

The Protestant View of the Inspiration and Authority of Scripture

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Each might be dated from any important event in the period of its rise.

The time of the end need not be a particular year. Daniel makes it a period of seventy-five years. His last chapter appears to relate chiefly to Judaism and Mohammedanism; if so, the 1260 years of this power will, of course, end at the beginning of the seventy-five years, while the papal period will end somewhere in the seventy-five years.—EDITOR.]

PROTESTANTISM.

THE INSPIRATION OF THE SCRIPTURES.

IN the progress of these discussions we come now to the position of the *Orthodox* or *Evangelical Protestant*.

It affirms what each of the schools which have been already considered denies. In opposition to the pantheist, and the intuitionist of the type of Schleiermacher and Morell, it affirms of a supernatural revelation its possibility. In opposition to the deist, it affirms its necessity. In opposition to the professedly Christian rationalist, it affirms its supreme authority; and in opposition to the mystic and the Romanist, it affirms its completeness. It maintains that a supernatural revelation of religious truth, especially as saving, was possible and necessary; and that, its actual communication being admitted, it is supremely authoritative and complete.

The supernatural revelation which the Protestant position affirms is the Bible, and the Bible alone — that is, the Scriptures as embraced in what are known as the Old and New Testaments. The Bible, the Bible alone, it contends, is the source and rule of a true theology — it is *the principium theologiæ*.

The question of the divine origin, the authoritative-ness and the canonicity of any writings hinges upon the

question of their inspiration. Any writing that is inspired by God is of divine origin, is of infallible authority, and is, *ipso facto*, entitled to be ranked as an integral element of supernatural revelation. On the contrary, any writing which is not inspired by God is of human origin, is of fallible authority, and must be denied a place in the canon of Scripture as the supernatural revelation of God's will to man.

It is, therefore, the question of the inspiration of the Bible that will now be discussed. After some preliminary remarks upon the reasons for the consideration of the question, the subject will be considered under the heads of the *Nature* of Inspiration; its *Relations*, and its *Extent*. The *Proofs* of the Inspiration generally considered, or the divine origin of the Scriptures will be reserved for another place.

Let us look briefly at some of the reasons for the consideration of the question.

In the first place, we have seen, in the examination of the deistical position, that a supernatural revelation is necessary to the religious interests of mankind. It is necessary to republish, correct and reënforce the doctrines of natural religion, obscured and marred as they have been by sin, and it is chiefly necessary to create and publish the facts and truths of redemption, without which there could be no deliverance from the disastrous effects of the fall, but which the uninspired reason of man could not possibly have conceived or suggested. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."

The conceded necessity of a supernatural revelation, and the incompetency of the natural reason in the premises, afford a presumption that God would furnish such a communication of his will to man. This presumption is sustained by the claim of the Scriptures to be just such a revelation. This raises the question of their divine authorship; and this is all one with the question of their supernatural inspiration. If inspired by God, they are originated by him, and are attended with his authority. If not, they rise no higher than human productions, and cannot be trustworthy in relation to the supreme questions of religion and the future destiny of men. The question of the inspiration of the Bible, is, therefore, one which must be considered, and it is one which is of transcendent importance.

In the second place, the Bible asserts its own inspiration. In this respect, it places itself in the attitude of a witness at the bar of human reason. This testimony, like that furnished by any respectable witness in regard to matters of importance, challenges attention and deserves examination. It is entirely unscientific to treat it with contempt. It is as much a fact as the phenomenal testimony of the heavens and of the earth, while the inferences which are deducible from it are of immeasurably greater consequence than those which are derivable from the facts of physical nature. The Bible professes to deal authoritatively with all the questions of religion and morality, it professes, indeed, to be the universe of religious and moral truth, and no scientific inquirer can pass by its stupendous pretensions, as the mere offspring of fanaticism and the fruit of delusion, without breaking

with the spirit and method of science itself. The question of its inspiration, therefore, has received, and will continue to receive, the profound attention of serious thinkers in every age.

In the third place, it has been the uniform testimony of the church universal that the Bible is inspired of God. This undeniable fact demands scrutiny. This has been the position of both Jews and Christians. Granted that this fact does not afford irrefragable proof of the inspiration of the Scriptures, it merits consideration. It would ill comport with the candor and modesty of philosophy and science to treat this mass of testimony with scorn, to look upon this innumerable host of witnesses as having been misguided enthusiasts, the victims of imposture and fraud. It were a superfluous task to show that the divine inspiration of the Bible has been the faith of scholars, philosophers and scientific men, and not alone of a countless multitude who have adorned the ordinary walks of life with every noble virtue, and illuminated the gloom of death by the splendor of a triumphant exultation. This history is greater than that of any secular empire that has ever flourished on the globe, and the questions it has developed have given rise to a vaster body of literature than any other single subject which has occupied the energies of the human mind. Regarded from this point of view also, the question of inspiration is forced upon our consideration.

In the fourth place, the attempts made at the present day to represent the Bible as of coördinate value with the sacred books of other schemes of religion than that of Christianity, necessitate an appeal to its inspiration

as proving its supremacy. It is not supposable that God has given to mankind several revelations touching their religious duties and interests — revelations which not only differ as to their contents, but are in conflict with each other. On the supposition, then, that he has communicated but one revelation of his will, it is of the last importance to settle this competition, and to decide the question, which of the claimants is of divine origin and authority. This result can only be reached upon the examination of the evidences each may be able to present of its having been divinely inspired.

In the fifth place, assaults upon the inspiration of the Scriptures are not, at the present day, confined to avowed infidelity. The greatest number of these attacks emanate from professedly Christian scholars. This is at least true of the claim of the Scriptures to be plenary inspired. The anti-supernatural school of Graf, Wellhausen and Kuenen has its representatives in theological institutions under the care of the orthodox churches of Britain and America. The question of inspiration which had been supposed by the people of God to be settled, so far as the church is concerned, is now reopened by nominally Christian men within the church itself. It makes no real difference that Schleiermacher and Morell, that Cheyne and Driver, Robertson Smith and Briggs admit the fact of what they call inspiration. It is not the inspiration for which the church of God has always contended. It is either an elevation of the spiritual nature which cannot be discriminated from the illumination and sanctification possessed in some degree by all saints, or an *afflatus* which is akin to what

we term the inspiration of genius. This is to use the term and to deny the reality. The contest is not only as it always has been *for* altars and firesides; it is one which is originated *at* our altars and firesides, and waged by those with whom we take sweet counsel and walk to the house of God in company. Although these writers wear the garb of Christian teachers, and affect to talk in the dialect of Zion, when they speak of inspiration they are careful to tell us that they do not, by that term, mean an influence which has secured, what God's people believe, the infallibility and "inerrancy" of the sacred records. On the contrary, it consisted with liability to err in the persons inspired, and actual errors in their writings.

Such being the doctrine which is maintained in the high places of the church, and embellished by the charms of a scholarship assuming to be nice and critical, the defenders of the traditional view are summoned to look afresh to their arms. Especially is the doctrine of verbal inspiration bitterly and contemptuously denounced. One often meets the declaration that it is well-nigh universally abandoned. None hold it but the unscholarly rabble. The *illuminati* look down upon it as one unworthy of their notice. It can make no difference to them that the Scriptures affirm the doctrine, for, according to them, the Scriptures are fallible, and it is left to the superior scholarship of modern times to determine the points at which they may be inerrant, and those at which they have fallen into error. It is really a question between the Bible of scholarship and the Bible of inspiration.

There is, then, abundant reason for considering the question of inspiration. It is infinitely important, and it is as inevitable as it is important.

I. The first aspect of inspiration that will be noticed is its *nature* — what is it?

The inquiry, at the outset, arises, What is the source from which we derive information upon this subject? I adopt the answer of Dr. Charles Hodge to this question, "The nature of inspiration is to be learnt from the Scriptures; from their didactic statements, and from their phenomena."¹ In preceding discussions touching the nature of theology, a distinction was conceded between natural and supernatural revelation. The former consists of the lessons imparted by the constitution of man and the material universe to which he is related. It grounded, in the first instance, man's knowledge of himself, and of God as the infinite, extra-mundane, personal Creator and providential ruler of all things. This knowledge still exists to some extent among all men — at least, it ought to exist — and no human being is excusable who does not possess it. But the teachings of this natural revelation are clouded and negatived by sin. The Scriptures profess to be a supernatural revelation, in which the old truths of the first revelation are clearly restated, and, in addition, the altogether new and original elements of a redemptive scheme are communicated. To us, then, the question of the authoritativeness of revelation is precisely the question of the authoritativeness of the Scriptures. There is, it is obvious, no pre-intimation in the old revelation of the

¹ *Syst. Theol.*, I., 153.

existence of the new, and no guarantee of its trustworthiness which can be collected from the present constitution of man, and the present order of nature. They are absolutely silent in regard to a supernatural revelation of God to the human race. From the nature of the case, we are dependent upon the testimony of the Scriptures touching the nature of their own inspiration.

Prophets and apostles claimed to be commissioned of God to declare his will, or, what is the same thing, to be inspired. This claim was not arbitrarily and gratuitously made. It was not addressed to an implicit faith. It was sustained by extraordinary credentials. The prophet or apostle proved his inspiration by miracles, or was vouched for as inspired by one who did work miracles. The inspired messages were recorded. These records are the Scriptures.

Here the appeal is to the *divine credibility* of the Scriptures as an inspired witness. The proofs of their credibility are such that if they cannot be deemed worthy of credence, neither can any human writings. The voice of the past would be silent as the grave, and no testimony could be relied on but that which is contemporary with ourselves. The Scriptures report the fact of the miracles as proofs of the inspiration of prophets and apostles. The Jewish and the Christian church accepted these proofs of inspiration. It is certain that *we* would not now admit the claim of one to be inspired, unless backed by miraculous credentials. Were they more easily duped than we in matters of supreme importance? Do we enjoy a monopoly of common sense? Was wisdom *born* with us? It is a significant fact that the actuality

of the reputed miracles wrought by Christ and his apostles was not impugned by the early assailants of Christianity. It was only when the distance of centuries from the reported facts had been crossed, that Hume denied the credibility and pantheists the possibility of miracles. This question will be considered further on in the discussion.

But however atheists and pantheists, agnostics and infidels of all sorts may reject the testimony of the Bible to inspiration, the whole nominal church accepts it, and the Christian theologian relies upon it for information in regard to its nature. With the Scriptures, therefore, as our guide, let us inquire what inspiration is.

1. Generically considered, it is an influence affecting the human mind. Concerning this there is not apt to be any dispute. What is necessary is to determine the specific qualities going to constitute that connotation of marks which differentiates this influence from all others. Specifically considered —

2. It is an influence exerted by the Holy Ghost. "For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."¹ "The former treatise have I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach, until the day in which he was taken up, after that he through the Holy Ghost had given commandments unto the apostles whom he had chosen."² "Men and brethren, this scripture must needs have been fulfilled, which the Holy Ghost by the mouth of David spake

¹ 2 Peter II., 21.

² Acts i. 1, 2.

before concerning Judas.”¹ “And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.”² “Well spake the Holy Ghost by Esaias the prophet unto our fathers.”³ “And Jesus answered and said, . . . For David himself said by the Holy Ghost.”⁴ “Of which salvation the prophets have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow.”⁵

One of these passages asserts, negatively, that the inspiring influence is not from the will of man, and all, positively, that it proceeds from the Holy Ghost.

3. It is an influence either strictly revealing unknown truth to the mind, or presenting to it known truth. In the former case what is not actually cognized, or not cognizable, by the human faculties is made known; in the latter known truth is so presented or suggested as to limit attention to it and designate it as that intended to be delivered by the inspired person. In either case, there is revelation; in the one strictly and properly, in the other more loosely contemplated. The truth concerning the person of Christ was strictly revealed; that concerning the discourses of Jesus which his disciples had heard was revealed, in the sense of being selected, presented, pointed out, by the Spirit to be reported. In the latter case, so much of what Jesus had said was

¹ Acts i. 16.² Acts ii. 4.³ Acts xxviii. 25.⁴ Mark xii. 35, 36.⁵ 1 Peter i. 10, 11.

called to remembrance, or impressed upon the mind, as God willed to be communicated either orally or in writing. So with all the ordinary facts coming within the cognizance of the human faculties.

4. It is an immediate influence — that is, one not exerted through any medium. It directly brings the truth designed to be delivered into contact with the mind. In this respect, it is analogous to the act of regeneration, strictly considered as not synonymous with conversion; and not to the ordinary operation of the Spirit in sanctification which is conducted through the truth and the other means of grace. As in regeneration, the Spirit communicates *life* not through means, so in inspiration he without the intervention of means communicates *knowledge*.

5. It is a supernatural influence. It is one over and beyond the reach of the human faculties in either their natural or converted state; something to which they cannot of themselves attain, and which they cannot of themselves experience, however extraordinary may be the conditions upon which they act, and the circumstances by which they may be environed and impressed. It is as sovereign as the influence by which physical life was, in the first instance, engendered, or the soul of the sinner is spiritually quickened.

6. It is an objective influence. It comes from without the mind, and communicates to it an external and authoritative revelation of God's will. The term *objective*, it will be noticed, is here not used as formally signifying that which may be an object of contemplation by the mind, whether it be foreign to the mind or a

modification of the mind itself, but as designating that which is not internal to the mind, but external to it. The inspiring influence is exerted, it is true, *upon* the mind, and in this sense it may be said to be subjective — it is the mind which is its recipient. But it originates *without* the mind, and communicates truth *to* it. While subjective and internal as to the mind receiving the communication, it is objective and external as to its own nature, and as to the truth communicated to the mind. It is not merely an influence which stirs up the human faculties to unwonted and extraordinary energy. It is not simply an elevation of the intelligence to a degree in which it perceives truth, which in a lower degree it did not apprehend through lack of such stimulus; but it is the actual impartation of the truth to be perceived. In the case of revelation proper, it creates the truth and places it in relation to the mind; in the case of known things, it presents out of a multitude of possible things those particular things which are intended to be communicated to others.

This is the view which has been maintained by the church, one which is entirely different from that which is advocated by the school of Schleiermacher and by the higher critics of the present day. They make the inspiring influence, under the operation of the Spirit, to evolve from within the human faculties by virtue of their activity, as the heat of a wheel is produced by its rapid rotation. If this theory were true, the inspiring influence ought to have continued in the church from the first pious man until this time. It would have been a regularly operating force exposed only to the fluctua-

tions to which piety is subject. On the other hand, the church holds that inspiration was a *gift* bestowed in sovereignty, at such time and in such way as God determined, and that it has ceased for more than eighteen centuries.

Nor will it do to say that the piety of the church has not been equally elevated at all times. Granted, but when it has been heightened to an unusual degree, in the progress of the church since the apostles fell asleep — and who will deny that it sometimes has? — did the inspiring influence reappear in those seasons of revival? If so, where are its products? Has the canon of Scripture been increased since John wrote the Apocalypse? These writers confound inspiration with sanctification. Is it not manifest that the extraordinary and occasional feature of inspiration lifts it into a peculiar category transcending the *afflatus* by which the Spirit moves and stimulates the people of God?

Inspiration, then, is not subjective and internal, but objective and external. It does not cause the mind to attain truth by its own excited action, but, like an oracle, delivers truth to it. It is a messenger uttering God's sayings, a witness delivering God's testimony. It moves the mind, indeed, but only to receive that testimony. And receiving it, the inspired person is *ipso facto* commissioned from heaven to communicate it to others.

7. It is an influence exerted upon the intellect for the purpose of producing teachers. It is not intended to produce saints. Balaam and Caiaphas were subjects of this influence when they uttered their remarkable prophecies. These instances show that inspiration ter-

minated upon the intellect specifically, and not upon the general character; that one might be an inspired man without being a good man. Inspired men were generally good men, the inspired *writers* were all good men, but goodness in the recipient of the inspiring influence was an accidental quality, not one essential to the exertion of that influence. When controlled by it, even wicked men taught the truth. It is thus distinguishable from that saving illumination of the Holy Spirit, which, to a greater or less extent, is imparted to every pious man.

8. It is an influence which secures infallible teaching. The inspired person, so far as he was inspired, could not err. The matter communicated by inspiration was absolutely inerrant. The man might err, but not the man as inspired. This must be conceded, or the ground is taken that the inspiring Spirit may teach falsehood. Moses when he twice smote the rock at Kadesh and spoke impetuously to the people, Peter when he dissembled at Antioch and practically taught untruth, and Paul when he quarreled with Barnabas, spoke and acted not as inspired men, but as imperfectly sanctified men, at the time uncontrolled by the inspiring influence. They certainly were not moved by the Spirit to do or to speak what was wrong. When they *were* moved by his inspiring influence, they could not, to the extent of that influence, either do or say anything wrong.

This canon, however, that inspiration secures infallible teaching, let it be observed, does not imply that all the words spoken or written by persons under the inspiring influence were intrinsically true words. In the main, that was so. Inspired men generally spoke or

wrote words which accurately conveyed truth dictated by God himself, truth founded in the divine nature and designed to be profitable to the spiritual interests of men, truth, not merely as a correct report of facts, but in itself materially and formally expressing the divine character. But sometimes inspired men spoke or wrote words which were falsely or wickedly uttered by the devil or bad men. In these cases the inspiring influence induced an infallibly true report of the facts, although the facts themselves were lies; just as one may now truly report a lie spoken by another. The question *with us* is in regard to the infallible teaching of the scriptural record. We know inspiration as a concrete reality only in that record. Now the Scriptures, for the most part, are a record of God's own truth, springing from his nature, but, in some instances, they record the wicked acts and false words of Satan and impious men. In these cases, the record is exactly true and holy, the things recorded false and wicked. The clerk of a court may accurately record the testimony of witnesses. Some of that testimony may be false. In that case, we rightly say that the record is true, the recorded testimony false. So with the inspired Scriptures. Their record of facts is infallibly true; some of the things recorded were false. The fallibility and errancy of the things recorded in no degree affects the infallibility and inerrancy of the sacred record. In a word, the Bible is inerrant history.

This canon, furthermore, that inspiration secures infallible teaching, signalizes the distinction between inspired men and the stated teachers of the church. The former, when acting under the inspiring influence,

taught infallibly; the latter are fallible teachers. When the preachers of the gospel teach exactly what the Scriptures teach they teach infallibly. But they may teach what is contrary to the Scriptures, and then they teach falsely. If a preacher should declare that he who believes in the Lord Jesus Christ shall be saved, he would teach infallibly, for he would utter precisely what the Scriptures affirm. The matter of his teaching would be inspired matter. But should he in the next sentence say, that believing in Christ depends upon the human will, he would teach what is contrary to the Scriptures, and therefore false. What is the distinction? It is that between inspired and uninspired persons. The persons of the prophets and apostles were inspired; no person is now inspired. The inspiration abides in the Scriptures. He who delivers now what they contain teaches inspired truth; but he himself is not inspired. They teach infallibly; he is liable to teach fallibly. The inspired person, the uninspired person; the infallible Scriptures, the fallible teacher of the Scriptures — these are the distinctions that need to be emphasized.

9. It is an influence which secures the teaching of God's will in regard to the spiritual interests of men. All natural things communicated have a subordinate relation to this great end. It is not intended to teach science, or philosophy, or politics, *as such*. It may, to some extent do that incidentally, but that is not its supreme design.

10. It is an influence, the didactic inerrancy of which is not affected by the degree of the emotional *afflatus* accompanying it. Whether it communicates ordinary

natural facts, or the transcendent supernatural mysteries of creation, providence and redemption, it communicates all alike with the same infallible certainty. There are no degrees in its accuracy. It teaches the little and the great with the same inerrancy.

11. It is an influence the exertion of which upon the mind is attested to others, either directly or indirectly, by miraculous proof. Either the announcements of the inspired person were immediately accompanied by miracles, so that he was directly attested as delivering God's message, since none but God can work miracles, and he cannot endorse a fraud; or the professedly inspired person was vouched for by another whose inspiration was proved by miraculous credentials, so that he was thus indirectly attested as an inspired messenger from God. Reason legitimately demands that the claim to inspiration be confirmed by nothing short of miraculous evidence, and this fair requirement God actually meets. Prophets and apostles were, and the Scriptures are, sustained by miracles.

Let us now gather up these marks, generic and specific, of inspiration into a descriptive definition:

Inspiration is an immediate, supernatural influence of the Holy Ghost upon the mind, objectively communicating to it such truth as God wills to impart, effecting the infallible communication to others of that truth, and attested by miraculous proof.

II. The second aspect of inspiration which comes to be considered is its *relations*. What is its relation to revelation? What to the Scriptures?

The impression conveyed by some of Dr. Charles

Hodge's remarks in the chapter of his *Systematic Theology* on the Protestant Rule of Faith and Duty, section on Inspiration, is that revelation precedes inspiration. The truth to be communicated — that is, the supernatural truth — was revealed to the prophets and apostles, and then inspiration controlled them in its delivery. The confusion here is between revelation *to* the sacred writers and revelation *by* them to others. The latter is the sense in which the word is commonly employed, and in which, to avoid confusion, it ought to be employed. The revelation of the matter to be taught, which was made to the prophets and apostles, is precisely inspiration. The revelation of the truth by them to others is the result of inspiration.

Dr. Thornwell well puts the case thus, "This, then, is the divine arrangement. A class of men is put in charge of that which is to be the object of faith; this is inspiration. They report to others the word of the Lord; this is revelation; and this report is the medium through which a saving faith is engendered. . . . Inspiration gives rise to revelation; revelation to faith."¹

Calvin makes no distinction between revelation, as understood by Dr. Hodge, and inspiration, in the case of Paul as described by himself in the first chapter of Galatians — a case alleged by Dr. Hodge as supporting his distinction. The apostle says, "But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after men. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it but by the revelation of Jesus Christ."

¹ *Coll. Writings*, Vol. III., p. 154.

On this Calvin remarks, "It was necessary that Paul should state his doctrine in opposition to the whole world, and should rest it on this ground, that he had acquired it not in the school of any man, but by revelation from God. . . . His divine instruction communicated to him by immediate inspiration," etc. The reformer's view, then, was that the revelation made to Paul was by inspiration. The same influence which communicated the gospel to the apostle enabled him to communicate the gospel to others. Mere difference of time between the impartation of it *to* the apostle, and the delivery of it *by* him is not material. The influence was the same in both cases. He was inspired when he received the gospel, and inspired when he communicated it to the church. The inspiring influence was precisely the revealing influence, whether communicating the truth to him or through him.

There were revelations of God's will which were not made by the immediate inspiration of the Holy Ghost, but through voices, dreams, visions, angelic appearances, and epiphanies of the Son of God. But the revelation of truth designed to be communicated in authoritative and permanent writings to the church has, at least mainly, been made by that inspiration. It is only with reference to such revelation that the question occurs in connection with inspiration. Moses may have to some extent compiled, but in compiling he was inspired by the Spirit to use the matter in hand as a divine revelation, either as originating supernatural truth or as selecting natural.

What inspiration did for the sacred writers the in-

spired writings do for us. Inspiration revealed truth to them; the Scriptures reveal the same truth to us. We do not, as they, acquire the truth from the inspiring influence exerted upon us, but from the inspired Word speaking to us.

It is evident that the term *revelation* is apt to be employed in two different relations, and the confusion of the relations induces confusion in the use of the term. The first relation is that of the Spirit inspiring to the person inspired; the second is that of the inspired truth to the uninspired hearer. In the first case, inspiration is the same as revelation, and the control of the mind inspired in the delivery of the truth revealed. In the second case, revelation is the product of inspiration. The Spirit inspiring was the revealer of truth to the sacred writer. The Word inspired is the revelation of truth to the hearer.

In order to avoid confusion in the use of the term *revelation*, it is advisable to confine it to the product of inspiration — the inspired writings themselves. In them we have the revelation of God's will, embracing some things strictly revealed, and some things already known, but uttered by inspiration. The Scriptures are truly spoken of as God's revelation. Inspiration, then, is the cause of revelation; revelation, or the Scripture, is the effect of inspiration.

Revelation, or revealed truth, as the product of inspiration is the middle term between inspiration and faith. The Spirit communicated the truth to the sacred writers by inspiration; the Spirit enables us to receive the same truth by faith.

Again; revelation as the product of inspiration is common to the prophets and apostles, on the one hand, and ourselves on the other. Their specific difference is inspiration; ours is faith.

Once more; the prophets and apostles communicate the Scriptures; we receive them as communicated.

Revelation, then, does not precede inspiration, but inspiration precedes revelation, that is, the revealed truth in the Scriptures. Revelation, conceived as the *act of revealing* is inspiration, and should be so termed; revelation conceived as the *thing revealed* is the Bible, and they should be used as synonyms.

As inspiration precedes revelation, so revelation precedes faith. It is the report which God calls prophets and apostles to make, and us to believe. God gives his testimony through them, and requires us to accept it. Inspiration, revelation, faith — this is the true order.

III. The third aspect of inspiration which must be examined is its *extent*.

The inquiry here is twofold: First, what is the *degree* of inspiration? — that is, were there degrees in the inspiration of inspired persons, and consequently of the inspired writings? Secondly, what is the *scope* of inspiration? — that is, is every part of the canonical Scriptures inspired?

First, the *degree* of inspiration.

In considering the question, Were there different degrees of the inspiring influence exerted upon the persons inspired, the theories will here be thrown out of account which deny the supernatural and objective character of inspiration. They are naturalistic, if not posi-

tively infidel, and have already been, to a greater or less extent, discussed. To those who admit the fact of a supernatural, objective, authoritative inspiration the contest for supremacy is between four general theories with their special modifications. These are:

First. What is called the *mechanical* theory. This theory, it is claimed, maintains that the inspired persons were involuntary, passive instruments controlled by the inspiring influence, as are mechanical instruments by those who use them. It may be doubted whether it has, to any considerable extent, been maintained in the form in which it is stated by its opponents. The language of some of the early fathers, although often unguarded and extravagant, was intended to express in strong and unequivocal terms the doctrine of verbal dictation, a doctrine with which the mechanical theory is sometimes erroneously confounded. The identification of the two is conveniently employed to discredit that of verbal dictation, which is really the same as verbal inspiration. In sinking the easily conquered mechanical theory the attempt is made to engulf in the vortex in which it goes down the doctrine of plenary, verbal inspiration. But it is manifest that the verbal inspiration of the inspired persons, or the inspiration which infused into them the words they employed, would have been the same as the dictation of their words. One is unable to see the difference between them. At least, let it be understood that in the rejection, in this discussion, of the mechanical theory, there is no intention to include that of verbal dictation, and that in the advocacy of verbal dictation it is not designed to espouse the mechanical theory.

Secondly. The theory of *different degrees of inspiration*. According to this theory, the degree of the inspiring influence was greater or less in proportion to the importance of the matter, and to the needs of the mind inspired. The degrees of inspiration have been represented as elevation, superintendence, direction, and suggestion. The theory has been, and is, adopted by some writers reputedly orthodox.

Thirdly. What may be termed the theory of *spiritual insight* or *spiritual intuition* — the theory maintained by rationalists who admit the supernatural element in revelation, by broad-churchmen, and by the “higher critics” of the present day. Whatever may be the different forms in which this theory may be presented by different writers, its essence is that the inspiring influence is simply an *afflatus*, which puts the inspired person into sympathy, more or less intense, with the truth to be communicated, but which does not secure him against liability to error in the communication of the truth. Briefly, what it affirms is fallibility and errancy in the persons inspired, both as to their conceptions and productions; what it denies is their infallibility and inerrancy. Of course, it utterly discards the doctrine of verbal inspiration. According to it, the Scriptures are destitute of infallibility and inerrancy.

Fourthly. What is denominated the *dynamical* theory. It holds that both thought and language are imparted by the inspiring influence to the inspired person, but in such a manner as not to exclude the voluntary exercise of the human faculties, or the spontaneous employment of individual peculiarities in speaking and

writing. The name *dynamical* seems to have been attached to it to discriminate it from the so-called mechanical theory, so far as the latter was conceived as suppressing the human feature of inspiration—the unforced operation of human thought and utterance.

This theory is the same as that commonly styled the theory of verbal inspiration, and will be recognized in these remarks under its older and more familiar designation. If this doctrine can be proved, there will exist no necessity for the detailed discussion of the other theories. Its proof is their disproof. Profoundly convinced that the doctrine of the verbal inspiration of the Scriptures—that is, that inspiration extends to their words as well as to their sense—is the only true doctrine, of vital importance to the support of divine truth and to the maintenance of the interests of Christ's Church, I will endeavor, with God's help to substantiate it; first, by presenting direct, positive proofs, and, secondly, by answering some of the most prominent objections which have been urged against it.¹

One or two things need, at the outset, to be premised.

First. As already remarked, the nature of inspiration must be mainly collected from the Scriptures themselves. The doctrine of the early Christian fathers on the subject is of value, since it must be presumed that they knew the testimony of the apostles; but, after all,

¹An attempt to meet all the objections would be a task of supererogation—they have, for the most part, been answered over and over; and would, furthermore, require a volume, or rather volumes, instead of a brief discussion. Among others, reference is made to Gaussen, Lee, Bannerman, the two Hodges, Shedd, Thornwell.

the controlling evidence must be drawn from the statements of the Bible.

Secondly. This, it is charged, is reasoning in a circle—the assumption of the inspiration of the Scriptures is used to establish their inspiration. To this I answer—

In the first place, the exposition thus far has been concerned chiefly about the *nature* of inspiration, and assuredly the Scriptures are competent to testify as to their own nature. Would a man be charged with reasoning in a circle, because he had appealed to his own consciousness in regard to facts internal to him?

In the second place, the pinch of the question touching inspiration as a whole will not be evaded. The ground is here taken that it is competent to appeal to the Scriptures as inspired in proof of the *fact* as well as the nature of their inspiration, and that this does not involve the vice of an illegitimate reasoning in a circle. Suppose we should use the argument: God declares that he is true; therefore, God is true. Here God's truth would be proved by his truth. Would that be a vicious reasoning in a circle? The atheist might say, You assume that there is a God of truth. So we do; and so do all sensible men. But if that does not satisfy the atheist, we are prepared to support our assumption—to prove incontrovertibly that there is a God of truth. If there be, he is true in testifying to his truth. In like manner, we start with the premise: the Scriptures are divine, because inspired, and are, therefore, true in testifying to their own inspiration. Are they inspired? That proves them divine. Are they divine? That proves them true. If the infidel denies the premise, it can be proved. But

in proving it, the appeal was not, in the first instance, to their inspiration, to establish their inspiration. The appeal was to *miracles* as the incontestable proof of their inspiration. Let us divide. There are obviously two cases which must be considered separately from each other. What two cases? That of the contemporaries of the prophets and apostles; and that of ourselves, the present readers of the Scriptures.

Let us consider the case of the contemporaries of the prophets and apostles first. Those who professed to be prophets and apostles claimed to be inspired of God to declare his will. The claim was extraordinary, and, of course, had to be made good by extraordinary proofs. The demand was met. Miracles, miracles in the external and phenomenal sphere, miracles appealing to the senses, miracles which none but God could work, accompanied their delivery of their messages. Now, from the nature of the case, their contemporaries were the judges, and the only competent judges, whether these miracles were actually wrought. They decided that they were, and consequently that the claim of the prophet or apostle was made good. They accepted them as inspired, and, therefore, received their official communications both oral and written as inspired. When, then, the question arose whether a writing purporting to have been the production of a prophet or apostle was really his, the only thing required to settle the question was to get his testimony to his authorship of the writing. If that was secured, as he was known to be inspired, the last shade of doubt was removed: the writing was inspired. It will be seen, therefore, that the fact of the inspiration

of the Scriptures was settled upon miraculous evidence by the contemporaries of the prophets and apostles; and when *they* settled the fact they settled it not for their own age alone, but for all time; not for themselves alone, but also for *us*. Clearly, when they, upon demonstrative proof, accepted a writing as inspired, they received as indubitable its testimony alike to the fact, the nature, and the extent of its inspiration. Let it, then, be distinctly observed that in the first instance — that of the contemporaries of the prophets and apostles — inspiration was not proved by inspiration. The inspiration of the persons claiming to be inspired was proved by miracles, and their inspiration, thus proved, guaranteed the inspiration of their instructions oral and written.

Let us next contemplate the case of ourselves as present readers of the Scriptures. We are bound to accept them as they have come down to us in unbroken transmission from the contemporaries of the sacred writers. We are not the most competent judges as to their inspiration. Judges we are to a certain extent; to what extent will be evinced in a subsequent part of this discussion; but we are not the best qualified judges. The judges whose decision was determinative and ultimate were the contemporaries of the writers, and if we challenge their judgment and substitute for it our own we are guilty of folly. If, for example, an Englishman at the present day should question the authorship of the speeches of Lord Chatham and Edmund Burke in Parliament, he would subject himself to merited ridicule. And if an American now should dispute the authorship

of the speeches of Webster, Clay and Calhoun in Congress, he would inevitably share the same fate. The judgment of their contemporaries was absolutely decisive in the premises. They were acquainted with the men personally, they heard them with their own ears, and they knew that the speeches were published under the names of these persons, and acknowledged by them as their own. Does not that close the case? What have we of the present generation to do but to accept the judgment of the contemporaries? Even so is it with us in relation to the Scriptures. We receive them as the productions of the men whose names they bear, and as consequently inspired, upon the conclusive testimony of the church contemporary with the writers.

We are entitled, therefore, to start with the assumption that the Scriptures are inspired. We neither beg the question, nor reason in a vicious circle, when we appeal to the testimony of the Scriptures as inspired to their own inspiration. It is the surest proof to which we can resort.

It is common to say, that in proving the inspiration of the Scriptures, in order to avoid a circle, we adduce not their inspiration, but their *credibility*. The affirmation needs to be seriously qualified. We do appeal to their credibility — their authenticity and trustworthiness. But their *absolute* credibility consists precisely in the fact of their inspiration. If not, their credibility is simply that of a human witness, and consequently relative, not absolute. We need in so vital a matter, not human credibility, however great; we need divine credibility. The ground, then, is unhesitatingly taken that it

is valid to allege the testimony of the Scriptures to their own inspiration — to its fact, its nature, its extent and its scope.

In the third place, the higher critics themselves acknowledge the inspiration (as they conceive it) of some parts of the Bible. Now, from those very parts we fetch proof in regard to their inspiration. Is that illegitimate?

If, then, the Scriptures are a perfectly credible witness, their testimony to their verbal inspiration, if correctly quoted, ought to settle the question. At least it ought to settle it with those who do not exalt reason to a seat of authority *superior* to that of the Scriptures. If reason be held to be merely *co-ordinate* with the Bible, the deductions of reason could not outweigh the positive statements of the Bible. The mere objections of the one could not countervail the unequivocal testimony of the other.

Secondly. The question of verbal inspiration is here concerned about the original manuscripts of the Scriptures, and not about copies and translations. In what sense inspiration belongs to the latter is an inquiry which will be considered before the discussion closes; but the affirmation now made is that the original documents — the autographs — were verbally inspired, and therefore characterized by absolute inerrancy.

The objection that the maintainers of the verbal inspiration of the original manuscripts make a positive and sweeping assertion concerning documents which they have never seen, is one that recoils upon the objectors and materially damages their cause. For, if upon this

ground — the non-possession of the autographs — there is no right to affirm their verbal inspiration, on the very same ground there is no right to deny it. Neither party to the controversy is entitled to speak from actual observation. Neither has inspected the autographs. How, then, stands the case? Looked at simply from this point of view the respective causes are *in æquilibrio*. There is an equipoise of evidence between the two. Neither has the evidence of actual investigation. Let it be admitted that so far they check each other; if one party cannot affirm, the other cannot deny.

This, however, is not all. In every such case of an even balance of evidence, where the matter involved does not transcend the possibility of knowledge, the question arises, whether the equilibrium may not be destroyed, the beam kicked, by new evidence deducible from some other legitimate source. It must be allowed, too, that in such cases even faint presumptions avail to destroy the equipoise and settle the question. Now, it is asked of the denier of the verbal inspiration of the original Scriptures, what extraneous, additional evidence he is able to adduce. So far as appears to the contrary, he can plead none which is of any weight. If he appeal to the natural reason, the reply is that reason cannot be a credible witness, much less a judge, in this case. If reason is entitled to say what the Scriptures ought to be, the authority of the Scriptures is subordinated to that of reason. Every man may manufacture his own Bible. But that is not the position contended for by those with whom this argument exists. If he appeal to the difficulties, errors, discrepancies which he professes to find in

the Scriptures, the answer is ready that he changes the issue. The question is, not as to copies and versions, but as to the original documents. The copies and versions contain errors; therefore, they were not verbally inspired, is an entirely different argument from this: the autographs contain errors; therefore, they were not verbally inspired. Nor is there any conceivable right to infer that, because the copies and versions contain errors, the autographs must have contained them. That would be to violate common sense and all analogy. If he say that the alleged errors are structural, that from their nature they must have inhered in the originals, this is more easily said than proved; and the proof of the allegation may safely be challenged.

On the other hand, if, in view of the equipoise mentioned, the affirmer of the verbal inspiration of the original Scriptures be asked, what new, additional evidence he can bring forward, he appeals to the positive testimony of the Scriptures themselves as a credible witness. The peculiar force of this appeal lies not in the fact that there are one or two, or a few, insulated passages of a doubtful character in which that testimony is rendered, but that the testimony is implicated in the whole drift, trend, genius of the Scripture, so that if it were eliminated the Scriptures would be so mutilated as to lose their identity. Granted, the testimony is conveyed in copies and translations, but surely the impugner of verbal inspiration would not plead that fact as invalidating the testimony. If the copies and versions embodying this testimony are rejected as of no scriptural authority because they contain it, what Scripture at all

would remain? The denier of verbal inspiration who would take that ground would rank himself with avowed infidels who reject a supernatural revelation, and discard the Bible. The very Scriptures which are allowed by the objectors to verbal inspiration are explicit in their testimony in its favor. Either, then, they must accept the testimony of Scriptures acknowledged by themselves to be canonical and credible, or in rejecting the testimony deny the existence of any canonical and credible Scriptures.

The fact is not lost sight of that these deniers of verbal inspiration contend that even those writings which they rank as Scriptures, and which they confess to have some inspiration, are not absolutely inerrant; that the writers, while enjoying a degree of inspiration, were liable to err. But surely it is going beyond their own theory to hold that these errors consisted in express, repeated, concurrent statements which were erroneous in regard to doctrines of high importance. It is going beyond their own theory to hold that David and Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel, Matthew and John, Paul and Peter concur in making false assertions touching so significant a matter as the divine inspiration of the Scriptures. It is, more than all, going beyond their own theory to maintain that Christ himself made fallacious assertions touching this vitally important subject. But this they do when they deny the verbal inspiration of the Scriptures. Two consequences result: first, they are fatally inconsistent with themselves. They affirm the authority of some of the Scriptures, and deny their veracity. Secondly, in refusing the testimony of the Scriptures,

uniformly and explicitly furnished, to their verbal inspiration, they wipe out the Scriptures themselves. For it is obvious that writings professing to come from God, and to be dictated by his spirit, and at the same time abounding in false statements, are the forgeries of men. It would be an insult to the God of truth to attribute them to him; they are fraudulent human productions — fraudulent, not because they do not utter some truth, but because they do utter some falsehood, while they claim to be *wholly* from God.

It is difficult to see how the higher critics can avoid the consequence of charging Christ himself with a want of veracity in testifying to the inspiration of the Old Testament Scriptures, and not only to their inspiration, but to the verbal inspiration of all of them, except upon one supposition. That is, that in accordance with their general position of the fallibility and errancy of all the scriptural writers, they may hold that the evangelists incorrectly reported the words of their Master. It was not he who erred, but they. To this I reply:

In the first place, the improbability of the supposition is so violent as to amount to an impossibility. The evangelists did not report the testimony of Christ in regard to this matter as borne on some exceptional occasion, but as one which he was in the habit of uttering, and of employing in solemn and formal argument in vindication of his divine commission, and in refutation of the positions taken by the religious teachers of the people. He appealed to the inspired Scriptures as the only standard of truth by which both his own claims and those of his opponents were to be judged. Now, if the

evangelists have given to the church and the world an incorrect report of their Master's explicit and reiterated teachings in relation to so vitally important a subject, one not of subordinate, but of fundamental and controlling value, the consequence would be inevitable that their whole history, as well of the facts of Christ's life, death and resurrection, as of his doctrinal teachings, would be liable to suspicion and convicted of untrustworthiness.

There is a special consideration which is here deserving of attention. The Saviour enjoined it upon his disciples that when they should be brought before councils, they should take no thought what they should say, for the Holy Ghost would teach them in the self-same hour what they ought to say. Now if the laws of human nature and the history of human precedents be of any force, it amounts to moral certainty that when forecasting their own defence from charges brought against them, they never would have dreamed of such a rule of action as that. They must have been dependent upon their Master for the very conception of it, and must have correctly reported his words in regard to it. From one instance learn all. And what gives this consideration the greater point is, that the rule which they reported the Saviour as having imposed on them is one which expressly conveyed the doctrine of the verbal dictation of the Spirit. The Holy Ghost shall teach you what ye ought to *say*. The critics are hard put to it when to relieve themselves of blasphemy against the Son of God they deny the inspiration of the Holy Ghost.

In the second place, if the evangelists who heard their

Master speaking in the flesh incorrectly reported his doctrine concerning inspiration, what about Peter? He declares that holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. In using these words he did not profess to report the words of Christ. The question occurs, Did he *incorrectly report himself*? If it be replied that the second Epistle of Peter is of questionable canonicity, the question returns, Did he in the first epistle incorrectly report himself when he spoke of the oracles of God? And did Paul incorrectly report himself when he, too, calls the Scriptures the oracles of God, in the Epistle to the Romans, the canonical authority of which is not disputed? It will not be denied that whether oracles designate the sources of answers or the answers themselves, oracular responses were always in words. It follows that Peter and Paul, who did not profess to report the words of the Master in the flesh, must have incorrectly reported themselves, when they taught the verbal inspiration of the Old Testament Scriptures; for did not, the critics being judges, the evangelists incorrectly report the Master because they represent him as teaching the same thing?

With these preliminary considerations — that the appeal on the question before us must be taken chiefly to the statements of the Scriptures themselves; and that the discussion is mainly concerned about the original manuscripts of the Scriptures; the way is open to present the proofs of verbal inspiration.

1. The Scriptures of the Old Testament were verbally inspired.

(1) This is affirmed by the Old Testament writers.

Moses constantly affirms that God delivered commands to him in words. In the extraordinary interviews between Jehovah and his servant, colloquies were held, as between man and man, in which the same predication is made of God's words as of the words of Moses, "God said unto Moses"; "Moses said unto God." (Ex. iii.) The language, "The Lord said unto Moses," "the Lord spake unto Moses," is so uniformly employed in Exodus and Leviticus that it has the force of a formula. Further, it is expressly stated that Moses was commanded to speak to the children of Israel what God had spoken to him — the very words of Jehovah were put into his mouth. One or two citations will suffice, "And the Lord called unto Moses, and spake unto him out of the tabernacle of the congregation, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel and say unto them," etc. (Lev. i. 1, 2.) "And the Lord spake unto Moses and to Aaron, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them," etc. (Lev. xv. 1, 2.) The same language is also used in Numbers, "The Lord spake unto Moses." "The Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them," etc. We meet with the same fact, substantially, in Deuteronomy. "On this side Jordan, in the land of Moab, began Moses to declare this law, saying, The Lord our God spake unto us in Horeb, saying," etc. (Deut. i. 5, 6.) "And the Lord spake unto me, saying, Ye have compassed this mountain long enough: turn you northward. And command thou the people, saying," etc. (Deut. ii. 2-4.)

It can make no difference, whatever view may be held upon the question, whether Moses was the author of the

Pentateuch. If he were, as Christ and the apostles testify, he directly testifies to his verbal inspiration. One who denies this denies the statements of Scripture. The higher critics, who, notwithstanding the testimony of Christ and the apostles, attribute the authorship of the Pentateuch to a writer who lived long after Moses, admit the inspiration of that subsequent writer. But he, on that supposition, affirms the verbal inspiration of Moses — affirms it just as emphatically as, on the supposition of the Mosaic authorship, Moses asserts it of himself. From this view the position of the higher critics affords no escape. They are inconsistent with themselves. They deny verbal inspiration, and make their late writer or writers of the Pentateuch explicitly affirm it. Are the critics themselves, by a recent *afflatus*, inspired to recall the express testimony of a former inspiration?

Very much the same thing was true of Joshua as of Moses — he was verbally inspired to teach and guide the Israelites. "Now after the death of Moses, the servant of the Lord, it came to pass that the Lord spake unto Joshua, the son of Nun, Moses' minister, saying," etc. (Joshua i. 1.) "The Lord spake unto Joshua, saying," etc. (Joshua iv. 1.) "And the Lord said unto Joshua," etc. (Joshua vi. 2; viii. 1.) "Now Joshua was old and stricken in years, and the Lord said unto him," and then follows the assignment of their respective territories to the tribes. "The Lord also spake unto Joshua, saying, Speak to the children of Israel, saying," etc. Whoever was the author of the Book of Joshua, he affirms the verbal inspiration of Joshua; and, as the

book consists largely of what Joshua said, the verbal inspiration, to that extent at least, of the book. Further, as the writer records what was verbally dictated to the great leader, it is obvious that the writer himself must have been verbally inspired.

David claimed verbal inspiration for himself, "The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and his word was in my tongue. The God of Israel said, the Rock of Israel spake to me." (2 Sam. xxiii. 2, 3.)

Isaiah prefaces his prophecy with language which shows that he was possessed of verbal inspiration, "Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth, for the Lord hath spoken"; and he calls on his hearers to hear from him the word of the Lord, "Hear the word of the Lord." (Isa. i. 2, 10.) He asserts that the Lord spoke to him, "Moreover the Lord said unto me," etc. (Isa. viii. 1.) He quotes the very words of God, "Now will I rise, saith the Lord," etc. (Isa. xxxiii. 10.)

Jeremiah is very express and profuse in affirming his verbal inspiration — so much so that it is almost superfluous to quote from him. "The words of Jeremiah, the son of Hilkiah, of the priests that were in Anathoth in the land of Benjamin: to whom the word of the Lord came," etc. (Jer. i. 1, 2.) "Then the Lord put forth his hand, and touched my mouth. And the Lord said unto me, Behold, I have put my words in thy mouth." (Jer. i. 9.) "Who is the wise man that may understand this? and who is he to whom the mouth of the Lord hath spoken, that he may declare it," etc. (Jer. ix. 12.) "Hear ye, and give ear; be not proud: for the Lord hath spoken." (Jer. xiii. 15.) "And these are the words

that the Lord spake concerning Israel and concerning Judah. For thus saith the Lord," etc. (Jer. xxx. 4, 5.) "The word that the Lord spake against Babylon, and against the land of the Chaldeans, by Jeremiah the prophet," etc. (Jer. l. 1.)

Ezekiel furnishes the same testimony. "And he said unto me, Son of man, go, get thee unto the house of Israel, and speak with my words unto them." "Moreover he said unto me, Son of man, all my words that I shall speak unto thee receive in thine heart, and hear with thine ears. And go, get thee to them of the captivity, unto the children of thy people, and speak unto them, and tell them, Thus saith the Lord God," etc. (Ezek. iii. 4, 10, 11.)

Daniel speaks no otherwise. "And he said unto me, O Daniel, a man greatly beloved, understand the words that I speak unto thee." "Now I am come to make thee understand what shall befall thy people in the latter days: for yet the vision is for many days. And when he had spoken such words unto me." (Dan. x. 11, 14, 15.)

Hosea testifies to the same thing. "The word of the Lord that came unto Hosea. . . . The beginning of the word of the Lord by Hosea. And the Lord said to Hosea." (Hosea i. 1, 2.) The word of the Lord that was spoken to Hosea was spoken to the people by him.

Amos says, "Hear this word that the Lord hath spoken against you, O children of Israel." (Amos iii. 1.) Israel was exhorted to hear the word of the Lord spoken to Amos and by him spoken to them.

Micah claims that the mouth of the Lord spoke by him. "But they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree; and none shall make them afraid: for the mouth of the Lord of hosts hath spoken it." (Micah iv. 4.)

Through the prophets, generally, runs a stream of testimony to their verbal inspiration, as is indicated by the frequent recurrence of such expressions as "the word of the Lord," "the burden of the word of the Lord," "the Lord said," "the Lord spake," "thus saith the Lord."

To all this may be added the consideration that the prophets, as their very name implies, were spokesmen of God's words — heralds speaking according to his dictation.

(2) Christ and the New Testament writers affirm the verbal inspiration of the Old Testament Scriptures.

Our Saviour used an argument against the Jews, "which turned upon the divine authority of the words of the Old Testament." "Jesus answered them, Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods? If he called them gods unto whom the word of God came, and the Scripture cannot be broken: say ye of him whom the Father hath sanctified and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest, because I said, I am the Son of God?" (John x. 34-36.) Here, let it be noticed, first that Jesus declares that the words he cites are part of the irrefragable Scriptures; and, secondly, that he calls the Scriptures the Word of God. Dr. Driver thinks it improper to denominate all the Scriptures the Word of God, only some parts of it being, in his opinion, entitled

to be so characterized. The weight of authority is decidedly against him.

Our Lord did the same thing on another occasion. Arguing with the Pharisees, "He saith unto them, How then doth David in spirit¹ call him Lord, saying, The Lord said unto my Lord," etc. (Matt. xxii. 43, 44.) Not only did Jesus affirm the verbal inspiration of the Old Testament Scriptures, but as the argument is addressed to the concessions of the Pharisees it is evident that they did the same.

The Apostle Paul repeatedly affirms that the Old Testament Scriptures were verbally inspired by God. In some passages he represents those Scriptures as identified with God, so that what they say is regarded by him as said by God himself. "The Scripture saith unto Pharaoh." (Rom. ix. 17.) "And the Scripture foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith." (Gal. iii. 8.) "But the Scripture hath concluded all under sin." (Gal. iii. 22.) "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners, spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets." (Heb. i. 1.)

Paul bases an argument upon the singular number of one word in Genesis, "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ." The argument here is the same with that urged touching Christ's confutation of the Pharisees by appealing to a few words in Psa. lxxxii.

¹ εν πνεύματι. These words are by some rendered "by the Spirit." If this be the true rendering, the argument based on the passage is powerfully enhanced.

The same apostles quotes certain passages of the Old Testament as the very words of the Holy Ghost. "Well spake the Holy Ghost by Esaias the prophet unto our fathers." (Acts xxviii. 25.) "Wherefore as the Holy Ghost saith, To-day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts." (Heb. iii. 7, 8.) "The Holy Ghost this signifying." (Heb. ix. 8.)

He calls the Scriptures the "oracles of God." Oracles were delivered in words. The inference is plain.

He also terms the Scriptures the "Word of God," "For the word of God is quick and powerful," etc. (Heb. iv. 12.) The word of God is a compendious expression for the words of God. The Scriptures are a collection of God's words, and as they are characterized by unity they are fitly designated as his Word.

Paul declares that "all Scripture is given by inspiration of God." The questions are not now raised as to the scope of this enunciation concerning the Scriptures, and as to the propriety of inserting the verb *is* between "Scripture" and "given"; but it is contended that the words "given by inspiration of God," inspired by God, *θεόπνευστος*, applied to Scripture, prove that every Scripture confessed to be inspired is verbally inspired. The argument is as conclusive as it is brief. Scripture is writing, which is the same as to say that writing is writing. But writing consists of words. If then the writing is inspired, the words that compose it are inspired. Paul affirms verbal inspiration.

The Apostle Peter definitely asserted the verbal inspiration of the Old Testament Scriptures. "And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God." (Acts ii.

17.) "For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." (2 Peter i. 21.)

In this testimony all the apostles concurred. "And when they heard that, they lifted up their voice to God with one accord, and said, Lord, thou art God, which hast made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is: who by the mouth of thy servant David hast said," etc. (Acts iv. 24, 25.)

2. The Scriptures of the New Testament were verbally inspired.

(1) The Lord Jesus promised to the apostles the verbal inspiration of the Holy Spirit when they should be called to testify to him and his gospel. "But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak: for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak. For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you." (Matt. x. 19, 20.) "And when they bring you unto the synagogues, and unto magistrates, and powers, take ye no thought how or what thing ye shall answer, or what ye shall say: for the Holy Ghost shall teach you in the same hour what ye ought to say." (Luke xii. 11, 12.) So far for the verbal inspiration of their oral teaching.

(2) The Saviour promised to the apostles the same inspiration in all their teaching whether oral or written. "But the Comforter which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said [N. B.] unto you." (John xiv. 26.) "But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send

unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify [N. B.] of me: and ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning." (John xv. 26, 27.) One cannot help pausing here to notice the conjunct influence of the Spirit's testimony to the apostles, which, of course, would be in words, and of their own experience as personal observers. The Spirit's testimony and their own testimony would be one and the same. "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen." (Matt. xxviii. 19, 20.)

(3) "The apostles placed their writings upon the same footing exactly with their oral instructions." If the latter were verbally inspired, so, consequently, were the former. "Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle." (2 Thess. ii. 15.) "Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand." (1 Cor. xv. 1.) "But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name." (John xx. 31.) "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life (for the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that

eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us); that which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ. And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full." (1 John i. 1-4.) If, then, the oral teachings of the apostles were, as has been incontestably proved, verbally inspired, so were their writings.

(4) If the apostles "attributed to their own compositions" equal authority with that of the Old Testament Scriptures, and the latter were, as has been shown, verbally inspired, so likewise were the former. That they did ascribe such authority to their writings is proved by facts, as recorded in the New Testament. Peter dealt with Paul's epistles in that way. He ranked them, as to authority, with "the other Scriptures." "And account that the long-suffering of our Lord is salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given [N. B.] unto him hath written unto you; as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other Scriptures, unto their own destruction." (2 Peter iii. 15, 16.) Paul quotes Luke as entitled to equal consideration with Moses. "For the Scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. And, The laborer is worthy of his reward." (1 Tim. v. 18.) The quotation in the first part of the verse is from Deut. xxv. 4, and that in the last part is found nowhere else, as cited by Paul, than

in the Gospel of Luke x. 7. The words of Paul and those of Luke are, in the original, precisely the same. (See also Col. iv. 16, 1 Thess. v. 27.)

(5) Paul distinctly asserts the verbal inspiration of his teachings oral and written. He tells the Thessalonians that they had received his instructions as the word of God, and not as the word of man. "For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe." (1 Thess. ii. 13.) He declares to the Corinthians, that he delivered the gospel in the words which the Holy Ghost taught him. "And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom." "Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth." (1 Cor. ii. 4, 13.)

Thus far the argument has been based in the statements of the New Testament Scriptures, but another of a general character may be added—

(6) Reasoning *a minori ad majus*, it must be inferred that if the Old Testament Scriptures were verbally inspired, much more were those of the New Testament.

In the first place, it will not be disputed that the teachings of Christ were verbally inspired, or at least had an authority exactly the same with that conferred upon men by verbal inspiration. Take any supposition one pleases. If he taught as man, as he was endued, in that capacity, with the Holy Ghost without measure, he was, in the highest sense, verbally inspired. If he taught

as God, he was the fountain itself of inspiration, and directly expressed omniscience and infinite truth in his instructions. This single consideration ought with candid minds to lift the New Testament to the highest plane of verbal inspiration. If it be objected to this view that the discourses of Christ were reported in the writings of men, and were colored by their imperfection and fallibility, the reply is irresistible by one who respects the New Testament Scriptures as credible, that the Lord Jesus expressly promised to give the apostles the Holy Spirit, who should bring to their remembrance all that he had said to them. They had, it is true, been ear-witnesses of his instructions, but if their memory, the memory of all of them, should fail them in exactness of retention, its deficiency would be infallibly supplied by the dictation of the Holy Ghost.

In the second place, the apostles, according to our Saviour's own statement were greater than the Old Testament prophets. John the Baptist was the greatest of the prophets, because he was nearer to Christ than they, but he that was least in the New Testament dispensation was greater than he because nearer to Christ than he was. Surely the apostles were not least in the kingdom of heaven. The argument is conclusive that they were greater than John and the whole succession of Old Testament prophets. If, therefore, the prophets were verbally inspired, much more were the apostles of our Lord's extraordinary call. If they were not verbally inspired they were less than the prophets of the old dispensation; a supposition which cannot be tolerated, as contradictory to the words of Jesus.

In the third place, the New Testament dispensation is the culmination, the crowning development of the old economy. It would, therefore, be absurd to ascribe to the New attributes inferior to those belonging to the Old — to make Christianity an institute of less dignity and glory than Judaism.

The conclusion at which we have arrived by this line of argument is, that both the Old and New Testaments were verbally inspired, and, therefore, that verbal inspiration is predicable of the whole Bible. Having appealed to the direct statements of the Scriptures in proof of their verbal inspiration, other arguments tending to the same result will now be submitted.

3. The primitive church held the doctrine of verbal inspiration. Assuredly it knew the doctrine of the apostles on the subject. It is almost unaccountable that Mr. Morell should have denied that the early church regarded the writings of the apostles and evangelists as verbally inspired. That the Scriptures were verbally inspired was the view of Justin, Irenæus, Athenagoras, Origen, Gregory Thaumaturgus, Chrysostom, Macarius, and Cyril of Alexandria.¹ That Augustin held the doctrine which is here contended for is evinced by Dr. Shedd's citation from his *De Consensu Evangelistarum* (I., xxxv.), "Christ is the head and his apostles are the members. Whatever he wished us to read concerning his words and deeds, he ordered to be written down as if

¹ There is not room here for the insertion of quotations from the early fathers. Reference is made to Suicer, Article *γραφή*, Conybeare's *Bampton Lectures*, Lect. 1, Thornwell's *Collected Writings*, Vol. III., and Gaussen, p. 343.

with his own hands; and he who reads the narratives of the evangelists will believe them as if he saw Christ himself writing by their hands and pens.'"¹ This testimony is explicit enough. The argument here is like that in regard to the Canon of Scripture. The early church had the true view in that matter, because it knew the mind of the apostles concerning it. That settles the question for us. And so as the early church, knowing the judgment of the apostles on the subject, held the view of verbal inspiration, the doctrine must be held to be apostolic, and that, of course, ought to determine our belief; unless, with the higher critics, we elect to differ with the apostles. From such presumption may the Lord in mercy deliver us!

4. The doctrine of verbal inspiration is the only one which maintains the plenary inspiration of the Scriptures.

In the first place, how are we to be assured that God's thoughts are accurately presented, unless the language be God's? If it be replied that the writers were so superintended as to guard against error, the question arises, In what form was that supervision exercised? If the *expression* of the ideas was not guarded by this superintending influence, it is impossible to see how errors of statement could have been prevented? It was precisely in expressing the thoughts that the human organs were liable to the danger of failing to represent them accurately.

In the second place, if the words were not inspired, the contemporaries of the inspired persons would have

¹ *Dogmat. Theol.*, Vol. I., p. 74.

been under the necessity of taking the testimony of the writers themselves that they had exactly presented the thoughts which God communicated to them. That would have destroyed, or at least impaired, their confidence in the inerrancy of the writings, since the testimony would, *ex hypothesi*, have been that of men as fallible, and not as inspired. To us the difficulty would be insuperable, as we have no access to the persons of the prophets and apostles. In a matter of so vital moment we need absolute assurance, and that can only be felt upon the conviction that words and thoughts are alike inspired. "The theory of verbal dictation," says Dr. Thornwell, "which our author [Morell] declares 'has been so generally abandoned by the thoughtful in the present day,' is the only theory which we have ever regarded as consistent with the exigencies of the case, the only theory which makes the Bible what it professes to be, the Word of God, and an adequate and perfect measure of our faith. If its contents, in any instances, however insignificant, rest only on the testimony of the human agents employed in writing it, in those instances we can only believe in man; the statements may be true, but they cease to be divine and infallible, and the assent which we yield to them becomes opinion and not faith."¹

In the third place, if all Scripture is not verbally inspired we could not know what parts are verbally, and therefore, beyond doubt, plenary inspired. Our confidence in the whole Scripture would be shaken. It is necessary that all be verbally inspired to relieve this uncertainty. In matters of eternal concern we need a

¹ *Coll. Writings*, Vol. III., p. 51.

"thus saith the Lord" to ground an unquestioning faith.

5. If the Holy Spirit can suggest thoughts he can suggest words. If he can give the matter, he can give the mode of presenting it. There is no more mystery, no more difficulty, in one supposition than in the other. Even in the case of the ordinary believer, the Spirit is represented as speaking in him and through him, as inditing his language in prayer as well as creating his dispositions and inciting his thoughts. He is said to cry, Abba, Father, in the children of God. (Rom. viii. 26; Gal. iv. 6.) He is not God's Son; it is they who are children of God, and consequently they who cry, Abba, Father, as is expressly stated. (Rom. viii. 15.) Yet the Spirit in them utters the same cry. If he can and does indite the words of a believer's prayers, without interfering with the active exercises of his own faculties, why could he not have suggested the words in which inspired men clothed the matter of his communications, without suppressing the free play of their minds?

6. The apostles were endowed with the extraordinary gift of speaking fluently in foreign tongues with which they were wholly unacquainted. This consideration is urged as of the highest importance in its bearing upon the question before us, not only as furnishing positive proof of the fact of verbal inspiration, but also as meeting by anticipation one of the commonest objections to the doctrine of verbal dictation — namely, that it is inconsistent with the manifestation of individual peculiarities of thought and style in inspired persons, and makes them merely mechanical, passive instruments of

the sole agency of the Spirit. In regard to the fact alleged — the endowment of the apostles with the gift of tongues — there can be no dispute except on the part of avowed infidels, and this argument is not with infidels, but with those who admit the credibility of the Scriptures and allow a species of inspiration. The record in the Acts of the Apostles is explicit — the facts are indisputable.

Now, first, this proves that God *can* give the words in which his will is to be communicated; secondly, that in some instances he *did* give the words; and thirdly, that the inspiration of the words did not interfere with individual peculiarities of utterance. Certainly Peter spoke as Peter, and John as John. If that were true of their speaking, there is no conceivable difficulty in supposing that it was true of their writing. Here we have an actual instance of verbal inspiration. The ground is rashly and presumptuously taken that the hypothesis of verbal inspiration is opposed by an antecedent impossibility, which is equivalent to the assertion that Almighty God himself could not make it a fact. Without the attempt now to show, that this is to place a limit upon omnipotence because of what appears an impossibility to the human mind, it is sufficient here to be indicated that the supposition of verbal inspiration was in this concrete case palpably actualized. The hypothesis of an antecedent impossibility is negatived and overthrown by the actual fact. The subject will be farther considered when some of the objections to verbal inspiration will come to be examined.

7. *Accurate* thought cannot be disjoined from lan-

guage. Words are its vehicles, both subjectively and objectively. When we think accurately and precisely, we think in words. To give the thoughts, therefore, is to give the words. If this can be made out, verbal inspiration is established. Let it be observed that it is not intended to say that our *feelings* are always associated with words. It is conceded that there are emotions which cannot be expressed, at least adequately expressed, in language. Paul says that the Spirit makes intercession in the children of God with groanings that cannot be uttered. The Greek, however, is literally *unuttered* groanings. But whatever may be the exact meaning of those words of the apostle, it is not here denied that there are feelings which are so tumultuous and confused, or perhaps so deep and poignant that they cannot be fitly represented by words. Nor is it meant to assert that there may not be certain forms of intellection, certain acts of the intelligence — the cognitive faculty, which are not possible unless connected with language. It may be that there are acts of presentative knowledge, in which real objects are immediately apprehended by the mind in sense-perception, and acts of representative knowledge, in which the images of the real objects formerly presented are pictured in the imagination, which are not associated with lingual signs. Even in these cases, however, it is difficult, if not impossible, to determine whether the mind does not spontaneously attach some representation in language of the presented objects, and lay hold of and retain the objects by some word-symbols in its representative processes. But let it be admitted that some intellectual activities are un-

attended with words; that concession would not affect the position here maintained, which is that clear, accurate thinking, thinking which is designed to be intelligibly communicated to others, is done through the medium of language. What is contended for is, that the kind of thought involved in the reception and especially the communication of inspired matter is never dissociated from words.

Didactic statement is the very method, as the words imply, by which teaching is effected. But teaching was the form in which inspired communications were made in the first instance by the Spirit to the persons inspired, and in the second instance by the inspired persons to their fellow-men. Two things have already been established, first — in the discussion of the theory of Schleiermacher and Morell — that there is no intuitional faculty of revelation which is correlated with religious truth, and only needs to be stimulated by inspiration to activity in order clearly to apprehend the “eternal verities” of religion; and, secondly, that it is a profound mistake to confound a mere emotional *afflatus* with inspiration. The Scriptures affirm, and the church at large has always held, that, in the act of inspiring, the Spirit positively teaches, that he didactically communicates truth to the understanding. It has been shown, in the consideration of the nature of inspiration, that it terminates upon the intellect, and the fact that it was sometimes entirely disconnected with pious character and feelings, as in the cases of Balaam and Caiaphas, was pleaded to prove that it is a didactic influence to be carefully discriminated from the holy illumination involved

in the process of sanctification. We have also seen that the Scriptures sustain this view of inspiration, in uniformly declaring that the Lord “spake” in words to the prophets and apostles, and that they were commanded to deliver his words to others. This ought to be sufficient to determine the question. The point, however, now insisted upon is that, from the very nature of the case, didactic statement supposes thinking through words.

First. This is obvious in regard to that inspired teaching which involved *logical* processes — which proceeded by reasoning. It would seem almost a needless task to show the hopelessness of conducting a logical process without words. How could we dispense with terms, the very constituents of propositions, and therefore the conditions upon which judgments are formed? But terms are concepts expressed in words. This holds not only of him who is taught to reason logically, but also of him who, in his own mind, reasons logically. One would imagine that the logical thinker would make but sorry progress, if any progress at all, did he not pin his concepts to representative signs; and what are those signs but words? Without them he would inevitably be compelled at every new step to reinstitute all preceding steps in the process. In fact, he could not get on with it. He must have his mile-posts to mark his progress, his labels to distinguish his concepts. Those mile-stones and labels are words. But however this may be with the thinker himself who is elaborating his own processes, it is certainly true of the person taught. Take away words and how, in the name of sense, would one teach to others either the theory or the practice of logical

reasoning? How would he communicate to others a logical argument?

Now let it be borne in mind that a large part of the Scriptures consists of logical arguments and of logically connected expositions of truth. These must have been taught in words by the inspiring Spirit to the inspired persons, and in words are palpably taught by the inspired persons to the uninspired hearers. The Scriptures, so far as they involve this logical form of didactic statement, are but copies of the form of didactic statement made by the Spirit to the prophets and apostles. The intellectual action of inspired men must have proceeded by language, just as that of the uninspired hearer must be conducted in the same way.

Secondly. Let us consider the case of laws, commands, precepts. It will scarcely be denied that in the formation of laws, and the conception of commands and precepts precise and careful thought is required, and it is certainly true that in their didactic statement the utmost accuracy is demanded. This precision is only attainable through verbal apprehension and verbal delivery. Their brevity and compactness exact the employment of words, both in framing and expressing them. Consciousness and experience may be safely appealed to in support of this position. What progress would be made in the mental construction of a code of human laws except through the instrumentality of accurate language? And one may well crave to know how it could be communicated without language partaking of the precision of formulas? But it is evident that before, and in order to, its exact expression in

words, the words must have been previously conceived and adopted by the mind. In fact, the intellectual act is necessarily performed through the medium of language, or at any rate in inseparable connection with it.

This becomes greatly clearer, when it is considered that the laws and precepts contained in the Scriptures are divine — that they are divinely originated, and are imposed only by the divine authority. They convey the mandatory thoughts of God. Man had no right to frame or issue them. It follows that the words in which they are embodied must have been by inspiration communicated to the human writers, just as those words are communicated by them to us. The divine law could not have been thought out by man without divine words. Didactic statement was, in this instance, as well indispensable to the inspired teacher, as to the uninspired persons whom he was commissioned to teach.

Thirdly. It may be contended that the narratives of Scripture must be exempted from the operation of this principle. It has already, in the progress of this discussion, been signalized that inspiration is to be contemplated in two aspects — as the strict revelation to the inspired men of unknown or unknowable matter, and as the suggestion or presentation to them of known or knowable matter. According to that determination the narratives of facts level to human apprehension, cognizable by the mind in its ordinary condition, were inspired narratives. That, however, is not exactly the state of the question which we are now considering. The question now is, whether the narratives of Scripture were, in accordance with the laws of the human mind, conceived

in words. Here again a distinction must be taken — between the narratives of facts transcendental and undiscoverable by the mere human faculties, and those of facts either known to them or discoverable by them. The former of these classes of narrative will be adverted to farther on in the discussion. The question now is in regard to the latter.

It may be said that, in this case, a narrative is concerned about objects, such as persons, actions, places, mountains, rivers, events — all of which, in accordance with the laws of presentative and immediate knowledge, are as observable phenomena directly brought into contact with the mind through sense-perception; and that when the presentative relation ceases they are, in obedience to the laws of representative knowledge, picturable by the imagination. In either of these cases, it may be urged that the designation of the objects by names is not necessary. They are in no need of words to impress themselves. The mind observes and holds them without the aid of language. So far as the *individual* objects are concerned, this may be so. At all events no contention is now made about them so contemplated — that is, as single and out of relation to other objects. But the case is different with reference to a narrative, in which objects are not at all, or only to a very small extent, treated as individual and out of relation, but in connection with other objects. Now this relation may be logical or historical. Objects may be logically grouped into classes, and the narrative may deal with them as such, as in the instance of armies, communities, nations; and then, it is unnecessary to

argue that words become indispensable. Or objects may be dealt with historically, in the relations of successive and connected facts. And how in that case the narrative either as conceived or stated can proceed without words it is impossible to see. Words are often characterized as *abridgments* of thought. This is true. They symbolize, represent, stand for, tedious processes of thinking. In this respect we could not do without them, in the conduct of logical processes. But it may also be remarked that words discharge the office of *bridges*. They are in narrative the connecting links between fact and fact, between person and person, between one predication and another. How could the narrative proceed without the distinctive names of persons, without the copulative conjunction, or the verb *to be* with its inflections? How rapid would be its flow, if instead of distinctive names of individuals and peoples, circumlocutory descriptions had to be resorted to; if, instead of the name *Moses*, the scriptural narrator had been under the necessity of always describing that person as the man whom God chose to be the mediator between the Ruler of heaven and earth and the people whom he had selected to be peculiarly his own, and to be their lawgiver, leader and judge? Every element in the description would have been requisite to complete the connotation of marks by which that particular individual was distinguished from other men. But the name *Moses* served both as an abridgment of that collection of peculiar qualities, and a bridge by which the narrator passed rapidly from one part of his history to another. So with the name *Israel*, and so with all the words which were distinctively

characteristic of men and things. It is not deemed necessary to press this special argument any farther. It would seem manifest that no one could pursue the train of a narrative, in his own mind, without the use of words. If this conclusion has been fairly reached, it would follow that the narratives of Scripture are no exception to the law that accurate thought and language are inseparably connected, and that the Spirit in inspiring the sacred writers to record them gave them both the facts and the words in which they are couched.

8. The *transcendent truths* of Scripture are fairly pleadable in proof of the position that clear and precise intellectual action is inseparable from words. By transcendent truths are meant those doctrines which it is not in the power of the *thinking* faculty of man to *conceive*. They are distributable into two classes. First, there are truths for the apprehension of which we are solely and entirely dependent upon the fundamental laws of belief inlaid by nature in the human constitution, which when educes from latency, and brought out into activity and formal expression, by the actual cases of conscious experience, issue in faith-judgments. These when so developed are the necessary truths, primary convictions, primitive cognitions, which lie at the basis of all our thinking processes. To these truths we are conducted by the natural and necessary progress of our rational faculties. But the deranging force of sin has marred this originally natural tendency of the human mind, and clouded those faith-judgments to which, without that disorderly influence, men would be normally led. Now to apprehend — a word of the most general character is

advisedly used — to apprehend, to seize and hold these transcendent truths, it is requisite that appropriate words be employed. Words, so to speak, crystallize and conserve them. Without, for instance, the words, cause and effect, substance and property, personality, infinite or illimitable, it would be difficult if not impossible to apprehend clearly and definitely the great and regulative truths which they symbolize. So far as any ratiocinative process into which they enter as elements is concerned, it would be impracticable, without the language which expresses them and gives them subsistence. When our minds are occupied about them, we are obliged to use these significant words — we could not do without them.

Now the Spirit, when by inspiration he communicated the transcendent truths of revelation to the sacred writers, gave to them also, in conformity with this necessity, the words which signify them. He enabled and impelled them to apprehend these doctrines by means of the words which he suggested; or to say the same thing in another way, the inspiring influence as didactic taught them these truths through appropriate language. Take, for example, the doctrine of the unity of God, either as essential or relative; that is, either as the absolute unity of his essence, or as his onliness as the triune Jehovah. Stripped of the words (or their equivalents) one God, God is one, what abstract apprehension of the divine unity would have been available, not to say possible? What practical office would this truth have discharged in conflict with a universally prevalent polytheism?

Secondly. Another class of transcendent truths is

that of those which lie altogether beyond the power of the human mind to originate or develop, which are absolutely undiscoverable by the human faculties, under their most generic consideration. These are truths which would be entirely unknown without supernatural revelation. They are created by it. In regard to them it must be held, not that they cannot be apprehended without being associated with words, but that words are the necessary condition of their communication. Without the preëxistence of the words which convey them, they would have no existence. In this case God dealt with inspired men as a father now deals with his young children. He first teaches them the words which represent truths which, in their infantile state, they cannot discover, and which when so conveyed they cannot then even apprehend, in the hope that they will be able intelligently to receive them when their faculties shall have expanded. In such cases, the inspired writers accepted the truth, verbally communicated to them, upon the same principle as that upon which we rely upon the statement of them in the Scriptures — the principle of faith.

Take, as an illustration of this class of truths the mysterious doctrine of the resurrection of the dead. It was utterly undiscoverable by the human faculties. It was neither a thought-judgment, nor a faith-judgment. When stated to us, it is impossible for us to comprehend it. We first receive the verbal statement of it in the Scriptures, and then believe it upon God's naked testimony. So likewise must it have been with the inspired writers. The Spirit first impressed upon their

minds the words teaching the doctrine, and then they by faith accepted the truth verbally announced.

Here, then, we have a clear and undoubted instance of verbal inspiration, of inspiration that *must* have been verbal to be inspiration at all. It is, in this regard, analogous to the miraculous endowment of the apostles with the gift of speaking in foreign tongues. It is, like that, a concrete case of verbal inspiration. And it deserves to be remarked that the most precious truths of redemption are precisely those doctrines which lie at the root of this argument.

9. Similar proof of verbal inspiration is derivable from the *prophecies* of Scripture, which are predictive of events in the distant future, conditioned upon the contingent action of human wills, and therefore incalculable upon the uniform operation of natural law. The argument in this relation is so obvious that it needs but little elaboration. How could Moses have predicted that God would eventually raise up to his people a prophet like unto him? How could David and Isaiah have foretold some of the minute particulars of Messiah's death and burial? How could the prophets have exactly forecast the fate of kingdoms and cities? How, for example, could Isaiah and Jeremiah have described long beforehand the fall of Babylon, and the detailed circumstances which attended that event, in their days so improbable? How could these events have been predicted unless the words which expressed them had been infused into the minds of these prophets? How could they have *conceived* them without the origination of the conceptions by words? Otherwise, the very thoughts would have

been impossible. How could one, had that been possible, have predicted the overthrow of Napoleon at Waterloo, and his imprisonment and death on St. Helena, had he not mentally conceived the name of Napoleon as a great conqueror, the name of the field of Waterloo, the name of the island of St. Helena? Without such conception his prediction would have been indefinite — might have applied to another man. Were one now to predict the destruction of London, how could he do it without first conceiving the word London as designative, not of any city, but of a particular city? And how could he have the conception of the destruction of that great metropolis unless the very words of the prediction were imparted to him by a supernatural revelation? Without such a profession he would be a madman, as with it he would probably be regarded as one.

Again we have an actual, concrete instance of verbal inspiration, checking the hypothesis of an antecedent impossibility of the fact.

In regard to prophetic, unproductive *visions*, it must be confessed that the case is by no means so clear. It may be said that they are neither the results of thinking nor the judgments of faith; that they were simple intuitions, and like all mere presentations were independent of language as to their existence. But it must not be forgotten that these visions were didactic; they were intended to teach great religious lessons. They were not, therefore, merely intuitions of magnificent præternatural scenery, but possessed as specific character, as definitely instructive. When Moses and Isaiah and Ezekiel had their sublime visions of the effulgent

manifestation of the divine perfections, they were by the inspiring Spirit informed that it was the glory of Jehovah, the God of Israel, the Lord of hosts, in contradistinction to so-called divinities of the heathen, that was represented; and the scenes of the visions were apocalyptic of his being, his character and his providential efficiency. The experience of the visions involved the apprehension through language of the angelic ministries which celebrated his fame. It must also be remembered that these visions were designed to extend the vocation, or to emphasize the vocation, of the prophets to their extraordinary office as teachers, and to impress upon them their duties, and the manner in which they were to be performed. In a word, the visions were not only impressive presentations, but were didactic propædantics of the prophetic ministry. The meaning of them was interpreted, concurrently with their experience, in language by the Spirit to the prophets.

It must, moreover, be considered that not only were these sublime presentations made to the exalted imagination of the prophets, but that the prophets were moved by the Holy Ghost to furnish *descriptions* of them. And as their natural faculties were utterly incompetent to conceive these verbal explanations, they were dependent upon the inspiring influence both in thinking the words and in recording them. This exposition of the case, it is believed, is in accordance with the Scriptures, and necessitated by the very nature of these visions as supernatural apocalypses; but whatever may be thought about the matter, it is enough to know that the descriptions

given by the prophets were necessarily in words, and that the uniform and the express statement of the Scriptures is, that holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. The descriptions were verbally inspired.

This concludes the consideration of the extent of inspiration in that aspect of it which is implied in its degree. The argument, pursued with constant and earnest prayer for the guidance by the Spirit of a fallible mind, has gone to show that there are no degrees in the inspiration of the Scriptures, inasmuch as it is verbal; that the record is in words, and that the words were furnished by the Holy Ghost. All inspired men, and consequently their writings, were controlled by the didactic accuracy of the omniscient and almighty Spirit. The Scriptures, therefore, are absolutely infallible and inerrant.

Secondly. The *scope* of inspiration.

The question here is, Does the inspiration which has been contended for belong to all parts of the Scriptures—that is, the writings which the church has always held to be canonical Scripture? The affirmative will be maintained.

1. The first appeal in proof is to the classic passage, 2 Tim. iii. 16, which, for necessary reasons, is cited from the original: *πᾶσα γραφή θεόπνευστος καὶ ὠφέλιμος πρὸς διδασκαλίαν*, etc. This is rendered in our English Version, “All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine,” etc.

(1) By some *πᾶσα* is considered distributive and not collective, and accordingly they construe the affirmation

to be, Every Scripture is inspired of God—*θεόπνευστος*—and is profitable for doctrine, etc. This is the alternative reading given by the authors of the Revised Version, and is favored by Bishop Ellicott. Let this reading be adopted, and then, as whatsoever is predicated of every part of a whole is predicated of the whole, the construction is equivalent to that of the English Bible, “All scripture is given by inspiration of God. The question here might be as to the meaning of the word Scripture, *γραφὴ*; and that question is settled by the immediate context. The apostle reminds Timothy that from a child he had known “the holy scriptures”—the holy writings, *τὰ ἱερὰ γράμματα*—which, of course designated the sacred Scriptures, the canonical books of the Jews. These sacred writings he alluded to under the term *γραφὴ*; and it can make no difference, as has just been indicated, whether it is employed distributively or collectively; the result is the same.

(2) The rendering of the Revised Version is, “Every scripture inspired of God is also profitable for teaching,” etc. No doubt the revisers desired to make the import of the apostle’s great enunciation plain and exact. But in departing from the Authorized Version, in order to accomplish this design, they signally failed. Their rendering is susceptible of two constructions. It may be construed to mean, Every Scripture which is inspired of God, *and no other Scripture*, is, besides being inspired of God, also profitable, etc. This meaning may not be that intended by the revisers, but it is certainly deducible from the structure of the sentence; and such a construction of his meaning would be nothing short of an

injustice, if not an outrage, to the apostle. He had just asserted that the sacred Scriptures, the holy writings, were taught to Timothy by pious and Jewish lips in his childhood, and that they were able to make him wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. Did he design to imply that among these holy writings, or besides them, there were some holy writings which were not inspired of God, and were not profitable for teaching, etc. ? It cannot for a moment be supposed.

Another construction of which the rendering of the Revised Version is capable is, Every Scripture being inspired of God is also—in addition to its inspiration—profitable, etc. In regard to this possible construction it may be said :

In the first place, it refuses the verb *is* to the first clause, and without sufficient reason inserts it in the second. The Greek does not employ the verb in any part of the enunciation. Literally rendered into English it would be, All (or every) Scripture inspired of God, profitable for doctrine (or teaching), etc. As that rendering would have been a violation of syntax, and, therefore, insufferable, the question arose to the translators, Where shall the connecting verb be placed ? The English translators very naturally inserted it in the first clause, All Scripture is, etc. The revisers reject this construction and inject the verb in the second clause. The change involved a shocking departure from the old, consecrated construction of the English-speaking church, which could only have been justified by a sufficient reason. For what good reason was it made ? It would seem to have been arbitrarily adopted.

In the second place, the removal of the verb from the first clause and the interpolation of it in the second made it necessary to give *κα* the translation “also,” or to leave the whole sentence in English verbless and ungrammatical. This cannot be regarded as an improvement of the Authorized Version’s rendering.

In the third place, the translation of *κα* by “also” enforces the imposition of what appears to be an unwarrantable meaning upon the apostle’s grand enunciation ; for the word “also” implies in the second clause of the sentence something over and beyond what was asserted in the first, something which was not contained in the first. It conveys the impression that Scripture was not inspired *in order* to be profitable, but that besides being inspired it is moreover profitable, etc. It discharges offices which its mere inspiration does not guarantee. How much preferable is the sense, Scripture is inspired, and because it is given by inspiration of God it is profitable for doctrine, etc., and completely furnishes the man of God for all good works ! One of orthodox tendencies is unable to account for the solicitude which was manifested by the revisers to shift the position of the verb “is” in the affirmation of the apostle, in view of the fact that it has no place in the Greek text. Why not say, as the Authorized Version says, Scripture is inspired of God, as say inspired Scripture is profitable ? The rendering of the Revised Version is unnecessary, infelicitous and misleading.

In the fourth place, what is gained by the change ? The affirmation, Every Scripture inspired of God is plainly tantamount to the affirmation, Every Scripture

is inspired of God. How could the words inspired of God be predicated of every Scripture unless every Scripture is inspired of God? The two affirmations are precisely equivalent. What, then, is gained by the change? One fails to see the difference between the rendering in the text of the Revised Version and the alternative rendering given in the margin, "Every scripture is inspired of God."

We are brought, then, to the question, whether the change made by the revisers from "all scripture" to "every scripture" is of any moment — a question immediately pertinent to the present discussion. It is not likely that they intended to make the passage signify that only some Scripture is inspired of God, and that there is some Scripture which is not so inspired. That, as we have seen, would be to violate the context. But if that was not their meaning, the change from "all" to "every" is of not the slightest force. If every Scripture is inspired of God, all Scripture is. And if, as has been proved, the inspiration of the Scriptures is verbal, all the canonical Scriptures are verbally inspired. This celebrated passage is fairly pleadable in support of that position.

2. The Lord Jesus Christ taught the inspiration of all the Scriptures, which were canonical at the time of his ministry on earth.

(1) He is the supreme Teacher of religious truth to the church and the world. All men are commanded by God to "hear him," upon peril of eternal death.

(2) He perfectly knew the canon of the Jewish Scriptures. This, of course, is acknowledged by all but pronounced infidels.

(3) He sanctioned the whole Jewish canon, and taught its inspiration.

First. If that canon was not as a whole correct, or if any part of it was uninspired, he would have exposed its incorrectness as a whole, and pointed out the unauthoritativeness of the uninspired part. If, on the suppositions made, he had not discharged that office, he would have been either ignorant, or culpable. To say either is to assail the foundations of the Christian religion, to discredit the gospel, and to treat with contempt the eternal hopes of men.

Secondly. He expressly characterized all the canonical Scriptures of the Jews by the singular and comprehensive title, "the Scripture," *ἡ γραφή*. Upon the question in hand this consideration is of the utmost importance. It possesses a fourfold significance. In the first place, the Saviour asserts the unity of the Old Testament Scriptures: all the sacred writings composed but one book — the writing, the Scripture. In the second place, he affirms the inspiration of every part of the Old Testament canon. If the Scripture, as a whole, cannot be broken — and such is our Lord's declaration — that fact must have resulted from its divine inspiration. If this was true of the whole, it must have been true of every component part. If a chain cannot be broken, every particular link must be unbreakable. In the third place, Christ affirms the verbal inspiration of the whole Scripture, and of every part. In the passage in which the words under consideration occur, he founds his argument against the objectors to his divinity upon certain words of a Psalm. This evinces his maintenance

of the verbal inspiration of that Psalm, and *pari ratione* of the Psalms. He adds, immediately after his citation of the words of a Psalm, "and the Scripture cannot be broken." In this assertion he groups the Psalms, every Psalm, with the whole Scripture, and in affirming the verbal inspiration of the Psalms he affirms the verbal inspiration of the whole Scripture. Otherwise the words of the argument become unmeaning. In the fourth place, in the declaration, "The Scripture cannot be broken," Jesus proclaims the irrefragable, indissoluble, authority of the whole Scripture and of every part of it. Why? Because it is of divine authority. How is that established? Because it is divinely inspired. The inspiration of the Scripture and of all its parts is clearly asserted.

It may be objected that the inference is illegitimate from the inspiration of a single part to that of all the parts. The answer is easy. The argument is that no part of the Scripture can be broken, because the Scripture as a whole cannot be broken. If reduced to strict logical form it is, No Scripture can be broken; the eighty-second Psalm is a part of Scripture, therefore it cannot be broken. The argument holds good of every part of Scripture as well as of this particular part — the eighty-second Psalm; and Jesus included Moses and the prophets with the Psalms in the Scripture. The conclusion is obvious.

In addition to this line of proof the fact is adduced that the Lord Jesus expressed the grand unity of the Scriptures by designating them as the Word of God. He charged the Pharisees with invalidating the Word of

God — evidently meaning the Scriptures — by their traditional law, "Making the word of God of none effect through your tradition, which ye have delivered." (Mark vii. 13.) If all the Scriptures are the Word of God, they are verbally inspired. The same predication must be made of every part. What is true of all must be true of each. Allusion has already been made to the opinion of a distinguished higher critic that it is improper to apply the title Word of God to the whole Scripture, but it should be assigned only to particular parts. One may be pardoned for preferring the authority of him who "spake as never man spake" to that of those who speak as men often speak.

Thirdly. Our Saviour expressly acknowledged the divine authority and consequently the divine inspiration of the several books of the Jewish canon.

In the first place, he did this by his compendious distribution of the Old Testament Scriptures into the law of Moses, the prophets and the Psalms, in accordance with the accepted classification at the time when he spoke. "And he said unto them [his disciples assembled after his resurrection], These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me." (Luke xxiv. 44.)

In the second place, he did the same by his references to the Scriptures of the Old Testament in general.

Again and again he used the words with the solemnity of formulas, "It is written," "Thus it is written."

In his unanswerable argument with the Pharisees in

proof of his divine commission, his last point was an appeal to the Scriptures. "Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me." (John v. 39.)

In his conversation with the disciples going to Emmaus he invoked the testimony of all the Scriptures to himself, "And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself." (Luke xxiv. 27. See also Matt. xxvi. 54, 56.)

He adduced the law and the prophets to silence the derision with which the Pharisees treated his claims, "The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it. And it is easier for heaven and earth to pass than one tittle of the law to fail." (Luke xvi. 16, 17.) Here it is evident that our Lord first uses the term *law* specifically as a member of the usual classification, and then employs it generically as synonymous with the Scriptures. Otherwise, in affirming the immutability of the law specifically considered, he would have implicitly acknowledged the mutability of the prophets. Such a construction of his language the purport of his argument excludes. He asserts the unchanging perpetuity of the Scriptures in their minutest particulars. It merits especial notice just here that the very same thing is solemnly declared by the Lord Jesus of his own words, "Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away." (Luke xxi. 33.) As the New Testament consists principally of reports, expositions, inferential amplifications and historical devel-

opments of his words, nay, *is* his Word communicated by inspiration to the sacred writers, it, according to the declaration of Christ, possesses with the Old Testament the unchangeableness of God's veracity. Jesus affirms the immutable authority of the whole Scripture, Old and New, because it is the inspired Word of God.

In the third place, the same thing is proved by the use which our Saviour made of particular books in the Old Testament Scriptures.

In his argument with the Pharisees touching divorce he appeals to Genesis. "But from the beginning of the creation God made them male and female. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife; and they twain shall be one flesh." (Mark x. 6-8; Gen. i. 27; ii. 24.) He also cites the narrative in Genesis of the flood. (Matt. xxiv. 37-39.)

In the Sermon on the Mount, he expounded the ten commandments, the record of which is in Exodus. Of the moral law, and of the prophets, he affirms immutable authority, "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil." (Matt. v. 17.) Had not the moral law, as the standard of justification, been exactly fulfilled by Christ, we could not be discharged from the obligation perfectly to obey it in that respect. In his argument with the Sadducees concerning the resurrection of the dead, which, in the judgment of the Pharisees, had silenced his opponents, he cited the words of the same book as of conclusive authority. (Ex. iii. 6, 15, 16.)

Our Lord, as a man, conformed himself to the requirements of the ritual law contained in Leviticus and

Numbers. Sufficient importance has, perhaps, not been attached to this fact as evincing his acceptance of the inspired authority of the Old Testament Scriptures. But it must be specially noted that he expressly quotes Leviticus (Matt. xv. 4; Lev. xx. 9.)

In the progress of his temptation by the devil in the desert, he employed the words of the Book of Deuteronomy as a complete answer to the insidious suggestions of the great adversary. (Deut. viii. 3; vi. 13; x. 20.) There are, besides, other references which he made to the same book.

It has thus been pointed out that our Lord endorsed the belief of the Jews in the inspired authority of the Pentateuch.

Refuting the charge of the Pharisees that his disciples had violated the Sabbath by plucking corn on that day, he cited the act of David, approved by the high priest, as recorded in 1 Samuel, "Have ye not read what David did?" (Matt. xii. 3.); and in Matt. xxiii. 35, he virtually attests the inspired accuracy of all the historical books which narrated events from the death of Abel to that of Zacharias, the son of Barachias. These books are charged with serious errors by the higher critics. The contrast of judgment is conspicuous.

In Matt. xiii. 35 he expressly quotes David as a prophet, in Matt. xxi. 16 he cites Psa. viii., and in Matt. xxi. 42 he uses the words of Psa. cxviii. It was previously shown that he employed the very words of Psa. lxxxii. and Psa. cx. to clench his arguments, and now attention is called to the impressive fact that on the cross he used words from Psa. xxii. in making the most

affecting appeal to God that was ever uttered, "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?" — "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" He also in his dying agonies exclaimed, "I thirst," and tasted the vinegar offered him, in fulfilment of the prediction in Psa. lxix., "And in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink."

In the rebuke administered at the temple to the Pharisees and Sadducees for their profanation of that sacred edifice, he cited the words of Isaiah, with his usual formula, It is written, "Mine house shall be called an house of prayer." (Matt. xvi. 13; Isa. lvi. 7.) He took for the text of his memorable sermon at Nazareth the words of Isaiah, in which his anointing for his preaching office is so beautifully and sublimely portrayed, and in regard to which he said, "This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears." (Luke iv. 16-21; Isa. lxi. 1, 2.) In Matt. xiii. 14, and xv. 7, 8, he quotes the prophecy of Isaiah.

It is more than probable that in the words reported in Matt. xv. 24, "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel," he cited, or at least referred to Ezekiel xxxiv.

In his discourse to his disciples concerning the last things, he quotes Daniel as an inspired prophet, whose prediction in regard to the temple at Jerusalem would certainly be fulfilled, "When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel the prophet stand in the holy place." (Matt. xxiv. 15.)

He twice quoted the prophet Hosea. (Matt. xii. 7 and Hosea vi. 6.)

He assigned to the prophet Jonah a singular eminence

as the only sign that would be given to the contemporary generation who denied his divine commission as the Messiah, and by the extraordinary significance which he attributed to him as a type of his own death and resurrection, stamped his approval of a narrative which has furnished occasion for the cheap ridicule of blasphemous witslings. (Matt. xii. 39, 40; xvi. 4.)

He recognized the inspired authority of the prophet Malachi in his prediction touching the coming of Elijah. (Matt. xvii. 10-12; xi. 14; Mal. iv. 5, 6.)

It has thus with some care been proved that our adorable Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ authoritatively confirmed the belief of the Jews in the inspiration of their canonical books. It may be said that the enumeration is not complete — that there are Old Testament writers to whom he did not specially refer. It is sufficient to reply that his endorsement of those enumerated guaranteed that of all, since were the others not of inspired authority, and therefore not entitled to a place in the canon, he would, as the true and faithful Teacher of his church, have admonished her of the fact, and put her on her guard against false pretenders to inspiration. But, further, it has been proved that he confirmed the classification by the Jewish church of her canonical books, grouped all the Scriptures into unity under the compendious designation of the Scripture, and under the title of the Scriptures set his seal upon all her sacred, authoritative writings.

The argument might properly be arrested at this point. The authority of Jesus Christ, the revealer of God's will, the great Prophet of the church, the very

source of all inspiration, ought to be decisive with those who revere his name. But the testimony of the New Testament writers, partaking as they did of the same inspiring Spirit with their Master (Acts i. 2, 5), will also be briefly adduced. And let it be borne in mind that the special question now before us is with reference to the extent of inspiration as to its scope: Does it belong to *all* the books of the canonical Scriptures?

3. The writers of the New Testament bear the same testimony with Christ to the inspired authority of all the Scriptures.

(1) Other books than those expressly recognized by the Lord Jesus are attested to by them: the number of endorsed Old Testament writings is increased. These books are, Joshua (Heb. iv., xi.), Judges (Heb. xi.), Kings (James v.), Proverbs (Heb. xii.), Jeremiah (Matt. ii., Heb. x.), Joel (Acts ii.), Micah (Matt. ii.), Haggai (Heb. xii.), Zechariah (Matt. xxi., xxvi.). Amos is quoted in the great speech of Stephen, who was not a New Testament writer, it is true, but was in all probability inspired in the delivery of that speech. Certainly, he was "full of the Holy Ghost," and received a remarkable, miraculous attestation from the glorified Saviour. The allegation of the *book* of Joshua may be objected to. But in the passage to which reference is made (Heb. iv.) the writer says, "For if Joshua had given them rest, then would he [God] not afterward have spoken of another day." That subsequent speaking was in the book of Psalms, which is thus distinguished from the books of Deuteronomy and Joshua in which the first speaking is recorded.

(2) The New Testament writers attest the inspiration of most of the books endorsed by Christ. It would be tedious to give the references. Through inadvertence the enumeration here given may not be complete, but we have seen that those acknowledged by Christ and the New Testament writers are, Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Samuel, Kings, Psalms, Proverbs, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel (probably), Daniel, Hosea, Joel, Jonah, Micah, Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi. Amos was attested to by Stephen. As the Jewish canon was made up, and there was no construction of one by Christ and the writers of the New Testament, but, on the contrary, the reception by them of the existing one, the maxim by no means holds here, *Expressio unius est exclusio alterius*. But the express attestation of so many books of the Jewish canon was the virtual attestation of all. Had those not specifically mentioned been uninspired, they would have been explicitly excluded from approbation.

(3) A special line of argument previously employed in relation to Christ's teachings holds good here — the New Testament writers collect *all* the books of the Jewish canon under general and comprehensive and unifying titles. They speak of them as the law, the prophets, the law and the prophets, the Scriptures, the holy Scriptures, the oracles of God, and above all as the Scripture, the Word of God. It is not necessary again to press the argument. The fact is signalized.

4. The previous argument in favor of the *verbal* inspiration of the New Testament Scriptures goes far to prove the inspiration of all of them. No elaborate rea-

soning will be employed upon that subject. The question of the inspiration of all the New Testament writings is really the question of the canon of the New Testament, and that is not here under special discussion. But the proposition is laid down, without fear of successful contradiction, that all the canonical Scriptures of the New Testament are inspired. Whatever New Testament Scriptures are canonical are entitled to that rank precisely because they are inspired. No other than an inspired writing could be canonical.

There are two grounds, based in historical evidence, upon which, to my mind, the question of the canon was settled. The first is, that all the New Testament writers were apostles, with the exception of Mark and Luke; that the apostles were inspired men; that their claim to apostleship and inspiration was incontestably proved by miracles; and that these miraculous credentials were perfectly known by the apostolic church. Who, in that church, could, with any shadow of just reason, doubt that Matthew and John, Paul, James and Peter were apostles of our Lord? Who could dispute the patent fact of the miraculous credentials by which they proved their claims to the apostolic office, and the inspiration attaching to it? Claims, I say, for there were many who were endued with miraculous gifts, but few only claimed to be on an equality with the apostles, and their presumptuous pretensions were soon silenced by miraculous interventions which were observable by all. The only question, then, when a writing professed to emanate from an apostle, was, Is it genuine; that is, produced by the apostle himself? or, Is it a forgery?

The second ground is, that the means of determining the genuineness or spuriousness of a reputed apostolic writing were easily available and indubitably certain. Allusion is not now made to those marks by which the personality of the writer might be recognized — individual peculiarities of style, personal references, notices of incidents, reminiscences of past intercourse, and the like; although it has pleased God, in his infinite wisdom, to co-act in inspiration with the free play of the human faculties, and by this very instrumentality to preserve the church from the danger of deception. All these considerations aside, important as they may be, there is one which is absolutely decisive. It is that the apostles outlived their own writings, and consequently they were proved to be genuine by their own personal testimony. How easy, in case a spurious writing purporting to come from an apostle was foisted upon the church, would it have been for him to suppress it as a forgery! How easy? How important, how necessary would it have been!

Upon these two grounds, then, the primitive church was competent to settle, and must have settled, the question of the canon. Was any writing apostolic? It was, therefore, inspired. Was it inspired? It was, therefore, necessarily of canonical authority. Inspiration was the canon, the *rule*, by which a writing was to be tested. If inspired, it was placed in the church's *list* of canonical Scriptures.

The case of Mark and Luke can give no trouble. They were vouched for by the apostles themselves. The

apostles attested their writings to be of inspired authority. That was sufficient.

The judgment of the church contemporary with the apostles and immediately succeeding them ought, upon this question, to be conclusive. All the Scriptures which it deemed canonical are inspired, and if inspired, then, if the preceding argument is, true, verbally inspired.

To us, living in this distant age, it pleased God, in merciful condescension to our necessities, to afford additional and confirming proof of the plenary inspiration of "the holy Scripture," by "the heavenliness of the matter, the efficacy of the doctrine, the majesty of the style, the consent of all the parts, the scope of the whole (which is to give all glory to God), the full discovery it makes of the only way of man's salvation, the many other incomparable excellencies, and the entire perfection thereof;" and to impart "full persuasion and assurance of the infallible truth, and divine authority thereof," by "the inward work of the Holy Spirit, bearing witness by and with the word in our hearts."¹ The Jewish church, with the confirming approval of Christ, and the early Christian church with that of the apostles, decided the question, *what* writings are inspired Scripture, but the Scriptures themselves attest their divine origin, their authority, and their saving efficacy by their own internal evidence, and the witness of the Holy Ghost. In these respects holy Scripture "dependeth not upon the testimony of any man or church, but wholly upon God (who is truth itself), the author thereof; and

¹ Westminster Conf. of Faith, Chap. I., Sec. V.

therefore it is to be received because it is the Word of God."

The testimony of the Jewish church and of the early Christian church in regard to the question of the canon — that is, What is the inspired Word of God? — is of the highest *presumptive* value; but it rises to a vastly greater significance, it amounts to the certainty of authoritativeness, in view of the fact — too little insisted upon — that it was confirmed by the testimony of Christ and the apostles.

There yet remains the consideration of prominent *objections* to the doctrine of verbal inspiration. Before closing the discussion, in its positive aspects, of the nature, the relations, and the extent of inspiration, some remarks will be succinctly made about its bearing upon the rationalistic positions of the higher criticism. It hardly needs to be said, after the proofs which have been furnished that the inspiration of the Scriptures is not merely *ad sensum*, but also *ad verbum*, that the strictures upon the higher criticism will be passed upon it from that point of view. If this standard of judgment is refused and denounced, let the argument, in favor of the verbal inspiration of the original manuscripts — derived from the uniform and unimpeachable testimony of the Scriptures themselves, as well as from other sources — be clearly disproved. The exposure of variations and even positive mistakes in copies and translations amounts to nothing, against the positive proof of the integrity of the original text.

1. If inspiration was verbal, it was obviously different from the illuminating and sanctifying influence of the

Holy Spirit, and from the piety which is its effect. This has, one knows not how many times, been pointed out. The higher critics, under a specious coloring, revamp an old, false, oft-exploded hypothesis, which has ever been regarded by the true church of God as "a foul disfigurement and burden." They canonize Balaam and Caiaphas, and exalt them to a place in the gallery of illustrious saints. That they were inspired has been universally acknowledged; that they were pious it would task the acute ingenuity and the superior scholarship of the higher critics to show. That when inspired they "spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost" was true, but that they were holy men of God, it would be somewhat difficult to prove. If exalted piety and inspiration be the same, it is hard to see why the writings of Augustine and Luther should not have been added to the canon of the Christian Scriptures. Alas! the recantations of the celebrated father, and the extravagances of the distinguished reformer, stood in the way. They were not inspired men. Balaam and Caiaphas, when inspired, were infallible; Augustine and Luther, being uninspired, were not. The former spoke with the inerrancy of God's thoughts and words, the latter with the inaccuracy of their own.

2. In the light of the proofs which have been advanced we see that inspiration is not, as the higher critics contend, merely an *afflatus* which is, as some imply, a "spiritual insight" or "intuition," or, as others hold, causes it and intensifies it.

"Without," says Dr. Driver, "pretending to define inspiration, or to determine the mystery of its operation,

we may, I suppose, say that what we mean by it is an influence which gave to those who received it a unique and extraordinary *spiritual insight*, enabling them thereby, without superseding or suppressing the human faculties, but rather using them as its instruments, to declare in different degrees, and in accordance with the needs or circumstances of particular ages or particular occasions, the mind and purpose of God. Every true and noble thought of man is indeed, in a sense, inspired of God; but with the biblical writers the purifying and illuminating Spirit must have been present in some special and exceptional measure.”¹ In the first place, we are informed that inspiration produces spiritual insight. Nothing is said of what is demanded by the profound spiritual necessities of mankind — infallibility in teaching. An insight into “the mind and purpose of God” is indeed conceded, but what guarantee is furnished for the inerrant communication of that will and purpose? None. The inspiration of the words in which God’s will and purpose were to be declared, in addition to the spiritual insight, was necessary to afford that guarantee. In the second place, this spiritual insight, we are told, although unique and extraordinary differs only in degree from the inspiration of every true and noble thought of man. The inspiration is the same, the measure of its influence different. What, we may ask, is the quality which differentiates one degree of inspiration from the other? Is it certainty? Is it infallibility? No; it is only a deeper and clearer

¹ Sermons: On Inspiration, p. 147.

spiritual insight. One inspired in the highest degree sees the truth more vividly than another, but he does not teach it with an infallibility that does not belong to the other. Of such inspiration of the Scriptures, they give not the slightest hint. Was Balaam, under the “purifying and illuminating” influence of the Spirit, gifted with a unique and extraordinary spiritual insight, and led to truer and nobler thoughts than those he usually experienced, true and noble as they were? It is perfectly manifest that the scriptural idea of inspiration is very different from that of these learned critics. That is sufficient to convict them of error, in the very attempt they make to fasten error upon the Scriptures. The critics represent inspiration as an exciting, the Scriptures as a didactic influence. Holy men were moved, say the critics; holy men spake as they were moved, say the Scriptures. None but holy men were moved by the inspiring influence, say the critics; some unholy men were moved by it, say the Scriptures.

NOTE.—Just here in the prosecution of this writing, a terrific storm came on from sea. The works of man went down before it, some houses were wrecked, break-waters, except those of solid masonry, were crushed like egg-shells; wharves were torn to pieces, and some lives were lost. While yet the tail-end of the gale is cracking like a thousand wagon-whips, and the infuriated sea is pitching against the shore, and sending its spray, like discharges of shot, far up the streets, I resume this humble attempt, in conjunction with the abler labors of dear brethren in Christ, to oppose the onset of a more fearful tempest which is threatening the faith of the church and the eternal hopes of men. If the plenary inspiration of the Bible goes down, all is lost with it.

MT. PLEASANT, S. C., August 28, 1893.

3. The doctrine of the plenary, verbal inspiration of the Scriptures overthrows the evolutionary theory of revelation advocated by the higher critics. Applying to the Scriptures the unverified hypothesis of evolution, with its baseless pretension to be an established conclusion of science, they hold, that the Hebrews emerged from a rude and semi-savage condition; that the "national religion of Israel" sprang from atomic religious germs; that in the development of this religion, in consequence of the gradual expansion of the "religious idea," there resulted ever increasing attempts to formulate in writing the religious beliefs of the people; that these registrations, historical, legal, doctrinal, existed in fragmentary form until near the time of the exile, when they began to be collected, edited, and redacted (!) into the symmetry of a harmonious whole by writers who were gifted with an "extraordinary spiritual insight" for the discharge of this great literary (!) work; and that this work was carried on and complemented by post-exilic writers. Hence their Elohist and Jehovistic documents, and their Mosaic compilations, their Jehovist, Deuteronomist, and priestly codifiers, their Esdrine Torah, and their prophetic ethics.

This is not the place to discuss these views at length. It is only intended to show that this tissue of ingenious sophistry, decked out in the ostentatious feathers of reputed learning, this whole rationalistic and infidel speculation, is destroyed at one blow by the scriptural truth of verbal inspiration. This is not rash declamation. The doctrine of verbal inspiration has been estab-

lished upon an elaborate induction of scriptural testimonies. The Old Testament writers, Christ and the New Testament writers, have all been summoned to the witness-stand, and they testify against these speculators. They may reply that the Old Testament writers were errant, and so were those of the New Testament when they reported the discourses and sayings of Christ. These critics, however, cannot be mistaken; their investigations have been too thorough, their scholarship is too exact, their learning too complete. They are more errant than the sacred writers. The church universal has been duped. We are willing that the case go to the jury upon these respective testimonies.

But if the doctrine of verbal inspiration is true, there is no truth in their hypothesis of the evolutionary development of religion and revelation. It is not true that the religious ideas of the Hebrew people gradually expanded and grew by the inherent force of development. The hypothesis contradicts the express statements of scriptural history; and if that history cannot be appealed to, what history have these critics to appeal to? What? There can be no answer but: the history of their own speculations. They do not *believe* history, even inspired history; they possess so exceptional and extraordinary a spiritual insight, their religious intuition is so clear, that they *make* history, they see, in retrospective vision, the facts which constituted it. They profess to have the power of "constructing" it. They know better than Moses and the other sacred historians what ought to have been the facts. Marvellous his-

torians! They at least enjoy the distinguished honor of originality, in conceiving and proclaiming the theory of the Back-action of History.

There is no truth, it is repeated, in their hypothesis of the evolutionary development of religion and revelation. The sacred records show us — and there are no other records to show us anything about the matter, except the records of rationalistic folly — the sacred records show us that when, in consequence of a *dissolutionary* development, to follow Mr. Spencer's phrase, the Israelites gravitated continually to degeneration of faith and practice, it pleased God "at sundry times and in divers manners" supernaturally to intervene by revelations, verbal revelations, of his will. By these he corrected their false views and taught them the truth. By them he rebuked their sins and exhorted them to repentance. The evolutionary development was by God himself of his own plan of redemption. By these supernatural accretions to his sovereignty furnished revelations of his will, accompanied by such measures of his saving grace as he was pleased to impart, the people were preserved from total spiritual apostasy, just as by the supernatural interpositions of his providence they were ever and anon delivered from complete temporal destruction. If this is not so, if the supposition of the critics be true, how happened it that this evolution of religion developed first into the Israelitish, and subsequently into the Judean captivity — judgments visited upon the people for their incorrigible persistence in idolatry and every form of sin? How happened it, that

after the providential restoration of the Jews from Babylon, and new revelations of God's will to them, this evolution of religion developed into their rejection and crucifixion of their Messiah and Redeemer, and their dispersion to the ends of the earth? It is evident that revelation precedes religion, and is designed to supply its type and model, whether the actual correspondence of religion to revelation be realized or not. The parts of the Bible were successively added by supernatural, verbal inspiration of men selected by God to be the media through which he communicated an objective religion, a norm of faith and a pattern for the subjective life of the soul. Nothing is more untrue than that subjective religion preceded the inspired Scriptures, and that they were its formulated result. In short, the Bible is God-breathed, not man-inspired; and true inward religion is God-given, not man-evolved.

Of course, the doctrine of verbal inspiration is a flat contradiction to the whole figment of the late collecting, editing and revising of the books attributed to Moses. Christ and the apostles say that Moses wrote them. They had been written by Moses, as verbally inspired of God, and had been known as authoritative, long before Ezra was born. This is assertion, it will be said. Yes, it is God's assertion in his holy Word. They who deny it, charge him with error. What God said to Moses, Moses said to the people; and this was not only orally said, but written. Christ declared that "Moses wrote." The record, therefore, of what Moses said was produced by Moses himself. Otherwise the New Testament

writers were untrue. Let the critics face the issue, if they will. No respecter of the Scriptures will sit with them "in the seat of the scornful."

4. Orthodox writers admit that there is a divine element and a human element in inspiration; and this is insisted upon by the higher critics. This position ought to be guarded against the supposition that these two elements are coördinate. Far from it. The divine element is the controlling one, the human element only instrumental. It is the subordinate medium through which the divine inspiration acts. God inspires, man is inspired.

5. I close this section of the discussion with the remark that in this controversy the chief contest is in regard to verbal inspiration. To assign that question a place of minor importance is to give way before the higher critics and other assailants of the plenary inspiration of the Scriptures. Here is the citadel, and the principal weapons by which it is defended are miracles. Some of the reviewers of the newer criticism fail to see this. "Just because," observes Dr. Robertson, of Glasgow, "the issues in this controversy are so far-reaching, is it necessary to meet the critical view on its own ground, and to examine the foundation on which it rests. Questions are involved that lie much deeper than those of the verbal inspiration or the so-called 'inerrancy' of Scripture. It seems to me vain to talk of the inspiration and authority of books till we are sure that they are credible and honest compositions, giving us a firm historical basis on which to rest. My whole argument has been to show that, examined by the light which they themselves

furnish, these books are trustworthy documents; that the compositions which are undoubted and accepted give their testimony to those that are questioned or rejected; that the books as they lie before us, so far as they can be tested by the only tests in our possession, and making all allowance for the ordinary conditions of human composition and transmission of books, give us a fair and credible account of what took place in the history and religious development of Israel. If that point be allowed to be in a fair way established, I leave the argument for inspiration and authority to take care of itself."¹

I would not, in the slightest degree, underrate the valuable labors of the learned professor in his own chosen department of inquiry. He has ably met the critics on their own ground. But it is seldom wise to permit an enemy to select his own ground, if it can be avoided. Especially is it unwise to leave our own advantageous position. I am persuaded that, so far as the main issue is concerned, the judgment of the professor is a profound mistake — namely, that the question of the inspiration and authority of the Scriptures must be postponed to that of their credibility. On the contrary, as has been already contended, the sort of credibility of the Scriptures which is imperatively required, the credibility which guarantees certainty and infallibility, is founded exactly upon their inspiration. We are not defending professedly human records. Were that the case we would, of course, be content with proving human credibility. We are defending professedly divine

¹ *Early Religion of Israel*, p. 489.

records, and we can be satisfied with nothing short of divine credibility. Are they divine? They are divinely credible. To prove that they *are* divine we must prove their inspiration. He, then, who addresses himself to the question of the inspiration of the Scriptures "takes," as Luther said to Erasmus about free will, "the bull by the horns." If we can rout the enemy on the field where he is camped, well! But it is better to draw him to our own field, and join battle with him from our own entrenched lines. Let us look at the matter a little further.

(1) What is the great end of the contest? It is to prove the divine, and consequently, infallible and supreme authority of the Bible as the only rule of faith and duty. What is the great means to that end? It is to prove the inspiration of the Bible. And no other inspiration secures to us the attainment of the great end but verbal inspiration. No other affords complete security against fallibility. That point will not again be argued.

(2) In view of this end, what would be gained by the proof of the authenticity and credibility of the sacred records, if that proof did not furnish unimpeachable ground for faith in the verbal inspiration of the Scriptures? What we want is an absolutely inerrant standard. Any sort of inspiration, in general, will not answer. We must have the fullest inspiration, or some errancy is not excluded. While, then, in order that we may appeal to the testimony of the Scriptures to their own inspiration, we must prove their credibility as a witness, the proof of that credibility only rises to the

highest value when it grounds belief in verbal inspiration.

(3) Miracles prove inspiration — first the inspiration of certain men and then as a consequence the inspiration of their writings. Miracles prove inspiration *directly*, not merely through the credibility of the Scriptures. Further, the proof from miracles, be it observed first, did not, and does not depend upon the credibility of the inspired teachings, but the credibility of those teachings depended upon their inspiration; secondly, the miraculous proof does not wholly found upon the testimony of the Scriptures. In the first instance, it grounded confidence in the inspired men who spoke orally for God, and produced the Scriptures. How, then, could the credibility of the writings have "preceded" the inspiration of the writers, and their own existence? In the second instance, that is, of the uninspired ever after, of ourselves among them, the miraculous proof does not wholly found upon the testimony of the Scriptures to the *fact* of the miracles. The evidence in support of the fact — the actual occurrence — of miracles, is, for example, also derived from the fulfilment of prophecy, some of it contemporaneous with ourselves, and from the vast, rich region of religious experience.

(4) It is assumed, strangely assumed, by even some orthodox writers that errors in the Scriptures *as now possessed by us* would disprove the trustworthiness, and, therefore, the inspiration of the Scriptures. There *are* errors in the Scriptures as we now have them, either as copies or versions, minify them as we may. The case of plenary inspiration would be gone against us, if that

were all. Were it possible to prove the existence of errors in the original manuscripts, it would be true that the trustworthiness of the Scriptures would be disproved. It is, however, a fatal infatuation which prompts the admission, that the existence of errors in the Scriptures as we now have them would impair the plenary inspiration and consequent trustworthiness of the original documents — that errors in copies and translations infer errors in the autographs. The concession is utterly unjustifiable. Miracles proved the inspiration of the sacred writers. Their writings, therefore, as they came from their hands, *must* have been inerrant. We affirm the absolute inerrancy of *those* writings; and our affirmation is sustained by the whole strain and tenor of the Scriptures as we have them. What proof, on the other hand, counteractive to this, can be produced to establish their errancy? The proof from miracles for plenary inspiration is of the very highest degree of importance. Miracles, *Miracles*, MIRACLES! Here the battle rages in its hottest fury. See the wrath against them of Hume, Strauss and all sections of pantheists, rationalists, and anti-supernaturalists of every grade! This is the field on which they array their most formidable forces, and exert their utmost vigor. This aspect of the subject must be treated in a separate discussion.

Something must now be said concerning the question, Are translations inspired? The position is here taken that *so far as* a translation faithfully represents the original Scriptures, it is characterized by the same inspiration with them. If it exactly coincides with the original as to matter, it is substantially the same

with it. So far as it deviates from the original, it ceases to be inspired. To say, then, without qualification, that no translation is inspired is erroneous and injurious. The truth is that a good translation is partly inspired and partly uninspired — inspired to the extent of its reproduction of the original, uninspired to the extent of its variation from it. Such I believe to be the case with the English Bible. And, further, I believe it to be for by far the greatest part, indeed for almost the whole of it, inspired. In the main, it faithfully represents the original Scriptures. But the translation was effected by fallible men, and therefore contains some errors. Only to that extent is it uninspired. This view I found confirmed by Trench in his work on the Authorized Version.

“We must,” says the Archbishop, “never leave out of sight that for a great multitude of readers the English Version is not the translation of an inspired book, but is itself the inspired book. And so far, of course, as it is a perfectly adequate counterpart of the original, this is true; since the inspiration is not limited to those Hebrew or Greek words in which the divine message was first committed to men, but lives on in whatever words are a faithful and full representation of these, to the extent of their adequacy. There, and there only, where any divergence exists between the original and the copy, the copy is less inspired than the original — in fact, is not inspired at all.”

There is a necessary distinction to be maintained between the translation and the translators. The translators were uninspired men, and consequently liable to

mistakes; the translation is inspired, so far as it exactly gives the original — so far, no more.

This would seem to be obvious in regard to the matter of Scripture. As to the inspiration of the words, I am disposed to hold the following view: It must be granted that the words of a version are not, a few excepted, the very words of the original. So far, then, as the *literal form* of the original words and the translating is concerned, one cannot say that the translation is verbally inspired. The words of the version are not the very words which were suggested to the mind of the inspired writers by the Holy Ghost. In this sense, and to this extent, verbal inspiration cannot be predicated of a translation. But the words of a version may, as symbols, represent precisely the same ideas, the same things, as those expressed by the corresponding words of the original. I would, therefore, say that when that condition is fulfilled, the words of the translation possess an *equivalent inspiration* with those of the original. The Hebrew, Greek, and English words for the divine being exactly signify the same idea. The English word, when used in the Bible, has consequently an inspiration equivalent to that of the Hebrew and Greek words. As to letters and form, the words are different, as to significance they are the same.

The utterance ought not to be made without qualification that translations of the Scriptures are uninspired. I agree with Trench in holding to the inspiration of the English Bible.

OBJECTIONS TO THE VERBAL INSPIRATION OF THE SCRIPTURES.

Many of the objections which are urged against verbal inspiration are at the same time offered to the plenary inspiration of the thoughts, the sense, of the Scriptures. If we separate the two classes of objection by a strict logical analysis, we shall find that those which lie against verbal inspiration peculiarly are very few.

1. It is objected, as by Mr. Morell, that the theory of verbal dictation supposes a two-fold inspiration: one which influenced the minds and hearts of the persons inspired, and one which indited their words. Of these the first only is requisite and provable, the second unnecessary and incapable of positive proof. To this it is answered:

(1) This is an arbitrary and untenable distinction. It is assumed that there is no difference between inspiration and sanctification. But it has been already seen, in the analysis of the nature of inspiration, that these two things are quite different. The single fact that wicked men, like Balaam, were inspired is enough to refute the position.

But if it be shown that inspiration, instead of being sanctification, is an influence exerted in order to secure infallibility of teaching, the objections are dissipated which are founded upon the supposition of their identity. For example, proceeding upon that unwarrantable assumption, some writers have cited Paul's rebuke of Peter at Antioch as a disproof of verbal

inspiration. It is assumed that Paul reproved Peter for officially *teaching* error. There is no proof of this. All that is proved is that Peter was a partially sanctified man, and that, on the occasion adverted to, he erred in conduct. The apostle as a man, and the same apostle as an inspired teacher cannot be regarded as subject to the same predication. Paul himself, on another occasion, in all probability gave way to intemperate anger in his dispute with Barnabas.¹ He erred not as an apostle, but as an imperfectly sanctified man.

(2) The assertion, that no positive evidence can be produced in favor of verbal inspiration, has been abundantly disproved by the argument already presented. To that argument I must refer, in order to avoid needless repetition. There positive proofs were furnished with almost tedious particularity — proofs numerous and cogent enough to satisfy any fair and unprejudiced seeker for the truth. And there, also, attention was challenged to the fact that no proofs could be brought forward against the verbal inspiration of the original manuscripts.

2. It is objected, that the doctrine of verbal inspiration is inconsistent with the plain fact that the sacred writers possessed peculiarities of style which distinguished them from one another.

(1) This objection is grounded in an assumption which cannot be substantiated, namely, that the Almighty God has not the power to dictate the words in which he designs to express his will without destroying the peculiar styles of utterance which belong to indi-

vidual speakers or writers, and reducing them to a rigid uniformity. The only conceivable way in which the proof of this assumption could be attempted would be to show that the opposite supposition involves an impossibility, since it must be admitted by all theists that God can do everything that is not impossible. If such an attempt were essayed, it must be shown that the alleged fact of verbal inspiration implies either a moral or a natural impossibility.

It is conceded that it is impossible for God to act inconsistently with his moral perfections. The strength of Israel is not a man that he should lie, nor the son of man that he should repent. But surely it cannot be successfully evinced that the alleged fact of verbal inspiration implies God's inconsistency with his moral character. There is, to my mind, but one mode in which it is conceivable that such an effort would be made, and that is by showing that God would deceive men by producing upon their minds the impression that the words of the sacred speakers or writers which were his were not really his, but theirs. This attempt would be estopped by the simple consideration that inspired men, while delivering the words as emanating from them, at the same time declared that they are the words of God. Deception is out of the question.

It is equally impracticable to prove that the alleged fact of verbal inspiration involves a natural impossibility. Without an enumeration of the cases in which such impossibility exists, only two facts will be mentioned which go to show that verbal inspiration cannot be assigned to that category.

¹ ἐγένετο οὖν παροξυσμός, Acts xv. 39.

The first is, that it is perfectly competent for men, limited as are their powers, to express their thoughts in different styles. A speaker, addressing an illiterate and unintelligent audience, employs a style which he would not use in communicating the very same ideas to a cultivated assembly. This, owing to circumstances, he may do stately, and thus accustom himself to the employment of two parallel, but entirely different styles of address. One writing to a child in regard to religious interests of the greatest importance would invoke a totally different style from one which he would make the vehicle of the same thoughts to a divine or a philosopher. The inference is obvious. If this is possible to man, why should it be regarded as impossible to God? If the finite being is able to vary his style, why should the necessity be imposed upon the infinite being of confinement to one of fixed uniformity? The things is absurd.

Further, a teacher, impressing his thoughts upon those who are themselves in turn to become teachers of others, may employ styles of instruction adapted to their different grades of intelligence and education, and so stamp them upon their minds, as to lead to their respective use of them, the higher and the lower, in the free utterance of their thoughts — thoughts derived from their instructor and now become their own. The analogy is not perfect, but it avails to show that what man is in some measure competent to do, God can in a far higher degree accomplished.

The second fact — already to some extent insisted upon in the preceding discussion — has a more direct bearing upon the case in hand. It is a practical instance

of the possibility, or rather the actuality, of that against which an antecedent impossibility is asserted. Even God, it is affirmed, cannot verbally inspire men without invading their peculiar style of expression. Now, is there a case in which this has been done, and so done as to induce conviction in the minds of those who admit the truthfulness of the sacred records? Such an instance existed in the speaking of foreign tongues by the apostles. Concede the credibility of the account, and it is clear that the words were miraculously given them; and that they preached to the multitude in languages other than their own vernacular, nay, that these Galileans addressed the Jews in the native dialect of the latter. It is curious what a number of hypotheses have been devised by the rationalists of modern times to explain away this prodigious miracle. But the record is too explicit to afford them any countenance. Meyer, whose views of inspiration are not by any means marked by orthodox rigor, after noticing these hypotheses, thus expresses in italics his own conclusion, "It results beyond all doubt that Luke intended to narrate nothing else than this: *the persons possessed by the Spirit began to speak in languages which were foreign to their nationality instead of their mother tongue, namely, in the languages of other nations, the knowledge and use of which were previously wanting to them, and were only now communicated in and with the πνεῦμα ἄγιον.*"¹ This witness is true.

It is also clear that *all* the apostles were endued with the miraculous gift of speaking in foreign languages

¹ *Comm.* on Acts ii. 4.

with which they were not previously acquainted. The statement of the inspired historian is too definite to admit of doubt upon that point. "And there appeared unto them cloven tongues as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." (Acts ii. 3, 4.) They all spoke. The concourse was enormous, and there was ample opportunity for each of the apostles to address a certain group.

In addition, it is stated that the representatives of different nationalities understood the addresses made to them in their own native languages. The apostles did not, as the Irvingites in London did, speak, under the *afflatus*, in unintelligible gibberish — that is, what was mere jargon to the hearers. They preached the gospel connectedly and intelligibly. The different sections of the multitude apprehended the meaning of discourses which declared to them "the wonderful works of God."

Now, in view of these facts, can it be believed that all the idiosyncrasies of the apostles were obliterated, that they all spoke in exactly the same style,¹ that they all were confined to one iron-clad form of expression; that Peter, for instance, spoke precisely as John did, and John as James? Against such a position such considerations as the following may be presented:

In the first place, it is obvious that, for the time being, the apostles were put by the Spirit in command of the vocabularies of the various languages in which they

¹ By style is not intended merely a certain sorts of words, but also the mode in which they are put together, arranged and used.

spoke. Not only so; they cannot be conceived as having possessed a mere farrago of words. How could they have been understood in employing them? They must also have been endued with the power of arranging them syntactically, of constructing intelligent sentences and paragraphs. This supposes that each was able to *think* in the language he used. And if that were true, each would have thought in accordance with his mental ability, and the peculiar structure of his individual mind. For if not, another stupendous miracle must be supposed to have been unnecessarily superadded to that already wrought, by which all the thinking of all the apostles would have been reduced to absolute identity. Further this would violate the whole analogy of the scriptural writings as they record the oral discourses of inspired persons. For it is certain that the mode of thinking of the reported speakers was not identically the same. But the individual styles of thinking of the several apostles having been diverse from each other, that difference would necessarily have been reflected in their individual styles of speech. It cannot be supposed that, in violation of his own order of mind, Peter thought identically as John, and John as Peter. No more can it be conceived that they spoke exactly alike.

It is beyond doubt that the words were given by inspiration to the apostles. Now whether we suppose that, in the arrangement of the words into intelligent discourse, they were governed by the Spirit, or that they were not, no difference is created. The view here contended for stands fast — that the inspiration of words

is not incompatible with peculiarities of utterance. Nor can it affect this view to urge that the thinking of each apostle was in his native language, and that, concurrently with his speaking, by a rapid process he mentally translated the words of that language into the equivalent words of the foreign tongue. His thinking would have been his own, and the style of utterance would have corresponded with it.

In the second place, we know of no one divine model of style in exact conformity with which the discourses of inspired men which are reported in the Scriptures were shaped; whether those discourses were reported by themselves or others. The point here made is, that even in those cases in which the inspired speakers declare that the words of the Lord were put into their mouths, no one fixed, unmistakable divine type of style was employed, but the speakers, thus verbally inspired, used that style which expressed their spontaneous, individual genius. Even in these instances their discourses are strongly marked off from each other by peculiarities of style which may without difficulty be discerned. Were it otherwise, had there been one divine pattern of style, it could easily be recognized, and any divergences from it readily detected. When God is reported as speaking, he speaks as God; when Christ, he speaks as Christ; but when men are reported as speaking, they speak as men, even when they are inspired men. To say, then, that the apostles, on the day of Pentecost, all spoke according to one divine pattern of style is to violate the analogy of inspiration. From the nature of the case, however, the words in which they spoke were given them

by the Spirit. It was true of them as it was of Jeremiah that he had put his words into their mouths. If, notwithstanding this, their speaking was not characterized by perfect sameness of style, verbal inspiration is not in conflict with varieties of style.

In order to parry the force of the argument for verbal inspiration derived from the miraculous gift of tongues it has been suggested that God may have given the apostles, and others similarly endowed, a command of foreign languages like that acquired through a mastery of them by study; so that the selection of particular words was left to the undetermined exercise of their own faculties. But—

In the first place, this concedes the miraculous conferment of a command, a command in the highest degree, of the vocabulary of those languages. This infers, of course, the power of the Spirit to dictate particular words, if he had imparted a knowledge of the whole vocabulary, of a language. He who could do the greater could do the less. The only question is whether the spirit *would* indite the particular words. He did in the past infuse by inspiration particular words into the minds of the prophets, as the sacred records testify. On this occasion, if ever, such verbal inspiration would seem to have been proper, when the Christian dispensation was to be inaugurated, the church under the new economy to be organized, and a typical specimen of preaching to be furnished, which would be the prophecy and keynote of the proclamation of the glorious gospel through all the Christian ages. If the words in general of those languages in which the preaching of the cross

was to be done had been miraculously given, why not now, at this grand, critical, epochal juncture, the miraculous dictation of the words in particular in which the inspired heralds of salvation were to announce the beginning of a world-wide evangelism?

In the second place, if it could be shown that the gift of speaking in foreign tongues was not a permanent endowment of the mind, but was held in suspension until the actual occasions occurred upon which its use was required, the difficulty would be met. In support of that position the view may be urged that the inspired persons did not of themselves, and by virtue of any power resident in them, work miracles. They had no gift to perform miracles. They were simply the announcers of God's purpose to work miracles by his immediate efficiency, in concurrence with their teachings and in attestation of them. Now the actual speaking in a previously unknown foreign tongue was an unquestionable and amazing miracle. It would follow from the mode in which miracles were wrought that such speaking was accomplished by the *immediate* efficiency of God. It was not effected by a power resident as a habit in the mind, and consequently involved the immediate impartation of the language by the Spirit of God.

(2) It is conceded by all who do not oppose inspiration in every form, that *some* parts of the Scriptures are verbally inspired. It is not denied that at times, at least, Moses and the prophets uttered by express direction the very words which God delivered to them. But it must be granted that in these very discourses the speakers and writers employed styles of expression which are stamped

with their individual peculiarities. Were proof required for this position, the fact could be pointed to that the style of the writers in other passages than those reporting utterances admitted to have been verbally dictated is in the main characterized by the same features with that which is employed in those special passages. This consideration is in itself sufficient to show that verbal inspiration is not inconsistent with individual modes of expression.

(3) It may be contended that in those instances in which others than the original speakers report their utterances, the style is that of the reporters and not of the original speakers. So that nothing can be determined about the peculiar style of the speakers. For example, Luke reported the sermon of Peter on the day of Pentecost. How are we to know that the style was Peter's and not Luke's? It is here assumed that Peter spoke under the verbal inspiration of the Holy Ghost, but the purpose of this special argument does not necessitate the assumption that he spoke in another than his native tongue. He may have used the Greek in general use at the time, or the Aramaic, the current tongue of his countrymen in his day, or he may have employed the Judean rather than the Galilean dialect of that tongue. It matters not. The question here is whether in reporting him, Luke gives Peter's personal peculiarities of style, or his own. The same Luke reports Paul's sermon on Mars Hill, and the apostle's speech before Agrippa. Is the style in which the respective reports are couched the same? Does it bear upon it Luke's image and super-scription? Who can fail to detect the difference between

Paul's style and Peter's in the reports of Luke? Who does not discriminate the majestic sweep of thought in the sermon at Athens, and the exquisite elegance, the consummate oratory of the defence before Agrippa from the plainer, but cogent, discourse of Peter at Pentecost? Is it the one, fixed style of Luke which appears in these instances? There can be but one answer to the question. It is not. The inspired historian faithfully paints before us the peculiar personality of each great speaker. The fact, then, that the utterances of inspired persons may be recorded by other inspired persons than themselves, does not preclude our discernment of the individual peculiarities of style which distinguish the original speakers.

(4) The peculiarities of style in connection with the verbal inspiration of the sacred writings would seem to have been a wise, if not necessary, expedient for settling the question of their authorship, and of their divine authority. An apostle, for example, was proved by miraculous credentials to be divinely commissioned to communicate the will of God. His claim to inspiration was confirmed by miracles. The question, then, would be in relation to a writing alleged to have emanated from an apostle, Did he produce it? And certainly, in the personal absence of the reputed author, one important method of deciding that question would be the recognition of the style of thought and of expression by which he was characterized. His peculiarities having identified him as the author, the apostolic source of the writing would be necessarily inferred. In this way Paul could have been recognized by those who knew him as

the author of the epistles ascribed to him. But Paul himself declared that he spoke not in the *words* which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth. The apostolic authority and the verbal inspiration were both proved.

These reasons avail to show that verbal inspiration is not inconsistent with the employment by each of the sacred writers of a style of thought and expression which was peculiar to and characteristic of himself.

3. It is objected, that the New Testament writers, in quoting from the Old Testament use words of their own, different from the original. This objection needs no labored reply. The New Testament writers had an independent inspiration of their own. They gave the sense of the Old Testament writers in words of their own, but the words were inspired by the Holy Ghost. Was not his authority sufficient to justify them in their use? Was not the Spirit an authoritative expositor of his own language?

4. It is objected, that there are positive errors in the Scriptures, in the shape of discrepancies, and even contradictions in their statements concerning the same things.

It will be observed that this objection does not lie specially against the inspiration of the words, but also against that of the sense, of the Scriptures. The chief answer which I would return to it, and the only one which in this place is rendered to it, is that the question of plenary inspiration relates mainly to the original manuscripts of the Scriptures, and as we are not in possession of them, the allegation is not susceptible of

proof. The discrepancies charged may be wholly due to errors of transmission; and if we credit the general, uniform testimony of the Scriptures — and that cannot be discredited without sweeping away the Bible as a whole — must be held to be due to that cause. Some of the errors alleged have been removed by a careful collation of copies. Those that remain have been treated of, and are still treated of, by numerous writers whose ability and scholarship will not suffer by comparison with those of the objectors. To a careful study of these writers alongside of the critics, candid investigators of this question are commended.

The world of criticism and infidelity may be safely challenged to prove the errancy of the original documents of Scripture. Until that Titanic exploit is accomplished, we will abide true to the faith of the church universal and perennial in their inerrancy and supreme authority. "The floods have lifted up, O Lord, the floods have lifted up their voice: the floods lift up their waves. The Lord on high is mightier than the noise of many waters, yea, than the mighty waves of the sea. Thy testimonies are very sure: holiness becometh thine house, O Lord, forever."

AUTHORITY OF THE SCRIPTURES.

SOME things ought to be said, next, concerning the *authority* of the Scriptures. Let it be noticed that the question now before us is not in regard to the *canonical* authority of the Scriptures — that is, what writings are of canonical authority; but it is, What is the authority which attaches to the writings that are acknowledged to be canonical Scripture?

1. If the Scriptures have been proved to be inspired, and verbally inspired, of God, it would seem unnecessary to raise the question of their authority. If they are his Word, they must be absolutely authoritative touching the matters of which they treat. They are clothed with God's authority. This is the orthodox Protestant position. The Scriptures are the inspired, the only inspired, the plenary inspired, revelation of God's will concerning religion; therefore, they are the only, the infallible, the perfect, sufficient, and supremely authoritative, rule of faith and duty.

This authority of the Scriptures the Protestant holds to be *exclusive* in the sphere of religion. This must be true, unless it can be shown that the Scriptures were designed by God to be restricted in the territorial scope of their influence; that there is besides it some other revelation of the divine will, possessing the same marks of divine authority as characterize the Scriptures. It

must then be proved that the other professed revelation is, like the Bible, plenary inspired of God; that its inspiration is established by miracles equal to those by which the claim of the Scriptures to be inspired is sustained; and that it is adapted in all respects to the wants of sinful men. This cannot be proved for obvious reasons, a few of which, as in themselves sufficient, will be stated without expansion.

In the first place, the Bible professes to speak to all men. It challenges attention in the words, Hear, O earth! The audience it addresses is the world. It declares that there is but one Mediator between God and men — the Mediator Christ Jesus, whom it alone reveals, and that his name, which it alone proclaims, is the only name given *under heaven* whereby we must be saved. It is plain that it recognizes no co-ordinate, much less rival, revelation of God's will to mankind.

In the second place, the Bible being inspired, this claim to world-wide authority and supremacy must be true, and it must be exclusive of that of any other revelation. Two supreme sovereigns can no more reign in the same religious sphere than in the same political sphere. The reason is plain. Each would limit and condition the other, which would be contradictory to the supposition of the supremacy of either.

In the third place, no other revelation has been established by miracles, clear, unimpeachable miracles. This needs no argument.

In the fourth place, no other revelation provides for

the redemption of men from guilt, depravity and ruin. The Bible alone is adapted to the spiritual necessities of the human race.

In the fifth place, the world needs a revelation which is characterized by unity, which is consistent with itself, unfluctuating in its requirements and unchangeable in its decisions. The conception of several revelations, respectively adapted to different sections of the race, which are incompatible with and contradictory to each other, is perfectly absurd. It needs no consideration. Either these revelations would be supposed to emanate from the same source, and God's unity and self-consistency are destroyed; or from different sources, and polytheism is the result.

It must be added that a revelation is required, which is evidently not the product of the human reason. It must be recognized as an immutable standard, absolutely free from the varying opinions, conceits and tastes of men.

If, now, the Scriptures are proved to be a revelation from God, plenary inspired by him, it is at the same time proved that they are possessed of supreme and exclusive authority in matters of religion.

2. The Protestant position will be best gathered from the Reformed Confessions. Some extracts will, therefore, be furnished from these venerable symbols stained with the blood of martyrs. They will be selected from churches separated from each other by national associations and interests, but bound together by the holy ties of a common faith.

As a specimen of the doctrine held by the German Lutheran Church an extract is taken first from the Confession of Württemberg:

"The holy Scriptures we call those canonical books of the Old and New Testament, of whose authority there was never doubt made in the church. This Scripture we believe and confess to be the oracle of the Holy Ghost, so confirmed by heavenly testimonies, that, 'If an angel from heaven preach any other thing, let him be accursed' (Gal. i. 8). Wherefore we detest all doctrine, worship, and religion, contrary to this Scripture. But whereas some men think, that all doctrine necessary to be known of us to true and everlasting salvation is not contained in this Scripture, and that the right of expounding this Scripture lieth so in the power of chief bishops, that what they, according to their own will, give out, is to be embraced for the meaning of the Holy Ghost; it is more easily said than proved. . . . Many examples also do witness that chief bishops have been often and very foully deceived; wherefore the gift of expounding the Scripture is not so tied to the Popes, that whosoever shall be Pope must needs rightly expound the Scripture; but the true meaning of the Scripture is to be sought in the Scripture itself, and among those that, being raised up by the Spirit of God, expound Scripture by Scripture."

"We confess that councils ought to have their judgments in the church concerning the holy doctrine of religion, and that the authority of lawful councils is great; but the authority of God's Word must needs be greatest."

The second extract is from the Formula of Concord:

"We believe, and confess, and teach that the only rule and norm, according to which all dogmas and all doctors ought to be esteemed and judged, is no other whatever than the prophetic and apostolic writings both of the Old and of the New Testament." "But the other symbols and other writings, of which we made mention a little while ago, do not possess the authority of a judge; for this dignity belongs to holy Scripture alone."

The Second Helvetic Confession:

"We believe and confess the canonical Scriptures of the holy prophets and apostles of both Testaments to be the very true Word of God, and to have sufficient authority of themselves, not of men." "In controversies of religion, or matters of faith, we cannot admit any other judge than God himself, pronouncing by the Holy Scriptures what is true, what is false, what is to be followed, or what to be avoided."

The Bohemian Confession:

"First of all, the ministers of our churches teach with one consent, concerning the holy Scripture of the New and Old Testament (which is commonly called the Bible, and is lawfully received and allowed of the fathers which are of the best and soundest judgment), that it is true, certain, and worthy to be believed; whereunto no other human writings whatsoever, or of what sort soever they be, may be compared, but that, as man's writings, they must give place to the holy Scripture."

The French Confession:

"We believe that the Word, contained in these books [the canonical] came from one God; of whom alone, and not of men, the authority thereof dependeth. And seeing this is the sum of all truth, containing whatsoever is required for the worship of God and our salvation, we hold it not lawful for men, no, not for the angels themselves, to add or detract anything to or from that Word, or to alter any whit at all in the same. And hereupon it followeth that it is not lawful to oppose either antiquity, custom, multitude, man's wisdom and judgment, or edicts, or any decrees, or councils, or visions, or miracles, unto this holy Scripture; but rather that all things ought to be examined and tried by the rule and square thereof." French: "*Mais, au contraire, toutes choses doivent être examinées, réglées et réformées selon elle.*"

The Belgic Confession:

"These books [of Scripture] do we receive as sacred and canonical, whereupon our faith may rest, be confirmed and estab-

lished. Therefore without any doubt we believe also those things which are contained in them; and that not so much because the church receiveth and alloweth them as canonical, as for that the Holy Ghost beareth witness to our consciences that they came from God; and most of all for that they also testify and justify by themselves this their own sacred authority and sanctity, seeing that even the blind may clearly behold, and, as it were, feel the fulfilling and accomplishment of all things which were foretold in these writings."¹

The (Polish) Confession of Thorne:

"The sacred Scriptures divinely delivered in the books of the Old Testament through Moses and the prophets, in the books of the New Testament through the evangelists and the apostles, are the only, the infallible and the perfect norm and rule of Christian faith and worship."

The Scotch Confession:

"As we believe and confess the Scriptures of God sufficient to instruct and make the man of God perfect (2.Tim. iii. 16, 17), so do we affirm and avow the authority of the same to be of God, and neither to depend on men nor angels. We affirm, therefore, that such as allege the Scripture to have no other authority but that which it hath received from the church are blasphemous against God, and injurious to the true church; which always heareth and obeyeth the voice of her own Spouse and Pastor (John x. 27, but taketh not upon her to be mistress over the same." "So far then as the council proveth the determination and commandment that it giveth by the plain Word of God, so soon do we reverence and embrace the same. But if men, under the name of a council, pretend to forge unto us new articles of our faith, or to make constitutions repugnant to the Word of God, then utterly we must refuse the same as the doctrine of devils, which draweth our souls from the voice of our only God, to follow the doctrines and constitutions of men (1 Tim. iv. 1-6). The cause, then, why that general councils came together, was neither to make any perpetual law which God before had not

¹ Translated from the Latin.

made, neither yet to forge new articles of our belief, neither to give the Word of God authority; much less to make that to be his Word, or yet the true interpretation of the same, which was not before his holy will expressed in his Word."

The Irish (Episcopal) Confession (1615):

"The ground of our religion and the rule of faith and all saving truth is the Word of God, contained in the holy Scripture. By the name of holy Scripture we understand all the canonical books of the Old and New Testament, viz. . . . All which we acknowledge to be given by the inspiration of God, and in that regard to be of most certain credit and highest authority."

The English Confession (extant in Bishop Jewel's Apology, 1562):

"We receive and embrace all the canonical Scriptures, both of the Old and the New Testament. . . . Also, we profess that these be the heavenly voices, whereby God hath opened unto us his will; . . . that they be the foundations of the prophets and apostles whereupon is built the church of God; that they be the very sure and infallible rule, whereby may be tried whether the church do swerve or err, and whereunto all ecclesiastical doctrine ought to be called to account; and that against these Scriptures neither law, nor ordinance, nor any custom ought to be heard; no, though Paul himself, or an angel from heaven, should come and teach the contrary (Gal. i. 8).

The Westminster Confession:

"Under the name of holy Scripture, or the Word of God written, are now contained all the books of the Old and New Testament. . . . All of which are given by inspiration of God, to be the rule of faith and life." "The authority of the holy Scripture, for which it ought to be believed and obeyed, dependeth not upon the testimony of any man or church, but wholly upon God (who is truth itself), the Author thereof; and therefore it is to be received, because it is the Word of God." "We may be moved and induced by the testimony of the church to an high and rev-

erent esteem of the holy Scripture; and the heavenliness of the matter, the efficacy of the doctrine, the majesty of the style, the consent of all the parts, the scope of the whole (which is to give all glory to God), the full discovery it makes of the only way of man's salvation, the many other incomparable excellences, and the entire perfection thereof, are arguments whereby it doth abundantly evidence itself to be the Word of God; yet, notwithstanding, our full persuasion and assurance of the infallible truth, and divine authority thereof, is from the inward work of the holy Spirit, bearing witness by and with the Word in our hearts." "The infallible rule of interpretation of Scripture is the Scripture itself." "The Supreme Judge, by which all controversies of religion are to be determined, and all decrees of councils, opinions of ancient writers, doctrines of men, and private spirits, are to be examined, and in whose sentence we are to rest, can be no other but the Holy Spirit speaking in the Scripture."

[At this point, these words were written in pencil, "To be finished if God wills." Although unfinished, that which has been written is of sufficient interest and importance, especially to the non-ministerial reader, who seldom has access to the confessions quoted, to justify its insertion in these discussions.—EDITOR.]

THE PERSON OF CHRIST.

WHAT, precisely, do we mean by the Personality of Christ?

He was from eternity a divine person — the second person in the Godhead. In this respect, no more, no less, he was and continues to be a person. Since the incarnation, he is not two persons, nor a compound person — a divine-human person, as Dorner holds — but one and the same divine person.

The assumption of human nature no more changed his personality than his divine nature. Both remain the same, intrinsically. Of course, the divine nature cannot change, either by increment or decrement. Otherwise it would not be divine. An infinite nature cannot change by increment, for, from the necessity of the case, the infinite can receive no addition: if it could be apprehended as the infinite *plus* something, it would not be apprehended as the infinite. Nor could an infinite nature change by decrement, for any subtraction apprehended as made from it would destroy the apprehension of it as infinite. It would be the infinite *less* the thing subtracted, which is a contradiction.

The same reasoning may be employed in regard to the personality of Christ. He was and is an infinite person. Any intrinsic change in his personality would involve the supposition of a contradiction. The assump-