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IS THE



BIBLE INSPIRED?

BY

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INTRODUCTION.

THIS little book is the fruit of a suggestion by Prof. Briggs in his *Biblical Study*: "The doctrine of inspiration may be constructed by a careful, painstaking study of the sacred Scriptures themselves, gathering together their testimony as to their own origin, character, design, value, and authority." It lays no claim whatever to originality or scholarship, but its sole aim is to show in simple language that the words of the Bible are the words of God. If He is pleased to own it in the least degree to confirm the faith of any of His children in the verbal inspiration of the book given to us by His Holy Spirit, or to sound a note of alarm that may summons abler pens to the defence of the truth, the purpose for which it was hastily prepared will be accomplished; and to Him shall be all the praise through Jesus Christ our Lord.



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IS THE BIBLE INSPIRED?

I.

THE FAITH OF THE CHURCH.

ONLY within recent years has the question been asked by Christians, Is the Bible inspired? Among the apostolic fathers, as they are called, and for centuries afterwards, there was no dispute on the part of those who accepted the Sacred Scriptures as a revelation from God, concerning their plenary inspiration, their supreme authority, and their divine infallibility from first to last. Clement, for example, of whom Irenæus speaks "as having seen and conversed with the blessed apostles," and mentioned by one of the apostles as a fellow laborer in the gospel, wrote a long epistle to the Corinthians, the genuineness of which is not doubted. Scattered all through this epistle, when he quotes Scripture, and this he does continually, are such expressions as the following: "Hence we find how all the ministers of the grace of God have spoken by the Holy Spirit;" "For thus saith the Holy Spirit;" "For so says the Holy Scripture;" "The Holy Scripture itself bearing witness," "For He saith, eye hath not seen, nor ear heard;" "Look into the Holy Scriptures, which are the true words of the Holy Ghost;" "Ye know, beloved, ye know full

well the Holy Scriptures; and have thoroughly searched into the oracles of God: call them therefore to your remembrance.”

In an epistle of Barnabas, another companion and fellow-preacher with Paul, cited by Clemens Alexandrinus, Origen, Eusebius, and Jerome, and accepted as genuine by many of the early fathers, we have testimonies like these: “For so the Lord saith again to those heretofore;” “Wherefore He again speaketh to them;” “For thus saith the Scripture;” “For God hath said;” “And therefore the Scripture again speaks;” “And again He saith, hear O Israel, for thus saith the Lord, thy God. And again the Spirit of God prophesieth, saying;” “Furthermore, it is written concerning the Sabbath, in the Ten Commandments, which God spake in the Mount Sinai to Moses, face to face;” “The Lord hath declared unto us by the prophets;” “Thus saith the Lord by the prophets;” “Moses in the Spirit spake.”

The Cyclopædia of Biblical, Theological and Ecclesiastical Literature contains an excellent article upon Irenæus whom it represents as saying, “Well knowing that the Scriptures are perfect, as dictated (or spoken) by the word of God, and his Spirit. . . . We follow the one and only true God, as our teacher; and having His words as a rule of truth, do always speak the same things concerning the same things.” “But more than this, by the language which Irenæus uses, we find the church of his day harmonizing with and justifying the very highest claims that have ever been advanced in support of the inspired

authority and infallible accuracy of the canonical writings.' Hyppolytus, his disciple, says of the Bible writers, "Be assured they did not speak in their own strength, nor out of their own minds, what they proclaimed; but first by the inspiration of the word they were imbued with wisdom."

Origen, according to Lardner, declares "that the sacred books are not writings of men, but have been written and delivered to us from the inspiration of the Holy Spirit by the will of the Father of all things, through Jesus Christ;" "the sacred Scriptures come from the fulness of the Spirit; so that there is nothing in the prophets, or the law, or the gospel and the epistles which descends not from the Divine majesty; . . . one and the same Spirit proceeding from one God, teaching the like things in the Scriptures, written before the coming of Christ, and in the gospels and apostles."

Augustine is equally emphatic in asserting that the Scriptures were spoken by God through men; and many similar declarations could be furnished from other writers of the first centuries. Indeed, Lord Hailes, as stated in the biography of Robert Haldane, easily discovered in the Christian writings of these centuries the whole of the New Testament with the exception of seven verses, which he felt sure he could also find; and the passages thus plentifully quoted were always presented as the very word of God, and not as the word of man. It is enough perhaps to say that such is the unvarying testimony of the church for four hundred years, and it does not seem to have occurred to these early believers to inquire whether there

might be different degrees and kinds of inspiration, or whether some of the books of the Bible, or some portions of some of the books, might be inspired, and others uninspired.

When the light of the reformation broke upon Europe the same profound reverence for the Scriptures, as fully and equally inspired, is discovered in all of the writings and confessions of the church. Thus we find according to Schaff's Creeds of Christendom in the Belgic Confession, A. D. 1561, Article III., as follows: "We confess that this word of God was not sent nor delivered by the will of man, but that *holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost*, as the apostle Peter saith. And that afterwards God, from a special care which he has for us and our salvation, commanded his servants, the prophets and apostles, to commit his revealed word to writing; and he himself wrote with his own fingers the two tables of stone. Therefore we call such writings holy and divine Scriptures."

So the Helvetic confession of 1566 starts out with the declaration, "We believe and confess, the canonical Scriptures of the Holy prophets and apostles of both Testaments to be the true word of God itself, for God himself spoke to the fathers, the prophets and the apostles, and still speaks to us by the sacred Scriptures." "The Irish Articles of Religion," adopted in 1615, state: 1. "The ground of our religion and the rule of faith and all saving truth is the word of God, contained in the Holy Scriptures. 2. By the name of Holy Scriptures we understand all the canonical books of the

Old and New Testament.” Then follow the names of the books in the precise order in which we have them to-day. “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 Westminster Confession of Faith,” 1647, opens with these striking words: “Although the light of nature, and the works of creation and providence, do so far manifest the goodness, wisdom and power of God, as to leave men inexcusable; yet are they not sufficient to give that knowledge of God, and of his will, which is necessary unto salvation; therefore it pleased the Lord, at sundry times, and in divers manners, to reveal himself, and to declare that his will unto his church; and afterwards for the better preserving and propagating of the truth, and for the more sure establishment and comfort of the church against the corruption of the flesh, and the malice of Satan and the world, to commit the same wholly unto writing; which maketh the Holy Scripture to be most necessary; those former ways of God’s revealing His will unto his people being now ceased.

II. “Under the name of Holy Scripture, or the word of God written, are now contained all the books of the Old and New Testament, which are these: [the books of the Old and New Testament are then mentioned as they occur in our English Bible,] all which are given by inspiration of God, to be the rule of faith and life.

III. “The books commonly called Apocrypha, not being of divine inspiration, are no part of the canon of the Scripture; and therefore are of no

authority in the church of God, nor to be any otherwise approved or made use of than other human writings.

IV. "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.

VIII. "The Old Testament in Hebrew (which was the native language of the people of God of old,) and the New Testament in Greek (which at the time of the writing of it was most generally known to the nations,) being immediately inspired by God; and by his singular care and providence kept pure in all ages, are therefore authentical; so as in all controversies of religion the church is finally to appeal unto them.

IX. "The infallible rule of interpretation of Scripture is the Scripture itself; and therefore, when there is a question about the true or full sense of any Scripture (which is not manifold, but one,) it must be searched and known by other places that speak more clearly.

X. "The Supreme Judge, by which all controversies of religion are to be determined, and all decrees, councils, opinions of ancient writings, doctrines of men, and private spirits, are to be examined, and in whose sentence we are to rest, can be no other but the Holy Spirit speaking in the Scripture."

Even the famous Roman Catholic Council of Trent, 1546, "following," as it declares, "the ex-

amples of orthodox fathers, receives and venerates with an equal affection of piety and reverence, all the books both of the Old and New Testament—seeing that one God is the author of both—as also the said traditions, as well as those appertaining to faith as to morals, as having been dictated, either by Christ's own word of mouth, or by the Holy Ghost, and preserved in the Catholic church by a continuous succession.”

So among the “Dogmatic Decrees of the Vatican Council,” 1870, it is said that “this supernatural revelation, according to the universal belief of the church, declared by the sacred Synod of Trent, is contained in the written books and unwritten traditions which have come down to us, having been received by the apostles from the mouth of Christ himself; or from the apostles themselves by the dictation of the Holy Spirit, have been transmitted, as it were, from hand to hand. And these books of the Old and New Testament are to be received as sacred and canonical in their integrity with all their parts, as they are enumerated in the decrees of the said Council, and are contained in the ancient Latin edition of the Vulgate. These the church holds to be sacred and canonical, not because having been carefully composed by mere human industry, they were afterwards approved by her authority, nor merely because they contained revelations with no admixture of error, but because having been written by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, they have God for their authority, and have been delivered as such to the church herself.”

In the Longer Catechism of the Eastern church

also, "Examined and approved by the most holy governing Synod, and published for the use of schools and of all orthodox Christians, by order of his imperial majesty at Moscow, 1839, we find question 19, "What is that which you call *Holy Scripture*? Answer: Certain books written by the Spirit of God through men sanctified by God, called prophets and apostles. These books are commonly termed the Bible. Question 20, What does the word *Bible* mean? Answer: It is Greek and means *the books*. The name signifies that the sacred books deserve attention before all others. Question 22, Why, then, was the holy scripture given? Answer: To this end that divine revelation might be preserved more exactly and unchangeably. In holy Scripture we read the words of the prophets and apostles precisely as if we were living with them and listening to them. Question 23, Must we follow holy tradition, even when we possess holy Scripture? Answer: We must follow that tradition which agrees with the divine revelation, and with holy Scripture."

These extracts must serve at present as samples of many similar testimonies that might be given from those who are known as "the fathers," and from all branches of the Christian church. They show with singular unanimity the belief of the entire body of the Saviour's professed followers in the divine inspiration of all the books that compose the Bible, however wide apart and discordant, and sharply opposed in many things pertaining to ecclesiastical ordinances, to forms of government, and to doctrines of minor importance. The Roman

Catholic, the Greek, and the Protestant communion and the various parties and factions in each of these, may have little or nothing to do with one another, but they all unite with one voice in proclaiming that the sacred Scriptures are the word and work of God.

It is worthy of notice that they advance no theory about the mode of inspiration, nor is any theory held and maintained, so far as is known, for perhaps seventeen hundred years after the death of Christ. They content themselves with asserting in the strongest terms that we are indebted for the writings called the sacred Scriptures to the Holy Ghost, that the words we there read are the words of God, and hence that in the perusal of them we may be assured of entire exemption from the ignorance, the folly and the mistakes of men. Through all these centuries the church in every branch and portion that has the slightest ground for claiming the name of a church, has steadily and stoutly affirmed that the Bible is God's book in a sense that belongs to no other book, and hence that all of its commands are authoritative, all of its teachings are infallible, all of its narratives are indisputable, and all of its decisions are final.

II.

MODERN THEORIES OF INSPIRATION.

IT was reserved for a time near our own to witness the first serious departure from this universal faith of the church. In Germany, the birth-place of the reformation, and the birth-place of much that is far less desirable, there was heard about a century ago, even among many who had not abandoned Christianity, a denial of all that is supernatural in inspiration. It was held that the only inspiration is found in the sublime thoughts and devotional feelings of the men who wrote the Bible, and that these thoughts and feelings did not guard them against error and imperfection, any more than do similar thoughts and feelings as expressed in the opinions and writings of other Christians, their equals in other respects.

Perhaps the most prominent, or at least the most influential of this school, was Schleiermacher, pronounced by Dr. Schaff, "the greatest divine of the nineteenth century," although he admits that he was a Universalist, and that "he shook almost every dogma of orthodoxy." Of this man the *Biblical Cyclopædia* says that, "ignoring the dogma of inspiration, he laid free hand upon the sacred book, just as upon the dialogues of Plato, or any other ancient documents. But he did not doubt the substantial genuineness of the Bible, and he was confident that critical science is capable of drawing the line between the essential and the non-

essential." The legitimate and logical result of such teaching, the natural and inevitable fruit of such planting, was seen in the terrible assault of his pupil Strauss upon the New Testament, an assault which has exhausted the armory of the devil in his hatred of Christianity.

This view, so fatal not only to inspiration, but to revelation itself, passed over into England, and was adopted in a modified form by Coleridge, and then by Arnold of Rugby, but was carried to its unavoidable extreme as seen in the writings of his son Matthew, and as seen also in the teachings of Coleridge's admirers and pupils, Maurice and Macnaught the latter of whom says, "Milton and Shakespeare and Bacon, and Canticles and the Apocalypse, and the sermon on the mount and the eighth chapter of Romans, are, in our estimation, all inspired, but which of them is the most valuable inspired document, or whether the Bible, as a whole, is not incomparably more precious than any other book—these are questions that must be decided by examining the observable character and tendency of each book, and the beneficial effect that history may show that each has produced."

It is not surprising to find such a writer claiming that "there is a true inspiration in 'the instinct of the owl;' that it is heard in the rushing of 'the wind;' that it is seen in 'the springing of a blade of grass;' that it murmurs along 'the streams that flow among the hills;' that 'the herds of the field calve' by inspiration."

Of course any half idiot can see that this is infidelity in the thinnest disguise. If the inspiration

of the Bible is only the inspiration common to men who may write readable books, nay, common to the lower animals and to inanimate creation, it is worse than foolish to say that the Bible contains a revelation at all. Hence such a view needs no discussion, for it is unworthy of refutation. There is not a particle of difference between it and the coarse blasphemies of Tom Payne and Bob Ingersoll, except that it is more decent in its expressions, and more respectful in its treatment of God's great book.

Another view, scarcely less dangerous in its practical effects, but held by men of undoubted piety and ability, and of general soundness in the faith, supposes that there are different degrees in inspiration. Drs. Hill and Dick taught their theological classes that there is an inspiration of superintendence, an inspiration of elevation, and an inspiration of suggestion. Dr. Henderson increased the number to five, the inspiration of excitement, the inspiration of invigoration, the inspiration of superintendence, the inspiration of guidance, and the inspiration of direct revelation. They imagined that the Holy Spirit was not needed, when the writers of the Bible were able to discover for themselves the facts which they recorded, as their historical narratives, and that divine help was bestowed in exact proportion to the necessities of the penmen. In other words, God threw them upon their own resources, and when nature failed, He interposed to supply the information which they could not otherwise obtain.

Yet, Dr. Hill admits that, at least, "in the prophecies which the New Testament contains,

there must have been the inspiration of suggestion. Neither the words nor the thoughts could there come by the will of man; and the writers spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." Dr. Dick has most completely refuted his own view when he says, "Others have maintained, that the inspiration of the apostles was only occasional; that they were not always assisted and guided by the Holy Spirit; and that consequently, being sometimes left to themselves, they thought and reasoned like ordinary men. As this is a mere hypothesis, unsupported by proof, it is entitled to very little attention. If admitted, it would involve us in very great perplexity, because, not knowing when they did, and when they did not, enjoy the presence of the Spirit, we should be utterly at a loss to determine what parts of their writings we ought to believe. There would be truth, and there might be error in them, but how to distinguish and separate them, would puzzle the wisest head. And it comes to the same thing at last, whether you say that they were not inspired at all, or that they were inspired on certain occasions, while you do not furnish us with the means of ascertaining those occasions." And it comes to the same thing at last, it may be added, whether you say, that they were not inspired at all, or that they were inspired in various degrees, while you do not furnish us with the means of ascertaining what portion of the Bible was written by inspiration, and what portion was left to man's treacherous memory, and fallible judgment, and educational facilities, and peculiar temperament, and natural prejudice, and inborn tendency to lie.

Dr. Bannerman, Professor of Theology in New College, Edinburgh, has truly said, "The origin and occasion of this theory cast no small measure of light upon the character of it. It was introduced avowedly for the purpose of meeting the allegations of error and imperfection in Scripture, and in order to reconcile the existence of real defects with the belief of a divine agency employed in the composition of it. And had there been any foundation of truth in the theory itself, it would have answered the purpose for which it was used. Wherever imperfection existed in Scripture, it was sufficient for the advocates of such a scheme to say that there the human element was present to the exclusion of the divine, and that the error was due to the former in the absence of the latter. The theory was undoubtedly based upon a compromise between the friends and the enemies of inspiration, in which the enemies were allowed to retain the errors which they alleged in the sacred volume, and the friends were enabled to account for them, while yet retaining the general doctrine of an inspiration, at least in name." As the theory, however, is totally abandoned, or, at least, is never advanced, it requires no further notice.

There is yet another theory, still more absurd than the last, which is now commonly held, and held by many who claim to be thoroughly evangelical. It supposes that the thoughts of the Scripture writers were inspired—that is, that the Holy Spirit gave them correct conceptions of the truth to be recorded, and then left them wholly to their own taste and understanding and mental culture to

select the words which form the vehicle for the transmission of these thoughts into utterance. Truly this would be a mockery of our agony in the yearning of the soul to know what God has said to a lost world. It would be like one pointing us to a priceless treasure locked in a casket, and then throwing away the key and leaving us as poor as ever. However true or important or sublime the thoughts may be, they are of no value to us, unless expressed in words that suitably and accurately convey them to our minds, for we can get at thoughts only through words. It is the same, therefore, as saying that we have no Bible at all to affirm that the thoughts of the writers were inspired, but that their words were compelled to run the chances of human error or ignorance. So far as we know men really think only in words, and if God could have inspired the thoughts of these penmen, and then cast them upon their own choice to select language for the utterance of their thoughts, we would have precisely the same ground for our faith and hope, which we find in uninspired authors, neither more nor less. There would be no divine testimony, and therefore no certainty about anything that touches the tremendous question of our salvation.

But apart from this conclusive objection to the view, which, alas ! now seems to be generally entertained, it is enough to say that there is not a line in the Bible to give it the least foundation. As Dr. Bannerman has well said again, " All these theories of inspiration are wrong, simply because they are theories—human and unauthorized at-

tempts to explain a supernatural mystery, the reality of which is plainly asserted in the Bible, but the solution of which is left untouched. But some of them [and this among them] are still further wrong as running counter to the facts which they are framed to explain." Never was the caution more needed than here, "not to think above that which is written," (1 Cor. iv. 6), for man is no more competent to deal with the mystery of inspiration than he is with the mystery of the incarnation. We only know, and thank God for it, that we have a book divinely inspired, divinely infallible both in its thoughts and words; and while we may be assured of this by the Scriptures themselves, we are not called to fathom the infinitudes of Jehovah's unsearchable wisdom and knowledge. When He has spoken, it is our privilege to stand firmly and fearlessly upon the truth of His testimony; when He has not spoken, it is wisdom on our part to be silent.

There is one other theory of inspiration called *dynamic*, whatever that means. But it has no meaning. It is a high sounding term, which, like many other high-sounding terms, is only a sound, for it has no sense. If those who use the expression intend by it powerful, efficient, or that which is effectual for attaining the end and accomplishing the purpose for which revelation was given, it explains nothing and helps nothing to the better understanding of the subject. If they intend by it that the power or the influence is from God while the action is human, the term is admissible; but it leaves us just where we were before, to inquire

whether there is a plenary inspiration of the Scriptures, and of all the Scriptures ; that is, a full, complete inspiration, "an inspiration in which there is no mixture whatever of error," or whether revelation comes to us in an imperfect and mutilated form, the thoughts originating with God, the words descending from no higher source than man's poor intellect.

The importance of this inquiry it is impossible to overstate. It is obvious that upon the conclusion we reach will largely depend our interest in the study of the Scriptures, our confidence in the testimony they bear, and our certainty as to the ground of our standing before God for all eternity. Moreover, whether we are living "in the last days" or not, these are certainly "perilous times," for the state of the world, the unrest of men, the plottings of revolutionists, the decay of ancient governments, the rapid spread of communism, nihilism, agnosticism and hydra-headed infidelity, the hurricanes rushing through the air, the disasters upon land and sea, crowding each other so rapidly that it is impossible to keep them in memory, the marked increase of rationalism in the church itself, all portend that we are called to face formidable dangers, and that we stand at the threshold of momentous changes. If we have no earnest and positive faith in the Bible as the very word of God, where shall we look for guidance and comfort and refuge? "If the foundations be destroyed what can the righteous do?"

Prof. Green, of Princeton Theological Seminary, in his crushing review of Prof. Robertson's Smith's

“Higher Criticism,” opens his admirable book with these words: “All the signs of the times indicate that the American church, and, in fact, the whole of English-speaking Christendom, is upon the eve of an agitation upon the vital and fundamental question of the inspiration and infallibility of the Bible, such as it has never known before. The divinity and authorship of the Scriptures have heretofore been defended against the outside world of unbelievers, against pagans, infidels and skeptics; but the question is now raised, and the supreme authority of the Scriptures contested within the church itself. In the controversies which have agitated the churches of Great Britain and of this country heretofore, the infallible authority of Scripture has been admitted as the ultimate test of doctrine by all contending parties. All made their appeal to this standard. The settlement of every question depended upon its interpretation, or upon inferences fairly deducible from it. But now the standard is itself brought into question. Utterances which fill the air upon every side, and are borne to us from every quarter, from professors’ chairs, from pulpits, from the religious press, not to speak of what is incidentally woven into general literature and promiscuous conversation, show abundantly that the burning question of the age is not, What does the Bible teach? It is one yet more radical and fundamental: What is the Bible? In what sense is it the word of God? Is it a revelation from him and divinely authoritative; or is it to be left to the interpreter to say what in it is from God and worthy of our faith, and what is the

fallible human element that may be rejected? This question is approached from all sides, and the most diverse and conflicting answers have been given."

Again he says in his introductory chapter: "The venerable Dr. Hodge, who was for nearly three score years the glory and strength of Princeton Seminary, was called upon for some remarks in the Week of Prayer, at the beginning, I think, of the last year of his life. The subject before the meeting was the conversion of the world. It was his habit, on such occasions, to present a cheering view derived from the progress which the gospel had made or was making, or from the accomplished work of redemption which is the assured basis of the world's salvation, or the unfailing promise of God which makes the issue certain; but at the time referred to he recited, in long and formidable array, the various forms of opposition which are directed against the gospel within the bounds of Christendom itself—the materialistic philosophy, the oppositions of science, the socialistic excesses—and showed in what various ways unsanctified learning, power and influence in irreligious hands, and unchristianized masses, stand as barriers to the progress of truth and holiness. His aim was not to discourage, but to present a truthful and sober view of the actual aspect of the world, and of the forces which are at war against the progress of the gospel. It was the trumpet-call of the veteran who had fought his battles and won his victories, summoning new recruits to the holy war, and uttering loud notes of warning, that the strife was by no means ended; that there are many and fierce battles yet to fight,

and that others must take up the weapons which he was laying down. We are coming now, as it would seem, to the culmination of the struggle. The battle rages around the citadel. No drones or cowards are wanted now."

It is a significant fact that the man who for half a century stood as the leading witness for the truth in America, felt constrained to sound such a note of warning amid his last public utterances. That it was a needed and timely note has been plainly shown by the current of events since his departure to be with the Lord. Professors in theological seminaries, that claim to be evangelical, have sought to tear the pentateuch into shreds, denying in the face of Christ's oft-repeated testimony, that Moses was its human author, pretending to discover in it the traces of many writers and redactors and sub-redactors, and asserting with amazing effrontery that Deuteronomy was not known until the time of King Josiah, nor Leviticus until the time of Ezra. Meanwhile the most popular preacher in the United States travels through the country scouting the Bible account of the creation of man, whom he prefers to regard as a developed tadpole, denouncing with fierce invective the God of the Calvinist, and denying the punishment of the wicked in the future world.

All such men, and their numbers are rapidly increasing, are in secret sympathy, and many of them in confessed sympathy with the *Unitarian Review* of September, 1883, which boldly says: "According to Unitarianism man judges the Bible. According to Orthodoxy the Bible judges man. On

this point everything turns. Newman Smyth, in a moment when he was evidently not thinking of denominational barriers, gave expression to this sentiment: 'When Jesus said, Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice, He declared, unequivocally, that the sense of moral truth within man is the test of revelation.' . . . Some would say, The mind of the Christ is the testimony to truth, but how are we to know the mind of the Christ? How are we to discriminate the thought of Jesus from that of Confucius or Rousseau, except by the exercise of that cultivated and inherited moral and intellectual sense which is the birthright of our race. Let us be consistent on this point of the authority of truth.'

For brazen impudence and self-conceit this is hard to surpass. Each man's cultivated and inherited moral and intellectual sense is to sit in judgment upon God's word, and to treat it as his idea of truth demands. Ingersoll's cultivated and inherited moral and intellectual sense, and his conception of truth, lead him to pour forth a torrent of the foulest and vilest abuse of the Bible and the Saviour; but according to the requirement of this *Unitarian Review* he is entirely right. What, however, is to be the final judge with those who have no cultivated and inherited moral and intellectual sense, the mass of ruffians who furnish an unfailing supply of thieves and burglars and murderers, and crowd our jails and state prisons? Of course we should be consistent on this point of the authority of truth, and approve their conduct when they spurn the Bible with obscene jest, and honestly believe that they have a right to prey upon their fellow men.

If the sentiment of this *Review*, now so widely accepted beyond the ranks of Unitarian infidelity, is correct, and every man is left to decide for himself what in the Bible is worthy of respect, and what is to be despised as error, the advice of Job's wife to her distressed husband was eminently wise, for we can do no better thing than to "curse God and die." We have no Bible, or at least a Bible that is not worth a straw. What one man's cultivated and inherited moral and intellectual sense may accept as reasonable, and according to his view of truth, may seem to another absurd; and so each one picks out the little that may suit his own appetite, rejecting all the rest.

Alas! it comes to this: Have we any Bible at all? If so, is it inspired? Is all of it inspired? Is it inspired in such way that in reading its words we may be assured we are reading the words of God? Can we rest our faith and our hope of eternal life upon the Scriptures, the very writings, as perfectly truthful and free from error in their narratives, their doctrines and their promises? This is the question which it is proposed to discuss by consulting the writings to see what they say of themselves. Let no one imagine that the method of investigation here adopted is a begging of the question, for the argument is not addressed to the infidel, but to those who already believe that the Bible is in some way, and to some extent at least, the book of God. It is perfectly proper, therefore, and indeed, it is the only course left open to ask what the book affirms of its own inspiration.

III.

THE INSPIRATION OF THE HISTORICAL BOOKS AND PSALMS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT.

THE moment we open the Bible the eye rests upon the words, "God said." These words occur ten times in the first chapter of Genesis, and the same words, or the equivalent expressions, "the Lord said," "God," or "the Lord spake, saying," "thus saith the Lord," "the word of the Lord came," are found 501 times in the Pentateuch, 292 times in the historical book and Psalms, 1111 time in the Prophets, or 1904 times in the Old Testament, besides almost innumerable allusions to the words contained in these ancient Scriptures, as in fact the words of Jehovah.

It is undeniable that from the time of Moses to the time of Malachi, those who claimed to be the revealers of the divine will usually commence the message, which they declared they were commissioned to deliver, with some such preface as "Thus saith the Lord." Then follow certain words, sometimes many and sometimes few, sometimes addressed to an entire nation, sometimes addressed to a group or family, sometimes addressed to individuals; and it is admitted that the persons uttering the words wished them to be understood as directly received from God himself, and plainly declared that they were so received. There is not an intimation that they were communicating only the thoughts of God, or that they were giving in

substance what He told them to reveal, but there is a positive assertion that they were repeating the words which He commanded them to speak.

The question at once arises, were these men mistaken? Were they deceived? Were they deceivers, coming before their hearers with a proclamation that God had directed them to make certain statements in certain forms of expression, and yet, after all, He had given them no such direction? If this be so, there is manifestly an end of the Bible and of revelation, and not one of their statements upon any subject can be worthy of the slightest credit. Very frequently they used words touching events that were still in the future when they spoke or wrote, and they did not hesitate to enter into the minutest details concerning these predicted events, foretelling, for example, the very name of Cyrus, the precise number of years that should be spent in Egyptian bondage and in Babylonian captivity, and giving more than one hundred particulars with regard to the birth, life, death and character of the promised Messiah. Later Scriptures affirm that every one of these particulars was literally fulfilled, and if these later Scriptures tell the truth, it is evident that the very words in which the predictions were made must have been communicated to the ancient prophets. Inspired thoughts, apart from inspired words, could have been of no force in the numerous instances of this kind found all through the Old Testament.

But again, there are very many artless narratives purporting to give accounts of personal interviews between the Creator and his creatures. Thus we

are told that "the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil thou shalt not eat of it," (Gen. ii. 16, 17). "And the Lord God called unto Adam and said unto him, Where art thou? . . . And the Lord God said unto the woman, What is this that thou hast done? (Gen. iii. 9-13). "And the Lord said unto Cain, Where is Abel, thy brother?" (Gen. iv. 9). "And the Lord said unto Noah, Come thou, and all thy house, into the ark," (Gen. vii. 1). "And the Lord appeared unto Abram and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land," (Gen. xii. 7). "And when Abram was ninety years old and nine the Lord appeared to Abram and said unto him, I am the almighty God; walk before me and be thou perfect," (Gen. xvii. 1). The same direct and personal intercourse between God and man addressing each other in customary converse and articulate human speech appears in almost every chapter of Genesis, embracing a period of about 2500 years of the world's history.

In like manner, when we turn to Exodus, we see it recorded that "God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM," (Ex. iii. 14). That "afterward Moses and Aaron went in and told Pharaoh, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel," (Ex. v. 1). "Then the Lord said unto Moses," (Ex. vi. 1). "And the Lord said unto Moses," (Ex. vii. 1). "And the Lord spake unto Moses," (Ex. viii. 1). "Then the Lord said unto Moses," (Ex. ix. 1). "And the Lord said unto Moses," (Ex. x. 1). "And the Lord said unto Moses," (Ex. xi. 1). "And the

Lord spake unto Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying," (Ex. xii. 1). "And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying," (Ex. xiii. 1). "Then said the Lord unto Moses," (Ex. xvi. 4). "And the Lord called unto him out of the mountain, saying," (Ex. xix. 3). "And God spake all these words, saying, I am the Lord thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage," (Ex. xx. 1, 2). "And the tables were the work of God, and the writing was the writing of God, graven upon the tables," (Ex. xxxii. 16). "And the Lord spake unto Moses, face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend," (Ex. xxxiii. 11).

Is all this, and much more like it, true, or is it false? Did Moses and others only imagine that the Lord spoke to them, or did they pretend that He had spoken to them in order to maintain their power by the appearance of divine authority and sanction? Or did they mean that He did not speak to them but merely excited their thoughts to nobler conceptions and sublimer aspirations, so that their exalted ideas were the same in practical effect as if He had spoken in actual words? If there is any deception or delusion about it, evidently there is nothing in the Bible upon which we can rest with the least degree of certainty and confidence, for the writers prove themselves to be impostors or fanatics, worthy of nothing but contempt; and at best we are left to vague conjecture as to the value of its testimony upon any subject. On the other hand, if these repeated declarations are to be taken in their natural and obvious import, it is definitely

established that God can communicate and that He has communicated not only His thoughts but His words to men, and that *His* words at any rate are unquestionably inspired.

But let us see how clearly this inspiration of words, when uttered by His commissioned servants, is proved at His first appearance to Moses, who recoiled from the task which was set before him, and "said unto the Lord, O, my Lord, I am not eloquent, neither heretofore nor since thou hast spoken unto thy servant, but I am slow of speech and of a slow tongue. And the Lord said unto him, Who hath made man's mouth? . . . Now, therefore, go and I will be with thy mouth and teach thee what thou shalt say." (Ex. iv. 10-12). Here, it will be observed, God promises to be not only with his mind but with his mouth, and to teach him not only what to think but what to say. He was not required to rely upon his own choice or culture for the selection of suitable language with which he was to address the Israelites and Pharoah; but notwithstanding his lack of eloquence, and although he was slow of speech and of a slow tongue, he would experience no difficulty in delivering his message, because he would speak what his divine Teacher told him to utter.

Does not this at once account for a fact, otherwise unaccountable, that the same Moses who "was very meek above all the men which were upon the face of the earth," afterward said to the children of Israel, "Ye shall not add to the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish ought from it,"? (Deut. iv. 2). Would such a man assert

such a claim for the value, the sacredness, the immutable perfection of the least word, unless he knew that it was not his word but God's? Again he says, "These words which I command thee this day shall be in thine heart; and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes. And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house and on thy gates," (Deut. vi. 6-9).

Surely they were not the words of Moses alone which were exalted to this place of supreme excellence and of divine authority, and of vital moment to the present and eternal interests of the people and their children, and which led the man, who had long before renounced all ambition, to repeat the solemn warning, "What thing soever I command you, observe to do it; thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it," (Deut. xii. 32). He remembered the promise of God at the commencement of his painful and self-denying work, "I will be with thy mouth and teach thee what thou shalt say;" and he knew that the words he uttered were the words of God, which man must not seek to improve, nor to change in the least syllable or letter. Among the last acts of his sorely tried and toilsome life, he "made an end of writing the words of this law," [that is, as contained in the Pentateuch,] "and put it in the side of the ark of the covenant of the Lord" as an inspired witness of

God's truth, (Deut. xxxi. 24). We must conclude with the lowest of infidels that Moses was a cunning and cruel trickster who played upon the superstition of his brethren, or we must acknowledge that his words were given by inspiration of God.

There is another man mentioned in the Pentateuch who was unlike Moses in every respect. This was Balaam, "who loved the wages of unrighteousness," and who was willing enough to curse Israel for the sake of the reward offered by Balak, King of Moab. The monarch was impatient with the prophet for so long delaying to obey his summons, not knowing that words had been put into the mouth even of a dumb ass to rebuke that prophet for his madness, "and Balak said unto Balaam, Did I not earnestly send unto thee to call thee? Wherefore camest thou not unto me? Am I not able indeed to promote thee to honor? And Balaam said unto Balak, Lo, I am come unto thee; have I any power at all to say anything? The word that God putteth in my mouth that shall I speak," (Num. xxii. 37, 38). He did not say the thought that God putteth in my mind, but the word that God putteth in my mouth; and the subsequent part of the narrative shows that he uttered words he did not wish to utter—words he was compelled to pronounce in obedience to a mightier and an irresistible power—words that condemned himself—words that foretell his doom at the second coming of Christ as he exclaims, "I shall see him but not now; I shall behold him but not nigh"—words that reach on to the final catastrophe at the close of the present dispensation, causing him to

cry out in terror : " Alas, who shall live when God doeth this ?" It is certain, therefore, that whether the words of the true prophets were or were not inspired, the words put into the mouth of the ass, and the words of the false prophet were inspired, for he was the unwilling medium of their utterance.

So it was in the historical books, when Saul sent messengers to take David, and " the Spirit of God was upon the messengers of Saul, and they also prophesied. And when it was told Saul he sent other messengers, and they prophesied likewise. And Saul sent messengers again the third time, and they prophesied also. Then went he also to Ramah, . . . and the Spirit of God was upon him also," (1 Sam. xix. 20-23). Clearly it is not a question here of inspired thoughts, but of words that flowed from lips subject to the external and overpowering will of the Holy Spirit like the keys of an instrument under a master hand, compelling them to yield the sound he wishes them to produce. Or look again at the old prophet of Bethel, who invited the prophet of Judah to eat bread with him. The latter had been charged by the word of the Lord, saying, Eat no bread nor drink water in the land under Jeroboam's rule ; but he yielded to the entreaty and accepted the invitation of his brother. " And it came to pass, as they sat at the table, that the word of the Lord came unto the prophet that brought him back, and he cried unto the man of God that came from Judah, saying, Thus saith the Lord," and then immediately announced the doom of his guest, although not wishing to speak what he was compelled to say, (1 Kings xiii. 20). These

will doubtless be accepted by all Christians as proofs and examples of verbal inspiration, but they are not more remarkable than the fact that the Lord spoke to the child Samuel words, the very meaning of which the child could not fully understand, or the fact that "the word of the Lord came unto Nathan," (1 Sam. iii. 11; 2 Sam. vii. 4), or many similar facts recorded in the same books.

Among the last words of David we have the following striking testimony: "The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and His word was in my tongue," (2 Sam. xxiii. 2). He does not say, The spirit of the Lord thought by me, but spake by me; nor does he say, the truth of God was in my mind, but His word was in my tongue, That is, what he spake, he spake as the mouth-piece of the Spirit, and the word which his tongue proclaimed was the word of God. Hence it is not surprising to find scattered through the Psalms such strong expressions as these: "The words of the Lord are pure words, as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times," (Ps. xii. 6). "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple; the statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes," (Ps. xix. 7, 8). "Forever O Lord, thy word is settled in heaven." "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." "The entrance of thy words giveth light." "Thy word is true from the beginning," or as Dr. Clark renders it, "true from the first word," (Ps. cxix.). "Thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name," or above any other

manifestation of the divine character in creation, reason and science, (Ps. cxxxviii. 2). There is one Psalm containing 176 verses, and the word of God under some one of its various precious titles is mentioned in each of these, except one verse, and mentioned in such terms of praise, as so incomparable in its excellence, as so manifold in its perfections, as so unerring in its guidance, as so adapted to all the need of all humble souls, it is simply impossible to regard it as the word of any man or men ; and it is simply impossible that the writer who said of himself, "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me," could have claimed such high authority for his own commandments, and exhibited such profound reverence for his own words.

Long after David's day, the view of inspiration that still prevailed among God's people is shown in the prayer of Nehemiah : "Thou camest down also upon Mount Sinai, and spakest with them from heaven." . . . "Thou gavest also thy good Spirit to instruct them." . . . "Many years didst thou forbear them, and testifiedst against them by thy Spirit in the prophets," (Neh. ix. 13, 20, 30). The testimony against Israel through the whole of their previous history, for more than a thousand years, is here declared to have been the testimony of the Holy Spirit in God's prophets, and as this book is the last but one in the canon of Old Testament Scriptures, Nehemiah becomes an important witness for the truth, that the words which his forefathers had heard, were divinely inspired. In the old book of Job, that takes us back

to a time preceeding all known human history, Elihu, who is evidently a type of Christ, and who says to Job, "Behold, I am according to thy wish in God's stead," begins his remarkable address with the statement, "There is a spirit in man ; and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding," (Job xxxii. 8). Albert Barnes well says, "This evidently refers to a spirit imparted from above ; a spirit from the Almighty. The parallelism seems to require this, for it responds to the phrase, 'the inspiration of the Almighty' in the other hemistich. The Hebrew expression here also seems to require this interpretation. It is, *the Spirit Himself*; meaning the very Spirit that gives wisdom, or the spirit of inspiration. . . . The word 'spirit' here, therefore, refers to the Spirit which God gives, and the passage is a proof that it was an early opinion that certain men were under the teachings of divine inspiration."

Thus all through the historical books of the Old Testament, from first to last, there is a claim by those who were commissioned to speak in God's name, that they spoke the words of God, and their words were received or rejected as the words of God.

The woman of Zarephath said to Elijah, "Now by this I know that thou art a man of God, and that the word of the Lord in thy mouth is truth." (1 Kings xvii. 24). Of Zedekiah it is said, "He did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord his God, and humbled not himself before Jeremiah the prophet speaking from the mouth of the Lord," (2 Chron. xxxvi. 12). Similar allusions to verbal inspiration, found in every part of these books, are

too numerous to mention ; and every one who knows how untrustworthy is human history, especially in its details, and how difficult it is to find two witnesses, perhaps equally intelligent and conscientious, precisely agreeing about a simple question of fact, will at once recognize the necessity for verbal inspiration in the narratives of the Bible, as well as in its doctrinal and prophetic teachings. It has already been seen that, no matter in what form the message has been delivered or the story recorded, the messenger from God spoke or wrote words that came from God through human lips and pens ; and it is for this reason alone such power is ascribed to the word, and such care is taken to guard it against the rash intrusion and profane tampering of uninspired critics. "When thou goest it shall lead thee ; when thou sleepest, it shall keep thee ; and when thou awakest, it shall talk with thee." "Every word of God is pure ; . . . add thou not unto his words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar," (Prov. vi. 22 ; xxx. 5, 6).

IV.

THE INSPIRATION OF THE PROPHETICAL BOOKS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT.

WHEN we come to the prophecies, every vestige of doubt concerning verbal inspiration must be removed from the minds of all who are in anywise subject to the authority of the Scriptures, and who possess a common degree of intelligence. Even those who hold that there are different kinds of inspiration, and those who hold that only the thoughts of the writers were inspired, have been constrained to admit that here, at least, the words are inspired. In the language of Robert Haldane, one of the noblest men, by the way, God has ever given to His church, "The words that are used in the prophetic parts of Scripture, must *necessarily* have been communicated to the prophets. They did not always comprehend the meaning of their own predictions, into which they 'searched diligently.' And in this case, it was impossible that, unless the words had been dictated to them, they could have written intelligibly. Although they had written the Scriptures, it was necessary to show them 'that which is noted in the Scripture of truth,' (Dan. x. 21). The writings of the prophets constitute a great portion of the Old Testament Scriptures, and God claims it as His sole prerogative, to know the things that are to come. We are therefore, certain that *they* enjoyed *verbal* inspiration; and, as we have not anywhere a hint of

different kinds of inspiration by which the Scriptures are written, does it not discover the most presumptuous arrogance to assert that there are different kinds ?”

To the same effect Gaussen, the able and distinguished Professor of Systematic Theology in Geneva, says : “ This theory of a divine revelation, in which you would have the inspiration of the thoughts without the inspiration of the language, is so inevitably irrational that it cannot be sincere, and proves false even to those who propose it ; for, without their suspecting it, it makes them come much further down in their arguments than their first position seems at first glance to indicate. Listen to them. Though the words are those of man, say they, the thoughts are those of God. And how will they prove this to you ? Alas ! once more, by attributing to this Scripture from God, contradictions, mistakes, proofs of ignorance ! Is it then the words alone they attack ? And are not these alleged errors much more in the ideas than in the words ? So true it is that we cannot separate the one from the other, and that a revelation of God’s thoughts, ever demands a revelation of God’s words also.

“ This theory is not only antibiblical, irrational, and mischievous ; further, it is taken up arbitrarily, and amounts at best to a gratuitous hypothesis.

“ Besides, it is very useless ; for it resolves no difficulty. You find it difficult, say you, to conceive how the Holy Ghost could have given the words in Holy Scripture ; but can you tell us any better, how He gave the thoughts ? . . . But

we have much more to say than this. That which in this theory ought, above all, to strike every attentive mind, is its extreme inconsistency, seeing that those even, who hold it most strenuously, are forced withal to admit that, in its greatest part, the Scripture behaved to be inspired to the men of God, *even in its words.*" The italics in both of these extracts are the authors'.

Turning, then to the prophets, and following the order observed in our English Bible, we find Isaiah saying, "Hear, O heavens; and give ear O earth; for the Lord hath spoken;" "Hear the word of the Lord," (i. 2-10); "Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" (vi. 8); "Thus saith the Lord God," (vii. 7); "For the Lord spake thus to me," (viii. 11); "Therefore, thus saith the Lord God of hosts," (x. 24); and everywhere in the prophecy, God is represented as speaking, using the personal pronoun, "I," and predicting future events with a minuteness and particularity, which make the suggestion of the very words, in which the predicted events are announced, absolutely essential to the communication of the divine purpose.

Jeremiah begins his prophecy by informing us that, like Moses, he pleaded for release from the painful and perilous mission which lay before him. "Then said I, Ah! Lord God! behold, I cannot speak; for I am a child. But the Lord said unto me, say not, I am a child; for thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak. . . . Then the Lord put forth his hand, and touched my mouth. And the

Lord said unto me, Behold, I have put my words in thy mouth," (i. 6-9). It is impossible to teach the doctrine of verbal inspiration, unless it is distinctly set forth in these verses. God said to the trembling prophet, "I have put my words in thy mouth," and this at once made the child a man, and relieved him of all responsibility, except to repeat as a child the words of another, and a Greater. "Moreover, the word of the Lord came unto me, saying;" "Then said the Lord unto me;" "And the word of the Lord came unto me the second time, saying;" "Then the Lord said unto me;" "I am with thee, saith the Lord;" "Moreover, the word of the Lord came to me, saying," "Thus saith the Lord;" "Evil shall come upon them, saith the Lord;" "Hear ye the word of the Lord;" "Thus saith the Lord;" "I will yet plead with you, saith the Lord;" "Be ye very desolate, saith the Lord;" "My fear is not in thee, saith the Lord God of hosts;" "Thine iniquity is marked before me, saith the Lord God;" "Ye all have transgressed against me, saith the Lord;" "O generation, see ye the word of the Lord."

These expressions are all taken from the first two chapters of the prophecy, and they occur at brief intervals, sometimes at the beginning and the end of a single verse, or a short paragraph, through the entire book. How much is involved in them is clearly expressed in the declaration of Jehovah Himself, "The prophet that hath a dream, let him tell a dream; and he that hath my word, let him speak my word faithfully. What is the chaff to the wheat? saith the Lord. Is not my word like a

hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces? . . . Behold, I am against the prophets, saith the Lord, that use [margin, smooth] their tongues, and say, He saith" (xxiii. 28-31). The difference between inspired and uninspired words is the difference there is between chaff and wheat; and here there is the strongest affirmation that the words of true prophets were the very words of God.

The next prophecy opens with the announcement, "The word of the Lord came expressly unto Ezekiel the priest," (i. 3); "Thou shalt speak my words unto them, whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear," (ii. 7); "And he said unto me, Son of man, go, get thee unto the house of Israel, and speak with my words unto them," (iii. 4); and the phrases, "Thus saith the Lord," "The word of the Lord came," "Hear the word of the Lord," occur nearly two hundred times. Are we to make nothing of all this? Does it mean nothing? Are foolish men at liberty to imagine that the Lord said nothing, that the word of the Lord did not come to the prophet, that the people did not hear the word of the Lord, but only caught at His thought as expressed in the bungling language of mortals? Surely Christians should be on their guard against the acceptance of a wretched theory, however sanctioned by respected names, which make these emphatic and oft repeated testimonies to verbal inspiration of no force or effect.

Daniel was a diligent student of the Scriptures, and he "understood by books the number of the years, whereof the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah the prophet, that he would accomplish

seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem." In his prayer contained in the same chapter, he confessed that God "hath confirmed His words which He spake against us, and against our judges that judged us, by bringing upon us a great evil," thus witnessing that it was the word of the Lord which came to Jeremiah, and that God had confirmed, not man's words, but His own words. At the close of his prophecy, which sweeps over all intervening time to the second advent of Christ, and embraces the rise and fall of the world's great empires, he says, "I heard, but I understood not; then said I, O my Lord, What shall be the end of these things? And he said, Go thy way, Daniel; for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end." From this it is evident that Daniel did not understand the mighty scope and significance of his own predictions. Hence is it not true that the thoughts were always inspired; it is not true that the prophets or the apostles were always inspired; but, blessed be God, it is true that their word or writings, when delivered by them as His ambassadors, were, and are, always divinely, infallibly and perfectly inspired.

Even if time and space permitted, there is little need of a minute examination of the remaining prophets. Every one of them, without a single exception, bears the same testimony to the inspiration of the words uttered or written in their messages. Hosea says, "The word of the Lord that came unto Hosea; . . . the beginning of the word of the Lord by Hosea," (Hos. i. 1, 2). Joel says, "The word of the Lord that came to Joel," (Joel i. 1).

Amos says, "Thus saith the Lord;" "Hear this word that the Lord hath spoken against you, O children of Israel," (Amos ii. 1; iii. 1). Obadiah says, "Thus saith the Lord God," (Obad. 1). Jonah says, "Now the word of the Lord came unto Jonah," (Jonah i. 1). Micah says, "The word of the Lord that came to Micah," (Mic. i. 1). "But truly I am full of power by the Spirit of the Lord, and of judgment, and of might, to declare unto Jacob his sin," (Mic. iii. 8). Nahum says, "Thus saith the Lord," (Nah. i. 12). Habakkuk says, "The Lord answered me, and said," (Hab. ii. 2). Zephaniah says, "The word of the Lord which came unto Zephaniah," (Zeph. i. 1). Haggai says, "In the first day of the month came the word of the Lord, by Haggai the prophet; . . . thus speaketh the Lord of hosts, saying," (Hag. i. 1-2). Zechariah says, "In the second year of Darius, came the word of the Lord unto Zechariah; . . . therefore say thou unto them, Thus saith the Lord of hosts," (Zech. i. 1-3). "And the word of the Lord came unto Zechariah, saying, Thus speaketh the Lord of hosts, saying. . . . But they refused to hearken and pulled away the shoulder, and stopped their ears, that they should not hear. Yea, they made their hearts as an adamant stone, lest they should hear the law, and THE WORDS WHICH THE LORD OF HOSTS HATH SENT IN HIS SPIRIT BY THE FORMER PROPHETS: therefore came there a great wrath from the Lord of hosts," (Zech. vii. 8-12). Again it may be said, if this does not teach verbal inspiration, it cannot be taught in human language. Malachi says, "The

burden of the word of the Lord to Israel by Malachi. I have loved you, saith the Lord," (Mal. i. 1. 2) ; and twenty-four times in the prophecy of four short chapters we find the phrase, "Thus saith the Lord."

This by no means exhausts the argument for the verbal inspiration of the Old Testament, but enough has been said to convince any mind that has not resolved to reject the truth.

The internal evidences of such an inspiration have not been touched, and these are not less weighty than the external. For example, the writers of the ancient Scriptures were all Jews, and can any one believe that they would have presented so humiliating a history of their countrymen unless the language had been dictated to them? The narrative they furnish of their own nation for a period of more than a thousand years is an almost continuous record of unbelief, rebellion, vile apostasy, and shameful idolatry. Not only so, but the failures and sins of their greatest men, as they would now be called, are faithfully related, and all the world knows to-day of Abraham's twice-told falsehood, of Moses' anger and disobedience, of David's adultery and murder, of Elijah's fear and despair. The mere inspiration of thoughts will not account for facts like these, for if the words had not been dictated by the Holy Ghost, the facts would have been suppressed; and as we contrast the unflinching fidelity of these Jews, notwithstanding their peculiar and passionate love of their country and their countrymen, with any uninspired history or biography, well may we ask with one of

their own writers, "And is this the manner of man, O Lord God?" (2 Sam. vii. 19).

But it is another striking feature of these old books, so strangely faithful to the truth, that the penmen, although living long before the discoveries of modern science, have fallen into no blunders, even of language, touching any really proved and accepted results of scientific investigation. This is a bold assertion, but instead of entering now upon a discussion of it, which would be out of place, it may be proved by the fact that the most learned and scientific men of the world, as Dr. Samuel Johnson, Sir Isaac Newton, Hugh Miller, Dr. Pye Smith, Sir Roderic Murchison, Faraday, Sir Humphrey Davy, Sir James Simpson, the Duke of Argyll, and scores of others, were or are devout Christians, some of them holding the highest views of a plenary and verbal inspiration, and finding, in their profound acquaintance with science, nothing whatever to contradict these views. But it is a still more suggestive fact that at the meeting of the British Association in 1865 a manifesto was drawn up and signed by 617 scientific men, most of whom were of the highest eminence, as shown by the long list of honorary titles attached to their names; and these men, including Dr. Balfour, Bentley, Bosworth, Sir David Brewster, Macleod, Sir John Richardson, and others of equal distinction, declare their belief not only in the inspiration of the Scriptures, but in the perfect harmony of these Scriptures with natural science. The original document is now in the Bodleian Library at Oxford, and it begins with the following declaration:

“ We, the undersigned students of the natural sciences, desire to express our sincere regret that researches into scientific truth are perverted by some in our own times into occasion for casting doubt upon the truth and authenticity of the Holy Scriptures.

“ We conceive that it is impossible for the word of God as written in the book of nature, and God’s written word written in Holy Scripture, to contradict one another, however much they may appear to differ.

“ We are not forgetful that physical science is not complete, but is only in a condition of progress, and that at present our finite reason enables us only to see through a glass darkly, and we confidently believe that a time will come when the two records will be seen to agree in every particular.”

These 617 scientific men, then, can find nothing even in the words of Scripture to contradict any known facts of the present day ; and some of them, in the printed catalogue of their names, require five and six, and Sir David Brewster requires eleven, lines of small type to give in abbreviated form the names of the various learned societies and scientific associations of which they are members. It becomes young men and women, therefore, if they would escape the ridicule of sensible persons and the wrath of God, to pause and consider before accepting the second-hand ribaldry of infidels, or the impudent statements of half-fledged scientists. They might learn a valuable lesson from the old Christian who replied, when asked by a youth of

soft moustache and softer head how he reconciled the language of the Bible with the most recent discoveries of science, "What are the most recent discoveries of science? I have not read the morning papers."

The more the ancient Scriptures are studied, the more certainly will the honest reader be constrained to admit that man could as easily have made the world as he could have conceived and recorded these writings. There is not a word used at haphazard, but there is the most precise accuracy of expression, the most suitable selections of language to convey the meaning intended, the most careful reference to the use of the right tense of every verb, and to every little particle. Much of this is necessarily lost or obscured in imperfect translations; but the most moderate acquaintance with the original will bring to light on every page such nice distinctions, such delicate shades of meaning, such pains-taking and suggestive choice of phraseology, that the Bible student will again and again be overwhelmed with amazement and awe, and reverently acknowledge that he holds in his hands the very words of God Himself.

It is true that in a few instances there are words which coarse and vulgar infidelity has pronounced to be indecent and unfit to be read in polite society; but it is strange that coarse and vulgar infidelity does not inquire, in the first place, whether this may not be due to the translators, and, in the second place, whether these words were considered indecent by polite society at the time the English translation of the Bible was made. There is noth-

ing indecent in the words themselves, nothing improper except by the changing customs and usage of the world; and if coarse and vulgar infidelity was as intelligent as it pretends to be, it would know that these words were freely employed by the best and most classic English writers in the days of King James.

It is sad to think that there are many who eagerly respond to any objection that is urged against the perfect credibility and infallible inspiration of the Bible. They instantly leap to the conclusion that those who assail its authority must be right, and its defenders wrong. Their natural sympathies are with the "higher criticism" and other forms of skepticism, simply because their natural sympathies are not with God and His word. A gentleman who professes to be a Christian, and claims to be a great reader, came not long ago in a state of excitement to a minister of the gospel exclaiming, "I have just found a most wonderful book in the Mercantile Library." "What is it?" "It is a book by Prof. Robertson Smith of Scotland, who shows that the laws of Leviticus were unknown to the Jews for a thousand years after Moses, and that Deuteronomy was written at a period much later than his day." The minister looked at him a moment, and quietly said, "What is it in you that instantly takes sides against God's word? You did not inquire whether Prof. Robertson Smith had been utterly refuted and routed, but immediately jumped to the conclusion that he is right." "I did not know" the man sullenly answered, "that any one had replied to him." "Just so:

you did not know, and you did not care to ask. Now let me inform you that Prof. Green of Princeton, to say nothing of Hengstenberg and others, whose scholarship is so far beyond that of young Smith that he is unworthy to untie their shoe latchet, has proved that all of his talk about Leviticus and Deuteronomy is the merest bosh." He promised to get the books, and to read them, but it is doubtful whether he did so, as he has never since appeared. He is the representative of a large class, who eagerly take up with anything that promises to shake the faith of men in the Scriptures. They hope to find the old book false because it bears so hard upon them in their unsaved state; and yet if it were proved false, they would be left in an infinitely more pitiable condition, to grope through darkness to an unknown eternity. But he who is brought to bow his proud will at the foot of the cross, and to accept of pardon and eternal life as the unmerited gift of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord, can turn to these inspired Scriptures as the unfailing fountain of wisdom, strength and consolation; and the more he resorts to them, the more surely he will see that "holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."

V.

THE OLD TESTAMENT IN THE HISTORICAL
BOOKS OF THE NEW.

SCARCELY do we open the New Testament before the eye falls upon the words, "That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet," (Matt. i. 22, Revised Version). So in the next chapter, "Thus it is written through (*dia*) the prophet;" "that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through (*dia*) the prophet;" "then was fulfilled that which was spoken through (*dia*) Jeremiah, the prophet;" "that it might be fulfilled, which was spoken through (*dia*) the prophets," not through the prophet, observe, but through the prophets, (Matt. ii. 5, 15, 17, 23). So in the next chapter it is said of John the Baptist, "this is he that was spoken of by [or according to the best authorities *through*] Esaias the prophet," (Matt. iii. 3). So in the next chapter Jesus repulsed the assault of the devil by saying, "It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." A second time the tempter came, and "Jesus said unto him, It is written again." A third time he came, and a third time he was met and defeated in the same way, "It is written." At the close of the conflict our Lord entered upon His public ministry, "that it might be fulfilled which was spoken through (*dia*) Esaias the prophet," (Matt. iv. 4, 7, 10, 14).

Here, then, ten times in the first four chapters of Matthew are certain words of the Old Testament writings quoted, and quoted as spoken by the Lord through the prophets. Is evidence like this worth nothing? Is it to be set aside because ignorant men discover differences of style and imaginary difficulties, that prevent their acceptance of the truth of verbal inspiration? Let the honest reader ask himself the question, Who spoke the words of the Old Testament, that are reproduced at the beginning of the New Testament? The answer, ten times repeated, leaves no room for doubt. It was the Lord who spoke them, and the prophets were His mouth-piece and medium for the utterance of His words. They were in His hand, as the clay is in the hand of the potter, and without any interference with their mental peculiarities or literary culture, He made them vessels for the transmission of His own messages in human speech. If this is not true there is no truth in the Bible, and all of the objections that may be urged against it by the higher criticism are but "profane and vain babblings and oppositions of science, falsely so-called," (1 Tim. vi. 20).

It is strange that every Christian does not learn a lesson from the example of our Lord in His treatment of the Sacred Scriptures. In the threefold temptation that assailed Him, three times He replied, "It is written,"—three times He quoted the book of Deuteronomy, as if foreseeing the attacks upon it by professed friends who seem to be dazed by the glamour of modern scholarship; three times He rested upon the word of God as His sole

defence and sufficient answer, refusing to move a step beyond that word, even to satisfy His bodily wants, to establish His claim upon the faith of the religious who gathered about the temple, or to take the kingdoms of earth before the time appointed by the Father. Not only so, but He spoke of the word which he quotes as of more value than the bread that is essential to our existence, as superior in its authority to all the demands of our physical necessities, as proceeding from the mouth of God, not from the mouth of man, exalting it thus infinitely above the wretched theory of inspired thoughts clothed in uninspired language, for He declares that the food of man's life, the new life, the true life, the everlasting life, is the word not of man but of God.

Hence, we are not surprised to find in the next chapter such testimony falling from his lips as the following: "Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets; I am not come to destroy but to fulfill. For, verily I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled," (Matt. v. 17, 18). Upon this striking testimony Dr. Joseph Addison Alexander remarks: "*Jot or tittle* are expressions borrowed from the art of writing, and peculiarly appropriate in speaking of a written law, not even the minutest point of which should fail of its effect or be abolished without answering its purpose. As we in such a case might say, not a word, syllable, or letter, so the ancients said not an *iota*, the smallest Greek letter, corresponding to the Hebrew *yod*, from which it also

takes its name. The other word, translated *tittle*, denotes a little horn, but is applied to the minute points and projections by which similar letters are distinguished." The New Testament Commentary by Dean Plumtre, edited by Bishop Ellicott, says: "The 'jot' is the Greek *iota*, the Hebrew *yod*, the smallest of all the letters of the alphabet. The 'tittle' was one of the smallest strokes or twists of other letters. Jewish Rabbis used to caution their scholars against so writing as to cause one letter to be mistaken for another, and to give examples of passages from the Law in which such a mistake would turn a divine truth into nonsense or blasphemy."

Can any Christian believe that our Lord would have so strongly emphasized the importance of every little vowel point, and every slight projection of the letters that form the Hebrew alphabet, unless He intended to teach that the very words of the law were given by inspiration of God? Whatever may be the boasted scholarship of modern German rationalists, and of their admirers and disciples in this country, probably they will not claim equality with Him "in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge;" and His reverent treatment of the Pentateuch, containing the law, might suggest to them the propriety of a little more caution in some of their statements. Again and again He mentioned this entire section of the Sacred Scriptures as the Law of Moses, and He gave no intimation that Deuteronomy was written in the days of King Josiah, or that Leviticus was unknown until the time of Ezra. He at least dis-

covered no internal evidence, in the difference of style, that a number of independent authors had assisted in the composition of the three remaining books, followed up by a still larger number of redactors and sub-redactors. He recognized in the five books, as the Jews had them and as we have them, the handiwork of God, and hence one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, nor from the prophets, till all be fulfilled.

It is evident that with Him, not what was thought, but what was written in the Old Testament scriptures was an end of all controversy, an unimpeachable witness to the truth of all His teachings, and a court of last resort in its decisions upon all questions of faith and practice. These scriptures touched him at every step of His journey through the world, and were honored by Him as emanating from a higher than human source in their words, as well as thoughts. "He healed the sick; that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias, the prophet," literally, "that the word spoken through (*dia*) Esaias the prophet might be fulfilled or verified," (Matt. viii. 17). He "charged them that they should not make him known, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet," literally, "that the word spoken through (*dia*) Esaias the prophet might be fulfilled or verified," (Matt. xii. 17). "All these things spake Jesus to the multitude in parables; and without a parable spake he not unto them; that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet," literally, "that the word spoken through (*dia*) the prophet might be fulfilled or verified,"

(Matt. xiii. 34, 35). "Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your traditions? For God commanded, saying, Honor thy father and mother," (Matt. xv. 3, 4).

It will be observed that our Lord declares it was the commandment of God, not of man, which He quotes, and that God commanded, saying. It was not man therefore that commanded, but it was God who both commanded and said. He drove the money-changers out of the temple in the power of the Old Testament scripture, "It is written, my house shall be called the house of prayer." He rebuked the chief priests and scribes, who were angry because the children were singing His praise, with the Old Testament scripture, "Have ye never read, Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise?" Again He rebuked them for their rejection of Him with the Old Testament scripture, "Did ye never read in the Scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner?" (Matt. xxi. 13, 16, 42). To the Sadducees, who denied the resurrection, He said, "Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God. . . . Have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God, saying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living," (Matt. xxii. 29, 32).

The whole of the sublime argument turns upon the difference between the past and the present tense of the verb "to be." The Saviour distinctly affirms that the word was not spoken by man, but

by God, who did not say, I *was* the God of Abraham, but I *am* the God of Abraham and the patriarchs, and therefore as the covenant with them included both soul and body, they are still living and their bodies must be raised. To the Pharisees, who confessed that the Messiah is the Son of David He said, "How then doth David in spirit call him Lord," or as the Revised Version has it, "How then doth David in the Spirit," or as the Emphatic Diaglott renders it, "How then does David, by Inspiration, call him Lord?" (Matt. xxii. 43). "The Son of man goeth as it is written of Him." "All ye shall be offended because of me this night, for it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the flock of the sheep shall be scattered abroad." "Thinkest thou that I can not now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels? But how then shall the Scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be?" "But all this was done, that the scriptures of the prophet might be fulfilled," (Matt. xxvi. 24, 31, 54, 56).

These are passages selected almost at random from a single gospel, and can any one doubt in their presence that the Lord Jesus exhibited the most profound respect for the words, and for the very letters, of the Old Testament writings? When death stared Him in the face, He had but to raise His hand, but to lift one pleading glance to heaven for help, and more than twelve legions of angels would have rushed on eager wing to avenge the insults and cruelties inflicted by sinful men upon One whom they adored; but how then shall the

Scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be? At whatever cost to Himself, and with certain deliverance at hand, the Scriptures must be fulfilled, and they were fulfilled in the minutest particulars, with exact literalness, the words of accomplishment answering precisely to the words of prediction, as when His murderers gave Him gall and vinegar to drink, and parted His garments and cast lots upon His vesture, and reviled Him and wagged their heads, and mocked Him with the taunt, "He trusted in God; let him deliver him now," and wrung from His broken heart the dreariest cry of anguish that ever burst from mortal lips, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" (Matt. xxvii. 34-46).

It is the special design of the Holy Ghost in the gospel of Matthew to present Christ as the promised King, in the gospel of Mark as the faithful servant of God, (Isa. xlii. 1), and in the gospel of Luke as the Son of man; and this accounts for some of the differences and difficulties that have caused the feet of the higher critics to stumble. But whatever the difference, each of the three synoptical gospels, as they are needlessly called, makes abundantly manifest the jealous regard of the Lord Jesus for every little statement of the Old Testament writings, showing that they held a place in His esteem infinitely above that of the learned Rabbis, or of any human writings whatever. It is to be regretted that want of space forbids a careful examination of Mark and Luke upon this point, but they are in entire agreement with the testimony of Matthew, and the objector is challenged to point

out a single utterance of Christ that does not prove His acceptance of all the Old Testament writings as containing the very words of God, even in the most obscure and, as men would say, trivial passages.

The same fact is brought out still more fully, if it were possible, in the gospel of John that reveals Him as the Son of God. Thus we read, "His disciples remembered that it was written; the zeal of thine house hath eaten me up;" "and they believed the Scripture, and the word which Jesus had said," (John ii. 17, 22). To the Jews He exclaimed, "Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life; and they are they which testify of me." "Had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me, for he wrote of me;" not intimating that anybody else had written any of the five books, or any portion of the five books, which the Jews ascribed to Moses, (John v. 39, 46). "It is written in the prophets, and they shall all be taught of God," (John vi. 45). "He that believeth in me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water," (John vii. 38). "It is also written in your law, that the testimony of two men is true," (John viii. 17). "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 can not 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).

There are several things about this language of our Lord worthy of notice. First, he appeals to

the Scriptures as the sole judge of the controversy : “Is it not written?” Second, the argument turns upon the single word “gods” in a single verse of the 82nd Psalm. Third, it embraces the important difference between the singular and plural numbers, between “gods” and God. Fourth, it shows that it was God, and not the Psalmist, who called the princes and rulers “gods,” as representatives of Himself. Fifth, it declares that it was the word of God, not the word of man, that came unto them. Sixth, it asserts that the Scripture can not be broken in the least link, in the smallest particle, in the number, gender, case, tense, or inflection of the original word. Seventh, it proves the divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ. Bishop Ryle well adds, “The theories of those who say that the writers of the Bible were inspired, but not all their writings—or the ideas of the Bible inspired, but not all the language in which these ideas are conveyed, appear to be totally irreconcilable with our Lord’s use of the sentence before us. There is no other standing ground, I believe, about inspiration, excepting the principle that it is plenary, and reaches to every syllable. Once leaving that ground, we are plunged in a sea of uncertainties. Like the carefully composed language of wills, settlements and conveyances, every word of the Bible must be held sacred, and not a single flaw or slip of the pen admitted.” Perhaps it is well also to give a single extract from Hengstenberg whose scholarship, to say the least, was not inferior to that of the Scotch and American Professors of Higher Criticism: “It can not be doubted that the Scripture is broken by those who

assert that the Psalms breathe a spirit of revenge—that Solomon's song is a common, oriental love song—that there are in the prophets predictions never to be fulfilled—or by those who deny the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch."

In another place we are told that "Jesus, when he had found a young ass, sat thereon; as it is written, Fear not, daughter of Sion; behold, thy King cometh, sitting on an ass's colt. These things understood not his disciples at the first: but when Jesus was glorified, then remembered they that these things were written of him," (John xii. 14-16). "I speak not of you all: I know whom I have chosen; but that the Scripture may be fulfilled, He that eateth bread with me, hath lifted up his heel against me," (John xiii. 18). "But this cometh to pass, that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their law, They hated me without cause," (John xv. 25). "While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the Scripture might be fulfilled," (John xvii. 12). The soldiers about His cross cast lots for His seamless coat, "that the Scripture might be fulfilled." "After this, Jesus, knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the Scripture might be fulfilled, saith—I thirst." The executioners brake not His legs, but one of them with a spear pierced His side, "for these things were done, that the Scriptures should be fulfilled, A bone of him shall not be broken. And again another Scripture saith, They shall look on him whom they pierced," (John xix. 24, 28, 36, 37).

Is not this overwhelming testimony to the inspiration of the very words of the Old Testament? Hundreds of years before, predictions had been uttered that, on account of their brevity and apparent vagueness, would have utterly escaped human notice. They were left in the midst of historical narrations, or lodged in a short phrase of some Psalm, or embedded in a part of a prophetic verse, and yet after all of these centuries had passed, they were taken up and shown to demand a literal and precise fulfillment. The Lord Jesus had absolute control over the hour and moment of His departure, for He said, "I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father," (John x. 17, 18).

We behold Him, therefore, on the cross a voluntary victim of man's hatred of God's holiness, and a voluntary sacrifice to pay the penalty which God's righteous law demanded of the sinner. But why does He not die, and so end the fierce tortures that are racking His body, and the fiercer tortures that are rending His soul? We learn to our amazement that He is surveying, as it were, the vast field of ancient prophecy to see if there yet remained any little prediction that lacked fulfillment, before he would consent to bring the dreadful suffering to a close. Yes, there is one in the 69th Psalm, "In my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink," and the Holy one, "that the Scripture might be fulfilled, saith, I thirst. Now there was set a vessel full of

vinegar ; and they filled a sponge with vinegar, and put it upon hyssop, and put it to his mouth. When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished : and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost."

But why did not the soldiers break His legs ? Nearly fifteen hundred years previous to the crucifixion, the blood of a lamb without blemish was sprinkled on the two side posts and on the upper door posts of the houses, in which the Israelites were gathered on the night of the passover. Of this lamb God had said, " In one house shall it be eaten, thou shalt not carry forth ought of the flesh abroad out of the house ; neither shall ye break a bone thereof," (Ex. xii. 46). So the soldiers brake not His legs : " for these things were done that the Scripture should be fulfilled, A bone of him shall not be broken." But they pierced His side ; for a thousand years after Israel's redemption from Egyptian bondage, God had said through his prophets, " I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and supplication ; and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced," (Zech. xii. 10) ; or as the same divine speaker exclaims in the 22nd Psalm, " they pierced my hands and my feet." Hence in John we read, " another Scripture saith, They shall look on him whom they pierced."

In the light of all this, it is impossible to resist the conclusion that one of the two writers in the Old and New Testament, was not a credible witness, and did not narrate the facts as they occurred, or on the other hand that the very words of the Old

Testament are inspired. A hasty reading of Dr. Bannerman's book fails to show that he touches the gospel of John, but he truly says upon certain passages in Matthew, far less striking than these, "No theory of inspiration short of a plenary one will satisfy the requirements of a system of prophecy whose fulfillments, down to their minutest letter, are secured by the divine ordinations carried out in the life of Christ, expressly in subserviency to their fulfillment. . . . It affords a most impressive proof of the supernatural inspiration which presided over the very language in which the prediction was uttered, and which, unknown to the prophet, expressed a wisdom which was not his."

It only remains to state that the same reverence which our Lord exhibited for the Old Testament writings amid the agonies of death, He continued to manifest after His resurrection. Hence when He appeared to the two disciples on the way to Emmaus, "beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself." The same evening their eyes were opened to recognize Him, as He sat at meat with them, and took bread, and blessed it, and brake, and gave to them; and when He vanished out of sight, "they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the Scriptures?" Still later on the same evening Jesus stood in the midst of the assembled and astonished disciples, "and he said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which

were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the Psalms, concerning me. Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures, and said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day," (Luke xxiv. 27, 32, 44, 46). What an example our Saviour has left of the manner in which He would have His followers treat every portion of the Old Testament! All through His ministry of unwearied love, then upon the cross pouring out His blood to make atonement for our sins, and when He arose from the dead, the first fruits of them that slept, always and everywhere He exalted the word of God with careful regard for its least statement. Surely if we would walk in His footsteps, and gain His approval, we must resist every attempt to lower the divine claims of that word, and every temptation, though clothed with plausible argument and pretentious scholarship, to view any chapter or verse as unworthy of an implicit faith and unquestioning obedience.

Turning now to the Acts of the Apostles, we find Peter at the very beginning of the history standing in the midst of the disciples, the number of the names together being about an hundred and twenty, and saying, "Men, brethren, this Scripture must needs have been fulfilled, which the Holy Ghost by the mouth of David spoke concerning Judas," (Acts i. 16). Here it is asserted that this Scripture must needs have been fulfilled, which in itself shows that it could not have been the Scripture of man, and then it is plainly declared that it was the

Holy Ghost who spoke by the mouth of David. Unless, therefore, it can be shown that there is something peculiar in this Scripture, separating it from other ancient Scripture, the doctrine of the verbal inspiration of the Old Testament is established. But when we look at the Scripture thus quoted, and attributed directly to the Holy Ghost, we find nothing to distinguish it from any other Scripture: "Yea, mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me," (Ps. xli. 9). This is all there is of it, and yet it was spoken by the Holy Ghost through the mouth of David, and therefore the other writings of David were spoken by the Holy Ghost, if no exception to the rule can be cited.

So in the next chapter Peter says, "This is that which was spoken through (*dia*) the prophet Joel," (Acts ii. 16). In the next chapter he says of Jesus Christ, "whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began," (Acts iii. 21). Here again it is explicitly affirmed that it was God who spoke through (*dia*) the mouth of all the holy prophets, ascribing therefore to Him as the author, the words, not only of some but of all the prophets. In the next chapter the Apostles "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," (Acts iv. 24, 25). It was not David who said it, but the Lord God, the maker

of heaven and earth, said it through (*dia*) the mouth of David.

It seems almost like an insult to the understanding to continue an argument like this, when the point is already fully proved to all who are willing to receive the testimony of the Bible upon any subject whatever. The same thought pervades the entire book under consideration, as when Stephen says, "The God of glory appeared unto our father Abraham, . . . and said unto him;" "And God spake in this wise;" "the voice of the Lord came unto him, saying, I am the God of thy fathers;" "then said the Lord unto him," (Acts vii. 2, 3, 6, 31, 33). Paul speaking to the Jews of the death of Christ, tells them "that they had fulfilled all that was written of him;" that the promise God hath fulfilled, "in that he hath raised up Jesus again; as it is also written in the second psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee. And as concerning that he raised him up from the dead, now no more to return to corruption, HE said in this wise, I will give you the sure mercies of David. Wherefore HE saith also in another Psalm, Thou shalt not suffer thine Holy One to see corruption," (Acts xiii. 29, 33-35). "And Paul as his manner was, went in unto them, and three Sabbath days reasoned with them out of the Scriptures," (Acts xvii. 2).

It is a significant and suggestive fact that the Apostle found enough in the Old Testament writings to occupy him for three Sabbath days, in opening and alleging that Christ must needs have

suffered, and risen again from the dead, and that this Jesus whom he preached is the Christ; and it is equally significant and suggestive to know that so far as his discourse is recorded in the 13th chapter, and the discourse of Stephen in the 7th chapter, and the discourse of Peter on the day of Pentecost in the 2nd chapter, the sermons of the first preachers of the gospel were made up almost wholly of quotations from the Old Testament Scriptures. This clearly shows that they regarded these Scriptures as divinely inspired, and the decisions of these Scriptures upon any point under discussion as authoritative and final, because they were the decisions of God Himself.

There is not a line in the Acts of the Apostles in conflict with the statement just made, but it is confirmed by every sermon and utterance of men, who claimed that they also were inspired. Hence when Paul stood as a prisoner before the high priest, who commanded him to be smitten, he indignantly replied, "God shall smite thee, thou whited wall." "And they that stood by said, Revilest thou God's high priest? Then said Paul, I wist not, brethren, that he was the high priest: for it is written, Thou shalt not speak evil of the ruler of thy people," (Acts xxiii. 5). He instantly bowed to the authority of the Scripture, although he knew that he was wrongfully suffering a shameful indignity. Again he stood as a prisoner before Felix to whom he said, "I confess unto thee, that after the way they call heresy, so worship I the God of my Fathers, believing all things which are written in the law and in the prophets," (Acts xxiv. 14). Such was his confession of faith; and would to God it were

the confession of every one who is called to preach and to teach in these days—believing *all* things which are written in the law and in the prophets.

In the last appearance of the devoted apostle in the last chapter of the book, he is a prisoner in Rome, but not forbidden to receive any who desired to see him. On an appointed day many of the Jews came to him, “to whom he expounded and testified the kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus, both out of the law of Moses, and out of the prophets, from morning till evening. And some believed the things which were spoken, and some believed not. And when they agreed not among themselves, they departed, after that Paul had spoken one word, Well spake the Holy Ghost through (*dia*) Esaias the prophet unto our fathers, saying,” (Acts xxviii. 23–25). It was out of the law of Moses, observe, embracing the entire Pentateuch, he sought to persuade them, and it was not Isaiah who spake, but it was the Holy Ghost who spake through Isaiah, and said. Whether we can understand how the Holy Ghost spake or not, it is distinctly affirmed by the apostle that he did speak and say certain words. So the book opens with the testimony of Peter that the Holy Ghost spake through the mouth of David, and it closes with the testimony of Paul that the Holy Ghost spake through Isaiah. If, therefore, the testimony of these two inspired apostles is to be received, then the verbal inspiration of the Old Testament is proved.

VI.

THE OLD TESTAMENT IN THE EPISTLES OF THE NEW.

THE moment we turn to these, the eye falls upon the words, "Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God, which he had promised afore by his prophets in the Holy Scriptures," (Rom. i. 1, 2). Here it is distinctly asserted that it was not man but God who had promised, and that He had promised by, or rather through (*dia*) the prophets; and the reference to the prophets, as Dr. Charles Hodge truly says, "includes all the Old Testament writers, whether prophets in the strict sense of the term or teachers or historians." The plenary and verbal inspiration of the Old Testament is thus firmly established at the very beginning of the epistles, for it was God who spoke through all the men employed to produce the Scriptures or writings which are called "holy." Observe, not the writers nor their thoughts, but their writings are holy, because the writings are inspired. •

We are not surprised, therefore, to find the same apostle declaring that the chief advantage and distinction of the Jews consisted in the fact "that unto them were committed the oracles of God," (Rom. iii. 2). To the ancients who knew that oracles were the spoken communications of the Deity, this statement would furnish the strongest possible proof of verbal inspiration. Nor is the

evidence weakened when the apostle invests the Old Testament writings with the attributes of personality and divine authority. It is obvious that he considers his argument as ended, his testimony as conclusive, and his position as impregnable, when he can cite the inspired writings, and triumphantly exclaim, "What saith the Scripture?" (Rom. iv. 3). If he is defending the sovereignty of God, he falls back on the writing, "The Scripture saith unto Pharaoh," (Rom. ix. 17). It is true that it was God who spoke unto Pharaoh, but so much is the Scripture the very word of God that the apostle makes no distinction between the two. If it is salvation through faith in Christ he is presenting, it is enough for him to show that "the Scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on Him shall not be ashamed," (Rom. x. 11). If God's purpose toward Israel is under discussion, he reminds his readers, "Wot ye not what the Scripture saith of Elias?" (Rom. xi. 2). If he would illustrate the high value and indispensable importance of the Old Testament from first to last, in its bearing upon believers of the present dispensation, he says, "Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope," (Rom. xv. 4).

No wonder that eighteen times in the epistle to the Romans there is an appeal to what is written in the Old Testament as final in its decision upon every point of doctrine and of duty presented "to all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints," (i. 7). Men are made righteous by faith,

“as it is written, the just shall live by faith,” (i. 17). The Jews were dishonoring their profession by their formality, “for the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles through you, as it is written,” (ii. 24). God must be true, even if every man is proved to be a liar, “as it is written,” (iii. 4). There is not a righteous man on earth, “as it is written,” (iii. 10). Abraham was made the father of many nations, “as it is written,” (iv. 17). His belief of God’s word was counted unto him for righteousness, and “it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him,” (iv. 23). The sufferings of believers should not discourage them, “as it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long,” (viii. 36). God has a right to do as He please, “as it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated,” (ix. 13). The Jews as a body rejected Christ, “as it is written, Behold, I lay in Sion a stumbling-stone and rock of offense,” (ix. 33). “Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law,” (x. 5)—literally, “Moses writes of that righteousness which is of the law;” and, by the way, the quotation is from the book of Leviticus, which, the higher critics say, was unknown until the time of Ezra, but which, Paul says, was written by Moses. The preachers whom God sends have beautiful feet, “as it is written,” (x. 15). Israel for a time is set aside, “according as it is written,” (xi. 1-8). But the Lord is coming back for their salvation, “as it is written,” (xi. 26). Believers are not to avenge themselves, “for it is written,” (xii. 19). All shall yet bow the knee to Christ, “for it is written,” (xiv. 11). Even He

pleased not Himself, "as it is written," (xv. 3). The Gentiles may well glorify God for his mercy, "as it is written," (xv. 9). "And again HE saith," (xv. 10). Who saith? God. And where does HE say it? In Deuteronomy. The apostle would not build upon another man's foundation, "as it is written," (xv. 21).

The quotations from the Old Testament in the epistles to the Corinthians are not quite so numerous, but they are quite sufficient to confirm the truth of the authenticity and genuineness, the divine authority, and the plenary verbal inspiration of every part of these ancient writings. The gospel confounds the boasted learning and philosophy of unbelievers, "for it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise," (i. 19). "That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord," (i. 31). The things of God are not open to the eye of the natural man, "as it is written," (ii. 9). "The wisdom of the world is foolishness with God: for it is written, He taketh the wise in their own craftiness," (iii. 19). "That ye might learn in us not to think above that which is written," (iv. 6); and oh! that the higher critics would learn this lesson. "For it is written in the law of Moses," (ix. 9); and the quotation that follows is from the book of Deuteronomy which the higher critics say, was unknown until the time of King Josiah, but which, Paul says, was written by Moses. "For our sakes, no doubt, this is written," (ix. 10). "Neither be ye idolaters, as were some of them, "as it is written," (x. 7). "Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples

[or types]; and they are written for our admonition," (x. 11). "In the law it is written," (xiv. 21). "Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the Scriptures," (xv. 3, 4). According to what Scriptures? The Old Testament Scriptures, and in fulfillment of them, because they are from God. "And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam is a life-giving spirit," (xv. 45), and when that last Adam shall return from heaven, "then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory," (xv. 54).

Passing by for the present similar allusions to the Old Testament in the second epistle to the Corinthians, which would show the apostle's belief in the inspiration of the words, and of words that may seem to us obscure and unimportant in the ancient writings, it is clear that in the epistle to the Galatians, he ascribes to the Old Testament Scripture properties that belong to God alone. "The Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham," (iii. 8). How could the Scripture foresee anything? How could the Scripture preach? The only possible answer is that Scripture contains the very words of God, and hence it is clothed with His divine perfections, even in human form. Hence too it is added, "the Scripture hath concluded [shut up] all under sin," (iii. 22), thus arming Scripture with the justice and power of the Almighty. But what is the proof that all are under

sin, and exposed to its righteous penalty ? “ It is written, cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them,” (iii. 10). How is deliverance from the curse obtained ? “ Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us ; for it is written, cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree,” (iii. 13).

It is well to notice that both of these last quotations are from the book of Deuteronomy, and that they could not be omitted without irreparable loss. Perhaps no two verses in the Bible have been more used by the Holy Ghost for the conviction and conversion of men. The former excludes from all hope upon the ground of any legal obedience or personal righteousness, because it is written, “ Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.” The latter points out the only way of escape : “ Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us : for it is written, cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree.” No doubt millions have read or heard these two verses, and have been led by them to confess themselves undone sinners, and then to trust in Jesus Christ as an all-sufficient Saviour, who bore the curse in their stead. But if the book was not written until Josiah’s time, the unspeakable blessing it has brought to souls is founded upon a falsehood. The higher critics tell us that the question of its inspiration is not affected by the time of its composition or by its human authorship ; but since the writer asserts that the discourses found in the book

were delivered in the plains of Moab, in the last month of the 40 years' wandering; since we constantly meet in it such expressions as "when the Lord thy God bringeth thee into the land," and "when ye be come into the land," and "whither thou goest in to possess it;" since it is claimed in almost every chapter that it was written by Moses, it is obvious that it is a base forgery, and unworthy of the least respect, if it was not composed until hundreds of years after the settlement of Israel in the land. What then shall be done with the testimony of our Lord Jesus Christ and His apostles, who again and again quote it as coming from God by the hand of Moses?

But notice a proof of Paul's belief in verbal inspiration, when he adds to the two quotations from Deuteronomy a quotation from Genesis: "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He [that is God] saith not, and to seeds, as of many; but as of one, and to thy seed, which is Christ," (iii. 16). Here the argument turns entirely upon the difference between the singular and plural numbers of the noun, and if the apostle was inspired by the Holy Spirit, it is equally certain that the smallest words, and inflections of words are also given by inspiration. "It is written, that Abraham had two sons; the one by a bond-maid, the other by a freewoman." This is a simple narrative in Genesis, but it contains a profound spiritual truth which is brought out nearly two thousand years later as we read, "which things are an allegory; for these are the two covenants." The apostle taught by the Spirit saw in the words of a family

history a depth and meaning we could never have perceived, and he explains every difficulty, and meets every objection, with the bold challenge, "Nevertheless what saith the Scripture?" (iv. 22-30). This for him is evidently the same as God saying it, and it ought to be enough for every believer.

It would be tedious and unprofitable to traverse each epistle, merely to accumulate evidence that the Old Testament is inspired in all of its parts and in all of its words. Hence it will be better to rest the remainder of the argument upon a few leading passages, which will be accepted as clearly and fully teaching the doctrine of verbal inspiration, by every mind that is subject in any respect to the authority of God's word.

In the last epistle which Paul was directed by the Holy Spirit to write, he says to Timothy, "Continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them; and that from a child thou hast known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works," (2 Tim. iii. 14-17).

All Scripture is given by inspiration of God. Scripture means *writing*, and a writing is made up of words and the letters of the alphabet. The writing here includes at least the holy Scriptures

of the Old Testament with which Timothy was familiar from early childhood, even if it does not refer to the New Testament; and as this writing is declared to be given by inspiration of God, it is strange that any Christian hesitates to receive the truth of verbal inspiration. If it be replied that it is difficult to understand how God could speak in all the different styles of human language found in the Bible, is it any easier to understand how God could be manifest in human form, encompassed with all human infirmities, save sin? In either case the appeal is not made to the understanding, but to faith; and he who believes that the divine and the human co-exist in the person of the incarnate Word, may readily believe that the divine and the human co-exist in the written word. But whether received or rejected, the declaration stands fast forever, that "all Scripture is given by inspiration of God," and there can be no evasion of its meaning.

Some have supposed that the tremendous force of this testimony is broken by the translation given in the Revised Version, "Every Scripture inspired of God *is* also profitable for teaching." But the question of verbal inspiration is not in the least affected by the proposed change, for the learned chairman of the Revision Committee in defending it says, "it enunciates the vital truth that every separate portion of the living book is inspired, and forms a living portion of a living organic whole." Gaussen says, "the purport of this declaration of St. Paul remains the same in both the constructions that may be put upon the words, whether we

place, as our versions do the affirmative of the phrase on the word *theopneustos* (divinely inspired), and suppose the verb to be understood ('all scripture *is* divinely inspired'); or, making the verb to apply to the words that follow, we understand *theopneustos* only as a determinative adjective ('all Scripture divinely inspired of God *is* profitable'). This last construction would even give more force than the first to the apostle's declaration. For then, as his statement would necessarily relate to the whole Scripture of the 'holy writings,' of which he had been speaking, it would assume, as an admitted and incontestable principle, that the simple mention of the *holy writings* implies of itself that *Scriptures 'inspired by God' are meant.*"

Still with all humility, and with profound respect for the able Revision Committee, some of whom are known to be firm believers in verbal inspiration, it is to be regretted that they have given us the new translation of this important passage. It makes the apostle utter the merest truism. Of course every Scripture inspired of God is also profitable, and it needed no inspired writer to tell us that. Who would think of saying, "every wholesome article of diet is good for food?" Yet that would be as sensible as the statement, "every Scripture inspired of God is also profitable." Moreover, the Revisers are inconsistent with themselves in presenting such a translation. We find precisely the same adjective joined with a noun in the singular in another text, which they render, "Let *all* the house of Israel therefore know," (Acts ii. 36). We find precisely the same omission of

the verb, and the same form of construction, in another passage which they render, "All things *are* naked and laid open before the eyes of Him with whom we have to do," (Heb. iv. 13). Consistency would have required them to render it, "All things naked are also laid open."

Perhaps it is well to add that many competent scholars do not agree with the translation of the Revised Version. The American Bible Union renders it, "All Scripture is inspired by God, and is profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for that discipline which is in righteousness." McKnight renders it, "The whole Scripture is divinely inspired, and is profitable for teaching, for confutation, for correction, for instruction in righteousness." Even the Unitarian Version by Dr. Noyes, Professor of Hebrew and other Oriental languages in Harvard University, published by the American Unitarian Association, renders it, "All Scripture is inspired by God, and is profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for discipline in righteousness." Dr. Young, author of the Analytical Concordance of the Bible, renders it, "Every writing is Godbreathed, and profitable for teaching, for conviction, for setting aright, for instruction that is in righteousness." Rotherham renders it, "EVERY Scripture [is] God-breathed, and profitable unto instruction, unto correction, unto discipline, that [which is] in righteousness."

Dr. Fausset, in the Critical and Experimental Commentary says, "All Scripture [*pasa graphe*]'—'every Scripture' that is, Scripture in its every part. However, 'all Scripture' is a justifiable

translation, as the technical use of Scripture is so notorious as not to need the article. *Græphe* is never used of any *writings* except the sacred Scriptures. The position of the two Greek adjectives [*theopneustos kai ophelimos*] forbids taking the one as an epithet, the other as predicate, 'Every Scripture inspired of God is also profitable.' The adjectives are so closely connected that as one is a predicate, the other must be so too. . . . The *inspiration* gives God's *sanction* to all the words of Scripture," and "*inspiration* is predicated of the *writings*, 'All Scripture,' not the persons. The question is not *how* God has done it : it is as to the *word* not the *men* who wrote it. All the sacred writings are everywhere *inspired*, though not all alike matter of special *revelation* ; even the *words* are divinely sanctioned, as Jesus used them, (for example, in the temptation, and John x. 34, 35), for deciding all questions of doctrine and practice. There are in Scripture degrees of *revelation*, but not of *inspiration*."

Many others might be quoted in favor of the old translation, having a weight of authority equal, no doubt, to that of the accomplished scholars who composed the Revision Committee ; but this would be needless, since it is admitted that both translations are equally explicit in affirming the inspiration of all the writings, or of every writing, found in the holy Scriptures. These writings, made up of words and the words made up of the letters of the Hebrew and Greek alphabets, are declared to be inspired by an inspired apostle, and why should not this end the controversy ? Surely it ought to

satisfy the heart of every believer, and silence the objection of every doubter. There is no getting around the testimony ; there is no escape from the conclusion to which it leads or forces every humble and honest mind, to accept the very words of the Bible in their original form as the words of God. "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God ;" and ought not the evidence borne by such a witness to be considered as conclusive and final? "Yea, let God be true, but every man a liar ; as it is written, That thou mightest be justified in thy sayings, and mightest overcome when thou art judged."

Turning now to the Epistle to the Hebrews we are met at the very outset with the definite testimony, "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners, spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son," (i. 1, 2). Who spoke? God. How did He speak? In divers measures and in divers manners by, or rather *in*, the prophets, God clothing His words in the garments of the prophet's individuality. The prophets here plainly include all those through whom God revealed His purpose or will from Moses to Malachi, and the same God who not only thought, but spake, as distinctly affirmed by the Holy Ghost, in all the ancient prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us in His Son. Well might Dr. Lindsay, in his commentary on the epistle to the Hebrews, say, "The inspiration of the sacred oracles is proved by the declaration of the apostle in the passage before us. The words of the prophets are God's words ; the words of Christ are God's

words, and the words of the men sent forth by Christ are God's words."

It is still God who speaks in the second Psalm when it is added, "Unto which of the angels said He at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee? And again [in 2 Sam. vii. 14] I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son? And again, when he bringeth in the first begotten into the world, HE saith [in the 97th Psalm] And let all the angels of God worship him. And of the angels HE saith [in the 104th Psalm], who maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire. But unto the Son ['HE saith' being plainly implied], Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever"—a quotation from the 45th Psalm. "But to which of the angels said HE at any time, sit on my right hand"—a quotation from the 110th Psalm. We find here seven distinct declarations in the first chapter of Hebrews, that it was God who spoke in the Old Testament Scriptures. A learned theological professor says in a recent book, "we have found that the results of the textual criticism are in conflict with verbal inspiration, but not with the symbolical doctrine of inspiration [whatever that is]. If it should be found that the results of the higher criticism are in conflict with other school doctrines of inspiration, it is important that these doctrines should be changed as soon as possible to accord with these results."

Would it not be a little more modest to say, it is important that the results of the higher criticism should be changed as soon as possible to accord with the plain testimony of God's word? Seven

times in one short chapter, an inspired critic says it was God who spoke in the Old Testament writings. A so-called and self-named higher critic says God could not have spoken. Which of the two witnesses will it be wise for Christians to believe? No matter what textual criticism may show concerning the changes or corruptions of the original text, since the believer in verbal inspiration never affirms that the changes, or corruptions, or even the best translations are inspired, but only that when the true text is discovered, the words of that text according to the testimony of all the prophets, and of Jesus Christ, and of all the apostles, are the very words of God. The entire epistle to the Hebrews, which is little more than an inspired commentary upon the words of the Old Testament, assumes throughout the doctrine of verbal inspiration which the higher criticism rejects.

“Wherefore, as the Holy Ghost saith [in the 95th Psalm], To-day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness; when your fathers tempted ME [that is, God], proved me, and saw my works forty years. Wherefore I, [that is, God is the speaker] was grieved with that generation; . . . and to whom sware He that they should not enter into his rest?” (iii. 7-18). So in the next chapter; “As HE said, [that is, God said] As I [that is, God] have sworn, if they shall enter into my rest. . . . For HE spake in a certain place of the seventh day on this wise. . . . Again, HE limiteth a certain day, saying in David,” that is, God saying in David, (iv. 1-7). “As HE saith

also in another place, Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek," (v. 6). "For when God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he swore by himself, saying," that is, God said it, (vi. 13). "For HE testifieth [that is, God testifieth], Thou art a priest forever," (vii. 17). "For finding fault with them, HE saith, Behold, the days come, SAITH the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel. . . . In that HE saith, a new covenant, he hath made the first old," (viii. 8-13). "The Holy Ghost this signifying," (ix. 8). "Whereof the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us: for after that HE had said before," (x. 15). "For we know him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord," (x. 30); and God says it in the book of Deuteronomy, which the higher criticism pronounces a forgery or fraud.

So thoroughly persuaded was the apostle by the Holy Ghost, that it was God who spake in the Old Testament prophets, he does not hesitate to rest a most important doctrine and prediction upon a little word, which we would certainly have overlooked. "Whose voice then shook the earth: but now he hath promised [in Hag. ii. 6], saying, Yet once more, I shake not the earth only, but also heaven. And this word, Yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which can not be shaken may remain. Wherefore, we receiving a kingdom which can not be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear: for our God is a consum-

ing fire," (xii. 26-29). Does not this suggest to us the importance of a careful and devout study of every word of the Bible, and not to be content with trying to catch the vague, indefinite spirit of a book, whose least expression may involve the most momentous consequences? There is a profound reverence manifested by the inspired writers themselves for the very letter of the Scriptures, which, however offensive to higher criticism and ridiculed as bibliolatry, we would do well to imitate.

But these writers did not always know the full significance of their testimony, and hence it is certain that their very words must have been divinely inspired. "Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into," (1 Pet. i. 10-12). Understanding but imperfectly their own predictions, they searched diligently into the meaning of things which they were taught by the Spirit of Christ within them, showing that while they were in full accord with the mind of God, still they were indebted for their communications to a wisdom far beyond the grasp of their own thoughts and the reach of their own attainments.

This also throws light upon another passage in the second epistle, which has perplexed many. "Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. 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 Pet. i. 20, 21). The prophets did not of themselves interpret the revelations of God, for as no prophecy is of any private, literally, of one's own interpretation, it could not be the result of the prophets' conjectures as to the future, since they did not themselves perceive the full extent and vast sweep of their own supernatural predictions. "For prophecy was never sent after the will of man: but men had utterance from God, being moved by the Holy Spirit." Such is Alford's fine rendering, or as the Revised Version has it, "No prophecy ever came [Greek, was brought] by the will of man; but men spake from God, being moved by the Holy Ghost." But whatever translation may be adopted, if the text does not teach the doctrine of verbal inspiration, it can not be taught in human language. The prophets, including all who revealed the divine purposes, were not under the control of their own will, but they spake, not thought, but spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, or they had utterance from God. The higher critics may urge a thousand objections to the doctrine of verbal inspiration, but they dwindle into insignificance before this explicit and unimpeachable testimony of the apostle Peter. Moreover, it will be found that men practically must believe in verbal inspiration, or they will not be-

lieve in any inspiration at all; for it is a glaring contradiction in terms to say that the scriptures or writings are inspired, while the words that make up these writings are uninspired.

But surely it is needless to continue the argument for the verbal inspiration of the Old Testament. More than two hundred texts have been cited, which distinctly affirm this truth, and these do not by any means exhaust all that might have been quoted in its defence. No intelligent reader of the ancient scriptures can fail to see that the writers claim on every page to be the mouth-piece of God, uttering words which He commanded them to speak; and this claim is fully sustained in the Gospels, Acts of the Apostles and Epistles of the New Testament. Nothing more can be done for those who remain unconvinced by such testimony. If they hear not Moses and the prophets, followed and corroborated by our Lord Jesus Christ and His Apostles, "neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead."

VII.

THE INSPIRATION OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

NO argument is needed to prove the inspiration of the words that were spoken by our Lord Jesus Christ. Even the higher criticism will certainly admit that here at least the theory of inspired thoughts, leaving the language to the chances of human ignorance or mistake, falls very far short of the truth. It will be conceded by all who have any right to be called Christians, that both the thoughts and the words of the Saviour were absolutely free from the slightest error or imperfection. He himself declares, "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life," leading Peter to respond for all the apostles, "Thou hast the words of eternal life," (John vi. 63-68). It is not suprising, therefore, to find Him placing the stamp of immortality upon these marvellous words, when He said, "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away," (Matt. xxiv. 35).

It may be well to glance at His testimony to the unspeakable importance and priceless value of the very words that fell from his lips, for it will be seen that He attaches the same divine authority and weighty import to the words spoken and written by those whom He sent into the world as His ambassadors. Scattered through the gospels are statements like the following: "Whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will

liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock," (Matt. vii. 24). "Whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, when ye depart out of that house or city, shake off the dust of your feet. Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment, than for that city," (Matt. x. 14, 15). "He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him at the last day," (John xii. 48). "He that receiveth whomsoever I send receiveth me: and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me," (John xiii. 20). "He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings: and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me," (John xiv. 24). "If they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also," (John xv. 20). "I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me . . . Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word," (John xvii. 8, 20).

But still more explicitly He promised them on three different occasions an inspiration, which beyond all question extended to the words they were to utter. Thus at their first commission to preach to none but the lost sheep of the house of Israel, He said to them, "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). At another time in connection with the

duty of confessing His name, He said, "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). Still later, in His farewell discourse that looks on to the evils of the last days, He repeated the charge and promise, "When they shall lead you, and deliver you up, take no thought beforehand what ye shall speak neither do ye premeditate; but whatsoever shall be given you in that hour, that speak ye: for it is not ye that speak, but the Holy Ghost," (Mark xiii. 11).

If these assurances do not guarantee verbal inspiration to the apostles, at least for the purpose of defence against their adversaries, the doctrine can not be taught in human language. It will be observed that three times our Lord forbids them to think beforehand how or what they were to speak, to premeditate, to feel the slightest concern about the best way to answer their accusers, because they would be no more responsible for their words than children repeating the lesson they have heard from the master, because the Holy Ghost would teach them what to say and how to say. Of course it would be a ridiculous perversion of these remarkable promises, if a minister of Christ, or other witness for Him, were to plead them as an excuse for indifference, or indolence, or neglect of preparation to speak in His name; but it would have been gross disobedience and unbelief, had the apostles thought beforehand for a single moment of the

speech they were to deliver to their enemies, or of the best method of presenting their cause.

They were often arraigned at the bar of Jewish and Gentile rulers, when the thrice-repeated instruction of their Lord would be recalled as a solace to their fainting hearts ; and never did they more require its comfort and encouragement than on the day of Pentecost, in the presence of a scoffing mob. Accordingly we are told that, " they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven. Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language. And they were all amazed and marvelled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these that speak Galilæans ? And how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born ? Parthians and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judæa, and Cappadocia, in Pontus, and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and in the parts of Lybia about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Jews and Proselytes, Cretes and Arabians, we do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God," (Acts ii. 4-11).

Surely in this instance there can be no dispute concerning the fact of verbal inspiration. Even if the nonsensical notion were true that the apostles spoke in their native tongue, and that their words were translated in passing from their lips into the various languages of every nation under heaven,

still there could be no getting rid of verbal inspiration. If a number of illiterate American fishermen were heard speaking intelligibly and accurately in all the dialects of Europe and Asia, or if their English words were instantly conveyed to the assembled representatives of these countries in the different languages with which they were familiar, in either case there would be a mighty miracle, a plain interposition of God's hand, a manifest control of the very words by divine power. But when we remember that the day of Pentecost was the beginning of the present dispensation of the Spirit, and that it was obviously designed to symbolize the grand purpose and wide range of the dispensation, it is a truth of no small significance that the Church age was ushered in by men, who spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. Whether they afterwards spoke and wrote in the same way or not, none can deny that the coming of God's grace to the world rested at first upon the truth of verbal inspiration.

In what degree the Epistles are inspired is to be determined, in the first place, by the Saviour's promise of infallible guidance to their writers. In their official utterances they were to be His mouth-piece and representatives, and in their communications to Jew or Gentile He linked His divine authority to their words in indissoluble union. "He that receiveth you, receiveth me; and he that receiveth me, receiveth him that sent me," (Matt. x. 40). "He that heareth you, heareth me; and he that despiseth you, despiseth me; and he that despiseth me despiseth him that sent me," (Luke x.

16). "As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world," (John xvii. 18). "As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you. And when he had said this he breathed on them, and said unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost: whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained," (John xx. 21-23).

Still more explicitly He said to them, "The Comforter, 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 unto you," (John xiv. 26). "When the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me: and ye also shall bear witness because ye have been with me from the beginning," (John xv. 26, 27). "When he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear that shall he speak: and he will show you things to come. He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you," (John xv. 13, 14).

Keeping these promises in view, we are prepared in the second place to notice the testimony of the apostles themselves concerning the nature and extent of the inspiration that attaches to their writings. "Now we have received not the Spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the

Holy Ghost teacheth ; comparing spiritual things with spiritual [or rather, combining the Spirit's thoughts with the Spirit's words]. But 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. But he that is spiritual judgeth [margin, discerneth] all things, yet he himself is judged of no man. For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him ? But we have the mind of Christ," (1 Cor. ii. 12-16). If this does not assert the truth of verbal inspiration, it is difficult to imagine how it can be expressed. Not only does the apostle declare that he has the Spirit of God, and the mind of Christ, but that the language he used was in the words which the Holy Ghost teacheth.

Accordingly we find one who speaks of himself as "the least of the apostles," (1 Cor. xv. 9), and still later, as "less than the least of all saints," (Eph. iii. 8), and later still, as the chief of sinners, (1 Tim. i. 15), exalting his word to a level with the word of the divine Redeemer. "Unto the married I command, yet not I, but the Lord, Let not the wife depart from her husband." That is, the Lord Jesus Himself had given a positive command to this effect. "But to the rest speak I, not the Lord." That is, the Lord had said nothing about the question now presented, but the apostle says something, and his decision is no less binding than if it had been spoken by the Lord. Nay, he repeals and abolishes the Old Testament law with regard to separation between husband and wife, and therefore he claims for his words, the highest possible

degree of authority and inspiration. "Now concerning virgins," he adds, "I have no commandment of the Lord; yet I give my judgment, as one that hath obtained mercy of the Lord to be faithful." That is, the Lord had given no commandment concerning them, but the mercy that enabled him to be faithful as an apostle in speaking according to the mind of the Spirit, led him to pronounce a judgment, which must be accepted as if coming from the throne of the Almighty, (1 Cor. vii. 10, 12, 25).

It is impossible, therefore, that the same apostle could cast doubt upon his inspiration in the last verse of the same chapter where he says, "I think also that I have the Spirit of God," or as the Revised Version better renders it, "I think that I also have the Spirit of God," or as the Emphatic Diaglott translates it upon the authority of the Vatican manuscript, "I am certain that even I have the Spirit of God." But let the reading of our common version stand as it is, and it still furnishes the strongest testimony to the inspiration of Paul's words. Other teachers had visited the Corinthians, claiming to speak by the Spirit of God, and with a telling allusion to these he writes, I think that I also have the Spirit of God. It is as if one, perfectly familiar with a subject, should say in the face of those who cavilled at his proficiency, or boasted of their attainments, I think that I also know something of the matter in hand. He would not by this language concede his ignorance, but rather positively assert his superiority. Hence the apostle follows up his testimony with the solemn charge, "If any

man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things which I write unto you, are the commandments of the Lord," (1 Cor. xiv. 37). Thus does this humble man, when he writes as an apostle, link his words with the words of the ascended Saviour, and require an acknowledgement of their divine origin and sovereignty.

In the same chapter he says, "I thank my God, I speak with tongues more than ye all," and these tongues were not acquired by human learning, but imparted by the Holy Spirit. Again he says, "since ye seek a proof of Christ speaking in me, which to you-ward is not weak, but is mighty in you," (2 Cor. xiii. 3). It is not Christ inspiring his thoughts, but Christ speaking in him by the Holy Spirit, according to His promise. Again he says, "I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ," (Gal. i. 11, 12). Again he says, "by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words, whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ); which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit," (Eph. iii. 3-5). "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 man, but, as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe,"

(1 Thess. ii. 13). "He therefore that despiseth, despiseth not man, but God, who hath also given unto us his Holy Spirit," (1 Thess. iv. 8). "Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions [instructions, injunctions delivered], which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle," (2 Thess. ii. 15). "Hold fast the form [the pattern, or exact type, or concise representation] of sound words, which thou hast heard of me," (2 Tim. i. 13). Surely the plenary and verbal inspiration of the apostle's writings could not be asserted in stronger terms.

It may be well to follow Paul's distinct and repeated claim for the inspiration of his epistles with the testimony of another apostle. "Even as our beloved brother Paul also, according to the wisdom given 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). Here it will be observed, Peter places all of Paul's epistles on precisely the same high plane of divine authority held by the other Scriptures, which, as abundantly proved, both by the Old and New Testament, were inspired in their very words, and in the minutest inflection of their words.

But Peter also takes his stand by the side of Paul, when he says in the same chapter, "that ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us the apostles of the Lord and Saviour," (2 Peter

iii. 2). He charges the scattered flock of God to be mindful of the words, not of the thoughts, but of the words spoken and written by all in former times who had revealed the will of Jehovah, and then immediately puts his commandment, and the commandment or words of the other apostles, on an equality with the authoritative declarations of inspired prophets. The reason for this remarkable demand upon the faith and obedience of Christians he gives in his first epistle, where he shows that it was the Spirit of Christ moving the Old Testament prophets, "unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us did they minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the Gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven," (1 Peter i. 12).

Here, too, New Testament apostles are classed with Old Testament prophets, of whom the same writer declares that they "spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." Hence another apostle says, "Beloved, remember ye the words, [the very words, mark], which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ; how that they told you there should be mockers in the last times, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts," (Jude 17, 18). Still another apostle tells us that "every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of first fruits of his creatures. . . . Wherefore

lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls. But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves," (Jas. i. 17-22).

Thus do all of the apostles claim for the words of the Bible, including their own words, the inspiration and authority of God, and this ought to be sufficient with every true Christian to settle the question against all the theories and objections of the higher criticism or any other kind of criticism. The last of the apostles, at the very close of the Sacred Scriptures, says of a book so full of symbolical language few perhaps really study it, and fewer still pretend to understand it, "I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto them, God shall add unto him the plagues which are written in this book: and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the tree of life, and out of the holy city, which are written in this book," (Rev. xxii. 18, 19, Revised Version). This is the final utterance of inspiration and of revelation except the sweet promise and benediction, "He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly; Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus. The grace of the Lord Jesus be with the saints. Amen."

The first man who was employed by the Holy Ghost as His amanuensis said, "Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish ought from it," (Deut. iv. 2), and the last man employed by the same Spirit, nearly six-

teen hundred years later, distinctly testifies unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, "If any man shall add unto them, God shall add unto him the plagues which are written in this book: and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the tree of life." Truly a terrible warning we have here, which it would be well for all to heed, and it will be observed that the warning refers, not to the thoughts, but to the words of scripture, beginning with the Pentateuch and ending with the Apocalypse.

Of course the threat of punishment against those who trifle with the words of the Revelation applies to every part of the Bible, the whole of which, it has been abundantly proved, is given by inspiration of God; and hence the believer reads with surprise and sadness statements like the following, scattered through a book recently sent forth by a Professor in a Theological Seminary: "Are the laws of the Pentateuch any less divine, if it should be proved that they are the product of the experience of God's people from Moses to Josiah?" (Biblical Study, p. 25). "We have found that the results of the textual criticism are in conflict with verbal inspiration," (p. 172). Astruc, a Roman Catholic physician, in 1753, "presented to the learned world, with some hesitation and timidity, his discovery that the use of the divine names, *Elohim* and *Jehovah*, divided the book of Genesis into two great memoirs and nine lesser ones. This was a real discovery, which, after a hundred years of debate, has at last won the consent of the vast

majority of biblical scholars," (p. 202). "*Fiction* is represented in the New Testament in the parables of Jesus. It is also represented in the apocryphal books of Tobit and Susanna, and in the 4th book of Maccabees in the story about the seven heroic Maccabee sons, and, in Esdras iv., in the legend about Zerubbabel and Truth," (p. 238). "Higher criticism comes into conflict with the authority of Scripture when it finds that its statements are not authoritative and its revelations are not credible," (p. 243). "There are also a few examples in the New Testament of the use of legends and fables, (2 Pet. ii. 4, *seq*; Jude 9, *seq*; 2 Tim. iii. 8), for purposes of illustration, which do not commit the authors to their historical truthfulness," (p. 316).

There is much more of the same sort, but enough has been quoted to bring grief to all who love the word of God, and to show that the influence of such a book with young men preparing for the ministry, like the imagination of the thoughts of the human heart, must be "only evil continually." The author asks, "Are the laws of the Pentateuch any less divine, if it should be proved that they are the product of the experience of God's people from Moses to Josiah?" Undoubtedly they are; and not only less divine, but unworthy of the least respect, for such a theory makes Moses, or the writer of the books of Leviticus and Deuteronomy, and Christ Himself, and the apostles, false witnesses, because they again and again testify that it was the hand of Moses that wrote the Pentateuch, and that it was delivered to Israel before the Jordan was crossed.

Again he coolly states that "the results of the textual criticism are in conflict with verbal inspiration;" but in whose opinion? Not certainly in the opinion of Prof. Charles Hodge, beyond all comparison the greatest theologian this country has ever produced, who says, "*The inspiration of the Scriptures extends to the words.* 1. This again is included in the infallibility which our Lord ascribes to the Scriptures. A mere human report or record of a divine revelation must of necessity be not only fallible, but more or less erroneous. 2. The thoughts are in the words. The two are inseparable. If the words, priest, sacrifice, ransom, expiation, propitiation, purification by blood, and the like, have no divine authority, then the doctrine which they embody has no authority. 3. Christ and His apostles argue from the very words of Scripture. . . . Constantly it is the very words of Scripture which are quoted as of divine authority. 4. The very form in which the doctrine of inspiration is taught in the Bible, assumes that the organs of God in the communication of His will were controlled by Him in the words which they used. . . . This, moreover, is the very idea of inspiration as understood by the ancient world. The words of the oracle were assumed to be the words of the divinity, and not those selected by the organ of communication," (Systematic Theology, Vol. I p. 164).

The opinion so confidently expressed by the author of Biblical Study is certainly not that of Professors A. A. Hodge and B. B. Warfield, who are not surpassed by him in scholarship and sound

judgment, and who say that "the divine superintendence, which we call inspiration, extended to the verbal expression of the thoughts of the sacred writers, as well as to the thoughts themselves, and hence the Bible considered as a record, an utterance in words of a divine revelation, is the word of God to us. . . . *The line* (of inspired or not inspired, of infallible or fallible) *can never rationally be drawn between the thoughts and the words of Scripture,*" (Presbyterian Review). Again the latter of these able Professors says in a published statement of his views, "That we have an inspired Bible and a verbally inspired one, we have the witness of God Himself; and that this means that every statement of whatever kind in the whole compass of Scripture, from the first word of Genesis to the last of Revelation, is infallibly true and of absolute authority to bind the head, heart, and life, rests on no lower authority. . . . May the man who through indifference, carelessness, conceit, or wickedness would deny this truth of God and teach men so—no, *not* perish—but be converted from the error of his way, and, like a second Paul, be set by God's power to defend that which he would have destroyed."

The statement that the results of textual criticism are in conflict with verbal inspiration, is certainly not the opinion of Dr. Alexander Carson, pronounced by Dr. Edgar in the Orthodox Presbyterian of Belfast, "the Jonathan Edwards of the nineteenth century," who says to those who were in sympathy with the views expressed by the author of *Biblical Study*, "How can we know the

thoughts of an author except by the words of the author? Had the inspired writers been left to themselves as to the choice of words in any part of their writings, they might have made a bad choice, and inadequately or erroneously represented the mind of the Spirit. The best writer that ever moved a quill may often fail in expressing his own sentiments. . . . Will you show us how any piece of composition can be ascribed to an author, when the words, sentences and collocation are not his own? Are the words, sentences and arrangement, no parts of the writings to which they belong? I am one of those fantastic people who believe that a writing contains all the words, sentences and arrangement, that are found in it; and therefore can not see how all Scripture is given by inspiration, if any word originally in the Scripture was uninspired. I am so old fashioned as to believe, that if all Scripture is inspired, there is no Scripture which is uninspired, for I have not yet learned to believe both sides of a contradiction," (Inspiration of the Scriptures, p. 104).

It is certainly not the opinion of the first of living preachers, C. H. Spurgeon, who says in his preface to the fifth volume of *The Treasury of David*, "We can not but express our sense of the superficiality of the best and most laborious of comments, when compared with the bottomless depths of the Sacred Word, nor can we refrain from uttering our growing conviction that the Scriptures possess a verbal as well as a plenary inspiration; indeed, we are quite unable to see how they could have the one without the other. So much of mean-

ing dwells in the turn of an expression, the tense of a verb, or the number of a noun, that we believe in the inspiration of the words themselves; certainly the words are the things *written*—for the refined spirit of a passage is not the creature of pen and ink. Our Lord's favorite sentence, 'It is written,' must of necessity apply to words, for only words are written."

Human authority is of little worth touching a question definitely settled by the word of God, but since so many, alas! consider it of importance, it may not be amiss to cite two or three other witnesses to the truth of verbal inspiration. Rev. J. R. Graves, LL. D., the bravest and strongest man, as the world would say, in the Southern Baptist Church, asks the question, "Are all parts of the Bible inspired? Is its inspiration plenary only, or plenary verbal? . . . Since no distinction is made in the amount of inspiration of any part, we are not at liberty to intimate a difference. Each part is therefore equally inspired with any other part. If the whole is God's word, each and every portion and part of it, every paragraph and period, every sentiment and sentence and *word* is equally God's word. . . . There may be errors in the transcription of the ancient manuscripts; there may be errors in translation, and errors many in interpretation, but that the original Scriptures are the words of the living God, He most explicitly declares them to be. No true friend to Christianity can advocate a spotted inspiration, since it effectually wipes out the Bible as a reliable book from the face of the earth."

Robert Haldane, previously quoted, well says, "Nothing can be more clearly, more expressly, or more precisely taught in the Word of God. And while other important doctrines may be met with passages of seeming opposition, there is not in the language of the Scriptures one expression that even appears to contradict their plenary and verbal inspiration. Whence, then, it may be asked, has arisen the idea of difficulty so general among the learned, but utterly unknown to the great body of Christians? It has wholly arisen from a profane desire to penetrate into the manner of the Divine operation on the mind of man in the communication of revealed truth. . . . Every thing contained in the Bible, whether the words of the penman, that contain the mind of God, or the words of others, that are inserted for the purpose of giving such information as He is pleased to impart, is equally, according to the express declarations of Scripture, dictated by God. It should, however, be observed, that it is not at all implied in the assertion of plenary verbal inspiration, that every example recorded in Scripture, without any judgment expressed with regard to the conduct of good, or even inspired men, should be for imitation. When the word of God records human conduct, without pronouncing on its morality, whether it is sin or duty must be ascertained by an appeal to the general principles of Scripture."

Dr. Anderson, one of the clearest and most scholarly of recent English writers, tells us "it is also most important to recognize the fact that all Scripture is equally inspired. We are not at

liberty to exercise a verifying faculty, and to accept or reject what we please, or just that truth or statement that commends itself to our consciousness, and adjusts itself to our capacity of belief. . . .

The writers were not left to their own judgment as to what particular event or narrative was to be inserted in the Scriptures, any more than as to how the record thereof was to be worded. So that whether it be a statement of the most prosaic character, or a prediction of the loftiest sublimity, a maxim of simple ethics, or a doctrine of the deepest interest and importance, all is inspired, all is of God. The tables of genealogy, the dimensions of the Tabernacles, the prophecies of Messiah's future triumph and glorious reign—all are equally inspired, and all are from God. And not only is this Divine inspiration plenary, but it is *verbal* also; for the words themselves, which record the facts, describe the narratives, and enunciate the truths, are all and equally inspired. That is to say, that the words of inspired Scripture are the words of the Lord God Himself, that the men who were inspired by the Spirit of God to write the Scriptures were not left to choose their own words promiscuously, but that whilst the individuality of each writer was preserved, the words themselves, with their various inflexions, as well as the subject-matter, were given to them by direct inspiration of God."

To this may be added the statement of the devoted Bishop of Liverpool: "On one point of vast importance in the present day, the reader will see that I hold very decided opinions. That point is inspiration. I feel no hesitation in avowing, that

I believe in the plenary inspiration of every word of the original text of Holy Scripture. I hold not only that the Bible *contains* the word of God, but that every jot of it was written, or brought together, by Divine inspiration, and *is* the word of God. . . . For my own part, I believe that the whole Bible, as it came originally from the hands of the inspired writers, was verbally perfect and without a flaw. I believe that the inspired writers were infallibly guided by the Holy Ghost, both in their selection of matter and their choice of words."

Such testimony by the ablest, the most learned, the most distinguished, the most faithful of God's witnesses, might be multiplied indefinitely; but these samples are presented to put young men on their guard against the unfounded assertion that "the results of the textual criticism are in conflict with verbal inspiration." This is just the opposite of the truth, for the only textual criticism that is worthy of the name, not the mere hunting up of various readings, but the devout and diligent search into the derivation and meaning of words, reveals ten thousand proofs of verbal inspiration. There is scarcely a verse in the Scriptures that does not bring to light evidence of the most careful selection of language, and a supernatural guidance in the choice of words which the ablest modern scholarship is sometimes insufficient to render suitably, words just exactly adapted to show out delicate shades of meaning often lost in translations; and never once indicating ignorance or mistake on the part of the writer. If any one doubts this, let him, with the scope of a passage in view, attempt to

improve its phraseology, and he will soon become convinced that the penmen of a rude and barbarous age far surpassed him in the proper selection of a phraseology of precise and wondrous accuracy. Let him also consider that in a book composed by so many different authors, of every degree of culture, intellect, and social rank, there is not one statement that is proved to be false by modern knowledge. Take up the apocryphal books, or the writings of the early fathers, some of whom were the immediate successors and even the companions of the apostles, and you meet with palpable absurdities and blunders. Why did not the apostles themselves fall into such absurdities and blunders, in some narrative or doctrinal teaching or illustration? Their writings have been subject to the fiercest criticism for nearly eighteen hundred years, and as the highest scientific investigation can discover no error in them, we can only conclude that their very words were given by inspiration of God.

The "real discovery" of Astruc that the use of the divine names, *Elohim* and *Jehovah*, divides the book of Genesis into two great memoirs, betrays such a lack of spiritual intelligence that it is sad and painful to every believer. Even a child can understand why *Elohim* alone is used in the first chapter of Genesis, where only the work of creation is described; and why God takes the title of *Jehovah Elohim* in the second and third chapters, when man is brought upon the scene, and stands in covenant relation to the Almighty; and why *Jehovah* only is used in the fourth chapter, when it is a question of redemption. It was not Moses, there-

fore, who was the clumsy compiler, gathering up two great memoirs from independent documents which he found floating on the sea of ancient tradition, nor were there two or more writers engaged upon the history contained in Genesis, but it is the author of Biblical Study who fails to see the entire appropriateness of different names under varying circumstances.

He is a scholar, however, and he knows that the two leading divine names run side by side throughout the whole of the Old Testament, as well as in the Pentateuch or Hexateuch. Thus we have Elohim about 44 times, and Jehovah nearly 200 times in Judges: Elohim 3 times and Jehovah 18 times in Ruth: Elohim about 80 times and Jehovah about 330 times in 1 Samuel: Elohim about 50 times and Jehovah about 50 times in 2 Samuel: Elohim about 80 times and Jehovah about 260 times in 1 Kings: Elohim about 70 times and Jehovah about 275 times in 2 Kings: Elohim about 110 times and Jehovah about 180 times in 1 Chronicles: Elohim about 175 times and Jehovah about 375 times in 2 Chronicles: Elohim 53 times and Jehovah 40 times in Ezra; Elohim 70 times and Jehovah 18 times in Nehemiah: Elohim 17 times and Jehovah 32 times in Job: Elohim about 350 times and Jehovah about 680 times in the Psalms: Elohim 5 times and Jehovah nearly 90 times in Proverbs: Elohim about 85 times and Jehovah about 400 times in Isaiah; and so it is to the last of the prophets.

Why does not the Professor see a real discovery of two great memoirs and nine or more lesser ones

in each of these books, as well as in Genesis? Precisely the same real discovery stares him in the face from Judges to Malachi which meets him in the Pentateuch, and it puzzles an unlearned man to know why the higher critics stop at the first five or six books with their independent documents, different authors, and small army of redactors and sub-redactors. Indeed they do not intend to stop, as shown in their treatment of Isaiah and other portions of the Scriptures, but if let alone for awhile they will drive their ploughshare from Genesis to Malachi, and then from Matthew to Revelation, pausing at last by the side of Baur and Strauss, and handing over their admirers and followers to rationalism and the devil.

But what has been said about Elohim and Jehovah does not fully show the absurdity of the argument that the use of these divine names proves the existence of "two great memoirs and nine lesser ones." Very often the names occur within the limits of a single verse. For example, "they went in male and female of all flesh, as Elohim had commanded him; and Jehovah shuted him in," (Gen. vii. 16). "I will make thee swear by Jehovah, the Elohim of heaven," (Gen. xxiv. 3); "Then shall Jehovah be my Elohim," (Gen. xxviii. 21); "But Jehoshaphat cried out, and Jehovah helped him; and Elohim moved them to depart from him," (2 Chron. xviii. 31); "In Elohim will I praise his word; in Jehovah will I praise his word;" (Ps. lvi. 10). Thus it is in scores of texts, and it certainly requires a very high criticism to discover in each of them two great memoirs, and nine lesser ones,

and an indefinite number of redactors and sub-redactors in order to account for the use of the two divine names.

As to the assertion that "*fiction* is represented in the parables of Jesus," and placing them on a level with the story of Tobit and Susanna, as to the assertion that "higher criticism comes into conflict with the authority of Scripture when it finds that its statements are not authoritative and its revelations are not credible," as to the assertion that there are legends and fables in the New Testament, "which do not commit the authors to their historical truthfulness," it is monstrous and shocking. If such declarations, carefully written in a book, and no doubt deliberately uttered from the chair of instruction in the class-room, do not throw wide open the doors of the church to the stalking in of a defiant and rampant infidelity, and do not send forth the students for the ministry, who read and hear them, with no settled convictions of the divine origin of the book they are commissioned to make known to the people, then a sufficient cause will fail to be followed by its legitimate consequences.

There are many Christians who have no sympathy with the higher criticism in its irreverent treatment of God's word, and yet they are sorely perplexed about verbal inspiration. The manifest peculiarities of style in the various books of the Bible constitute, in their judgment, a serious objection to the statement that the Holy Spirit dictated the very words. But surely they ought to remember that when we have the clear and re-

peated testimony of the Sacred Scriptures to their verbal inspiration, this fact alone must sweep away their hastily formed conclusion which, after all, is the result of ignorance. "Canst thou by searching find out God? canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection? It is as high as heaven; what canst thou do? deeper than hell; what canst thou know?" (Job xi. 7, 8).

It is very foolish to imagine that the eternal One, who is infinite in understanding, and the source of all wisdom, is subject to the limitations of man's feeble little intellect, or forced to confine the operations of His mind within the narrow range of human experience. No one doubts that there are those among His creatures, with mental growth and development of fifty or sixty years at most, who can employ a great variety of styles in their writings. Bacon, for example, wrote on law, religion, philosophy, history, science, and it has been plausibly argued that he composed some of the plays attributed to Shakespeare. Sir Isaac Newton wrote on astronomy, mathematics, and prophecy, and while there was enough perhaps to indicate unity of authorship, there was certainly diversity in the modes of expression. Many others have turned their pens at different periods of a short life, or perhaps at the same periods, to a variety of subjects, now sending forth a romance, and then poetry, and then a careful discussion of political questions, and then their views of some scientific speculation; and although the literary style employed is suited to the topic presented, all the styles emanate from one and the same brain. If man who

is but a worm can do this, what can not God do? May not He who formed the mind employ that mind to communicate His own thoughts and words, without any interference with the peculiarities it received from His creating hand ?

Daily all over the civilized world organists are seated at their instruments, and by a touch of the keys and pedal they are calling forth through hundreds of pipes an almost endless variety of sounds. Some of them can cause at least a resemblance to the dash of waves upon the shore, to the roar of the hurricane, to the soft notes of a flute, to the cry of a child ; but all must proceed from the same wind chest in obedience to the will of the same master mind. One who has stood in a vast garden, and thought of the innumerable shapes and colors and mingled odors about him, and then cast his thoughts over the vaster field of creation, and reflected that every one of these things was in the divine mind before it was formed by the divine handiwork, can only wonder at the foolishness that restricts the boundless resources of God. One who has watched the movements of a complicated machinery in factory or mill, and remembered that it is the product of a creature, who in comparison with the Creator is a senseless moth, a crawling caterpillar, a dull toad, can only be astonished at the stupidity which doubts the ability of God to utter His own words through the medium of a thousand different styles, if He so choose.

There is another common objection to the truth of verbal inspiration which has been recently expressed in a lecture full of evolution-infidelity and

nonsense, delivered throughout the country by the most popular preacher in America. He is a man of unquestioned genius, which he has unquestionably exercised for evil. He is as much worse than an infidel as a dangerous enemy, who has stolen into the camp in the guise of a friend, is worse than an open foe in front. Like all other secret and avowed skeptics in the church, and all other heretics, he is bitterly hostile to verbal inspiration, and brings forward as an unanswerable argument against it the dissimilar language used by the four Evangelists in recording the inscription upon the Saviour's cross. There is nothing original, however, in the argument, for it has been used times without number, and is used still until it has grown stale.

It does not seem to occur to him, and to better men who think there is force in the argument, that one of these four Evangelists wrote his account of the crucifixion before the others. All that the three had to do, therefore, was to copy precisely the words recorded by the first, and this a school boy could have done, and this the three would most certainly have done, were it not for verbal inspiration. They did not copy because the Holy Ghost directed them not to copy. He had His own special design in each of the four gospels, which together form the four equal sides of our Lord's perfect life on the earth. In Matthew He is presented with special reference to His claim and title as the King of the Jews, in Mark as the obedient Servant predicted by Isaiah, in Luke as the Son of man, and in John as the Son of God. It will be found upon examination that the four modes of recording the

inscription answer exactly to the purpose of the Holy Spirit in the four gospels.

Moreover the preface to the inscription in each gospel shows that it was the deliberate intention of the writers to record the words differently. In Matthew we are told that His executioners "set up over his head, his accusation written, **THIS IS JESUS THE KING OF THE JEWS.**" In Mark we are told "the superscription of his accusation was written over, **THE KING OF THE JEWS.**" In Luke we are told that "a superscription also was written over him, in letters of Greek, and Latin, and Hebrew, **THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS.**" In John we are told that "Pilate wrote a title, and put it on the cross. And the writing was, **JESUS OF NAZARETH THE KING OF THE JEWS.**" Must not every candid reader see at a glance that these differences were designed, that they were not left to chance nor even to the choice of the writers, and that taken all together they make up the full inscription? So far, then, from disproving the truth of verbal inspiration, the testimony of the four Evangelists to the words placed on the cross, when carefully considered, is its triumphant demonstration.

Another difficulty lies in the way of many who are disposed to accept verbal inspiration, when they are reminded of the trivial nature of some statements found in the Bible. For example, for a hundred years men who reject this truth, have sneered at the assertion that the Holy Spirit directed the apostle to write to Timothy about an old cloke that had been left at Troas, (2 Tim. iv.

13). Well, if any Christian, and especially any minister of the gospel, can find it in their hearts to ridicule the tender care of the Divine Spirit for the comfort of His aged and faithful servant, awaiting martyrdom in a Roman dungeon, they are welcome to all the capital they can make out of the touching record.

In like manner every objection to the doctrine falls to the ground, and although the higher critics and other enemies of the Bible will continue to fight it, and mislead multitudes, it remains true to-day that "all scripture is given by inspiration of God." All of the sacred writings from the first verse of Genesis to the last verse of Revelation were dictated by the Holy Spirit, and upon those portions which professed Christians and professors in theological seminaries denounce as fictions and legends, as the story of Jonah and the great fish and the destruction of Sodom, Jesus Christ and the inspired apostles have set the seal of their solemn sanction. The Bible is a unit, one perfect, indivisible whole, the Old Testament and the New Testament forming volume first and volume second of God's revealed will and God's communicated words; and men must either accept all of it, and through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ enter heaven at last, or they must reject all of it, and go into hell when they die.

That this is not too strong a statement will be obvious when we recall the relation of God's word to the entire question of our salvation. By it we are begotten or born into newness of life. "Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that

we should be a kind of first fruits of his creatures," (Jas. i. 18). "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever," (1 Pet. i. 23). "In Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel," (1 Cor. iv. 15). By it we are cleansed from the filthiness of the flesh. "Already ye are clean because of the word which I have spoken unto you," (John xv. 3, Revised Version). "Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish," (Eph. v. 25-27).

By it we are practically sanctified, or set apart to the service of God. "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth. As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth," (John xvii. 17-19). "We are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth," (2 Thess. ii. 13).

By it we are built up and nourished, as children advance from the feebleness of infancy to the strength of maturity. "And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified," (Acts xx. 32). "As new born babes, desire the sin-

cere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby : if so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious," (1 Pet. ii. 2, 3).

By it the secrets of the heart are made bare, and yet it furnishes the weapon of defence against the assaults of the devil. "The word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart," (Heb. iv. 12). "And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God," (Eph. vi. 17).

By it God accomplishes His will in the scheme of redemption. "As the rain cometh down, and the snow, from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater ; so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth : it shall not return unto me void ; but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it," (Isa. lv. 10, 11). "Is not my word like as a fire ? saith the Lord ; and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces ?" (Jer. xxiii. 29).

By it human destiny is decided. Abraham said to the rich man in hell pleading in behalf of his five brethren, "They have Moses and the prophets ; let them hear them. And he said, Nay, father Abraham : but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent. And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead,"

(Luke xvi. 29-31). "He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him at the last day," (John xii. 48).

We are not surprised, therefore, to find the scriptures called the oracles of God, or that which God has spoken. "What advantage then hath the Jew? or what profit is there of circumcision? Much every way: chiefly, because that unto them were committed the oracles of God," (Rom. iii. 1, 2). They are called the word of God, because God is their author and revealer. "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God," (Rom. x. 17). They are called the word of the Lord, because God manifest in the flesh, Jehovah Jesus, they everywhere set forth. "The word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you," (1 Pet. i. 25). They are called the word of Christ, because Christ is the subject, the sum, and the substance. "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom," (Col. iii. 16). They are called the word of life, because they alone secure life to the dead soul. "Holding forth the word of life," (Phil. ii. 16). They are called the word of truth, because they contain the truth without admixture of error. "In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation," (Eph. i. 13). They are called the word of faith, because they are to be believed. "The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith which we preach; that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt

believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved," (Rom. x. 9).

Thus does the Holy Spirit seek to impress upon us in every way the unspeakable importance and inestimable value of the sacred Scriptures, not one word of which from the first of Genesis to the last of Revelation could be changed but for the worse. Every verse, every line, the tense of every verb, the number of every noun, and every little particle are worthy of devout and diligent study; and such study would reveal new beauties, and marvellous proofs of superhuman wisdom, and a more profound conviction each day that such a book can come only from God.

Since the fall of man He has placed before us but two perfect objects, the incarnate Word and the written word, and the relation between the two is most intimate and precious. The former is everywhere revealed in the latter, and he who reads a chapter in the Old Testament or the New, and does not find Christ there has read it unintelligently. "Search the scriptures," He said to the Jews; "for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me," (John v. 39). "And beginning at Moses, and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself. . . . And they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures? . . . And he said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses,

and in the prophets, and in the Psalms, concerning me. Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures," (Luke xxiv. 27, 32, 44, 45).

This is just what is needed now, for when by His Spirit He opens to us the Scriptures, and opens the understanding that we may understand the Scriptures, we will be more like Paul who, as his manner was, went in unto the Jews, "and three sabbath days reasoned with them out of the scriptures, opening and alleging, that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead," (Acts xvii. 3); and who said to king Agrippa, "Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come: that Christ should suffer, and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should show light unto the people, and to the Gentiles," (Acts xxvi. 22, 23). Let Christ be the object before the mind, and the driest details of Old Testament history, and the Old Testament ritual, become radiant with glory.

But there is another aspect in which the incarnate Word and the written word may be viewed as inseparably linked together, and bearing to each other the closest resemblance. In both we find a divine and a human element, and in both the human element is perfect, absolutely free from the touch of error or failure. Christ was and is forevermore God in the true and fullest sense. But His humanity had upon it no taint of sin from the first Adam's fallen nature, because He was begot-

ten by the Holy Ghost. Precisely so is it with the written word. It is divine in the true and fullest sense, and it is also human in the true and fullest sense, but that which is human in it is far removed from human mistakes, because it was produced by the Holy Ghost. This has ever been the faith of those most deeply read in the oracles of God, for as Auberlen says, "The substance of the old Protestant doctrine of inspiration may be expressed in these words: the Holy Spirit dictated the Bible verbally, and the human composers are not authors, but only the writers—indeed, only the hands or the pens."

Such a mechanical view of inspiration, as it is called, is now almost universally rejected, but it is far less dishonoring to God, and far less dangerous to the souls of men, than the rash statements so often heard from pulpits, and so often seen in the writings of ministers, claiming to be evangelical. It has come to pass that if any declaration of the Bible does not fall in with the popular belief, or with the judgment of human reason, or with a shallow reform, or with the deductions of some impertinent and half-fledged science, it is treated by multitudes of Christ's professed ambassadors as a dream, or a vision, or a fiction, or a legend, or a fable. Poor fools! they do not see that for the sake of gaining a little notoriety, or of winning a reputation for culture, they are playing into the hands of infidelity, and undermining the foundations of the church, and proclaiming with unblushing cheek their treachery to their Lord and His word.

But when professors in theological seminaries,

appointed to train young men for the gospel ministry, are engaged in writing books that, if believed, must inevitably destroy the confidence of the common people in the Bible, it is a still more appalling sign of the times. Doubtless they are quite honest in their conviction that they are advancing the cause of the truth, and that the alleged discoveries of the higher criticism will lead to a more intelligent acquaintance with the Scriptures. Doubtless they think that they are doing God service, as did the Jews who gathered around the cross ; but if so, once more is the prayer of the divine Sufferer needed in their behalf, " Father, forgive them ; for they know not what they do."

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