been started, from a harmonistic, chronological, or historical point of view, which he has not treated, sometimes more than once. In a study of his doctrine of Scrip-

ture, his treatment of these scriptural difficulties cannot be neglected. On the contrary, they exhibit his conception of Scripture in action; and a review of them will enable us to look upon his conception of Scripture in the most searching light that can be thrown upon it.

Lightfoot is very far from denying that *difficulties exist in Scripture*. If he is at fault in any respect here, it is in exaggerating their number and their intractableness. Nevertheless, he does not allow that these difficulties are really errors of Scripture, or even blemishes on the divine face of Scripture. Not only are all of them capable of satisfactory explanation; but each several one of them has been purposely introduced into Scripture by the Holy Ghost for a high and good end, and this end is discoverable by the careful and diligent student. The difficulties of Scripture are thus transferred from blots into beauties; from obstacles into aids to faith; from marks of human infirmity into examples of divine wisdom. In the preface to his *Harmony, etc., of the New Testament* (III. pp. vi., vii., xvi.), he speaks as follows on the general subject :

“I shall not trouble the reader with any long discourse, to show, how the Scripture abounds with transposition of stories; how the Holy Ghost doth, eminently, hereby show the majesty of his style and divine wisdom: how this is equally used in both testaments; what need the student hath carefully to observe these dislocations; and what profit he may reap by reducing them to their proper time and order.

“I have not set myself to comment; but in a transient way, to hint the clearing of some of the most conspicuous difficulties, — and that, partly, from the text itself, — and partly, from Talmudical collections. Multitudes of passages are not possibly to be explained but from these records. For, since the scene of the most actings in it, was among the Jews, — the speeches of Christ and his apostles were to the Jews, — and they Jews, by birth and education that wrote the Gospels and Epistles; it is no wonder if it speak the Jews' dialect throughout; and glanceth at their traditions, opinions, and customs, at every step. Though it be penned in Greek, it speaks in the phrase of the Jewish nation, among whom it was penned, all along; and there are multitudes of expressions in it, which are not to be found but there, and in the Jews' writings, in all the world. They are very much deceived that think the New Testament so very easy to be understood, because of the familiar doctrine it containeth, — faith and repentance. It is true, indeed, that it is plainer as to the matter it handleth, than the Old, because it is an unfolding of the Old; — but for the attaining of the understanding of the expressions that it useth in these explications, you must go two steps further than you do about the Old: — namely, to observe where, and how, it useth the Septuagint's Greek, as it doth

very commonly;—and where it useth the Jews' idiom, or reference thereunto, which, indeed, it doth continually. . . . The greater part of the New Testament might be observed to speak in such reference to something or other commonly known, or used, or spoken, among the Jews; and even the difficultest passages in it might be brought to far more facility than they be, if these references were well observed. There are diverse places where commentators, not able to clear the sense for want of this, have been bold to say the text is corrupt, and to frame a text of their own heads; whereas the matter, sufficiently handled in this way, might have been made plain." (III., pp. vi, vii., xvi.)

In his sermon on the "Difficulties of Scripture," he tells us that the Holy Ghost purposely introduced difficulties into Scripture to challenge serious study of them; that they are all capable of solution; and that it is our business, and it will be our profit, to search out the solutions and their lessons.

"The Holy Ghost," he says, "hath purposely penned the Scriptures so as to challenge all serious study of them." . . . "Peter tells us that there are divers things in Paul's epistles hard to be understood; and why did the Holy Ghost dictate them so hard by Paul? . . . Because the Holy Ghost hath penned Scripture so as to challenge all serious study. He could have penned them all so plain that he that runneth might read them: but he hath penned them in such a style that he that will read them must not run and read, but sit down and study." (VII., p. 208.)

Accordingly these difficulties, which belong to the majesty of the Scriptures (VII. p. 212), both can be and are to be understood, for—

"God never writ the difficulties of the Scripture only to be gazed upon and never understood: never gave them as a book sealed and that never could be unsealed." (VII. p. 216.)

They may be great and numerous, so great that the Old and New Testament may now and again seem to be "directly contrary," "as if the two Testaments were fallen out and were not at unity among themselves" (VII. p. 210.) Yet this is but an incitement to the discovery of the underlying unity, and Light-foot has nothing but scorn for those who

"have taken upon themselves to pick out some places in the Bible, which they say are past all possibility of interpreting or understanding." (VII. p. 211.)

These principles are repeatedly insisted upon. After enumerating such difficulties in another place, he continues thus:

"For resolution of such ambiguities, when you have found them, the text will do it, if it be well searched. . . . This way attained to will guide you itself in

what else is agreeable to profitable reading; as in marking those things that seem to be contradictions in the text, or slips of the Holy Ghost (in which always is admirable wisdom.) . . . Strange variations, yet always divine. . . . Admirable it is to see how the Holy Spirit of God in discords hath showed the sweet music. But few men mark this, because few take a right course in reading of Scripture. Hence, when men are brought to see flat contradictions (as unreconciled there be many in it), they are at amaze and ready to deny their Bible. A little pains right spent will soon amend this wavering, and settle men upon the Rock; whereon to be built is to be sure." (II. pp. 8, 9.)

In Peter's reference to the difficulties in Paul's epistles, he thinks he sees a proof of the intentional character of them:

"He citeth Paul's Epistle to the Hebrews, and giveth an honorable testimony to that, and to the rest of his epistles: but acknowledgeth that, in some places, they are hard to be understood and were misconstrued by some unlearned and unstable ones to their own ruin; yet neither doth he nor Paul, who was alive and well-knew of the wresting of his epistles, clear or amend these difficulties, but let them alone as they were: for 'the Holy Ghost has so penned Scripture as to set men to study.'" (III. p. 327.)

A few examples of his dealing with these difficulties will be instructive. The following are some *Old Testament cases*:

"Divers psalms in the original are alphabetical; but few of these have the alphabet true, for some reason or other admirably divine: so one letter in Jeremy's alphabetical Lamentations, is altered constantly, for secret and sweet reason." (II. p. 39.)

"Men frame intricacies and doubts to themselves here, [Gen. xi. on the age, birth, and call of Abraham], "where the text is plain, if it be not wrested." He proceeds to solve the several difficulties. (II. p. 88.)

On 2 Kings xxiv. 8, 9, and 2 Chron. xxxvi. 9, as to the age of Jehoiachin when he began to reign: "Now in expressions that are so different, propriety is not to be expected in both; but the one to be taken properly, and that is, that he was eighteen years old when he began to reign; and the other that he was the son of the eighth year, or fell in the lot of the eighth year after any captivity of Judah had begun: for the beginning of his reign was in the eighth year of Nebuchadnezzar; and in the eighth year of the seventy of captivity. And so the Holy Ghost dealeth here, as he doth about Ahaziah as we observed there." (II. p. 288.)

Accordingly, when speaking of 2 Kings viii. 26, as compared with 2 Chron. xxii. 2, he had said: "The original meaneth thus, 'Ahaziah was the son of the two-and-forty years, — namely, of the house of Omri, of whose seed he was, by the mother's side; and he walked in the ways of that house, and came to ruin at the same time with it.'" (II. 227.)

Whatever we may think of the reasonableness of such harmonizing, its serious presentation exhibits Lightfoot's conviction of the harmonizable character of the whole Old Testament text,

and shows how far he was from readiness to allow that it contained errors.

Let us note now a few *cases from the New Testament* :

“Only there is some difference betwixt Matthew and Luke, in relating the order of the temptations: which Matthew having laid down in their proper rank, . . . Luke, in the rehearsing of them, is not so much observant of the order [that being fixed by Matthew before], as he is careful to give the full story; and so to give it, as might redound to the fullest information. . . . As our mother Eve was tempted by Satan, . . . so by these, had it been possible, would the same tempter have overthrown the seed of the woman. . . . Luke, for our better observing of this parallel, hath laid the order of these temptations answerable to the order of those.” (III. p. 41, cf. IV. p. 348.)

On Luke v. 12 seq.; Matt. iv. 18 seq.; Mark i. 16 seq.: “In the order of Luke there is some difficulty: 1. He relateth the calling of these disciples differently from the relation given by the others . . . They say, he called James and John at some distance beyond Peter and Andrew; but he carrieth it as if he called them all together. But this is not contrariety, but for the more illustration; they all speak the same truth, but one helps to explain another. . . 2. A second scruple in the order of Luke is this,—that he hath laid the two miracles of casting out a devil in Capernaum-synagogue, and the healing of Peter’s mother-in-law, before the calling of these disciples; which apparently by this evangelist were after. But the reason hereof may be conceived to be, especially, this, . . . having an eye, in that his relation, rather to the place than to the time. And so we shall observe elsewhere, that the very mention of a place doth sometimes occasion these holy penmen to produce stories out of their proper time, to affix them to that, their proper place.” (III., pp. 52-53.) “And thus the scope of his (Luke’s) method is plain. And here again we see an example of what was said before,—namely, that the mention of a place doth oftentimes occasion these holy penmen to speak of stories out of their proper time, because they would take up the whole story of that place all at once or together.” (III., p. 58.)

As to the Gadarene miracle: “The main doubt lies in this; that whereas Mark and Luke speak but of one possessed, Matthew speaks of two. So I observe that Matthew speaks of two blind men begging at Jericho, whereas Mark speaks of but one; and so likewise Matthew speaks of both the thieves mocking Christ, whereas Luke speaks of but one of them so doing”—[He gives several possible views of the harmony and then continues]: “But the other examples adduced, where Matthew speaking of two, Mark and Luke speak but of one, it is plain and satisfactory that these two latter, writing after Matthew, and he having given the story before them, numbering the persons concerned in it,—they have not been curious so much to specify the number of the persons on whom the miracles were wrought, which he had done before, as careful to record the miracle done,—that none of Christ’s workings might be left unrecorded, as to the nature of the thing done.” (III., p. 84.)

As to the place of singing the hymn at the Passover: “Which, indeed, is neither contrariety nor diversity of story, but only variety of relation for the holding out of the story more complete.” (III., p. 151.)

On Mark's "third" hour and John's "fifth": "Mark, therefore, in that calculation of time, takes his date from the first time that Pilate gave him up to their abusings; and his phrase may be taken of so comprehensive an intimation, as to speak both the time of his first giving up, 'at the third hour' of the day, and the time of his nailing to the cross, 'the third hour' from that. And much after the same manner of account that our Saviour's six hours' suffering, from Pilate's first giving him up, to his dying, are reckoned, so the four hundred and thirty years of sojourning of the children of Israel in Egypt (Ex xii.) are computed; namely, the one half before they came into Egypt and the other half after." (III., p. 162.)

On the inscriptions on the cross: "In the expression of which the variety of the evangelists shows their style, and how when one speaketh short, another enlargeth, and what need of taking all together to make up the full story . . . Their variety is only in wording this for the reader's understanding." (III., p. 165.)

On Luke v. and its parallels: "Now, though there seem to be these different, yea, contrary circumstances in the evangelists' relation, yet is the story but one and the same, but only related more largely by Luke than by the others." (V., p. 149.)

One of the most common internal difficulties in the Scriptures arises from what Lightfoot calls "*transposition and dislocation of times and texts.*" Of this he speaks as follows:

"The same Spirit that dictated both the Testaments hath observed this course in both the Testaments alike: laying texts, chapters, and histories sometimes out of the proper place, in which, according to natural chronological order, they should have lain. And this is one of the majestiknesses, wherewithal the Holy Ghost marcheth and passeth through the Scriptures. Not that these dislocations are imperfections,—for they ever show the greatest wisdom: nor that to methodise these transposed passages is to correct the method of the Holy Ghost;—for it is but to unknot such difficulties as the Holy Ghost hath challenged more study on; nor that it is desirable that our Bibles should be printed in such a methodised way and such Bibles only to be in common use,—for the very posture of the Bible as it now lieth, seemeth to be divine". . . . (II., p. lxii.)

An example or two should be given also of Lightfoot's mode of dealing with *historical difficulties* in Scripture:

Of Cyrenius: "Either Cyrenius came twice into Syria to lay taxations, as Funicus contendeth, or else Josephus faileth here, as he doth not seldom elsewhere, in chronology." (IV. p. 193.)

Of Theudas, more fully: "This were a very ready and easy interpretation of these words of Gamaliel, if this great scruple did not lie in the way:—namely, that this Theudas, mentioned by Josephus, was about the fourth or fifth year of Claudius; but this Theudas mentioned by Gamaliel, was before Judas the Galilean, which was in the days of Augustus. There is a great deal of ado among expositors what to make of these two stories, so like in substance, but so different in time. Some conceive that Josephus hath missed his chronology, and hath set Theudas'

story many years later than it fell out. Others refuse Josephus' story as not applicable to the Theudas of Gamaliel, [though they hold that he hath spoken true in it], because the time is so different; but they think Gamaliel's Theudas was some of those villains, that so much infested Judea in the time of Sabinus and Varus,—Joseph. Ant. lib. 17, cap. 12: though Josephus hath not there mentioned him by name. A third sort conceive that Gamaliel's Theudas was not before Judas the Galilean, who rose about the birth of Christ, but a long while after,—namely, a little before Gamaliel speaketh these words: and they render *πρὸ ἡμερῶν* in the strict propriety,—namely, that it was but 'a few days before:' and *μετὰ τοῦτον*, not '*post eum*,' 'after him,'—but '*praeter eum*,' 'besides him.' In these varieties of opinions and difficulties, it is hard to resolve which way to take; and it is well that it is a matter of that nature that men may freely use their conjectures in it and be excusable." (VIII. p. 82.) He goes on to give it as his own opinion that Josephus' and Gamaliel's Theudas are not the same, but two different men; the second possibly a disciple of the other. This was published in 1645. In a posthumous book he adopts another opinion, as follows: "Josephus makes mention of one Theudas, an impostor, whose character, indeed, agrees well enough with this of ours; but they seem to disagree in time. . . . Those that are advocates of Josephus, do imagine there might be another Theudas, besides him that he mentions; and they do but imagine it, for they name none. I could instance, indeed, two more of that name; neither of which agrees with this of Gamaliel, or will afford any light to the chronology of Josephus. . . . Can we suppose now that Gamaliel could have either of these Theudas in his eye? Indeed, neither the one nor the other has any agreeableness with that character, that is given of this Theudas about whom we are inquiring. That in Josephus is much more adapted; and grant only that the historian might slip in his chronology, and there is no other difficulty in it. Nor do I, indeed, see why we should give so much deference to Josephus in this matter, as to take such pains in vindicating his care and skill in it. We must (forsooth) find out some other Theudas, or change the stops in the verses, or invent some other plaster for the sore,—rather than Josephus should be charged with the least mistake; to whom yet, both in history and chronology, it is no unusual thing to trip or go out of the way of truth. I would, therefore, think that the Theudas in Josephus is the same in Gamaliel; only that the historian mistook in his accounts of time, and so defaced a true story by a false chronology." (VIII. p. 401.)

The difficulties that arise from the quotation of the *Old Testament* in the *New* furnished Lightfoot, naturally, much material for the exercise of his harmonistic skill. We give a few examples of his dealing with them.

With reference to the application of the *Old Testament passages* in the *New*:

On Matt. ii. 15 and 18: "The two obligations produced here out of the *Old Testament* . . . are of that fulness, that they speak of two things apiece, and may very fitly be applied unto them both and show that the one did resemble and

prefigure the other." (IV., p. 231.) "The Holy Ghost, therefore, doth elegantly set forth this lamentation by personating Rachel." (IV., p. 232.)

On Acts i. 16: "Now the application of these places so pertinentely and home to Judas, showeth the illumination and knowledge, that the breathing and giving of the Holy Ghost had wrought in the disciples." (VIII., p. 36.)

With reference to the New Testament dealing with *Old Testament facts*:

Commenting on Acts vii. 4 and 7: "The Holy Ghost indeed hath ascribed the conduct of this journey to Terah. . . . This clause [Acts vii. 7] is here alledged¹ by Stephen, as if it had been spoken to Abraham; whereas it was spoken to Moses four hundred years after. But the Holy Ghost useth to speak short in known stories; as Mat. i. 13; 1 Chron. i. 36; Mark i. 3, 2." (VIII., pp. 110, 111; cf. 112.)

On Luke xi. 51, on Zecharias, son of Berachias, whom he identifies with Zechariah, son of Jehoiada, referring to Isaiah viii. 2 (cf. XI. 288): "If any one hesitates about the changing of the name, let him say by what name he finds Jehoiada recited in that catalogue of priests set down in 1 Chron. v. . . . If by another name, you will say (supposing he be also called Barachias), he was then a man of three names. This, indeed, is no unusual thing with that nation, for some to have more names than one: nay, if you will believe the Jewish doctors, even Moses himself had no less than ten." (XII., p. 123.)

With reference to *the freedom of quotation* by the writers of the New Testament from the Old:

"The evangelists and apostles, when they take on them to cite any text from the Old Testament, are not so punctual to observe the exact and strict form of words, as the pith of them, or sense of the place, as might be instanced in many particulars: so that the difference of the words would not prejudice the argument in sense, were there not so great difference [between Mark i. 2 and its Old Testament original] of person, as *we* and *thee*." He then argues that this variation is intentional, not "to cross and deny," but to explain and illustrate: "The majesty of Scripture doth often show itself in re quoting of places, in this,—that it alledgeth them in difference of words and difference of sense; yea sometime sin contrariety . . . Wherein the Holy Ghost, having penned a thing in one place, doth, by variety of words and sense, enlarge and expound himself in another." (IV. p. 246.)

On Luke i. 17, from Malachi: "But, first, the Holy Ghost is not so punctual to cite the very letter of the prophet as to give the sense." (IV. p. 155.)

On Matthew ii. 6: he notes the differences and undertakes to investigate¹ them clause by clause. On the substitution in the first clause of "in the land of Juda," for "Ephrathah," he remarks: "First, there are some that give the general answer to all the differences in this quotation, that the scribes and the evangelists tie not themselves to the very words of the prophet, but only think it well to render his sense. And this answer may be very well entertained, and give good satisfaction, especially

¹The reader will, of course, remember that "alledged" means "adduced" or "quoted", not "affirmed," "asserted."

since that, in allegations from the Old Testament, it is usual with the New so to do,—but that the difference between the text and the quotation is so great, that it is not only diverse, but even contrary. Some, therefore, Secondly, . . . [attribute the change to the error of the scribes, whom the evangelist accurately represents; but Lightfoot rejoins that the scribes knew their Bible too well to fall into such an error] . . . “Thirdly, Whereas some talk of a Syriac edition, which the Jews used at that time more than the Hebrew, and which had this text of Micah as the evangelist has cited it” . . . [he objects that this rests on two unsupported conjectures, and finally determines as follows:] . . . “The scribes or the evangelists, or both, did thus differently quote the prophet, neither through forgetfulness, nor through misleading of an erroneous edition, but purposely and upon a rational intent”—viz., to convey their meaning better to Herod. The variation in the second clause: “but not the least” is met by an exegesis of the Hebrew, showing it to be consonant; then, “The text of the prophet, then, being rendered in this interpretation, this allegation of the evangelist will be found not to have any contrariety to it at all, but to speak, though not in the very same words, yet to the very same tenor and purpose . . . And thus doth the evangelist express the prophet’s mind, though he tie not his expression to his very words, alledging his text to its clearest sense, and to the easier apprehension of the hearer” . . . The change in the third clause, “princes,” is shown to be, with a difference of words, the same sense; and so with the fourth clause: “But here again doth he differ from the letter of prophet, but cometh so near the sense, that the difference is no difference at all.” (IV. p. 224.)

On Matt. iv. 12, where “only” is inserted; “But first, our Saviour applies the text close to the present occasion. . . . Our Saviour doth reduce it to such a particular, as was most pertinent and agreeable to the matter in hand. And so parallels might be shown in great variety: where one place of Scripture, citing another, doth not retain the very words of the portion cited, but doth sometimes change the expression to fit the occasion; as Matt. ii. 23, translates Netzer,—‘a branch,’ in Isaiah liii. 4,—‘a man of Nazareth.’ . . . Secondly, although the word *only* be not in the Hebrew text, yet it is in the LXX.; . . . and it is most ordinary for the evangelists to follow that copy. And that translation hath warrantably added it, seeing (as Beza well observeth) so much is included in the emphatical particle *hūn*; and is also understood by comparing with other places.” (IV. 346).

The complication of the problem of New Testament *quotation*, through the use of the *Septuagint*, alluded to in the last extract, is always kept in mind by Lightfoot. Thus:

“The Apostle” [in Hebrews xi. 21] “there follows the LXX.; that in their unpricked Bibles read ‘matteh,’ ‘a rod,’ for ‘mettah,’ ‘a bed’” (II. 107).

One of the most striking cases of the New Testament’s agreement with the Septuagint text concerns the insertion of a second Cainan in the genealogical tables, which appears also in Luke’s genealogy of our Lord. This is repeatedly referred to by Lightfoot:

On Genesis xi. 11, 13: "Arphaxad. . . . The LXX. makes him the father of Cainan, which never was in being; and yet is that followed by St. Luke, for special reasons." (II. 90).

On Luke iii. 36: he speaks of the insertion of Cainan, of there being no mention of him in the Old Testament genealogies, "nor, indeed," he adds, "was there ever any such a man in the world at all"; and remarks that it is easy to see that Luke obtained him out of the LXX. Then he adds: "But when this is resolved, the greater scruple is yet behind,—of his warrantableness so to do, and of the purity of the text when it is done." "And from hence" [the LXX.] "hath St. Luke, without controversy, taken in Cainan into this genealogy,—a man that never was in the world; but the warrantableness of this insertion will require divers considerations to find it out." He sets forth that the Seventy were forced to translate the Bible against their will, and did it as ill as they could, using an "unpricked Bible" as one device to mislead; and that they inserted the "said name," Cainan, as one of their tricks. God used the LXX. "as the key for the admission of the heathen, and as a harbinger to the New Testament." Luke writes with a universal interest and intent. Now, he argues:

"This being the intent of the pedigree's placing here, as the very placing of it doth inevitably evince, it is not only warrantable, but also admirably divine, that Luke taketh in Cainan from the Seventy. For, first, writing for heathens, he must follow the heathens' Bible in his quotations. Secondly, in genealogies he was a copier, not a corrector. Thirdly, and chiefly, In following this insertion of the Seventy, he embraceth not their error, but divinely draweth us to look at their intent.

"When Jude mentioneth Michael's striving with Satan about the body of Moses, he approveth not the story as true, which he knew to be but a Talmudic parable; but, from the Jews' own authors, he useth this as an argument against them, and for their own instruction.

"So, though Luke, from the LXX., the Bible of the heathen, have alleged Cainan the son of Arphaxad, he allegeth it not as the truth, more than the Hebrew; but from the LXX's own authority, or from the matter which they inserted in distaste of the calling of the heathen, he maketh comfortable use and instruction to the heathen concerning their calling. . . . Thus are the censers of Korah and his company, though ordained for an evil end by them, yet reserved in the sanctuary for a good, by the command of God." (IV. p. 325.)

The same argument, in essence, is repeated much more fully in another passage; and as the matter is important to help us to estimate Lightfoot's methods, we shall quote it pretty much at large. He is sure that Luke here follows the LXX:

"I cannot be persuaded by any arguments, that this passage concerning Cainan was in Moses's text, or, indeed, in any Hebrew copies which the LXX. used . . . But now if this version be so uncertain, and differs so much from the original,—how comes it to pass that the evangelists and apostles should follow it so exactly, and that even in some places where it does so widely differ from the Hebrew fountain?

“*Ans.* I. It pleased God to allot the censers of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, to sacred use, because they were so ordained and designed by the first owners;—so doth it please the Holy Ghost to determine that version to his own use, being so primarily ordained by the first authors. . . . So the Greek version, designed for sacred use, as designed for the Holy Bible,—so it was kept and made use of by the Holy Ghost.

II. Whereas the New Testament was to be wrote in Greek, and came into the hands chiefly of Gentiles,—it was most agreeable,—I may say most necessary, for them, to follow the Greek copies, as being what the Gentiles were only capable of consulting; that so they, examining the histories and quotations that were brought out of the Old Testament, might find them agreeing with, and not contradicting them. . . .

III. . . . *Object.* But the clause, that is before us (to omit many others), is absolutely false; for there was neither any Cainan the son of Arphaxad; nor was Jesus the son of any Cainan, that was born after the flood.

Ans. I. There could be nothing more false as to the thing itself than that of the Apostle, when he calleth the preaching of the gospel *μωρία*, ‘foolishness,’ 1 Cor. i. 21: and yet, according to the common conceptions of foolish men, nothing more true. So neither was this true in itself, that is asserted here; but only so in the opinion of those for whose sake the evangelist writes. Nor yet is it the design of the Holy Ghost to indulge them in anything that was not true; but only would not lay a stumbling-block at present before them. ‘I am made all things to all men that I might gain some.’

II. There is some parallel with this of St. Luke, and that in the Old Testament, 1 Chron. i. 36: ‘The sons of Eliphaz, Teman, and Omar, and Zephi, and Gatam, and Timnah, and Amalek.’ Where it is equally false that Timnah was the son of Eliphaz, as it is that Cainan was the son of Arphaxad. But far far, be it from me to say, that the Holy Ghost was either deceived himself, or would deceive others! Timnah was not a man, but a woman; not the son of Eliphaz, but his concubine; not Amalek’s brother, but his mother, Gen. xxxv. 12. Only the Holy Ghost teaches us by this shortness of speech, to recur to the original story, from whence those things are taken,—and there consult the determinate explication of the whole matter: which is frequently done by the same Holy Spirit, speaking very briefly in stories well known before.

The Gentiles have no reason to cavil with the evangelist in this matter; for he agrees well enough with their Bibles. And if the Jews, or we ourselves, should find fault, he may defend him from the common usage of the Holy Ghost, in whom it is no rare or unusual thing, in the recital of stories and passages well enough known before, to vary from the original, and yet without any design of deceiving, or suspicion of being himself deceived; but according to that majesty and authority that belongs to him, dictating and referring the reader to the primitive story, from whence he may settle and determine the state of the matter, and inquire into the reasons of the variation. St. Stephen imitates this very custom while he is speaking of the burial of the patriarchs, Acts vii. 15, 16; being well enough understood by his Jewish auditory, though giving but short hints in a story so well known.

III. It is one thing to dictate from himself, and another thing to quote

what is dictated from others, as our Evangelist in this place doth. And when he did without all question, write in behalf of the Gentiles, being the companion of him, who was the first apostle to the Gentiles,—what should hinder his alleging what had been dictated in their Bibles?

When the apostle names the magicians of Egypt, Jannes and Jambres, 2 Tim. iii. 9, he doth not deliver it for a certain thing, or upon his credit assure them, that these were their very names, but allegeth only what had been delivered by others, what had been the common tradition amongst them, well enough known to Timothy, a thing about which neither he nor any other would start any controversy.

So when the apostle Jude speaks of Michael contending with the devil about the body of Moses, he doth not deliver it for a certain and authentic thing; and yet is not to be charged with any falsehood, because he doth not dictate of his own, but only appeals to something that had been told by others, using an argument with the Jews fetched, from their own books and traditions."

[IV. Argues that if fault is to be found for adding Cainan, it is to be found with the Seventy and not with Luke.] (XII., pp. 54-62)

In estimating the meaning of such a passage as this, we must remember that, for our present purpose, the question is not whether Lightfoot succeeds in saving the credit of the sacred writers, on the grounds which he alleges; but whether he considered himself to succeed in doing so. We are not investigating the real value of his arguments; but the value which he placed upon them. We may possibly ourselves think that the method which he here adopts, and the explanations which he offers, will leave the New Testament writers chargeable with faults and errors, which impinge upon their infallibility; but it is quite evident that Lightfoot did not think so. On the basis of the explanation which we have just quoted, he felt able to say that there "never was in the world" such a man as Cainan mentioned in Luke's genealogy of Christ, that the story of Michael's striving with Satan for Moses' body was "but a Talmudic parable," that Jannes and Jambres were but invented names of the Egyptian magicians; and yet to declare in the same breath that the whole of the books which make mention of them, in all their parts and words and letters, were the dictation of the Holy Ghost, who is incapable of error. He declares that Luke's following the LXX. in the insertion of Cainan was "not only warrantable, but admirably divine," and that in doing so "he embraceth not the error, but divinely draweth us to look at the intent." In such matters the Holy Ghost acts "according to that majesty and

authority that belongs to him;" and the sacred writers are not to be "charged with any falsehood" on their account.

The principles on which Lightfoot bases these explanations are those of accommodation and of the *argumentum ex concessis*. He supposes that the sacred writers, in making use of such material, do it in order to avoid arousing the opposition of their readers or to refute and convince them out of their own mouths; and that this use of such material does not commit the sacred writers to its truth. There can be no question that the *argumentum ex concessis* is a legitimate form of argument; and none that the sacred writers make use of it: and if Lightfoot can succeed in subsuming the present instances under this argument, he has no doubt succeeded in his explanations of them. The point of doubt is whether these are cases of this kind of argument. He held that they are. He argues this indeed with iterated persistency. Let us gather some of the chief passages together:

"Whence had the apostle these names, [Jannes and Jambres]? From the common-received opinion and agreement of the Jewish nation, that currently asserted that the magicians of Egypt were called by these names. . . . So that the apostle takes up these two names neither by revelation, as certainly asserting that the sorcerers of Egypt were of these names; but as he found the names commonly received by the Jewish nation, so he useth them.

Such a passage is that of the apostle Jude about 'Michael's contending with the devil about the body of Moses:' which he neither speaketh by inspiration¹ nor by way of certain assertion,—but only citing a common opinion and conceit of the nation, he taketh an argument of their own authors and concessions." (VI. p. 90.)

Commenting on Jude, 9th verse, elsewhere: "Not that ever such a dispute was betwixt Michael or Christ, and the devil about Moses' body; but the Jews have such a conceit and story, and we meet it in their writings: and the apostle useth an argument from their own saying to confute their doing." (VII. p. 179.)

"In citing the story of 'Michael the archangel contending with the devil about the body of Moses,' he doth but the same that Paul doth in naming Jannes and Jambres; merely allege a story which was current and owned among the nation, though there were no such thing in Scripture; and so he argueth with them from their own authors and concessions. . . . His alleging the prophecy of Enoch is an arguing of the very like nature; as citing and referring to some known and common tradition, that they had among them to this purpose. . . . And in

¹Lightfoot's use of "inspiration" as equivalent to "revelation" just above, must not deceive us into supposing that he means that Jude did not do this under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost. See the further passages, and compare above, for his use of the word "inspiration."

both these he useth their own testimonies against themselves; as if he should thus have spoken at large: 'These men speak evil of dignities,' whereas they have sown a story for current, that even 'Michael the archangel' did not speak evil of the devil, when he was striving with him about the body of Moses, &c. And whereas they show and own a prophecy of Enoch, of God coming in judgment, &c., why, these are the very men to whom such a matter is to be applied,' &c. It is no strange thing in the New Testament for Christ and the Apostles to deal and argue with the Jews upon their own concessions." (VII. 328.)

This "useful principle of interpreting" is further illustrated in connection with a former passage (VII. p. 179) by an exposition of Acts vii. 53, where Lightfoot translates "unto the disposition of angels."

"As if Stephen did rub their own opiniou upon them, as is frequently done by the apostles, and that his meaning should be this: 'You say, and conceive, that the very receiving of the law did translate and dispose them that heard it into the predicate and state of angels; and yet this brave law you have not kept. The law that you conceit made others angels hath had no good effect upon you at all: for ye have not kept it.'" (VIII. p. 179.)

He then cites another case of the Apostles arguing thus, "to confute them from their own opinions and tenets," viz., 1 Cor. xi. 10, which, indeed, may be a case in point.

Whether we can follow Lightfoot in looking upon all these cases as cases of arguments *ex concessis* or not, we can at least understand that his thinking so gave him an explanation of them which enabled him to contend at the same time that the facts involved were not true, and yet that the biblical writers were absolutely infallible or inerrant: they did not put them forward as facts. And on this general principle, he was inclined to deal with all testimonies borrowed by the writers of the Bible from sources of authority among their readers; in such cases they were "copiers, not correctors." Thus:

"Jacob goeth down into Egypt with seventy souls. The LXX. have added five more from 1 Chron. vii. 14, 20, &c.: followed by St. Luke, Acts vii. 14." (II. p. 104.)

Matthew took "the latter end of his genealogy," and Luke "the beginning of his," from "the public registers," "leaving then the civil records to avouch for them if they should be questioned." (IV. 172-73.)

So Matthew took Rahab's marriage to Salmon, "from ancient records." (IV. p. 174, cf. 177.)

There are other instances also in which Lightfoot's explanations

may not seem to us to be satisfactory or indeed suitable. For example, there is a case of quite extreme application of *the principle of accommodation* in his explanation of the parable of the rich man and Lazarus. He supposes that Christ framed the parable according to the common Greek opinion as to Elysium and Tartarus; which empties the whole mass of details in the story of its value as a revelation of the future state. And there is a case also in which two inconsistent explanations are offered, the latter of which suggests something very similar to the modern critical *theory of "re-working,"*—though, of course, with a difference. He is discussing Psalm lxxxix., which he considers to be by Ethan, son of Zerah, "penned many years before Moses, in bondage in Egypt;" and he raises the difficulty that David is often mentioned in it, to answer it thus:

"*Answer.* 1. This might be done prophetically; as Samuel is thought to be named by Moses, Psa. xcix. 6: for that Psalm, according to a rule of the Hebrews, is thought to have been made by him. 2. It will be found in Scripture, that when some holy men, endued with the Spirit of God, have left pieces of writings behind them, indited by the Spirit,—others that have lived in after-times, endued with the same gift of prophecy, have taken these ancient pieces in hand, and have flourished upon them, as present, past, and future occasion did require. To this purpose compare Psa. xviii. and 1 Saml. xxii.; Obadiah and Jer. xlix. 14; and 1 Chron. xvi. and Psa. xvi. and cv.; and 2 Peter ii. and the Epistle of St. Jude, verse 18. So this piece of Ethan, being of incomparable antiquity and singing of the delivery from Egypt,—in after-times, that it might be made fit to be sung in the temple, it is taken in hand by some divine penman, and that groundwork of his is wrought upon, and his song set to a higher key; namely, that whereas he treated only of the bodily deliverance from Egypt, it is wound up so high as to reach the spiritual delivery by Christ; and therefore, David is so often named, from whom he should come." (II. p. 357.)

In these passages we have probably Lightfoot at his worst. Acute, learned, full of expedients, and always reverently bearing in mind, before all things, that the Scriptures are literally the word of God, in which there can be no error; he yet is overtaken by the fault which so often attends the harmonist, and overreaches himself with unnatural subtleties which raise more difficulties than they lay. It would be a blunder to suppose that this type of explanation is characteristic of Lightfoot. Were our purpose to estimate his ability and his resources as a harmonist, there would be quite a different body of examples to be adduced, far more

characteristic of him and far more worthy of his great learning and good judgment. But as our object is to investigate his attitude towards Scripture, we have been forced to adduce rather those instances that have fallen under our eye, in which his dealings with Scripture might be misapprehended by a careless reader as involving the admission of errors in the text of Scripture. It will be only fair, however, that we shall set over against these instances of overstrained subtlety at least one example of his more satisfactory exposition; and we shall choose for this his treatment of that *crux* of interpreters.—Matt. xxvii. 9. He discusses this text twice, and to the same effect in both instances; we quote the substance of both passages:

“And here a quotation of Matthew hath troubled expositors so far that divers have denied the purity of the text . . . whereas these words are not to be found in Jeremiah at all; but in Zechariah they are found. Now Matthew speaks, according to an ordinary manner of speaking, used among the Jews, and by them would, easily and without cavil, be understood, though he cited a text of Zechariah under the name of Jeremiah: for the illustration of which matter we must first produce a record of their own.” He proceeds to quote the well-known passage in *Bava Babra* fol. 14, f. 2, on the order of the books in the Old Testament, in which the “Prophets” stand thus: Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Isaiah, the Twelve, and continues: “And thus in their Bibles of old, Jeremiah came next after the Book of Kings, and stood first in the volume of the prophets. So that Matthew’s alleging of a text of Zechariah, under the name of Jeremy, doth but allege a text out of the volume of the prophets, under his name that stood first in that volume: and such a manner of speech is that of Christ (Luke xxiv. 44) . . . in which he follows the general division that we have mentioned—only he calleth the ‘whole third part’ or ‘hagiographa’ by the title of ‘the Psalms,’ because the Book of Psalms stood first of all the books of that part. In that saying, Matthew xvi. 14, . . . there is the same reason why Jeremiah alone is named by name,—viz., because his name stood first in the volume of the prophets: and so came first in their way, when they were speaking of the prophets.” (III., 157.)

“How much this place hath troubled interpreters, let the famous Beza, instead of many others, declare: ‘This knot hath hampered all the most ancient interpreters; in that the testimony here is taken out of Zechariah, and not from Jeremiah; so that [it seems plainly to have been ἀμάρτημα μνημονικόν, “a failing of memory,” as Augustine supposes in his third book, “De consensu evangelistarum,” chapter the seventh; as also Eusebius in the twentieth book Ἀποδείξεως, “of demonstration.” But if any one had rather impute this error to the transcribers, or (as I rather suppose) to the unskilfulness of some person, who put in the name of “Jeremiah,” where the evangelist had writ only, as he often doth in other places, Διὰ τοῦ προφήτου, “by the prophet,”—yet we must confess that this error hath long since crept into the Holy Scriptures, as Jerome expressly affirms, &c.

“But (with the leave of so great men) I do not only deny that so much as one

letter is spurious, or crept in without the knowledge of the evangelist, but I do confidently assert that Matthew wrote 'Jeremy,' as we read it,—and that it was very readily understood and received by his countrymen. We will transcribe the following monument of antiquity out of the Talmudists, and then let the reader judge" . . . [quoting Bab. *Bava Bathra*, folio 14, 2]. . . . "You have this tradition, quoted by David Kimchi in his preface to Jeremiah. Whence it is very plain that Jeremiah, of old, had the first place among the prophets: and hereby he comes to be mentioned above all the rest, Matt. xvi. 14, because he stood first in the volume of the prophets, therefore he is first named. When, therefore, Matthew produceth a text of Zechariah under the name of Jeremy, he only cites the words of the volume of the prophets under his name, who stood first in the volume of the prophets. Of which sort is that also of our Saviour, in Luke xxiv. 44: 'All things must be fulfilled, which are written of me in the law, and the prophets, and the Psalms.' 'In the Psalms:' that is, in the Book of Hagiographa, in which the Psalms were placed first." (XL p. 344.)

Surely this is a very admirable specimen of harmonizing. The fact appealed to is an indisputable one;¹ and the usage of quoting a section of the Scriptures by the name of its first book is shown to be a New Testament usage. The only fault to be found with the treatment is that Lightfoot is a little too sure that his explanation is the only possible one. Plausible and satisfactory as it is, we should rather see the whole case put in a properly apologetical form, and their full weight allowed to all the possibilities; somewhat thus: 1, It is not absolutely certain that Matthew wrote "Jeremiah," and not "Zechariah." 2, It is not certain that a passage in Zechariah might not be properly quoted under the title "Jeremiah." 3, It is not certain that a passage in Jeremiah might not have been intended, as well as the passage in Zechariah which supplies some of the words cited. But we are not now discussing the errorlessness of the Scriptures, but Lightfoot's obviously firmly-held belief that they are errorless. And it is clear that he found no error in the citation in Matthew xxvii. 9, which has been in all time, and is now afresh in our day, made to do duty as the plainest of all the errors found in Scripture.

Here we may bring our study of Lightfoot to a close. It is perfectly evident that his fundamental conception of Scripture

¹ Compare Ryle, *The Canon of the Old Testament*, pages 226 *et seq.*, for the commonness and the antiquity—Ryle thinks the originality—of the order appealed to by Lightfoot.

was that it is the Book of God, the "dictates of the Holy Spirit," of every part and every element of which—its words and its very letters—God is himself the responsible author. It is perfectly evident that he would have considered it blasphemy to say that there is anything in it—in the way of falseness of statement, or error of inadvertence—which would be unworthy of God, its Author, who as Truth itself, lacks neither truthfulness nor knowledge. It is perfectly evident, in a word, that he shared the common doctrine of Scripture of the Reformed dogmatists of the middle of the seventeenth century. It is perfectly evident also, we may add, that his doctrine of Scripture is generally that of the Westminster Confession; and that he could freely and with a good conscience vote for every clause of that admirable—the most admirable extant—statement of the Reformed doctrine of Holy Scripture. It is a desperate cause indeed, which begins by misinterpreting that statement, and then seeks to bolster this obvious misinterpretation by asserting that men like Lightfoot, and Rutherford, and Lyford, and Capel, and Ball, and Baxter, did not believe in the doctrines of verbal inspiration and the inerrancy of Scripture. If they did not believe in these doctrines, human language is incapable of expressing belief in doctrines. Is it not a pity that men are not content with corrupting our doctrines, but must also corrupt our history?

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