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THE CONGREGATIONAL LECTURE.

FOURTH SERIES.

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DIVINE INSPIRATION.

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BY E. HENDERSON, D.D.

SECOND EDITION.

LONDON:

R. CLAY, PRINTER, BREAD STREET HILL.

# DIVINE INSPIRATION;

OR, THE

SUPERNATURAL INFLUENCE

EXERTED IN

THE COMMUNICATION OF DIVINE TRUTH;

AND

ITS SPECIAL BEARING ON

THE COMPOSITION OF THE SACRED SCRIPTURES.

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With Notes and Illustrations.

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BY E. HENDERSON, D.D.

SECOND EDITION.

LONDON :

JACKSON AND WALFORD,

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1847.



# ADVERTISEMENT

TO THE SECOND EDITION.

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It has proved a source of much satisfaction to the Author to find, that the views advocated in these Lectures have been generally approved by his readers. The alterations introduced into the present edition are chiefly verbal. Some few passages have been expunged, and others have been inserted. Certain statements have been slightly modified in consequence of remarks kindly suggested by reviewers and others; but the purchasers may rely on the Lectures being substantially what they were when first delivered. The Author commends the work in its cheaper form to the blessing of God, which alone can render it conducive to edification and comfort.

HIGHBURY,  
*July, 1847.*

#### ERRATA.

Page 12, line 28, *for* penman, *read* penmen.

— 137, — 27, *for* Henstenburg, *read* Hengstenberg.

## P R E F A C E.

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THE attention which the subject of the following Lectures has already received, and the number of works that have appeared, in which it is more or less ably discussed, might seem to render any additional publication superfluous. It is only necessary, however, to advert to the facts, that upon no topic within the compass of theological science does there exist a greater diversity of opinion—that most of those who profess to believe in the doctrine which it involves, hold it in a very loose and unsatisfactory manner—and that some of the best treatises in which it is handled are generally inaccessible, in order to be convinced, that something still remains to be done—some contribution still to be made towards the settling of a question, the importance and interest of which all



readily admit. There is also much in the peculiar features of the times which calls for renewed effort in this department of theology. A spirit of universal inquiry has been awakened. The enemies of revealed truth are busily scattering the seeds of scepticism and infidelity. Lowering, or, to speak more properly, annihilating statements respecting the supernatural phenomena which the Scriptures exhibit, are liberally made by a pseudo-rational party of various grades and distinctions. Extravagant and untenable theories are advanced by some of the professed friends of revelation ; while a revival of pretensions to inspiration and other miraculous endowments still continue, in some measure, to disturb the peace of the church. It has been presumed that, in contemplation of all these circumstances, an attempt to subject the doctrine to a fresh process of historical and exegetical investigation would at least be considered justifiable, though, in the judgment of some, it might not prove successful.

To the difficulties which attach to the subject the Author has not been insensible. They have been felt by all who have preceded him, and would

certainly have deterred him from venturing to encounter them, had it not been for a conviction, produced almost at the commencement of his inquiries, that some of the most formidable do not necessarily adhere to it, but are the result of unwarranted hypotheses, or strained and false interpretation.

It was originally his design to have confined himself to the more limited question respecting the exertion of supernatural influence on the minds of the sacred writers; but he soon found that justice could not be done to that particular division of the subject, without specially examining the statements of Scripture respecting the modes in which God otherwise revealed himself to the chosen messengers and favoured recipients of his will. He, therefore, extended his plan so as to make it embrace the whole range of revealing influence, and has not scrupled to employ the term *inspiration* in this its most comprehensive meaning.

The results of his investigations he now submits to the decision of the candid, in the humble hope that,

by the blessing of God, they may subserve the cause of truth, by confirming the faith of some, and recovering others from the baneful influence of sceptical and unsettled notions, or the equally dangerous tendencies of a bewildering and perplexing fanaticism.

E. HENDERSON.

CANONBURY SQUARE,  
*August, 1836.*

## ADVERTISEMENT,

(BY THE COMMITTEE OF THE CONGREGATIONAL LIBRARY.)

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THE "CONGREGATIONAL LIBRARY" was established with a view to the promotion of Ecclesiastical, Theological, and Biblical Literature, in that religious connection with whose friends and supporters it originated. It was also designed to secure a convenient *locality* for such associations as had previously existed, or might hereafter exist, for the purpose of advancing the literary, civil, and religious interests of that section of the Christian Church to which it was appropriated. Without undervaluing the advantages of union, either with Evangelical Protestants, or Protestant Nonconformists, on such grounds as admit of liberal cooperation, it was nevertheless deemed expedient to adopt measures for facilitating the concentration and efficiency of their own denomination. In connection with these important objects, it was thought desirable to institute a LECTURE, partaking rather of the character of *Academic prelections* than of popular addresses, and embracing a *Series of Annual Courses of Lectures*, to be delivered at the Library, or, if necessary, in some contiguous place of worship. In the selection of *Lecturers*, it was judged proper to appoint such as, by their literary attainments and ministerial reputation, had rendered service to the cause of divine truth in the consecration of their talents to the "defence and confirmation of the gospel." It was also supposed, that some might be found possessing a high order of intellectual competency and moral worth, imbued with an ardent love of biblical science, or eminently conversant with theological and ecclesiastical literature, who, from various causes, might never have attracted that degree of public attention to which they are entitled, and yet might be both qualified and disposed to undertake courses of lectures on subjects of interesting importance, not included

within the ordinary range of pulpit instruction. To illustrate the evidence and importance of the great doctrines of Revelation ; to exhibit the true principles of philology in their application to such doctrines ; to prove the accordance and identity of genuine philosophy with the records and discoveries of Scripture ; and to trace the errors and corruptions which have existed in the Christian Church to their proper sources, and, by the connection of sound reasoning with the honest interpretation of God's holy Word, to point out the methods of refutation and counteraction, are amongst the objects for which "the Congregational Lecture" has been established. The arrangements made with the Lecturers are designed to secure the publication of each separate course, without risk to the Authors ; and, after remunerating them as liberally as the resources of the Institution will allow, to apply the profits of the respective publications in aid of *the Library*. It is hoped that the liberal, and especially the opulent, friends of Evangelical and Congregational Nonconformity, will evince, by their generous support, the sincerity of their attachment to the great principles of their Christian profession ; and that some may be found to emulate the zeal which established the "Boyle," the "Warburton," and the "Bampton" Lectures in the National Church. These are legitimate operations of the "voluntary principle" in the support of religion, and in perfect harmony with the independency of our Churches, and the spirituality of the kingdom of Christ.

The Committee deem it proper to state that, whatever responsibility may attach either to the reasonings or opinions advanced in any Course of Lectures belongs exclusively to the Lecturer.

CONGREGATIONAL LIBRARY,  
*Blomfield Street, Finsbury, August, 1836.*

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## INTRODUCTORY LECTURE.

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PROV. XXX. 1—6.

*“The words of Agur the son of Jakeh, even the prophecy : the man spake unto Ithiel, even unto Ithiel and Ucal, Surely I am more brutish than any man, and have not the understanding of a man. I neither learned wisdom, nor have the knowledge of the holy. Who hath ascended up into heaven, or descended ? who hath gathered the wind in his fists ? who hath bound the waters in a garment ? who hath established all the ends of the earth ? what is his name, and what is his son’s name, if thou canst tell ? Every word of God is pure : he is a shield unto them that put their trust in him. Add thou not unto his words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar.”*

IN whatever obscurity the initial words of the text may be involved, or however difficult it may be to furnish a satisfactory explanation of the proper names which it exhibits, the sentiments expressed in it admit of an appropriate application to the subject of the present Lectures. The intellectual powers of man are confessedly of a noble and exalted character, susceptible of universal culture, and capable of engaging in extensive

and profound research. Supplied with materials for reflection and ratiocination both by the constitution and operations of his own mind, and by the innumerable phenomena which are presented to his view in external nature, he cannot exercise the faculties with which he is endowed, by applying, to the extent of his opportunities, those principles of physical and psychological induction which approve themselves as the only solid basis of human knowledge, without acquiring fresh vigour and freedom of thought, obtaining more accurate conceptions of the nature and relations of things, and commanding more comprehensive views of the vast universe of which he forms a part. Yet, after he has taxed his powers to the utmost—after he has carried his mental processes into all the regions which come within the limits of the human understanding—he is reduced to the conclusion, that, in the absence of Divine Inspiration, or of its results in the records of Divine Science, it is impossible to attain to that acquaintance with Deity and human destiny which alone can satisfy a rational mind. Taught from above, he confesses his ignorance and imbecility, clings to the volume which contains a perfect revelation of the character, will, and government of God; and discovering in it a light sufficient to conduct him in safety through all the labyrinths of the present state, and introduce him with joyful hope into a better, he is jealous for its honour, and frowns on every attempt to improve upon its contents.

When the mind has arrived at a practical conviction respecting the existence of the Supreme Being, to whatever source that conviction may be traced, it is

obvious no questions can arise of deeper or more commanding interest than the following:—What cognizance does the Infinite Creator take of the universe, to which he has given existence? Does he continue to preside over its affairs, administering them according to his pleasure, and so controlling and disposing of them as infallibly to secure the attainment of his own purposes? In what light, in particular, does he regard the conduct of his rational creatures? Has he made any disclosures of his will to them? And, if so, where are these disclosures? and what is their character?

It will be granted by all who admit the force of the arguments drawn from the admirable scheme of contrivances and provisionary arrangements which pervade the economy of nature, in corroboration of the doctrine of the existence of a wise, powerful, and all-perfect First Cause, that the same wonderful economy furnishes numerous developments of a system of moral government, the laws of which afford important indications of his character as a righteous and benevolent Ruler. Whoever seriously reflects on the difference which obtains in human actions, the moral judgments which we naturally form in regard to them, the established connexion which subsists between virtue and happiness on the one hand, and vice and misery on the other, the extent of retributive awards, which appear in the history of the world, and the extreme difficulty which men find in their attempts to annihilate the conviction of the existence of a supreme Moral Governor, must perceive that the idea is most congenial to the human mind, and is, indeed, absolutely indispensable to the resolution of phenomena, which meet it in every direction. The

disposition also which mankind have universally discovered to institute such a government among themselves is an additional argument in favour of the existence of a supreme moral system in the hands of that Being to whom we attribute infinite excellence—whatever is good or praiseworthy in ourselves being only a feeble adumbration of the same quality in Him, in whose boundless mind it exists in an infinite degree. But while we thus satisfy ourselves in regard to the fact of a Divine moral government, and feel convinced that to deny it would be to shut our eyes against the manifold proofs of providential and rectoral agency which are every where presented to us, as well as to repress those inward notices and feelings which commend themselves as the genuine dictates of our moral constitution, it must be allowed that a thick veil of obscurity hangs over the pages of natural revelation with respect to those subjects which, as sinful and accountable creatures, it most concerns us to know. For, whatever may be the apparently appropriate processes of moral discipline through which we are conducted in the present state; how cogent soever the reasonings in reference to our future condition to which we may endeavour to surrender our minds; whatever the flattering guesses and specious hypotheses which we may form in regard to God's treatment of moral agents, and whatever degree of satisfaction we may derive from certain isolated views of the Divine character;—we no sooner take a broad and impartial survey of our condition, and fix our contemplations on other aspects of Deity, which force themselves upon us, than we find that there is nothing within the wide range of the physical or the



intellectual world, which is calculated to inspire us with confidence, or produce in our minds any feeling of well-grounded hope. Under such circumstances we require information respecting the will and designs of our Maker, which neither the operations of nature, nor the ordinary course of things in the moral world, can, by any possibility, supply.

Independently, however, of the undeniable characters of moral degeneracy, which so awfully mark our history, and assuming that the time was when man existed in an unfallen and holy state, is it reasonable to suppose, that he would be left by his Creator to collect the several items of his knowledge merely in a natural way by the observations which he might make on the physical objects by which he was surrounded, and by reflection on his own intellectual and moral constitution? Allied by the superior faculties of his nature to "the Father of Spirits," is it imaginable that no immediate intercourse took place between them? Or, are we to believe that the only communications made by the Deity were effected by the music of the spheres, the sound of the elements, the inarticulate voices of the brute creation, or the deep heavings of man's own immortal nature? The rest of creation was regulated by the laws of physical mechanism, or mere animal instinct, and terminated on material and sensible objects; but man was gifted with intelligence and moral principle—he was created with powers which capacitated him for holding converse with his Maker in the way of receiving from him supernatural and intelligent communications, and of yielding in return suitable expressions of gratitude and love.



The frame of human nature is obviously constituted with a view to a higher intercourse than can be held with any description of agents in the visible world. For though it exhibits a perfect adaptation to meet the claims of social converse between individuals of the same species, it is, at the same time, so constructed as to admit of intelligent communications taking place between them and beings of a higher order in the scale of existence—especially with the Supreme Intelligence himself, to whose incessant care man is indebted for the continued preservation of all his powers and faculties. But if no such communion ever existed, or was ever intended, the fact just adverted to presents an anomaly without a parallel in this province of the Divine kingdom.

On the supposition that, on his formation, the first human being was destitute of all concreated or supernaturally-imparted knowledge, it does not appear how, y any process of intellectual operation whatever, he could have arrived at definite or satisfactory ideas respecting the spiritual and moral character of God, the relations in which he stood to him, his duties towards him, the manner in which these duties should be discharged, or his own higher and ultimate destiny. And even as it regards the simple fact of the existence of one Great First Cause, supposing him ever to have arrived at the knowledge of it by the exercise of his own unaided powers, what an expenditure of time and thought it must have cost him ! what processes of investigation and induction he must have instituted ! with what difficulty he must have satisfied himself with respect to the properties of matter, the laws of

motion, the connexion between causes and effects, and numerous other particulars in relation to the phenomena of the universe ! And after all, notwithstanding the indications by which he was met of the operation of a principle superior to any which came under the cognizance of his senses, how was it possible for him to reach a point in his inquiries beyond which he felt it was no longer necessary to proceed—a point at which he might rest in the assured conviction that he had now conquered every difficulty, surmounted every doubt, and positively ascertained the nature of THAT BEING who was higher than the highest, from whom all things proceeded, and to whose governance all were subject ? When the idea of the Divine Existence has once been admitted into the mind, nothing is more easy than the discovery of innumerable proofs in support of it. Naturalists and metaphysicians employ it in the construction of their several systems, and unconsciously avail themselves of the light which it diffuses over their reasonings, even when undertaking by *à priori* or *à posteriori* arguments to establish the fact ; but it remains to be seen at what results they would arrive if they were to commence their labours totally uninfluenced by any such previous notion. Certain it is that, how extensively soever the belief in a Deity has obtained in the world,—and few indeed have been the exceptions,—it cannot be shown that it has, in any one instance, resulted from argument, or that any individual ever acquired it by applying his mental powers to an investigation of the phenomena of nature.

When we take into consideration the necessity of supernatural communications in order to the satisfac-

tory determination of every essential point of faith and duty, it appears in the highest degree probable that such communications must have taken place. We cannot conceive it possible that the Divine Being would have left the human family destitute of the knowledge of himself, and of his will as the supreme standard of moral actions. We accordingly find, that, in all countries and in every age, the opinion has prevailed, that an intercourse has subsisted between heaven and earth. There exists no pagan system of religious faith which does not, under one shape or other, recognise its occurrence. So powerfully has the idea laid hold on the human mind, that, in the absence of positive revelations, recourse has been had to invention and imposture, in order to satisfy its desires of higher information than could possibly be obtained by the exercise of the unassisted powers of reason. To this source may be traced many of the oracles of Egypt and Greece, the original Sibylline books, and other frauds of ancient and modern heathenism. There are also to be found in the various religious creeds, which have been or still are professed in the pagan world, numerous points of convergence, which impel us to believe that there formerly existed a primitive revelation as the prototype, from which, by imperceptible degrees, they have receded, in proportion to the progress of corruption, or the influence of superstitions more or less gross in their character, which have been associated with them. It is impossible to pursue the study of mythology to any extent, without perceiving certain relationships which point to a common source, extraneous in point of locality to the territory which it covers, and remote in point of time

from the ages which it historically describes. The Vedas of the Hindoos, the books of Buddha, the Zendavesta, and the Icelandic Edda, as well as the mythologies of Chaldea, Egypt, and Greece, exhibit, amidst all the obscurity in which an immense profusion of symbols, fables, and allegories has involved them, unequivocal developments of a pre-existent period of monotheism and pure revelation.

Of the numerous religions which have existed in the world, there are only three that claim to have been derived from the one living and true God—the Jewish, the Christian, and the Mohammedan ; or, strictly taken, they may be reduced to *two*, inasmuch as the Jewish and Christian are merely parts or divisions of the same Divine system of revelation—the latter being complementary, or perfective of the former. The pretensions of Islamism are high and uncompromising in their character, but they rest on no solid foundation. The Koran, which forms its religious code, purports to have been revealed from heaven during nocturnal visits of the angel Gabriel, who, it is believed, communicated it to Mohammed precisely as it stands, chapter for chapter, and verse for verse, written upon parchment made of the skin of the ram which Abraham sacrificed in the room of his son Isaac. The tenet, that it is celestial, uncreated, and eternal, has likewise had many adherents ; but a slight acquaintance with the history of the times in which it originated, and an equally slight comparison of its contents with those of the Jewish and Christian Scriptures, are sufficient to show that it consists of borrowed materials, clumsily put together, and published to the world in the name of

the most Compassionate and Merciful, unaccompanied by any appeals in proof of its divinity, except to the inimitable sublimity of its style, (a quality, however, which is perceptible only by believers,) its alleged coincidence with former revelations, and especially the professed fulfilment of certain prophecies delivered by Moses and Christ, which had Mohammed for their object.\* It is undeniable that the author of the book had repeated interviews with the Jews and the Nestorian monks of Syria during his commercial journeys to that country, when he had opportunities of becoming acquainted with the Bible, isolated passages of which, obscured and disfigured by Rabbinical and legendary comments, he amalgamated with dogmas held by the Magi and Sabæans, in order to form a religious system of his own—a system decidedly hostile to every species of idolatry, but also essentially differing from that of the Jews and Christians, except in regard to the Divine Unity and Spirituality, and belief in a future state of rewards and punishments. When repeatedly challenged by those to whom he first announced its dogmas to work miracles in attestation of his call as a Divine ambassador, the reply of Mohammed was, that a sufficiency of miracles had already been wrought by Jesus and other prophets; and that, besides, they were unnecessary, since believers did not require them, and they would be thrown away upon infidels, who would not admit their validity. He was also urged to confirm his messages by unequivocal predictions; but he excused himself by asserting, that he did not hold the key of

\* See Note A.

secret things, and that it belonged to God and not to him to know the future. That a system so manifestly founded on falsities and fables should so rapidly have spread, so extensively have prevailed, and have been so permanent in its influence, is to be accounted for on the grounds of its superiority to the most refined system of paganism, its congeniality with some of the leading principles of our depraved nature, as existing in a prurient state in oriental climes, the secular influence which it has had at its command, and especially the deep degeneracy of those sections of the professed Church of Christ, with which it has been in more immediate contact.

In support of the Jewish and Christian Revelation, claims of a very different character are advanced. These claims rest on evidences both of an external and internal nature, which challenge the freest and most ample examination, and furnish the most satisfactory attestation that the truths, to substantiate which they are produced, were not of human invention, but the result of Divine communications, and are to be regarded as authoritative announcements of the will of God to mankind.

The more ancient of these communications were not originally reduced to writing. Such of them as were granted to our first parents, to the antediluvians, to Noah and others, appear to have been committed, for a period of two thousand years, to oral tradition, as a medium of preservation and transmission:—both of which purposes it was fully competent to secure, at a time when human longevity was greatly extended, and the revelations themselves were more limited and



individual in their aspects than most of those which were afterwards made. But after the life of man was about to be abbreviated to two-thirds of a century, and the patriarchal dispensation gave place to a national institute, which was to be the great depository of Divine truth, not merely for the benefit of those among whom it was established, but ultimately for the benefit of the whole world, the revelations of the will of God were embodied in written documents, and carefully preserved in the archives of the Hebrews, where they received such accessions of oracular matter as continued, from time to time, to be vouchsafed from heaven. To the sacred records thus delivered to the posterity of Abraham, have since been added those which appertain to the Christian economy; and both classes of books have been handed down to us, unimpaired, in any material degree, by the lapse of time, or the accidents of transcription, to which, in common with all other writings, they have been exposed.

It is to the revelations which it pleased the Deity at different periods to make to mankind, and to the influence exerted to secure the faithful deposition, in written forms, of those truths which he was pleased to ordain should be transmitted to future ages, that we here appropriate the term inspiration. We use it in a generic sense, and comprehend under it, not merely the particular species of Divine influence which was enjoyed by the sacred penman, but the entire subject of revelation, or the various modes in which Jehovah employed supernatural agency for the purpose of disclosing his will.\*

\* See Note B.



Before proceeding to investigate the nature and modes of inspiration as thus defined, it will be necessary to institute an inquiry into the import of certain terms and phrases which have been employed in reference to it, in order that we may be fully prepared to view it in the various aspects under which it is presented to our notice in the book of God.

On examining the history of languages it is found that, during their most ancient periods, or in such as have undergone but little cultivation, the primitive signification of words is almost universally physical, being derived from external or sensible objects, the ideas of which have previously taken possession of the mind. Whatever signs there may have been in the primeval language, in which the first man held converse with his Maker, that were purely the result of intellectual conceptions, and in no manner originated by or dependent upon any thing of a physical or sensible character; and how much soever these signs might have been augmented and improved upon, if the human mind had continued assiduously to cultivate intercourse with the spiritual world, nothing was more natural than the reduction of language to a gross subserviency to sense, in proportion as the mental powers became enslaved to secular pursuits, and the higher interests of the soul merged in those of corporeal or mere animal gratification. The mind becoming as it were identified with the external objects of its choice, their influence over the ideas which it formed, and the various modes by which it gave expression to these ideas, could not but prove highly deteriorating.

In the state of degeneracy thus superinduced, man-

kind now naturally exist ; and it is not till some mighty impulse has been exerted upon their minds, or certain habits of abstraction have been created, that an introversion of this order of things takes place. And even in a state of spiritual renovation, when the mind is occupied with the contemplation of invisible objects,—whether these objects embrace its own internal states and operations, or whether they embrace intellectual essences which are extrinsic to it,—it is next to impossible for it to rid itself of previously acquired sensible ideas, or to express itself, except through those vehicles of thought which owe their origin to something or other that has come under the cognizance of the senses, and to which, in consequence, it has become more or less strongly habituated. In proceeding to generalize and pursue trains of abstract thought, it is compelled, for the most part, to employ phraseology already in use, only transferring to it new and nobler ideas, on the principle of definite analogies, which are found to exist between these ideas and those of a physical complexion which it was originally adopted to express.

Nor did it seem proper to Infinite Wisdom, in making a revelation to mankind, to depart, except in comparatively few instances, from the ordinary usage of language, as thus obtaining among them. In Holy Scripture words are freely used in a metaphorical sense to denote spiritual objects, which, in their primary acceptation, designate objects in the material world, or purely sensible images and impressions. Of this we are furnished with abundant proof by the terms usually employed to describe our present subject,—terms which

are, for the most part, borrowed from the analogy subsisting between the idea of *wind* or *breath* and that of *spirit*, to express which, not only in Hebrew, but in most of the ancient, and in many of the modern languages, the same word is used. This analogy appears chiefly to rest on the properties of subtilty, invisibility, and vital energy, by which both are characterised. Hence, in the account given by Moses of the formation of Adam, the language is so constructed, that while it unquestionably indicates the infusion of vital animal power by an act of the Creator analogous to that of inspiration, or blowing into any material subject; it also teaches the doctrine, that at the same time, and by the same act, man became possessed of a rational, intelligent nature. “And the Lord God formed man “of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his “nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living “soul.” (Gen. ii. 7.) In the Latin version of this passage the verb *inspiravit* occurs, which in the same version is also applied, in the passive voice, to describe the action of the Holy Spirit on the minds of the prophets, and the effect of such action in the production of the Sacred Scriptures through their instrumentality.\* In like manner the substantive *inspiratio* is employed to express that Divine influence by which intelligence is imparted to the human mind (Job xxxii. 8); and it is to the use of these terms in this ancient version we are to trace the derivation of the words *inspire* and *inspiration* in their appropriated theological import.

The Greek term *θεοπνευστία*, which divines generally

\* 2 Pet. i. 21—*Spiritu Sancto inspirati*. 2 Tim. iii 16—*Omnis scriptura divinitus inspirata*.

use when treating scientifically of inspiration, is formed from the compound *θεόπνευστος*, which, in the authorized version, is rendered—"given by inspiration of God," (2 Tim. iii. 16); but which, according to its strict etymological import, signifies what is divinely breathed, or a certain divinely imparted property or quality, in consequence of which the subject of which it is predicated claims Divine authority. The word occurs nowhere besides in Scripture; nor has it been found in any of the earlier Greek writers, on which account it has been conjectured that it was formed by the Apostle, in order more definitely to express what he had to teach respecting the Divine origin of the sacred writings. That it may have originated with him is certainly not impossible; yet if it be found in heathen writers who flourished in or shortly after his time, and who cannot, with any degree of probability, be supposed to have had any knowledge of his writings, it would seem more natural to conclude that it was employed by them in common, as already existing in the language. Now it does occur in Phocylides, or rather in the poet who wrote under his name in the reign of the Emperor Adrian, when describing the superior wisdom communicated by the gods, with which that which was merely human was not for a moment to be compared.\* Plutarch also, who wrote much about the same time, speaks of *θεοπνεύστοι ὀνείροι*, or such dreams as were obviously of supernatural origin; such as were so very extraordinary in their character, that they could not be referred to the class of common

\* . . . . . λόγος ἔρμυ' ἀνθρώπων\*

Τῆς δὲ ΘΕΟΠΝΕΥΣΤΟΥ σοφίης λόγος ἐστὶ ἄριστος.

oneiric phenomena with which we are more or less familiar, but must be attributed to Divine influence. But though this identical term does not appear to have been in use among the earlier Greeks, their language teems with others similarly compounded, which are, in like manner, expressive of an action or influence of the Divinity on the human mind, corresponding analogically to that exerted on material objects by the wind, particularly on vessels impelled before it at sea,—a Divine energy or afflatus, which the recipient or passive subject could not withstand, which took possession of him, filled him, excited him, bore him along, taught him, and enabled him to deliver doctrines, and perform actions, which transcended the limits of his ordinary powers and modes of operation.<sup>1</sup> Nor can it be doubted that it is in accommodation to the phraseology which he found in the Platonic philosophers, that Philo employs the participle *καταπνευσθὲν* in reference to the noble endowments of Abraham, which he ascribes to the inhabitation of the Divine Spirit, whose influence had descended from above, and produced a complete change in his character.<sup>2</sup>

It is with similar reference, as significant of the supernatural gifts with which the Apostles were to be

(1) Of these the following are a specimen : *θεοδίδακτος, θεοφόρος, θεοφόρητος, θεοφορούμενος, θεοκίνητος, θεόληπτος, θεοφράδμων, θεοπρόπος, θεοδέγμων, θεόμαντις*. To express the same thing, the Greeks also made use of the terms *ἐνθεος, ἐπίπνοος, ἐπιπνευσθὲν, πνευματοφόρος, ἐνθουσιῶν, ἐνθουσιασμένος, ἐνθουσιαστῆς, πεπνυμένος, ἀποδαιμονιζῶν, μαινομένος, μαινόλης, &c.*

(2) Οὐδὲ γὰρ ὁμιλίαις ἐχρῆτο ταῖς αὐταῖς, ἀλλ' ἐπιθειάζων τὰ πολλὰ, σεμνοτέrais. Ὅποτε γοῦν κατασχεθεῖη, μετέβαλλε πάντα πρὸς τὸ βέλτιον, τὰς ὄψεις, τὴν χροιάν, τὸ μέγεθος, τὰς σχέσεις, τὰς κινήσεις, τὴν φωνήν· τοῦ θείου πνεύματος, ὅπερ ἄνωθεν καταπνευσθὲν εἰσκήσατο τῇ ψυχῇ. *De Nobilitate*, vol. ii. p. 442. Edit. Mangey.

inspired, that our Lord is said to have “*breathed* upon them, ἐνεφύσησε”—accompanying the symbolical act with words of corresponding import : “Receive ye the Holy Ghost,” πνεῦμα ἅγιον. (John xx. 22.) And when the important promise, thus solemnly made, was fulfilled on the day of Pentecost, by the actual impartation of the extraordinary influences of the Divine agent, among other features of the wonderful phenomenon is enumerated “a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty *wind*, ὥσπερ φερομένης πνοῆς βιαίας, which filled all the house “where” the disciples “were sitting.” (Acts ii. 2.) It is true the term employed in this latter passage is not precisely that by which wind and spirit are expressed in common ; but it is a derivative from the same theme, and seems to be used here with singular propriety in restriction to the symbol, in order to distinguish it from the thing signified, *viz.* the influence of the Holy Spirit with which the Apostles were then endued in so remarkable a degree, and from which effects of the most amazing character were to result.

On the same principle of analogy the Spirit of God is said in Scripture, נָפַח, to come or fall powerfully on those who were the subjects of miraculous agency, Judges xiv. 19 ; 1 Sam. x. 10 ; ἐπέπεσε, Acts x. 44 ; נָח, to rest or continue upon them, Num. xi. 26 ; 2 Kings ii. 15 ; כָּסָה, to cover or invest them, Judges vi. 34 ; 1 Chron. xii. 18 ; (comp. ἐνδύσθησθε, Luke xxiv. 49 ;) אָרַב, to enter into them, Ezek. ii. 2, iii. 24 ; מָלַא, to fill or replenish them, Exod. xxviii. 3, xxxi. 3 ; (comp. ἐπλήθησαν, Acts ii. 4 ; πλησθεῖς, iv. 8 ;) קָלַף, שָׂא, to take them up, or bear them away, Ezek. iii. 12, 14 ;—all of which



sensible modes of expression are designed to teach us the divine origin, completeness, permanence, energy, and efficiency of the gifts with which the persons spoken of were endowed ; just as the wind descends upon the earth, surrounds or fills the objects with which it is brought into contact, and imparts to them an impetus by which they are removed from their ordinary position, and impelled forward in the direction in which it blows. And it is in reference to the same physical action, or in terms borrowed from it, that the prophets are described as having made their communications, as they were moved or borne along by the Holy Ghost, *ὑπὸ πνεύματος ἁγίου φερόμενοι*, 2 Pet. i. 21.

The exertion of this Divine influence is further spoken of under the idea of a hand falling or being upon any one, *וַיָּדָה נְפִיָּה, וַיִּהְיֶה עָלָיו*, in which Hebrew usage there is the same metaphorical accommodation to physical conceptions or impressions which we have traced in the former case. Thus we read that the hand of the Lord was upon Ezekiel by the river Chebar, (ch. i. 3,) and that when the Spirit lifted him up and carried him away, and he went in bitterness in the heat of his spirit, the hand of the Lord was strong upon him, (iii. 14.) Similar language is employed by Isaiah when describing the powerful impulse by which he was actuated on being supernaturally instructed respecting the manner in which he was to discharge the duties of his office : “For the Lord spake thus to me with a strong hand,” (ch. viii. 11.) We read also, 2 Kings iii. 15, “It came to pass, when the minstrel played, that the hand of the Lord came upon” Elisha, who, in consequence, immediately delivered a prophecy.

The hand being the seat of power, or that member of the human body by which its strength is most efficiently exerted, it came to be regarded as the emblem of that quality ; and in the oriental languages the term is frequently used in this tropical or metaphorical sense ; so that by the phraseology which we have just quoted from the Old Testament, we are obviously to understand that the prophets became the subjects of a sudden and powerful impulse, by the influence of which their minds were prepared to receive, and strengthened and prompted to communicate, those revelations of the Divine will with which they were favoured.

The exertion of this extraordinary impulse was not, however, confined to those who were selected to be interpreters of the will of God ; it was also vouchsafed to such as were raised up for the achievement of supernatural deeds in defence of the cause of the Most High. (Judges iii. 10 ; vi. 34.) Of this we have a remarkable instance in the case of Samson, in reference to whom we read, that “the Spirit of the Lord began to move him at times in the camp of Dan,” (xiii. 25.) On which we would observe, that in the original וַתְּהִל רִיחַ יְהוָה לְפָעֻמוֹ, there is nothing corresponding to the words “at times,” which intimate that the extraordinary spiritual influence exerted upon him was merely occasional ; whereas, the fact taught in the passage is, that, at the period there referred to, he experienced, for the first time, the exertion of such influence. But I advert to this text specially for the purpose of pointing out the peculiar force of the term (נִפְּצָה) there employed to describe the manner in which Samson was wrought upon, it being used in this application no-



where else in Scripture, but otherwise signifies to make a stroke or impression on the senses, to move with sudden violence ; hence, mentally to agitate, throw into a state of excitement, powerfully to put into a state of emotion. As employed in the present instance, it is evidently expressive of the excitation of the Hebrew youth to feats of chivalrous valour, exceeding any which he or any of his companions could have exhibited if they had been left to the exercise of their ordinary strength, in order that he might be prepared, by the experience which he thus had of supernatural aid, to trust in Jehovah when he should be called to fill situations in which nothing short of that aid could enable him successfully to cope with the enemies of his people. When afterwards honoured to put forth superhuman energy, it is said, וַתָּצִיחַ אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל, “the Spirit of the Lord came mightily upon him,” (chap. xiv. 6 ; xv. 14 ; ) which is obviously expressive of the communication of that physical strength by which he became qualified to execute what lay beyond the limits of mortal power.

In accordance with the use of this and similar phraseology, indicating the powerful impulse of the Spirit, he who sustained the prophetic character is called a “spiritual man,” or *a man of the Spirit*, אִישׁ הָרוּחַ, *i. e.* one who is the subject of his supernatural influence ; or as it is significantly expressed by the LXX. πνευματοφόρος, impelled or borne along by the Spirit. (Hos. ix. 7.) In the same acceptation the term πνευματικός, “spiritual,” is used, 1 Cor. xiv. 37. “If any man think himself to be a prophet or spiritual”—where the combination of *spiritual* with *prophet*, just

as in the passage quoted from Hosea, shows that the reference is not to the ordinary grace of the Holy Spirit, but to the possession or enjoyment of extraordinary Divine influence, which indeed is also apparent from the nature of the Apostle's argument. It is upon this principle that, in the New Testament, those who were, or pretended to be, the subjects of such influence, are termed πνεύματα, *spirits*. (2 Thess. ii. 2; 1 Tim. iv. 1; 1 John iv. 1—3.) The state in which the true prophets or spiritual men were, when acted upon by such influence, is described by the very emphatic phrase בְּרוּחַ, ἐν πνεύματι, to be *in the Spirit*, i. e. so to be the subject of his extraordinary operations, that the influence thus exerted constituted as it were the element in which they lived and acted; and, while it lasted, superseded the ascendancy of their rational faculties, though, as we shall afterwards have occasion to notice, it did not deprive them of the use of these faculties, as some have preposterously maintained. (Ezek. xxxvii. 1; Matt. xxii. 43; Rev. i. 10.)

Another term of frequent occurrence in its application to those who were the subjects of extraordinary Divine influence, and which throws considerable light on our subject, is PROPHECY. According to some the Hebrew word נָבִיא, which we render *prophet*, is derived from the root נָבָה, signifying to produce; hence, to bring out, or give utterance in speech: others derive it from נָבָה, to be high, to be raised to intercourse with the Deity; while others again refer it to בָּא, to come or enter, and explain it to mean one who has been admitted into the secret counsel of Jehovah, or to whom a Divine revelation has come. But whatever resem-

blance any of these roots may have to the term in question, and how appropriately soever the significations which have been deduced from them may describe certain aspects of the prophetic character, they are destitute of any solid etymological basis. It is now generally agreed among Hebrew scholars, that the word comes from נָבַא, which is not used in any of the forms of the active voice, but in the Arabic and Ethiopic dialects signifies to speak, announce, indicate; and, in the former, specially to announce the will of God. It is closely related to another verb, נָבַח, which differs from it only in a single letter of the same class, the signification of which is to boil up as a spring, to pour forth copiously, to give copious utterance in words. In the passive and reflexive forms, the verb obviously conveys the idea of the delivery of a communication by one who is the subject of foreign influence—one who is acted upon by another of whose will he is the interpreter, or organ of revelation.<sup>1</sup> On comparing all the passages of the Old Testament in which the word occurs, and combining in natural order the different ideas which they most readily suggest, the following appear to be the acceptations in which it is used by the sacred writers.

First, it designates a person to whom God has revealed himself in an extraordinary or miraculous manner, and who, in consequence, is on terms of immediate and intimate intercourse with him—one for whom the Deity has a special regard, and to whose

(1) See Winer's Edit. of Simonis Heb. Lexicon, and Gesenii Lexicon Manuale in vocc. נָבַא and נָבַח. F. D. Dresde de notione prophetæ in Cod. Sac. Viteb. 1788. J. F. Rehkopff de vate Scripturæ, Helmst. 1788, 4to. J. C. Kallii Dissertt. de voce נָבַח Havn. 1741, 4to. H. Witsii Miscell. Sacra. lib. i. cap. 1.

influence in procuring the Divine favour great importance is to be attached. This acceptation presents itself Gen. xx. 7, the first time the word occurs, where God declares to Abimelech respecting Abraham, נָבִיא הוּא, "He is a PROPHET, and he shall pray for thee, and thou shalt live." In the same sense it is used of Moses, Deut. xxxiv. 10—12, and of the patriarchs generally, Ps. cv. 15.

Secondly, it is employed to denote one who announces or publishes the matters which Jehovah has revealed to him, and who, in doing so, speaks under the impulse of Divine inspiration. Such, indeed, is the notion which ordinarily attaches to the term.<sup>1</sup> Those who in this sense were prophets, not only had revelations of the Divine will made to them, but they were commissioned to communicate them in the name of God to others. The same view is suggested by the application of the name to Aaron, Exod. vii. 1: "And the Lord said unto Moses, See, I have made thee a god to Pharaoh; and Aaron thy brother shall be thy prophet." He was to receive the messages from Moses, and deliver them to the Egyptian monarch. Hence the term came to be given, by way of eminence, to the order of men raised up under the Jewish economy for the purpose of imparting such religious instructions as they had derived immediately from God, and who acted officially in the capacity of infallible religious teachers in the ancient Church. And in the quotations made in the New Testament from the Old, those are comprehended under the title, who, though not belonging to the prophetic order, were nevertheless

(1) Stillingfleet, Orig. Sac. book ii. ch. 5. § 4.

favoured with Divine revelations, which they published for the benefit of others. Thus David, who was not a prophet in the official sense of the term, is nevertheless called by that name, Acts ii. 30.

Thirdly, the word is used of those who, under the influence of Divine inspiration, gave expression in a lofty, energetic, and poetic style, to the truths with which they were inspired, or to certain truths respecting God and divine things, which they were supernaturally excited to rehearse. It appears to be employed in this sense in reference to the seventy men of the elders of Israel, who were selected to assist Moses in the discharge of his official duties, of whom it is said "that, when the Spirit rested on them, they prophesied and ceased not;" with respect to which exhibition, as continued in the camp by Eldad and Medad, Moses disinterestedly exclaimed, "Would to God that all the Lord's people were prophets, and that the Lord would put his spirit upon them!" (Num. xi. 29.) In this sense Miriam is called a prophetess, because she was inspired to lead the female choir by which the discomfiture of the Egyptians was celebrated, (Exod. xv. 20, 21;) and the choirs of prophets mentioned 1 Sam. x. 5, 10—15, to which Saul joined himself, and in whose exercises he participated, seem to have been similarly occupied. To this species of prophesying must also be referred the song of Zechariah, Luke i.

Fourthly, the word prophecy is also sometimes taken in the stricter sense of foretelling future events, in which case those of whom it is predicated had these events revealed to them with the express command to



make them known to others ; respecting which Amos writes—" Surely the Lord God will do nothing, but " he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets. " The lion hath roared, who will not fear? The Lord " God hath spoken, who can but prophesy ? " (iii. 7, 8.)

Of most of these acceptations of this important term, and certain minor modifications of it, examples occur in the New Testament ; but it would be improper to anticipate in this place what belongs to the *χαρίσματα* conferred upon the Apostolic Church, a particular examination of which will occupy our attention in a future lecture. What has been adduced is sufficient to show that the state of the persons who are called prophets, or who are spoken of as having prophesied, was of an extraordinary character, and that, in most cases, they were inspired interpreters of the Divine will.

To express the supernatural impartation of truth to the mind, the terms *reveal*, *Revelation*, *ᾠκάλυψις*, are employed. Both terms properly signify the rolling back of a veil, or such a removal of it from any object before which it has hung, that it shall no longer intervene between that object and the subject of vision, to prevent his contemplation of it. Though the verb *ᾠκάλυπτειν*, to reveal, is frequently followed by the things said to be revealed, it is evident we are not to conceive of any effect being produced upon them by the act of revelation. Truth, like its great Author, is immutable ; it consists of pure celestial light, and, like that of the sun, is itself equally unaffected by the existence or by the removal of any obstructions which may intercept its communication. Whatever change took place in man, and was the result of a Divine

influence, directly and immediately operating upon his mind so as to turn his attention to the objects of revelation, gave him such a perception of them as was requisite to secure their definite presentation to others in the forms either of ordinary or prophetic language, and was accompanied with overpowering, perceptible evidence, that what had thus been acquired was really communicated from heaven. It is on this principle we are to account for and interpret such metaphorical phrases as *uncovering the ears or the eyes* of any one. Thus 1 Sam. ix. 15; 2 Sam. vii. 27: "For thou, O Lord God of hosts, God of Israel, hast revealed to thy servant," גְּלִיתָה אֶזְרִיאֵן עָנָךְ: lit.—hast *uncovered the ear* of thy servant, *i. e.* caused him to perceive, or opened his mind, and thus imparted to him the knowledge of thy kind and gracious purpose. In like manner it is said, that the Lord opened, פָּתַח, uncovered or unveiled, the eyes of Balaam, Num. xxii. 31; and that infatuated prophet, describing his state as the recipient of Divine revelations, speaks of himself as "the man whose eyes are open;" גִּלְיָי עֵצִים, *the man of unveiled eyes*, *i. e.* he, from whose mind the veil had been removed, which naturally hides from mortals the purposes and future operations of Jehovah. (Num. xxiv. 3, 16.) For this reason supernatural discoveries of truth are designated *revelations*, 1 Cor. xiv. 6, 26; 2 Cor. xii. 1, 7; Gal. i. 12; ii. 2; Eph. iii. 3; Rev. i. 1; and of the glorious Author of these communications it is said, "He giveth wisdom to the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding. *He revealeth the deep and secret things*; he knoweth what is in the darkness, "and the light dwelleth with him." Dan. ii. 21, 22.



Other terms and phrases, such as —“ Thus saith the Lord ;” “ the Lord spake ;” “ the Lord commanded ;” “ the word of the Lord came ;” “ the Lord appeared ;” “ the Lord revealed himself ;” “ the Lord shewed me ;” “ the Spirit speaketh,” &c. ; are all more or less expressive of the different ways in which the Divine will has been revealed to mankind. In general, it may be observed of them in this place, that they most explicitly assert the fact, that extraordinary Divine communications were made to men under the circumstances described in the sacred narrative ; and it would be contrary to all the laws of sound exegesis to interpret such phraseology either of mere natural events, of self-cogitation on the part of those who are stated to have been the subjects of them, or of feigned intercourse with heaven. To these hypotheses, as well as to some others of a similar description, recourse has been had both by those who deny that any supernatural interference has ever taken place on the part of the Deity for the instruction of the human family ; and by those who profess in general terms to admit such interference, but whose views, as developed in their exposition of particular cases, evince that they have no definite or fixed belief in its reality. Of the two classes of persons, the former is certainly the more consistent ; for to allow that the Scriptures contain a Divine revelation, and yet, in endeavouring to account for the peculiar phenomena connected with individual instances in which this revelation is asserted to have been made, to explain them away, or so to lower them as to bring them within the range of events—remarkable, indeed, in their character, but not beyond the power of natural

causation, is to demolish with the one hand what they build with the other ; and it would be acting a much more honourable, as well as a more consistent part, to reject the Scriptures altogether, and constitute the pure dictates of human reason, if such could be ascertained, the only standard of belief and practice.

It would seem absolutely impossible for any person who should peruse the Bible for the first time, and who should put upon its language such a construction as he would upon the language of any other book composed about the same time, and by persons circumstanced as the sacred writers profess to have been, to arrive at any other conclusion than that of a real celestial interposition having taken place in all those instances in which the Deity is said to have spoken, or to have revealed himself to certain persons specifically mentioned in the narrative. Such, in point of fact, is the construction universally put upon the language, not only by plain and ordinary readers, but also by persons of cultivated minds, who come to the perusal of the Scriptures unbiassed by hypothetical reasonings ; and it must be obvious that, if such be not the doctrine which these writings were designed to teach, no language could have been adopted that was more likely to lead mankind into error than that which is there employed.

The agent by whom, according to the express statements of revelation, the influence in question was exerted, is the HOLY SPIRIT, or that distinct personal Subsistent, of whom Divine names, properties, and acts are predicated, and who, in conjunction with the Father and the Son, constitutes the one only God.

The propriety of the name Πνεῦμα, thus given to him, does not appear to be founded on any spiration, emission, or breathing, as an internal personal characteristic, descriptive of the mode in which it has been asserted the Divine nature was communicated to him by the Father and the Son.<sup>1</sup> The only passage of Scripture to which an appeal has been made in favour of this hypothesis is John xv. 26, where our Lord promises, “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,” but in which no mind, uninfluenced by a speculative bias, or unaccustomed to scholastic or philosophical distinctions, could ever have discovered any reference to an immanent act in the nature of Deity; since the subject spoken of is the coming forth of the Holy Spirit, in the exercise of the functions ascribed to him in the economy of redemption, which was to take place after the ascension of Christ to glory. Indeed, this view of the passage is now adopted by all interpreters of Scripture of any note. But though the etymological import of the term Spirit, as applied to the Third Person of the Trinity, cannot be pressed into the service of metaphysical divinity, it would be unfair to conclude that no use whatever is to be made of it, or that the word itself is entirely destitute of force as applied to this Divine Person. That it is not given to him simply to denote his pure immateriality, seems evident from the consideration that, however it might thus serve to distinguish him from the Son, who united the humanity to his eternal spiritual nature,

(1) See Note C.

(πνεῦμα αἰωνίον, Heb. ix. 14,) it would not distinguish him from the Father, whose spirituality is equally absolute with that possessed by the Holy Ghost. It can only, therefore, be applied to him in this appropriate personal sense in reference to his operations, which, as it regards both the natural and the spiritual world, are compared to those carried on by means of the wind acting upon the objects with which it is brought into contact. "The Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters." "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth : so is every one that is born of the Spirit." (Gen. i. 2 ; John iii. 8.) He is the Author of all vivifying, purifying, and enlightening influences ; and, specially with respect to our present subject, by his inspiration, or Divine inbreathing, were the prophets and apostles qualified and enabled to communicate the mind of God to mankind. Hence the circumstance, to which sufficient attention has not been paid, that, in numerous passages of the New Testament the term Spirit is by metonymy applied to his agency, or to the effects which resulted from that agency, as made to bear upon the extraordinary qualification of the first teachers of the gospel.

On the subject of Divine Revelation in general, and on that of the influence specially exerted on the minds of those by whom the Scriptures were penned, no small diversity of opinion has obtained. To those who repudiate the claims of revelation altogether, are usually given the names of *Deists* and *Naturalists* ;

and to those who profess to believe in the Divine authority of the Bible, but explain away its miracles, prophecies, inspiration, and all its peculiar doctrines—reducing the whole to mere ordinary phenomena, popular prejudice, prudent accommodation, or philosophical hypothesis—is given that of *Rationalists*, which in reality differs from the former designations only in so far as it points to human reason, or more properly speaking, individual opinion, as the standard to which every thing connected with religious belief is to be submitted. The naturalists may be divided into two classes—Deists, strictly so called, who avow their belief in one extra-mundane spiritual principle, from whose creative impulse the powers and laws of nature originally proceeded ; and Materialists, or Pantheists, who place the primitive cause of things in corporeal substance, or, carrying out and refining upon this principle, consider the universe itself to be God.

Though some vague traces of Deism may be discovered in opinions broached in the earlier ages of the Church, it was not till the middle of the sixteenth century that its principles were openly avowed ;—first, by a number of persons in France and Italy, who are supposed to have assumed the name in order to prevent their opposition to all religion from being branded with the odious character of Atheism ; and afterwards by individuals in different countries of Europe. Nowhere, however, did they obtain a firmer footing than in this country, in which, during the greater part of the two following centuries, they were propagated with indefatigable zeal, chiefly in the shape of attacks on the Jewish and Christian Scriptures, but partly

also in specious attempts to recommend the sufficiency of the light of nature. By the great leader of the party, Lord Herbert of Cherbury, Deism was first formed into a system; and a few fundamental articles were selected as comprehending the whole of religion, to the entire exclusion of extraordinary manifestations of the Divine will, which he considered to be altogether unnecessary. Hobbes, Blount, Shaftesbury, Collins, Woolston, Tindal, Morgan, Chubb, Bolingbroke, and Hume, successively appeared as the antagonists of revelation, and attempted, with a degree of acuteness, learning, and eloquence, which was only equalled by consummate cunning and sophistry, to invalidate its evidences, expose its doctrines, impugn its morality, and supersede its necessity. Yet, met as they were by Baxter, Halyburton, Clarke, Jones, Lardner, the Chandlers, Sherlock, Chapman, Doddridge, Butler, Campbell, and numerous other able apologists of Christianity, the influence of their writings was greatly checked; and till the period of the French Revolution, little was done to revive the controversy. Nor are the efforts that have since been employed of a character calculated to produce any effect on men of enlightened and reflecting minds. They can only prove dangerous to those whose means of information are scanty, or who have an awful interest to serve by succumbing to the principles of infidelity.

The result of the contest was very different on the continent, especially in Germany. Not only were some of our principal Deistical works translated into the language of that country at the time, without any-



thing of a counteractive tendency sufficiently powerful making its appearance ; but the materials which they furnished have been the stores whence most of the modern means of attack on revelation have been supplied. Many of them, indeed, have been modelled into new forms, according to the various systems of philosophy which have prevailed ; but notwithstanding the strange metamorphoses of transcendentalism through which they have passed, they still retain a distinctness of features that sufficiently connects them with the family from which they sprang. Some of the strongest arguments that have been employed by Bahrdt, Teller, Löffler, Reimar, Paulus, Wegscheider, and Röhr, are to be found in the writings of our English Deists. It was from our native shores that the noxious breath of infidelity was wafted across the sea to empoison the atmosphere of German theology ; so that to whatever extent that theology has become impregnated with its pestiferous qualities, and how loud soever we may be in our condemnation of its influence, we must not forget that British infidels are primarily the subjects of inculcation.

The history of the doctrine of Inspiration, viewed in its more restricted acceptation, as applied to the Divine influence enjoyed by the sacred writers, or the consequent authority stamped upon the productions of their pens, is of much wider extent, and far more fruitful in scientific results. In the sketch with which it is proposed to occupy the remainder of the time allotted to this Lecture, it is not our intention to comprehend those views of the subject which are furnished



by the Scriptures themselves, as the statements which they present, strictly belong to the head of sacred proofs, which will come to be considered on a future occasion. It will be confined to the testimonies of men who lay no claim to extraordinary supernatural influence, or on whose behalf no such claim is advanced. In conducting this inquiry, we shall first examine the opinions held by the Jews, and then those which have been broached by Christian writers.

The earliest recognition of the doctrine by any uninspired Jewish writer is that found in the book of Ecclesiasticus, written about 180 years B.C. Besides references throughout this work to the revelations of the Divine will committed to the posterity of Abraham, there is a distinct ascription of the gift of prophecy to Moses, Joshua, Samuel, Nathan, Elijah, Isaiah, and other messengers of God; and *λόγια*, *divine oracles*, are particularly mentioned, ch. xxxvi. xlv. xlix.

In the writings of Philo, who flourished at Alexandria in the time of Christ and his apostles, the subject is repeatedly treated of, and a decided opinion is expressed respecting the degree of sacred influence which was exerted on the penmen of Scripture, and the state of their minds during the continuance of celestial communications. That a writer so fertile in imagination, so prone to allegorize, and so deeply imbued with the Platonic philosophy, should at times have expressed himself in terms which imply a belief that others besides Moses and the prophets, himself not excluded, were the subjects of Divine inspiration, cannot be deemed strange. Similar language is fre-

quently to be met with in the earlier fathers. But that he drew a broad line of distinction between the inspiration of the former and that of the latter, is evident from the paramount authority which he uniformly ascribes to the sacred Scriptures, and the explicit manner in which he points out the source whence they emanated. In his book, “*De Vita Mosis*,” he divides inspiration into two species : ἑρμηνεία, *Interpretation*, and προφητεία, *Prophecy*. Those who enjoyed the former received immediately from God either communications which were totally unexpected on their part, or communications in answer to questions put in order to obtain them. The latter he restricts to the ability to predict future events, which he unconditionally attributes to Divine influence, and considers those who were favoured with it to be also interpreters of the will of God, but subordinate or inferior to those who were such in a pre-eminent sense. The prophetic state during an illapse he thus describes : “ While our  
“ own intellect shines with full effect, pouring into our  
“ whole soul a meridian splendour, and we are in a  
“ state of self-possession, we are not the subjects of  
“ inspiration ; but in proportion as it disappears, a  
“ divine ecstasy and prophetic phrensy falls upon  
“ us. For when the Divine light shines, the human  
“ sets ; and when the former goes down, the latter  
“ rises. Thus it usually happens in prophecy. Our  
“ own intellect departs on the arrival of the Divine  
“ Spirit, and on his departure it again returns ; for it  
“ is not proper that the mortal and immortal should  
“ dwell together. On which account the disappearance  
“ of reason, and the darkness which surrounds it, is

“ followed by an ecstasy and divine fury.”<sup>1</sup> From this passage it clearly appears that Philo regarded the absolute cessation of mental activity on the part of the persons inspired as indispensable to their reception of supernatural influence. The same principle is repeatedly advanced when prophecy is the subject of discourse, but nowhere more explicitly than in his Third Book *de Specialibus Legibus*: “ For a prophet,” he says, “ advances nothing whatever of his own ; he “ is merely the interpreter of another, by whom he is “ actuated all the time he is speaking ; and while he is “ the subject of Divine enthusiasm, he is in a state of “ ignorance (or mental alienation) ; reason has retired ; “ the citadel of the soul has capitulated : the Spirit of “ God coming into and occupying it, acts upon the “ whole mechanism of the voice, and imparts to it “ those sounds by which there shall be a clear enunciation of the things predicted.”<sup>2</sup>

To Moses the highest place is assigned by Philo, who not only designates him a Prophet<sup>3</sup> and a Hiero-

(1.) “ Εως μὲν οὖν ἔτι περιλάμπει καὶ περιπολεῖ ἡμῶν ὁ νοῦς, μεσημβρινὸν οἶα φέγγος εἰς πᾶσαν τὴν ψυχὴν ἀναχέων, ἐν ἑαυτοῖς ὄντες, οὐ κατεχόμεθα, ἔπειδ’ ἀνὰ πρὸς δυσμᾶς γένηται, κατὰ τὸ εἰκὸς ἔκστασις ἢ ἐνθεος ἐπιπίπτει, κατοχωτική τε καὶ μανία. “ Ὅτε μὲν γὰρ φῶς ἐπιλάμπει τὸ θεῖον, δύεται τὸ ἀνθρώπινον, ὅτε δ’ ἐκείνο δύει, τοῦτ’ ἀνίσχει καὶ ἀνατέλλει. Τῷ δὲ προφητικῷ γένει φιλεῖ τοῦτο συμβαίνειν” ἐξοικίζεται μὲν γὰρ ἐν ἡμῖν ὁ νοῦς, κατὰ τὴν τοῦ θεοῦ πνεύματος ἄφισιν, κατὰ δὲ τὴν μετανάστασιν αὐτοῦ, πάλιν εἰσοκίζεται. Θέμις γὰρ οὐκ ἔστι θνητὸν ἀθανάτῳ συνοικῆσαι· διὰ τοῦτο ἡ δύσις τοῦ λογισμοῦ καὶ τὸ περὶ αὐτὸν σκότος, ἔκστασιν καὶ θεοφόρητον μανίαν ἐγέννησε.—*Quis Rerum Divinarum Hæres. Edit. Mangeii, Tom. i. p. 511.*

(2) Προφήτης τε μὲν γὰρ οὐδὲν ἴδιον ἀποφαίνεται τὸ παράπαν, ἀλλ’ ἔστιν ἔρμηνεύς, ὑποβάλλοντος ἑτέρου πανθ’ ὅσα προφέρει, καὶ καθ’ ὃν χρόνον ἐνθουσιᾷ γεγονώς ἐν ἀγνοίᾳ, μετανισταμένου μὲν τοῦ λογισμοῦ, καὶ παρακεχωρηκὸς τὴν τῆς ψυχῆς ἀκροπόλιν· ἐπιπεφοιτηκὸς δὲ καὶ ἐνοικηκὸς τοῦ θεοῦ πνεύματος, καὶ πᾶσαν τῆς φωνῆς ὀργανοποιεῖαν κρούοντας, καὶ ἐνυχῶντος εἰς ἐναργὴ δῆλωσιν ὧν προθεσπίζει.—*Tom. ii. p. 343.*

(3) Προφήτης.

phant,<sup>1</sup> but “the most eminent of prophets,”<sup>2</sup> and makes the prophetic spirit with which he was endowed the standard to which that of all other prophets was to be referred. His books he calls “the prophetic word,”<sup>3</sup> “sacred books,”<sup>4</sup> “oracles,”<sup>5</sup> and scarcely ever cites them without introducing his quotations by the use of the most exalted terms. He likewise mentions most of the other sacred writers in language which indicates his perfect conviction of their having enjoyed a special Divine inspiration.

Entertaining such ultra views on the nature of inspiration, it cannot occasion surprise that he should eagerly have adopted the fable of Aristeas, and ascribed to the Seventy Greek translators the same supernatural influence which he does to the original writers, or that he should lay great stress on the selection and collocation of the Greek words, and even the etymologies of Greek words, between which and the Hebrew he could trace any resemblance. He evidently held the universal verbal inspiration of Scripture in the strictest sense of the term.

Though the doctrine is nowhere expressly treated of by Josephus, yet his works contain numerous recognitions of his belief, and that of his nation, in the fact, that their sacred books were not of human invention, but the result of express communications on the part of the Deity. That Moses enjoyed immediate intercourse with heaven is implied in phraseology occurring on almost every page, which describes him

(1) Ἱεροφάντης.

(2) Δοκιμώτατος τῶν προφητῶν.

(3) Προφητικὸς λογός,

(4) Ἱεραὶ βίβλοι,

(5) Χρήσμαι.

as holding a Divine commission,<sup>1</sup> receiving Divine commands,<sup>2</sup> acting by Divine authority,<sup>3</sup> favoured with Divine manifestations,<sup>4</sup> and endowed by God with the gift of predicting future events.<sup>5</sup> The laws which he ordained were of Divine dictation.<sup>6</sup> What he inculcated he was himself taught by God,<sup>7</sup> and the whole Jewish constitution of which he was the administrator, and which he consigned to writing, he received by Divine communications at Sinai.<sup>8</sup> The sacred books of the Jews, which he enumerates, he declares to be justly believed to be *divine*,<sup>9</sup> and accounts for the discontinuance of inspired communications by the circumstance, that, after the reign of Artaxerxes, there existed no prophets who could regularly establish their claim to a Divine commission. He adds, that it was, so to speak, an innate principle with all the Jews to regard the contents of these books as instructions from God,<sup>10</sup> to which they adhered with constancy, and for which, if required, they would willingly lay down their life.

From the professed respect which the later Jews have uniformly manifested for the sacred books of the

(1) Περμφθει ὑπ' ἐμοῦ.—Antiq. Jud. lib. ii. cap. xii. 3.

(2) Θεοῦ προστάγματα.—Cap. xiii. 4.

(3) Θεοῦ κελεύσαντος.—Cap. xv. 3.

(4) Ὅρων τὴν ἐπιφάνειαν τοῦ Θεοῦ.—Cap. xvi. 2.

(5) Δηλοῖ δὲ ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ ἀνακειμένη γραφῇ τὸν Θεὸν Μωϋσῇ προειπεῖν.—Lib. iii. cap. i. 7.

(6) Κατὰ τὴν ὑπαγόρευσιν τοῦ Θεοῦ συνετάττετο.—Cap. viii. 8.

(7) Ἀνεμάνθανε παρὰ τοῦ Θεοῦ.—Antiq. Jud. lib. iii. cap. 12.

(8) Ἐξέμαθε παρὰ τοῦ Θεοῦ, καὶ τοῖς Ἑβραίοις γεγραμμένην παραδίδωσιν.—Cap. xii. 3.

(9) Τὰ δικαίως θεῖα πεπιστευμένα.—Contra Apion. lib. i. 8.

(10) Θεοῦ δόγματα.—Ibid.

Old Testament, it might be expected that the subject would be fully discussed in the Talmud; but the ponderous load of traditionary rules and precepts with which that immense work is charged, has left little or no room for the introduction of this or similar topics. At the same time occasional hints are dropped, or general statements are made, from which we may fairly infer what were the opinions of the writers. Thus, when they assert, that of five things in which the second temple was deficient, one was רוח הקודש, *the Holy Spirit*,<sup>1</sup> it is clearly implied that the nation formerly enjoyed the benefit of that divine influence. They, in fact, vindicate this influence to the writers of the Old Testament, by declaring, that, when the last of the prophets, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi, died, the Holy Spirit was taken away from Israel.<sup>2</sup> That they believed in absolute verbal inspiration appears from a passage in the Gemara on the Treatise Sanhedrin, in which they scruple not to denounce the loss of paradise against any who should be of a different opinion.<sup>3</sup>

By no Jewish writer has Inspiration been treated of to a greater extent than by the celebrated Rambam, or Moses Maimonides. This author, who was of an illustrious family at Cordova in Spain, flourished in Egypt in the latter half of the twelfth century, and distinguished himself by his proficiency in all kinds of

(1) אלו חמשה דברים שהיו בין מקדש ראשון למקדש שני אלו הן ארון וכפורת וכתובים אש ושכינה ורוח הקודש ואורים ותומים—Cod. Ioma, fol. 21. 6.

(2) משמחו נביאים אחרונים הגי זכריה ומלאכי נסתלקה רוח הקודש מִישראל: —Rab. Azariah in lib. Imre binah.

(3) Töllner's göttliche Eingebung der heiligen Schrift, p. 21.



sacred and profane learning. Both in his work entitled *Moreh Nevochim*, which he composed for the purpose of reconciling the doctrines and institutions of the Hebrew Scriptures with the principles of human philosophy, and in his *Yad Hahhazakah*, he expatiates at some length on the topic. According to the system which he lays down, there were, properly speaking, two degrees of inspiration—the *Gradus Mosaicus*, which was the highest and most perfect, and consisted in a direct divine illumination of the intellect without the intervention of angelic agency, or the influence of the imaginative faculty; and the other, the *Gradus Propheticus*, which he divides into the following subordinate degrees. 1. The illapse of the Spirit of power, as in the case of the Judges, who were thereby qualified to perform supernatural deeds. 2. The assistance afforded to some of the sacred writers and others, by which they were enabled, in a calm and serene state of mind, to compose psalms, moral precepts, and matters of a political and ecclesiastical character. 3. The presentation of parabolic visions and their interpretation to the mind of a prophet in dreams. 4. The production of a prophetic dream, strictly so called, in which the person inspired distinctly heard a voice, but did not perceive the speaker. 5. The appearance of a human being, who conversed with a prophet in a dream, as Ezek. xl. 4, 6. 6. Angelic communications in a dream. 7. The appearance of Jehovah himself in a dream. 8. The impartation of prophetic matter during a vision. 9. The production of an audible voice on such an occasion. 10. Sensible converse on the part of a divine messenger with the



recipient, while in a prophetic day-dream. 11. Angelic converse in a waking state.<sup>1</sup>

The second of these subdivisions coincides with what the Jews usually characterise by the name of רוח הקודש, *the Holy Spirit*, by which they understand a supernatural influence exerted upon persons, exciting and enabling them to discourse or write on various topics in a strain in which they would not have done, had they been left to their own native ability. The very terms in which they expressed themselves were essentially different from any to which they had been accustomed, or such as they had not acquired in an ordinary way. To this degree of inspiration Maimonides expressly refers the composition of the Psalms by David, the Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Solomon, the books of Daniel, Job, the Chronicles, and the rest of the Hagiographa; and accounts for their receiving this designation from the fact, that they were written by the Holy Spirit.<sup>2</sup>

Between Moses, who enjoyed the supreme degree of supernatural influence, and inferior prophets, the Rabbi thus distinguishes:—Moses received all his revelations in a waking state, whereas they received theirs in dreams and visions. His were derived immediately from God himself: theirs were received through the ministry of angels. The communications with which he was favoured produced no perturbation or astonishment in his mind: the prophets were the subjects of fear and agitation. With him the gift of prophecy

(1) מורה נבוכים. Edit. Buxtorf. Pars II. cap. xlv. p. 315. Basil. 1629. Carpzovii Introd. ad Libros Canon. Bibl. V. T. iii. p. 14.

(2) Ut sup. p. 319.

was permanent, so that he could, without preparation, exercise it whenever he chose; but in them it was only occasional, and required certain predispositions of mind.<sup>1</sup>

Modifications of these views are found in the works of Albo, Nachman, Abarbanel, Kimchi, and other Rabbins;<sup>2</sup> but how much soever they may differ from Maimonides, and from each other, on minor points connected with the doctrine, they are unanimous in attributing infallible divine influence to the writers of the Hebrew Scriptures.

Passing on to the christian writers by whom the doctrine is recognised, it may be proper to repeat the remark which we made when adverting to the sentiments of Philo, that, while some of them may occasionally speak of themselves as the subjects of inspiration, it is nevertheless evident they never meant to be understood as placing themselves on a level with the sacred penmen. All they intended by the expression was, the gracious instruction and direction, which, according to the Scriptures, every one is warranted to expect, who sincerely and humbly applies to God for the guidance of his Holy Spirit. To this remark there is one exception in the case of Hermas, one of the Apostolical Fathers, who, in his "Pastor," pretends to have been favoured with visions and angelic revelations, and speaks of inspiration with a degree of familiarity which sufficiently indicates the entire absence of the quality to which he lays claim.

(1) Bernard's *Main Principles of the Creed and Ethics of the Jews*, pp. 116—118. London, 1832.

(2) Smith's *Select Discourses*, p. 247, &c. London, 1831.

In the Epistles of Barnabas and Clement of Rome, the contents of Scripture are introduced by the formulas—"The Lord saith," "God saith," "Thus saith the Holy Spirit."<sup>1</sup> The latter calls the Scriptures, "the holy oracles of God," and exhorts the Corinthians to study them, in language which unequivocally evinces his conviction of their inspiration: "Look unto the holy Scriptures, which are the *true words of the Holy Ghost*. Ye know that nothing unjust or counterfeit is written in them."<sup>2</sup> And reminding them of what Paul had addressed to them in his first Epistle, he writes: "Take into your hands the Epistle of the blessed Apostle Paul. What did he write to you at the beginning of the gospel? Assuredly what he wrote to you was *by the Spirit*."<sup>3</sup> In his Epistle to the Magnesians, Ignatius, speaking of the holy prophets, declares that they were *inspired* by the grace of Christ fully to convince unbelievers of the unity of God.<sup>4</sup>

The view taken of the subject by Justin Martyr is sufficiently evident from the two parallel passages in his first Apology, in which, when affirming that the Christians worshipped the Father, the Son, and the Spirit, he represents the Third Person as the author

(1) Barnabas further expresses his belief in the inspiration of the sacred writers by such declarations as the following:—λέγει εἰς τὴν καρδίαν Μωσῆ τὸ πνεῦμα;—ἔλαβε παρὰ κυρίου τὰς δύο πλάκας γεγραμμένας τῷ δακτύλῳ τῆς χειρὸς κυρίου ἐν πνεύματι;—γέγραπται γάρ, πῶς αὐτῷ ὁ πατὴρ ἐντέλλεται;—ἐφ' οὓς τὸ πνεῦμα ἡτοίμασε.—Edit. Cotel. vol. i. pp. 39, 42, 43, 52.

(2) Ἐγκύπτετε εἰς τὰς γραφὰς, τὰς ἀληθεῖς (ῥήσεις) πνεύματος τοῦ ἁγίου. Ἐπίστασθε ὅτι οὐδὲν ἄδικον οὐδὲ παραπεποιημένον γέγραπται ἐν αὐταῖς.—Cotel. vol. i. p. 174.

(3) — ἐπ' ἀληθείας πνευματικῶς ἐπέστειλεν ὑμῖν.—Ibid. p. 175.

(4) — ἐμπνεόμενοι ὑπὸ τῆς χάριτος αὐτοῦ εἰς τὸ πληροφωρηθῆναι τοὺς ἀπειθοῦντας.—Cap. viii.

of that divine influence which the prophets enjoyed. His words are, "We also worship the *Prophetic Spirit*."<sup>1</sup> He declares that "there were among the Jews certain men who were prophets of God, by whom the *Prophetic Spirit* proclaimed future events before they came to pass:" and in almost every chapter the same epithet is employed. Of Isaiah he expressly affirms, that he was *inspired* "by the spirit of prophecy;" and shortly after adds—"Now when ye hear the sayings of the prophets read, imagine not that they are spoken by the inspired writers themselves, but by the Divine Word, who moved them;"<sup>2</sup> which latter statement may be reconciled with the former on the principle suggested by Bishop Kaye, that the Logos was regarded as the conductor of the economy of Divine grace from the beginning, though the Holy Spirit was the immediate agent. If the hortatory address to the Greeks was really written by Justin, which is questioned, however, by the learned prelate just referred to, Du Pin, and others, we have from his pen a description of the organic nature of inspiration, which would seem to have served as a model according to which the phraseology of many later writers was formed. "It was only necessary," he says, "for the prophets to surrender themselves entirely to the operation of the Divine Spirit; that the divine plectrum descending from heaven, and using the instrumentality of just

(1) Πνεῦμα τε τὸ προφητικὸν σεβόμεθα καὶ προσκυνούμεν.—Apol. ii. p. 56. Lutet. Paris, 1615.

(2) "Ὅταν δὲ τὰς λέξεις τῶν προφῆτων λεγομένας ὡς ἀπὸ προσώπου ἀκούητε, μὴ ἀπ' αὐτῶν τῶν ἐμπνευσμένων λέγεσθαι νομίσητε, ἀλλ' ἀπὸ τοῦ κινδύντος αὐτοῖς θείου λόγου.—Ibid. p. 76.

“men, as of a harp or lyre, should reveal to us the “knowledge of divine and heavenly things.”<sup>1</sup> Similar language is employed by Athenagoras, and Theophilus of Antioch—the former of whom asserts respecting the inspiration of the prophets, that the Spirit from God moved their mouths, like instruments, making use of them as a musician does of his flute.<sup>2</sup> Nor can any language more powerfully express a belief in the doctrine than that employed by the last-mentioned writer: “The men of God,” he writes, “actuated by the “Holy Spirit, and prophets being inspired and made “wise by God himself, became divinely taught, holy “and righteous, on which account they were deemed “worthy of this recompense—to be *the organs of God*; “and receiving wisdom from him, they spake by the “same wisdom, both of what related to the creation of “the world, and of all other things.”<sup>3</sup>

Irenæus, who flourished about the same time with the preceding writers, Tertullian, Dionysius, and Clement of Alexandria, abound in statements respecting the Holy Scriptures, which show that they considered them to have been written by special supernatural influence. And though Tertullian imbibed the fanatical notions of Montanus, and occasionally makes use of

(1) — ἀλλὰ καθαροῖς ἑαυτοῖς τῇ τοῦ θεοῦ πνεύματος παρασχεῖν ἐνεργείᾳ, ἵν' αὐτὸ τὸ θεῖον ἐξ οὐρανοῦ κατιὸν πληκτρον, ὥσπερ ὀργάνῳ κιθάρας τινὸς ἢ λύρας, τοῖς δικαίοις ἀνδράσι χρώμενον, τὴν τῶν θεῶν ἡμῖν καὶ οὐρανίων ἀποκαλύψῃ γινώσκιν.—Ibid. p. 9.

(2) — τῷ παρὰ τοῦ Θεοῦ πνεύματι, ὡς ὄργανα κεκινηκότε τὰ τῶν προφητῶν στόματα.—Legatio, Ibid. App. p. 8.

(3) Οἱ δὲ τοῦ Θεοῦ ἄνθρωποι πνευματόφοροι πνεύματος ἁγίου, καὶ προφῆται γενόμενοι, ὑπ' αὐτοῦ τοῦ Θεοῦ ἐμπνευσθέντες, καὶ σοφισθέντες ἐγένοντο θεοδιδάκτοι, καὶ ὅσιοι καὶ δικαίοι. διὸ καὶ κατηξιώθησαν τὴν ἀντιμισθίαν ταύτην λαβεῖν, ὄργανα Θεοῦ γενόμενοι, καὶ χωρίσαντες σοφίαν τὴν παρ' αὐτοῦ, δι' ἧς σοφίας εἶπον καὶ τὰ περὶ τῆς κτίσεως τοῦ κόσμου, καὶ τῶν λοιπῶν ὑπάντων.—Ibid. pp. 87, 88.



unwarrantably strong expressions respecting his own possession of the Spirit, he always maintained the paramount authority of the Bible as the word of God.

Origen appears to have been the first of the fathers who took a more minute and definite view of the subject. This extraordinary man, whose application to biblical study has never been equalled in any age, was necessarily called, in the course of his writings, to state without reserve the light in which he regarded it. We accordingly meet with it in many parts of his works, especially in his Books against Celsus, and in the chapter of the *Philocalia*, which is headed—"The Inspiration of the Divine Scriptures." He not only speaks of Moses and the Jewish prophets having the Spirit of God, and of its being a matter of belief with the Jews that they spoke by his afflatus, but pointedly asserts, that the same Spirit who taught Moses the things which had happened before his time, also taught those who wrote the gospel; and, on this account, scruples not to call both the prophets and apostles "Divine men."<sup>1</sup> He ascribes the language of Isaiah to the Holy Spirit;<sup>2</sup> declares that it is only necessary to peruse the writings of the prophets to be persuaded that the Spirit of God was in them;<sup>3</sup> maintains that the apostles taught Christianity in virtue of a divine power;<sup>4</sup> and repeatedly extends inspiration in express terms to the whole volume.<sup>5</sup> No person, he affirms, can read it with diligent attention, without being himself in some degree sensible of the inspiration which is inherent in it, or feeling convinced that its contents

(1) *Contra Celsum*, lib. i. p. 33. Ed. Spenceri.

(2) P. 42.

(3) *Ibid.* lib. viii. p. 409.

(4) Lib. i. p. 48.

(5) *Philocal.* cap. i. pp. 22, 23.



are the words of God, and not human compositions.<sup>1</sup> He contrasts the inspiration which the writers enjoyed with the pretended afflatus of the heathen priests, and shows that they had nothing in common.<sup>2</sup>

That Origen was a believer in the verbal inspiration of the Scriptures, is evident from two passages in his Commentaries. In that on the first Psalm, he expressly declares that the Holy Spirit subjected the word to the most rigid trial, when communicating it through those who were selected to be its ministers, in order that we might be convinced, by the analogy of the process with that employed by a refiner in purifying metals, that Divine inspiration was extended to the minutest letter : to which he thinks our Lord probably refers, when he says, "One jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law till all be fulfilled." (Matt. v. 18.) He then institutes a comparison with the natural world, in which small as well as great things are the result of the Divine operations ; and concludes, that whatever was written under an afflatus of the Spirit, was inserted with a view to the salvation of men, and that every letter contains a trace of wisdom according to the capacity of the recipient.<sup>3</sup> In his Thirty-ninth Homily on Jeremiah, he argues from

(1) Philocal. cap. i. p. 5.

(2) Contra Celsum, lib. vii. p. 333.

(3) Εἰ δὲ τὰ λόγια κυρίου λόγια ἀγνά, ἀργύριον πεπυρωμένον, δοκίμιον τῇ γῇ, κεκαθαρισμένον ἑπταπλασίως· καὶ μετὰ πάσης ἀκριβείας ἐξητασμένως τὸ ἅγιον πνεῦμα ὑποβέβληκεν αὐτὰ διὰ τῶν ὑπηρετῶν τοῦ λόγου, μή ποτε καὶ ἡμᾶς διαφεύγε ἡ ἀναλογία, καθ' ἣν ἐπὶ πᾶσαν ἔφθασε γραφὴν ἡ σοφία τοῦ Θεοῦ θεόπνευστον μέχρι τοῦ τυχόντος γράμματος.—"Ὅν τρόπον γάρ . . . οὕτως ἡμεῖς ὑπολαμβάνομεν περὶ πάντων τῶν ἐξ ἐπίπνοιας τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος ἀναγεγραμμένων, ὡς τῆς ἐπιδιδούσης τὴν ὑπὲρ ἄνθρωπον σοφίαν ἱερᾶς προνοίας διὰ τῶν γραμμάτων τῷ γένει τῶν ἀνθρώπων λόγια σωτήρια, ἐνεσπαρκύας, ὡς ἔστιν εἰπεῖν, ἐκάστῳ γράμματι κατὰ τὸ ἐνδεχόμενον ἵχνη τῆς σοφίας.—Philocal. cap. ii. p. 23.

our being commanded to suffer no idle word to proceed out of our mouth, and from the use to be made of all kinds of herbs for medicinal purposes, that a wonderful power attaches to every word which proceeded from the mouths of the prophets, and that there is not a jot, or the smallest element of Scripture, which is destitute of meaning.<sup>1</sup> The design of Origen in thus asserting a literal inspiration, obviously was to lay more securely the foundations of the allegorical system of interpretation, which he had adopted from his predecessors in the Alexandrian school. On no other principle did he imagine it was possible to conciliate the good opinion of philosophers, than that of attaching a spiritual meaning to the minutest circumstance occurring in the historical books of Scripture.

Though not canonized by the sainted fathers, who succeeded him, many of them availed themselves of the materials for spiritualizing which they found in the works of Origen; and, with scarcely any exception, they appear to have approved of the extent to which he carried his views of the doctrine before us. In the writings of Athanasius, Eusebius,<sup>2</sup> Basil the Great, the

(1) — καὶ οὐ θαυμαστὸν εἰ πᾶν ῥῆμα τὸ λαλούμενον ὑπὸ τῶν προφητῶν εἰργάζετο ἔργον τὸ πρέπον ῥήματι· ἀλλὰ γὰρ οἶμαι ὅτι καὶ πᾶν θαυμάσιον γράμμα τὸ γεγραμμένον ἐν τοῖς λογίοις τοῦ θεοῦ ἐργάζεται, καὶ οὐκ ἔστιν ἰῶτα ἓν, ἡ μία κεραία γεγραμμένη ἐν τῇ γραφῇ, ἥτις τοῖς ἐπισταμένοις χρῆσθαι τῇ δυνάμει τῶν γραμμάτων οὐκ ἐργάζεται τὸ ἑαυτῆς ἔργον.—Philocal. cap. ii. p. 37.

(2) The testimony of Eusebius is too important to be omitted here:—οἱ θεσπέσιοι καὶ ὡς ἀληθῶς θεοπρεπεῖς, φημὶ δὲ τοῦ Χριστοῦ τοὺς ἀποστόλους. τὸν βίον ἄκρως κεκαθαρμένοι, καὶ ἀρετῇ πάσῃ τὰς ψυχὰς κεκοσμημένοι, τὴν δὲ γλῶτταν ἰδιωτεύοντες, τῇ γε μὴν πρὸς τοῦ σωτῆρος αὐτοῖς δεδωρημένη θεία καὶ παραδοξοποιῶ δυνάμει θαρσύνοντες, τὸ μὲν ἐν περινοίᾳ καὶ τέχνῃ λόγων τὰ τοῦ διδασκάλου μαθήματα πρεσβεύειν, οὔτε ἥδεσαν οὔτε ἐνεχεύουν. Τῇ δὲ τοῦ Θεοῦ πνεύματος τοῦ συνεργοῦντος αὐτοῖς ἀποδείξει, καὶ τῇ δι' αὐτῶν συντελουμένη θαυματουργῇ τοῦ Χριστοῦ δυνάμει μόνῃ χρώμενοι, τῆς τῶν οὐρανῶν βασιλείας τὴν γνῶσιν ἐπὶ πᾶσαν κατήγγελλον τὴν οἰκουμένην.—Eccles. Hist. lib. iii. cap. xxiv.

two Gregories, Jerome, Augustine, Chrysostom, and others who flourished in the fourth century, numerous passages occur in which it is vindicated, and placed in contrast with the notions which prevailed on the subject of inspiration in the pagan world. At the same time it cannot be denied that passages are also to be met with, especially in Augustine and Jerome, from which it is evident there were occasions on which they were compelled to modify their views. Thus the former of these fathers accounts for the variations which are found in many parts of the Gospels on the principle, that each writer exercised his mental faculties, and presented his own peculiar aspect of facts and circumstances; though, as they were all under the superintendence of the Spirit, it was impossible that any falsehood or error could be admitted into their writings.<sup>1</sup> A similar statement was made at a later period by Euthymius Zigabenus, in his Commentary on the twelfth of Matthew; but whether the opinion there expressed be his own, or that of an earlier expositor, it is impossible to determine.

It would be preposterous to expect opinions on the subject to which any value could be attached from the writers of the middle ages, since they were accustomed to place human tradition upon a level with the word of God, and scrupled not to attribute to popes and councils the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. It does not even appear to have occupied their attention as a distinct topic of investigation; and such was the neglect into which the Scriptures had fallen, that when it happened to be adverted to, it was only in the

(1) *De Consensu Evangel.* lib. ii. cap. 12.

most incidental manner, and so as to show that the ideas entertained of it were of the most fluctuating character. Admitted as a general principle, it was called in question by none of the schoolmen.<sup>1</sup>

About the time of the Reformation, when the Scriptures began to be restored to that place to which they are entitled, and Biblical theology became the subject of profound and persevering study, the claims of revelation received a proportionate share of public attention. One of the first who advanced any opinion at variance with those commonly received was Erasmus, who, in his notes on the second of Matthew, and the tenth of the Acts, remarked, that the Divine Spirit, by whom the minds of the apostles were governed, permitted them to remain ignorant of some things, to fall, and even to err for want of memory; but though he endeavoured to defend his positions against Eckius, by whom he was attacked, he afterwards retracted and acknowledged—"nunc testor, me abhorrere ab ullâ oblivione tribuendâ Apostolis."<sup>2</sup>

The sentiments of Luther on the subject of the canon are well known. Those which he entertained respecting inspiration he expressed in his usual free and undaunted manner; but it is evident, that, in reference to both points, his opinions are more to be traced to the influence of the peculiar circumstances of his times than to patient and ample investigation. For though he maintained, as a general theory, that the matters and not the words were inspired, yet in his controversy respecting the Lord's Supper, he was

(1) Töllner Einleitung, § viii.

(2) Apolog. adv. Monachos quosd. Hispan.

obliged to advocate the inspiration of the words of the institution. In rejecting verbal inspiration, the great Reformer was followed by Calixtus <sup>1</sup> and Musæus, both of whom, however, were violently opposed by the body of Lutheran divines, who, fearing lest their opinion might yield support to the Romanists, constructed an hypothesis, according to which the sacred writers not only had those things immediately communicated to them by the Holy Spirit of which they could acquire no knowledge by natural means, or of which they were ignorant, but even those which they already knew or might have known from their own consciousness, or through the medium of the senses. Though the symbolical books of the Lutheran church are silent on this head, the hypothesis obtained almost equal authority from the prominent place which was allotted to it in the systems of Calovius, Hutter, Hollaz, Gerhard, Quenstedt, Baier, and Buddæus, in which it was represented as a fundamental article of faith. Some of these authors went so far as to maintain the absolute inspiration or infusion of the Hebrew points;<sup>2</sup> and though Calvin and others of the Reformed church had entertained more moderate views of the subject,

(1) “*Neque scriptura dicitur divina, quod singula, quæ in ea continentur, divinæ peculiari revelationi imputari oporteat, &c.—sed quod præcipua, sive quæ primario et per se respicit ac intendit scriptura, nempe quæ redemptionem et salutem generis humani concernunt, non nisi divinæ illi peculiari revelationi debeantur; in cæteris vero, quæ aliunde vel per experientiam, sive per lumen naturæ nota, consignandis, divina assistentia et Spiritu ita scriptores sint gubernati, ne quidquam scriberunt, quod non esset ex re, vero, decoro, congruo.*”—*Respons. con. Mogunt.*

(2) “—hypothesis de punctorum vocalium nova inventione et ad textum Hebræum adjectione, est falsa, et dudum à theologis nostris explosa et confutata. Nos eorum vestigia sequuti, cœva esse literis seu consonantibus puncta vocalia, ipsisque statim in primâ scriptione à Spiritu S Amanuensis addita, probamus,” &c.—*Quenstedt Theol. Didact.-Polem.* Pars I. p. 202.



to such lengths was the controversy carried in Helvetia, that no candidate was admitted to ordination who did not *ex animo* profess his belief in the divine authority of the pointed text.<sup>1</sup>

In the Romish Church a diversity of opinions obtained after the Reformation; Canus, Estius, and other writers maintaining an inspiration of words: but the entire question had a peculiar turn given to it by the decisions of the Council of Trent, at which it was determined that not only the books of the Old and New Testaments, including the Apocrypha, had God for their author, but also the traditions of the Church, which, it was maintained, were equally to be traced to the mouth of Christ, or the dictation of the Holy Spirit.

A new epoch in the history of the doctrine was formed by the sentence of condemnation passed by the theological faculties of Louvain and Douay in 1586, upon the three celebrated theses of the Jesuit Professors Less and Hamelius. These learned divines denied the necessity of universal verbal inspiration, and the immediate inspiration of every truth or sentence contained in Scripture; and maintained that a book, written without any inspiration at all, would become scripture if it afterwards received the sanction of the Holy Spirit.<sup>2</sup> It does not appear, however, that any

(1) See Note D.

(2) The theses were expressed in the following terms:—"Ut aliquid sit scriptura sacra, non est necessarium, singula ejus verba esse inspirata. —Non est necessarium ut singulæ veritates et sententiæ sint immediate a Spiritu Sancto ipso scriptori inspiratæ.—Liber aliquis, qualis est fortasse secundus Maccabæorum, humana industria sine assistentia Spiritus Sancti scriptus, si Spiritus Sanctus postea testetur, ibi nihil esse falsum, efficitur scriptura sacra."—*Jahn's Introd. to the Old Test.* pp. 38, 39. New York, 1827.



notice would have been taken of these propositions had it not been for the controversy which was keenly agitated at the time between the Jesuits and Jansenists; for even when the subject of dispute was referred to the Pope, his answer was of so mild and measured a character, that it tended greatly to promote the free discussion of the question. Cornelius a Lapide, Suarez, Bonfrere, Bellarmine, Huet, Du Pin, Calmet, and especially Richard Simon, advocated the doctrine of the theses, and most Catholic writers since that period have gone into the same views. De Dominis, indeed, whose opinion was afterwards extended by Holden, scrupled not to maintain that the Evangelists might have erred in circumstantials without any injury to the faith.<sup>1</sup>

The merits of the discussions which thus originated, are chiefly to be estimated by the influence which they had in creating a powerful reaction in the minds of many Protestants in opposition to the exaggerated theory which had, for some time, obtained among them, and but for which, there is reason to believe, no countenance would have been given to the loose and dangerous principles which were afterwards advanced. The unscriptural notions on the subject, which had been more or less broached by Grotius, Spinoza, the Polish Socinians, Episcopius, and others of the Remonstrants, were at last collected and put forth in twenty letters, purporting to contain "The Sentiments of certain Dutch Divines respecting Simon's Critical History," but generally supposed to have been written

(1) Pusey's Historical Enquiry, &c. Part II. pp. 75—77.

by Le Clerc, who greatly aggravated the evil by denying inspiration in almost all its essential aspects.<sup>1</sup>

A translation of this work in "Five Letters" having made its appearance in this country,<sup>2</sup> the defence of the doctrine was taken up by La Mothe, Williams, Lowth, Calamy, Whitby, and Bennett, and was afterwards sustained by Doddridge in his able Dissertation on the subject, by means of which a barrier was thrown in the way of the influence which Le Clerc's opinions might otherwise have exerted on our British theology.<sup>3</sup> The views adopted by these writers being of a modified character, the ground which they took has continued to be occupied ever since; and the more recent attempts of Priestley, Geddes, and Wakefield, to impugn the dogma, have been successfully met by Finlay, Dick, Parry, and Wilson, whose arguments still remain unanswered.<sup>4</sup> Nor is there the least ground for apprehension from any thing that may now be advanced in opposition to it by those whose system of doctrine compels them to get rid of the strictly divine authority of the Scriptures: the only source whence danger might possibly arise would be a revival of the antiquated hypothesis of universal and absolute organic inspiration. Some efforts have lately been made to effect such a revival; but, with the exception of Dr. Fraser's Essay,<sup>5</sup> which deserves the serious perusal of all who wish to see what may be advanced on that side

(1) *Sentimens de quelques Théologiens de Holland sur l'Histoire Critique du Vieux Testament composée par le P. Richard Simon de l'Oratoire.* Amsterdam, 1685.

(2) A. D. 1690.

(3) See Note E.

(4) See Note F.

(5) *An Essay on the Plenary and Verbal Inspiration of the Holy Scriptures.* By Donald Fraser, D.D. New Fam. Lib. vol. ii. Edin. 1834.

of the question, they are not likely to produce much impression.

With respect to the continent, the doctrines of Luther already began towards the close of the seventeenth century to be remoulded in the forms of philosophy; and in proportion as one philosophical system overturned or succeeded another, they continued to be more or less affected by the different impulses, which, in consequence, were given to scientific minds. The influence of infidelity was also sensibly felt. The deep and serious tone in which revealed truth was formerly taught came to be exchanged for superficial, flippant, and licentious modes of interpretation. One doctrine was frittered down after another; the supernatural phenomena of Revelation were brought to the test of modern reason, and then discarded, till at last little was allowed to remain in the Bible but a venerable collection of mythological fragments, which might have been of some practical use in the remote and dark ages of antiquity, but cannot be admitted to possess any binding authority upon those who live in our day.

In the midst of this wreck, occasioned by the precipitation of some of the most valuable monuments of Christian truth, lies the doctrine of inspiration. It was not only the subject of scurrilous attack and absolute rejection on the part of such men as Bahrdt, Edelmann, Basedow, and Daum, but has suffered more serious injury from the treatment to which it has been subjected by Semler, Michaelis, Morus, Henke, Eckermann, Ammon, Griesbach, Bretschneider, Paulus, Wegscheider, and De Wette, by whom, under the

professed discussion of it as a biblical dogma, its plenary character has gradually been abandoned, and the position has been laid down as an ultimate conclusion, that the authority of the canonical books does not in any degree depend upon their inspiration, but would be equally valid and unshaken, though not a syllable contained in them had originated in any such source.

We cannot conclude this brief historical view of the doctrine, without congratulating the friends of biblical truth on the efficient manner in which its defence has been undertaken by Professors Tholuck, Twesten, Hahn, and other theological writers of the new school in Germany; and expressing a decided conviction, founded on the spirit in which it is carried on, and the degree of progress which it has already made, that the period is not distant when the Divine authority of the inspired volume will be fully acknowledged, and its blessed influence extensively felt in that interesting portion of Europe. Then shall he who has most boasted of the lights of reason and human philosophy, convinced of the utter emptiness of the principles which he and others have advanced, humbly and ingenuously confess with Agur, "Surely I am more brutish than any man, and have not the understanding of a man. I neither learned wisdom, nor did I acquire the knowledge of the Holy."

## LECTURE II.

### DIFFERENT MODES OF INSPIRATION.

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HEB. I. 1, 2.

*“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, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds.”*

THE result of our inquiry into the force and bearing of the peculiar phraseology of Scripture in reference to the subject of inspiration, is this:—that, in a general point of view, it embraces the entire range of influence supernaturally exerted in order to communicate to mankind the knowledge of truths, which they could not otherwise have acquired, together with a recognition of the diversified phenomena connected with the exertion of such influence, in so far as these phenomena form a legitimate object of investigation by the human mind. It now devolves upon us to examine the particular modes in which this extraordinary influence was vouchsafed, so far as they are specified in the Scriptures, in order that we may obtain more distinct and particular conceptions of its operations and

effects, and thus be led to admire “the manifold wisdom of God” conspicuously displayed in this, as in every other department of the Divine workmanship.

That the modes in which it pleased God to reveal his will, were various, is expressly declared in the words of the text. We are aware, indeed, that some very respectable modern commentators, such as Kuinoel and Dindorf, regard *both* the words here employed (πολυμερῶς and πολυτρόπως) as synonymous and expressive of the same thing, namely, the matter or doctrines contained in the ancient revelations; but it appears forced to refer either of them to the intrinsic nature of those divine disclosures itself, since what the apostle treats of is the diversified parts and modes in which they were made, which he contrasts with the manner in which God has revealed himself unto the new economy. With respect to the former, they were not only effected in various parts or portions, according to the various exigencies of the church, a considerable period of time frequently intervening between them, but they were also furnished by means or in ways greatly differing from each other.

Indeed, the term πολυτρόπως, which is commonly rendered “in *divers* or *various* manners” in the versions, is expressive of multiplicity as well as of diversity, and has accordingly been rendered by some, *in many different ways*. And what is thus so explicitly declared by the apostle must have been familiar to his readers, as it must still be to all who are in any degree conversant with the Scriptures of the Old Testament, almost every page of which affords proofs and illustrations of the fact. It would, however, be a palpable



misconstruction of the text, and diametrically opposed to another fact, which appears no less obvious from the pages of the New Testament, to suppose, that it implies the absolute non-existence of diversity in the manner in which God has made known his will to the church under the Christian dispensation. So far as concerns the several prophets on the one hand, and the one great Prophet, the Son of God, on the other, the antithesis is complete; and the exhibition of this antithesis seems to have been the grand, if not the sole aim of the writer. The circumstance of diversity relative to the ancient revelations is introduced, as it were, *en passant*, according to his constant and well-known manner of indulging in parenthetical additions, or touching upon minor topics, which caught his eye, but which have no immediate reference to the main point of his argument. Not only were the developments of the Divine will in the latter days not confined to the personal ministry of Christ, but were also made through the instrumentality of his apostles; but they were made in manners or modes nearly as “divers” as those in which that will had been revealed in ancient times. Of this abundant evidence will be adduced as we proceed.

From a collation of the statements furnished upon this subject in both divisions of the sacred volume, it will be found that the modes of Divine revelation, or the exertion of inspiring influence, which it pleased the Author of all wisdom to select, are the following:—direct internal suggestion; audible articulate sounds; the Urim and Thummim; dreams; visions; and the re-appearance of the departed.

Of these several modes, the first only is *immediate*, and is that which is generally considered to be inspiration in the strictest sense: the others are all *mediate*, consisting in the miraculous intervention of secondary causes, or certain applications of divinely interposed instrumentality, by which the matters of revelation were conveyed to the minds of its chosen recipients.

That the servants of God were occasionally, and some of them generally, the subjects of direct *inspiration*, is irrefragably proved by express testimonies of Scripture. In the proem to the sublime ode of David, with which his inspired poetical compositions terminate, he declares in reference to his general inspiration,

“ The Spirit of the Lord speaketh *in* me :  
And his word is upon my tongue.” 2 Sam. xxiii. 2.

The parallelism here employed is not to be viewed as consisting of two simply synonymous members, in which the same sentiment is taught without any difference of mode or degree; but is obviously of the class termed gradational, in which the idea introduced in the former member is continued, but amplified or diminished in the latter. The Psalmist first announces the source of his composition—the indwelling, extraordinary influence of the Spirit of Jehovah, by which he was supplied with inspired matter, without the intervention of mediate causes; and then he proceeds to describe the effect of such influence in the expression given to it in sacred song. The verse contains a statement in reference to his character as an organ of divine communications generally; having made which, he proceeds in the next to call our attention to a special communication, that had been made to him, in

the way of intermediate agency, or by an audible voice, such as that by which, as we read in his history, he was often addressed by the Most High.

Other passages, in which the doctrine of immediate inspiration is distinctly taught, are the following:—Matt. x. 20.—“For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh *in* you.” 1 Pet. i. 11.—“Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was *in* them did signify, when he testified beforehand of the sufferings of Christ.” In none of these instances is the instrumental sense admissible. They all assert the fact of direct internal revelation—the result of the extraordinary operation of God upon the minds of the prophets and apostles, by which they became imbued with supernatural knowledge, or had those objects and occurrences vividly and powerfully impressed on them, an acquaintance with which they never could have acquired in any natural way, or which, without such divine intervention and influence, they could not have been qualified to make known to the world. They all convey the idea, which is naturally suggested by the perusal of innumerable other passages of Scripture, in which no mention is made of the employment of any external means in imparting the revelation, that the recipients were wrought upon directly and immediately by the Holy Spirit, who opened their minds to perceive the things which they were to communicate to others; excited them specially to attend to them; and supplied them, as the exigencies of particular cases required, with the ability to give suitable expression to the matters with which they were inspired.

The possibility of such immediate revelation will not be called in question by any who believe in the Divine Omnipotence. The Infinite Spirit, by whom the human mind was created, and by whose unceasing agency it is preserved in existence, must ever be intimately present to it; and possessing a perfect knowledge of its faculties, states, and affections, and exercising a perfect control over all its operations;—governing it, moreover, in such ways as infallibly to secure the great ends of his moral government, it would be absurd to suppose that he has not the power of operating upon it in the way of directly communicating to it a knowledge of his will, or of producing in it certain ideas or conceptions independently of the use of external or secondary means. The denial of these immediate operations of the Deity upon the human mind can only consistently be maintained on the principles of materialism and physical necessity. If, indeed, the universe were nothing but a vast machine, governed by the laws of mechanical organization, operating invariably and uninterruptedly according to the fixed relations of things, and in consequence of an original impetus or impulse communicated to it at its creation, to the exclusion of all foreign influence in future; in other words, if, through the whole period of its existence, its affairs were conducted solely by the influence of its own concreated powers; then it would be highly irrational to imagine that any interference of the kind in question ever took place. But such an hypothesis, if it does not ultimately and absolutely supersede the necessity of creation itself, at least excludes the Creator from all further connexion with

the results of his own workmanship, and implicates the soul of man, with all its operations, in the concatenation of merely physical causes and effects. Upon this principle there is no occasion for the Divine existence; and man being abandoned to the influence of a dire and inevitable necessity, all rational freedom of will is necessarily excluded, and moral responsibility itself totally annihilated. From such a system, what well-poised mind does not recoil with instinctive horror! And with what satisfaction does it rest in the belief of a perpetual and universally concurrent Providence—the omnipotent influence of Him, who, while he hath endowed his intelligent creatures with the powers of free agency, never for a moment renounces his control over them, but sustains these powers, and so disposes of all their operations, as shall effectually promote the highest possible good of the universe! Such is undeniably the God of the Bible, the doctrine of which upon this point may be summed up in its own brief but emphatic language: “In him we live, and move, and have our being.” (Acts xvii. 28.)

But if God is thus ever present with his creatures, and incessantly upholds, guides, and controls their actions, what possible incongruity can there be in admitting the exercise of his benevolent agency in immediately presenting to their minds, and effectually inclining them to regard, and afterwards to communicate to others, truths of high concernment in reference to their present circumstances, or their future and immortal destiny? With what consistency can we assert our belief in his universal and uncontrollable agency in the physical world, and deny the exercise of

the same unlimited agency in the world of mind? Shall he cause his voice to be heard in the sweeping of the hurricane and the rolling of the thunder, and shall he not possess the power of holding purely intellectual converse as a Spirit with spirits—or rather, as the Father of spirits, with the spirits which he hath made? Shall he make his sun to rise on the evil and the good, shedding the beams of natural light over the world, and shall we not concede to him the ability to irradiate the minds of his intellectual creation with beams of celestial truth, directly emanating from himself, the uncreated and effulgent source of spiritual light?

While no difficulty, however, may be felt in regard to the possibility of immediate supernatural communications on the part of the Almighty, there may still remain in the minds of some a hesitancy with respect to the possibility of such communications becoming matters of distinct consciousness on the part of those to whom they were made. How, it may be asked, could they assure themselves that they actually were supernaturally and divinely imparted? How could they distinguish what they considered to be such communications from the productions of their own minds, or from the results of an influence exerted upon them by Satanic or demoniacal agency? How, in short, was it in their power to ascertain that what they regarded in the light of divine revelation truly came from God? The importance of these questions will at once appear when it is considered, that, in all ages, there have been those who have themselves been persuaded, and who have endeavoured to persuade others,



that they were the subjects of immediate inspiration, while nothing can be more satisfactorily made out than the fact of their self-deception, and the utter nullity of their pretended supernatural intercourse with the Deity.

That the prophets and apostles could and did discriminate between those matters which resulted purely from their own ratiocination, or from the mere exercise of any of their mental faculties, and the direct celestial inspirations with which they were favoured, appears incontrovertible from numerous passages of their writings. The *modus*, however, of that consciousness which they possessed of immediate inspiration is a psychological question, which is fraught with no small difficulty; and it may be anticipated, that all who have given the subject any reasonable degree of attention will concur in considering it to be one of which the absolute determination lies entirely beyond the power of those who have never had any personal experience of such consciousness. Locke, in his chapter on Enthusiasm,<sup>1</sup> has some remarks bearing upon the question; but though they possess great force in application to false impressions and mental illusions, they fail in fixing any distinct marks or criteria by which those who received divine communications could ordinarily distinguish them from their own conceptions, or from suggestions conveyed to their minds from some other source. He not only holds, indeed, the possibility of determining in each particular case the fact of inspiration, but that there existed certain marks which bore the infallible stamp of divine authority—something,

(1) Book i. chap. 19.

as he expresses himself, *extrinsical* to the persuasion itself, which the inspired person possessed, and which proved to him that he was not the subject of hallucination. But wherein does he place these γνώρισματα, or undoubted marks of divine inspiration? Not, certainly, in any thing that removes the pressure of the difficulty as principally existing in reference to those disclosures of which we here treat—such, namely, as were made in a direct manner, and altogether apart from the concurrence of the causes brought into action in other modes of revelation, which from their nature, or from the circumstances which attended them, necessarily produced more powerful impressions upon the mind. He appeals to the miraculous signs given to Moses, Gideon, and others, and considers these as constituting sufficient evidence that their persuasion of a divine commission was not illusory. And undoubtedly these signs, whenever furnished, were most satisfactory. But who does not perceive that this hypothesis by no means meets the entire exigency of the case: unless we admit, either that such tokens accompanied every new instance of direct revelation, or that, once given, they afforded such perfect assurance to the messenger, that whatever light was afterwards introduced into his mind, he was indubitably to regard as the result of a supernatural communication? The former position will not be maintained, as it would go to multiply miraculous agency far beyond any notices of it furnished in the Scriptures, or which they give us any reason to believe was ever exerted. With respect to the latter, it cannot be denied that there is one point of view in which it may be considered as

bearing upon the question. Moses, the prophets, and apostles, were all the subjects of an extraordinary commission, which was to continue through life, and in the execution of which they were to be employed as instruments in revealing the will of God to mankind. The miracles which attended their entrance upon this ministry afforded them incontestable evidence of a divine call, and their conscious recollection of these miracles, taken in connexion with numerous others, which they afterwards performed, must have powerfully corroborated their impressions in regard to the truths, which, as inspired men, they continually taught. But still, since their future life was not a state of pure, uninterrupted inspiration, but furnished scope for the intermediate exercise of their own thoughts and feelings in reference to manifold subjects in no way connected with their office, it follows that occasions must frequently have recurred on which their minds would experience a transition from the one state to the other, and consequently require fresh evidence of the recommencement of direct supernatural influence.

Without in any degree opening the door to the delusions of enthusiasm, or presuming, in the absence of positive data, to determine the question, may we not suppose that there was a vividness and distinctness attaching to the ideas directly communicated to inspired men, which greatly exceeded any thing of the kind experienced by them in the ordinary exercise of their rational powers, or even as the result of the saving operations of the Holy Spirit upon their minds; and that they possessed an assured consciousness, that

the knowledge which they thus acquired was not the result of any degree of activity on their part, but came to them quite unexpectedly, and was, as it were, forced upon their attention? add to which, an intuitive perception of the intrinsic excellence and moral congruity of the new matters of consciousness, which rendered it perfectly impossible for them to suppose, for a moment, that they could have proceeded from any other than a Divine source.

If we admit the fact of the original legitimation of the prophets and apostles by the intervention of miraculous agency, visibly and uncontrollably displayed, and the equally obvious fact of the subsequent impartation of supernatural light through the medium of sensible or physical causes, specially and miraculously called into operation for the purpose, by means of which a perfect assurance must have rested upon the minds of those holy men that they were actually employed by the Deity, as the instruments of communicating to mankind the knowledge of truths otherwise undiscoverable by them,—it seems no more than reasonable to demand for the internal concurring criteria, which have just been specified, a degree of certitude, which cannot be claimed by any uninspired persons, however powerful the impressions of which they are the subjects, or how much soever they may consider the matters which they imagine are communicated to them to be excellent and divine. The consciousness for which we contend, is not that of private individuals, or of such as have no external evidence to which to appeal in proof of their inspiration; but that of men who were otherwise warranted, on the most

rational and indubitable grounds, to conclude that they were the ambassadors of heaven. For such men to repose confidence in the inspirations of which they were sensible, was no enthusiasm: it was in perfect harmony with every principle which entered into the high character with which they were invested.

Of the different modes of revelation which were *mediate*, consisting in the intervention of certain agencies or external physical phenomena, that which we consider to possess the first claim on our attention is the production of AUDIBLE AND ARTICULATE SOUNDS, by which Jehovah made oracular announcements of his will to men. To this species of inspiration are to be referred all those passages of Scripture which plainly and unequivocally ascribe to the Deity the use of speech in connexion with personal manifestations, and also those which contain similar ascriptions, without any account of such manifestations, but which are not susceptible, on any other principle, of a rational interpretation.

It will be conceded by all who are familiar with the Hebrew language, that the verbs אָמַר, *to say*, and דָּבַר, *to speak*, are used by the sacred writers with great latitude of acceptation:—sometimes importing nothing more than the mere thoughts, purposes, designs, or resolutions of those of whom they are predicated; sometimes the exertion of will requisite to carry such purposes or resolutions into effect; and sometimes expressing, in a general sense, a divine communication, without specifying the particular way in which it was made. They are in fact employed, more or less, in

reference to all the diversified modes of revelation, to indicate the reality of the intelligent communications thus graciously vouchsafed. But, on the other hand, it is equally undeniable that there are numerous passages in which these terms are used with respect to God, the connexion and other circumstances of which compel us to understand them in the strictly physical sense, of his communicating, by articulate vocal sounds, the knowledge of his will to man. In such instances, the terms are not to be regarded as merely anthropomorphic—representing the Deity, in accommodation to the weakness of our intellect, as possessed of human organs, and merely intimating what he would have done had he been possessed of such organs; but they are to be taken in their plain and literal signification, as denoting the actual production of articulate words.

How these sounds were produced it is not for us to determine; but of this we may be certain, that there was nothing in the matter “too hard” for God. For “who hath made man’s mouth? or who maketh the dumb, or deaf, or the seeing, or the blind? Have not I the Lord?” “He that planted the ear, shall he not hear? he that formed the eye, shall he not see?” Exod. iv. 11; Ps. xciv. 9. And may we not further ask, in amplification, and with a direct bearing upon the point before us: He that planted the ear, shall he not possess the power of so disposing of the sonorous susceptibility of the surrounding medium as to make it the instrument of communicating to that organ those articulate sounds which he may will it to receive? Shall the creature be able, at pleasure, to cause those vibrations, which, being brought into con-



tact with the sense of hearing, produce in the mind ideas or impressions corresponding to those existing in the mind of the agent by whom the impulse is given; and shall the same power be denied to the Creator, by whose infinite skill the whole framework of nature was constructed, and at whose absolute disposal it must ever, in all its parts, be considered to lie? For the production of such sounds, he cannot require the organs of speech. As it was consistent with the pure spirituality of his being originally to give existence to matter, and then to mould it into the wondrously diversified forms which it assumed; and as he continuously operates upon it by the conserving influence of his providence, directly and universally exerted; there cannot be the least incongruity in his having occasionally done that himself immediately, for the attainment of certain great and important ends, which is ordinarily effected through the instrumentality of organs adapted and appointed for this purpose.

On consulting the record we find, that the oracular communications in question were sometimes made *without any accompanying personal phenomena*. Thus we are informed, (Num. vii. 89; viii. 1,) that when Moses entered the tabernacle of the congregation to speak with the Lord, he *heard the voice speaking to him* from above the propitiatory which was over the ark of testimony, from between the two cherubim: it spake to him,—yea, Jehovah spake to Moses, saying, &c. The Lord on this occasion fulfilled the promise which he had made, when he gave special instructions respecting the formation of the adytum, or holy of holies: “There I will meet with thee, and I will com-

mune with thee from above the propitiatory." (Exod. xxv. 22.) And it was owing to the oracular responses which were given from this sacred place, that, on the construction of the temple, it obtained the name of אֹרָקֵי, "The Oracle." (1 Kings vi. 16; viii. 6; 2 Chron. iv. 20.) From the particular way in which it is mentioned by this name in these passages, there appears to be no ground for the opinion of Hales<sup>1</sup> and others, that this mode of revelation absolutely ceased after the erection of Solomon's temple. The very fact of its being then first mentioned under the name of אֹרָקֵי, *oracle*, implies, that supernatural responses still continued to be given; though in consequence of the institution of the prophetic order, which had recently taken place, they were, in all probability, only employed on extraordinary emergencies, such as the death or absence of any of these accredited messengers of God—on which occasions it was found necessary to consult his will in this particular way. It must be observed, however, that it was only to Moses, and, after his death, to the High Priest for the time being, that the peculiar honour was conceded of receiving these oracular communications. And even with respect to the latter, it is uncertain whether they were ever imparted to him on his being permitted, on the great day of atonement, to enter the holy of holies. When he did receive them it was outside the vail, which separated the outer or first division of the temple from the most sacred place; so that there was not that immediate intercourse in the way of communication between the Deity and him which Moses enjoyed, and

(1) Analysis of Sacred Chronology, vol. ii. p. 240, 2d Edit.

which is emphatically expressed by פֶּה אֶל פֶּה, “mouth to mouth.” (Num. xii. 8.) This distinguished privilege was peculiar to the Jewish legislator.

In the history of Nebuchadnezzar we meet with another instance illustrative of this mode of revelation. It is stated by the sacred penman, that, while the proud boast of that monarch was yet in his mouth, “*there fell* A VOICE *from heaven*, saying, O king Nebuchadnezzar, to thee it is spoken; The kingdom is departed from thee,” &c. (Dan iv. 31.) It was not a simple impression wrought upon his mind, but an audible voice, miraculously produced, the component intelligible words of which he distinctly heard and understood.

In the New Testament we meet with similar examples. At the baptism of our Lord there was a VOICE from heaven, saying, “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” According to Rosenmüller, Kuinoel, and some other foreign interpreters, indeed, all that is meant by the voice here specified is a clap of thunder, which they suppose to have then taken place; and which, being so well timed, intimated that Jesus was the Messiah! But, not to insist on the absurdity of construing thunder into an announcement of the gracious pleasure of Jehovah—that phenomenon being uniformly considered as calculated to convey to the human bosom the impression of terror, rather than inspire it with an assurance of the Divine good will—such an interpretation is altogether at variance with the *usus loquendi* of the New Testament, and indeed of the Scriptures generally, in which the formula here used is never employed, except in reference to an

actual verbal declaration. Schleusner, under the word *φωνή*, quotes a number of passages in support of this hypothesis; but, as is frequently the case with that lexicographer, there is not one of them to the point. With respect to Gen. iii. 8, to which he refers, there can be no doubt that by "the voice of the Lord God walking in the midst of the garden," we are to understand the reverberation of thunder, which was then heard for the first time, and formed an awful prelude to the judicial summons which the guilty pair were about to receive. We the rather select this alleged proof, because the passage is generally appealed to as furnishing an instance of the very kind of revelation we are now considering; while by some it is interpreted of a personal appearance of the Logos—whereas it must be obvious to all who compare it with other passages of the Old Testament in which the phrase, "the voice of God," or "of the Lord," occurs, without any specification of words uttered, it is uniformly employed to denote the noise or sound of thunder. See 2 Sam. xxii. 14; Job xxxvii. 4, 5; Ps. xxix. *freq.* xli. 6.

I may just add, as a concluding remark on the neological construction put upon the words of the evangelist, that it is rejected as untenable by Fritsche, one of the most recent commentators on the passage, though his views generally are of a highly pseudo-rational character.

The same announcement which was made at our Lord's baptism was repeated in precisely the same audible manner on the mount of Transfiguration: "While he yet spake, behold a bright cloud overshadowed them; and behold a VOICE out of the cloud,

“ which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him.” (Matt. xvii. 5.) The terms in which the phenomenon is here described are not, indeed, identical with those employed on the former occasion; but the difference is not such as to warrant the insinuation of Paulus,<sup>1</sup> that the voice was not strictly and properly divine. Though the cloud which overshadowed our Lord and his disciples may only have rested on the mountain, and may not have been of that description of clouds which appear high above the horizon, yet as it must be supposed to have covered the face of the heavens, it is obvious the voice which made the communication is to be understood as coming from heaven, just as if no cloud whatever had intervened. But we are not left to the uncertainty of conjecture. All who admit the divine authority of the first chapter of the Second Epistle of Peter, will, at once, bow to the decision there furnished by an inspired witness, who expressly informs us that the VOICE came “from *heaven*—from *the excellent glory*,”—language than which none could have been adopted more definitely or strikingly to characterise the divine source of the oracle.

At a still more advanced period of our Lord’s public ministry, this supernatural mode of announcing the Supreme will was again employed. In the anguish of his soul, arising from the pressure of that imputed guilt which he had undertaken to expiate, and publicly avowing his sense of such anguish, the illustrious sufferer was at a loss how to give vent to his feelings;

(1) *Exegetisches Handbuch über die drei ersten Evangelien*. 11<sup>ter</sup> Theil. p. 456.

but, just as he was on the point of supplicating deliverance, he checked himself, nobly resolving to submit to the utmost inflictions, in order that the object of his mission might be accomplished. "Now is my soul troubled: and what shall I say? Father! save me from this hour? It was for this very purpose I came to this hour. Father! glorify thy name!"<sup>1</sup> No sooner was the pathetic appeal followed by the equally disinterested petition, than "there came A VOICE from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again." That, in this case, as in the preceding instances, plain intelligible words were uttered, the express specification of the terms clearly shows. At the same time, it is no less evident from the narrative, that though the voice was heard by the surrounding multitude, their perception of it generally was not distinct: some, like our modern commentators, being of opinion that it thundered, while others said, "an angel spake to him." The circumstance, however, that a portion of the auditors, who appear to have heard it more distinctly, though not sufficiently so to recognise the Divine Person from whom it proceeded, maintained that it was a real articulate communication made through the intervention of an angel, corroborates the position, which is otherwise clearly borne out by the very face of the narrative, that the sound was

(1) "If the common punctuation and interpretation be here adopted, we must suppose that, through perturbation, our Lord first utters and then retracts a prayer. That, however, is both objectionable and unnecessary: for many of the best ancient and modern commentators and editors place a mark of interrogation after ταύτης, thus making two interrogations as follows: What shall I say? [shall I say] Father, deliver me from this hour? But for this cause came I, for this hour, *i. e.* to meet this hour." Bloomfield's Greek N. T. 2d. Edit.



not natural thunder, but that of words audibly produced by an immediate exertion of the power of God. We are, indeed, conducted to the same conclusion by our Lord's declaration—"This voice came not because of me, but for your sakes:" a declaration which undeniably implies that the phenomenon was not the result of the ordinary operation of physical causes, but a supernatural testimony expressly furnished in order to lead the hearers attentively to contemplate the wondrous personage who stood in the midst of them, and impartially to weigh the claims of his divine mission.

Another class of instances in which this mode of revelation was employed, comprehends those in which *an actual personal appearance* accompanied the enunciation of the words that were spoken. In such instances, those by whom the communications were made presented themselves to the view of the persons to whom they were imparted, in a visible and palpable manner. The form in which they thus appeared was human; and there is reason to believe that, in most cases, when first exhibited, it was marked by nothing of an extraordinary character, but possessed in appearance the simple properties of the human body, so that those to whose view it was presented could have regarded it in no other light than that of actual humanity. It was only by the accompanying circumstances, or by those developments of a higher or supernatural order with which they were favoured, they arrived at the assurance, that the being by whom it had been assumed was not in reality a member of the human family, but belonged to a superior order of existences. This view

of the subject is fully borne out by the declaration of Paul, Heb. xiii. 2, that "some have entertained *angels UNAWARES*,"—in which, in all probability, he refers to the cases of Abraham and Lot, recorded in the eighteenth and nineteenth chapters of Genesis, which will presently come under our consideration.

It must have struck all who have attentively perused the sacred volume, that, in the accounts which it furnishes of supernatural personal appearances, there is a marked distinction betwixt those of angels generally, or angels strictly and properly so called, and those of One who, by way of peerless pre-eminence, is styled מַלְאָכִי, THE ANGEL OF JEHOVAH, and to whom names, attributes, and works exclusively divine are unequivocally ascribed. In proof, it is merely necessary to refer to the histories of Abraham, Hagar, Jacob, Moses, and Manoah.

Different hypotheses have been framed with a view to explain this extraordinary historical fact. By some it has been maintained, that nothing more is meant by the expression, than merely a natural phenomenon, or some visible symbol, which was accorded, in order to satisfy men of the presence and approbation of Jehovah.<sup>1</sup> Others<sup>2</sup> have advanced the opinion, that wherever the Angel of the Lord is spoken of, a created angel is meant, through whose agency the transactions described were effected; while a third class,<sup>3</sup> sensible of the difficulty presented by the fact, that to this

(1) Herder, Hebr. Poesie, II. 47.

(2) Augustine, Jerome, Gregory the Great, Abenezra, Grotius, Le Clerc, Episcopus, Dr. S. Clarke, Gesenius, and Baumgarten Crusius.

(3) Priestley, Belsham, Sack, Pustkuchen, De Wette, Ewald, Köster. See Hengstenberg's Christologie, vol. i. p. 226.

angel an ascription of properties is made which clearly imply Divinity, endeavour to substantiate the hypothesis, that all such instances are to be regarded as real theophanies, or visible manifestations of Deity, irrespective of personal distinction. To each of these theories insuperable objections have been produced, more or less drawn from the historical circumstances of the different texts in which the phenomenon in question occurs. The only view of the subject which recommends itself as least clogged with difficulty, is that according to which the Angel of Jehovah was the Logos, or Divine Person of the Messiah, with respect to whose previous manifestations to mankind, as distinguished from his actually incarnate manifestation in the fulness of time, the prophet Micah asserts, that "his goings forth were of old, from everlasting."<sup>1</sup>

That the Son of God, in his capacity of Mediator, was invested with a peculiar agency under the Old Testament, and that, in the execution of this agency, he frequently appeared and conversed with men, is an opinion which was not only held by most of the Fathers, but has obtained the suffrages of the most enlightened Biblical expositors of modern times. Their arguments in support of it are principally drawn from the statements of the ancient Jewish Scriptures respecting the character and functions of the Angel of Jehovah, whom these Scriptures also plainly teach to be Jehovah; especially the celebrated prophecy in Malachi, which serves most satisfactorily to unlock all the other passages in which the doctrine is taught, inasmuch as it unquestionably identifies מְלֹאֲךְ הַקֹּדֶשׁ, "the

(1) See Note G.

Angel of the Covenant," with מַלְאָכִי, THE SOVEREIGN LORD, or the Messiah whom the Jews expected, as one in person and operations. These arguments are corroborated by certain parallel statements, made in the writings of the New Testament, which expressly assert the agency of Christ under the former dispensation. Thus Paul informs us, that the ROCK, or powerful God, who was present with the Israelites, and supplied all their wants in the wilderness, was Christ, and that he was the Divine Person whom they tempted at Meribah. (1 Cor. x. 4, 9.) And in his Epistle to the Hebrews, the same apostle declares, that it was His voice which shook the earth on occasion of the transactions at Sinai. (Heb. xii. 26.) Add to which, the very pointed and decisive language of our Lord, when speaking to the Jews, respecting the Father—"Ye have neither heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape," by which he appears clearly to teach, not merely that no such privilege had ever been enjoyed by any of the Jews whom he was addressing, or by any of their brethren then living, but that such personal manifestation and communication on the part of the Father had never, at any former period, been vouchsafed to their nation. And what he thus denies in regard to the Jews is elsewhere denied in terms equally strong of the whole human family: "No man hath seen God at any time." He is absolutely THE INVISIBLE, whom "no man hath seen, or can see." (John v. 37; i. 18; 1 Tim. vi. 16.) Of this truth, the ancient Israelites possessed so powerful a conviction,—a conviction produced by the extraordinary splendours of the Shechinah, and strengthened

by an express declaration of Jehovah himself to that effect, (Exod. xxxiii. 20,)—that any thing approximating to a vision of the Divine Being, or that could at all be construed into such a vision, was totally incompatible with the continuance of moral existence. Judges xiii. 22.

It follows, that whenever mention is made of the personal appearance of Jehovah, or of the Angel of Jehovah, "in whom was his name,"—in other words, who possessed the sum-total of his attributes,—we are to understand not any manifestation of the Divine essence, but the hypostatic development of the Logos by the temporary assumption of a sensible human form, anticipative of his future real incarnation. In his character of Mediator he acted from the beginning. By him was the universe created, and on him were devolved its continual conservation and government. (Col. i. 16, 17; Heb. i. 2, 3.) Whatever was done on the part of the Deity in time was done through him. Such is plainly the doctrine of the sacred writers of the New Testament; and whatever may seem to militate against it is to be accounted for on the principle of the essential union subsisting between the Logos and the two other persons of the Godhead, in consequence of which certain acts may be ascribed to the Deity absolutely considered, which nevertheless were performed by one of the Divine subsistents in particular.

Though we would not derive any positive proofs of the opinion just propounded respecting the Logos as the anciently manifested God from uninspired Jewish sources, yet, considering how the Talmudic, Cabbalistic, and even earlier writers, found themselves puzzled



in their attempts to grapple with the difficulties of the case, the circumstance cannot but be regarded as in some degree corroborative of the proofs deduced from Scripture, when it is found that occasionally, in their discussions of the subject, they are forced to give expression to sentiments which coincide with the Christian views of the Messiah, but which are totally at variance with the common Jewish notion of his being a mere man. It is exceedingly probable that the ancient Greek translator of Isaiah, in rendering the words, (ch. ix. 5,) אֵל גִּבּוֹר מְסִפֵּה, μεγάλης βουλῆς ἄγγελος, "the angel," or messenger, "of the great counsel," was influenced by some ideas which floated in his mind respecting the Person who had appeared to the ancients, combined with the expectations, which, at that time, began to be more strongly entertained, of the promised Messiah as the Angel of the Covenant. In regard to the מִמְרָא, MEMRA, of the Targums, it is incontrovertible that the author of that which goes by the name of Jonathan, appears studiously to have introduced the term into such passages as speak of the Lord's appearing or revealing himself. According to him, it was the *Word of the Lord* who appeared to Abraham; who went before the people in the wilderness; who conversed with Moses on Mount Sinai; spoke to Job out of the whirlwind; and was seen by Isaiah on the throne of his glory. The same usage frequently occurs in the more ancient and more valuable Targum of Onkelos, as well as in that of Jerusalem; and seems perfectly unaccountable on any other principle than the prevalence of an opinion among the Jews, that, in all such instances, there was the medi-



ation of some mysterious manifestive power, of whom divine characteristics are predicable, but who, on these occasions, exhibited certain peculiar aspects by which he was distinguished from the Invisible Jehovah, on whose behalf he mediated, and of whom he was the visible representative.<sup>1</sup>

This opinion is more fully developed in the Rabbinical writings, in which we meet with much respecting one whom the authors call METATOR (מֵטָטוֹר), or METATRON (מֵטָטְרוֹן), a term of uncertain derivation, but in which is most likely to be traced the Latin *Mediator*. Though some of the rabbins confound this exalted being with the Shechinah, or visible symbol of the Divine presence, yet others are careful to distinguish him—ascribing to him personal qualities, representing him as the Nuntius (שְׁלִיחַ) of Jehovah, and yet as uncreated; not of the number of ordinary or created angels; free from sin; the beginning of the creation of God, by whom the world was produced; in whose image man was made; the author of the law; the teacher of Moses; him by whom the sins of men were, in future time, to be expiated, and who had the power to forgive them. They further designate him—The Angel, the Prince of the face, the Prince of the law, of wisdom, of strength, of majesty, of the temple, (comp. Mal. iii. 1,) of kings and rulers, of angels; Prince of the high and exalted, and the many and

(1) See on the subject of the MEMRA J. J. Langii Dissert. Acad. de Targumim, seu versionum ac paraphrasium V. T. Chaldaicarum, Usu Insigni Anti-Judaico in doctrina de Persona Christi: speciatim de voce מֵטָטְרוֹן, seu λόγος, a Chaldæis de Messia usurpata. s. d. Dr. Laurence's Dissertation on the Logos, pp. 13, 14. Dr. Pye Smith's Scripture Testimony, vol. i. p. 552, 2d edit. J. J. Gurney's Biblical Notes and Dissertations, p. 123.

noble princes that are in heaven and upon earth. The whole is summed up in the most significant figurative epithet, עמוד האמציה, *THE COLUMN OF MEDIATION*.<sup>1</sup> Now, what specially deserves our notice is the fact, that the Rabbins expressly identify this *Metatron* with the Supreme Angel, whose manifestations are described in the Old Testament, and who is there represented as the Divine conductor of the Hebrew people.<sup>2</sup> They differ, indeed, in the modes in which they express themselves upon the subject; but this is nothing more than might naturally be expected, since they shut their eyes against the light of the New Testament, and chose to wander in the dreary mazes of Jewish unbelief, rather than follow Him who is “the Light of the world,” “the brightness of the Father’s glory, and the express image of his person.” They distinctly recognised in “the Angel of Jehovah” features of character which they found it impossible to reconcile with their notions respecting ordinary or created angels; but to form a correct idea of his true and proper nature was utterly out of their power.

To return from this digression. The Son of God, who, in his pre-existent state, appeared anciently in human form to men, and announced to them the Divine

(1) Buxtorf in voc. כַּמְטָרוֹן, col. 1191, 1192. Danzius in Meuschenii N. T. Illustr. p. 721, &c. Eisenmenger’s *Entdecktes Judenthum*, vol. ii. p. 394. Edzardi Tract. *Berachoth*, pp. 226—239. Sommeri *Theologia Soharica*, p. 36. Glæsneri *Theol. Sohar*, p. 37. Rosenroth’s *Kabbala denudata*, tom. i. p. 528. Hengstenberg’s *Christologie*, vol. i. pp. 239—246; or *Bib. Repos.* for 1833, pp. 672—678.

(2) Rabbi Alshech on Gen. xviii. 2. Rabbi Moses ben Hoshke, as quoted by Danzius, *ut sup.*

will, has likewise, since his glorification, manifested himself corporeally, and held converse with his followers. Of this a signal instance occurs in the history of the conversion of Paul, recorded in the ninth chapter of the Acts. Attempts, it is true, have been made to set aside the miraculous character of the transactions there described, and, as usual, to resolve the whole into a storm of thunder and lightning, and the supposed effects of such natural phenomena on the vivid imagination and aroused conscience of the apostle; but a more complete tissue of gratuitous assumptions was never thrown round any hypothesis than that exhibited in those commentaries in which the anti-miraculous view is advanced and defended.<sup>1</sup> To suppose that when the apostle solemnly avers, both in his apology before the Jews, and in that before King Agrippa; and when Luke repeats the statements in a plain, historical narrative, not only that he heard a voice from heaven, but that this voice was immediately addressed to him; that the communication consisted of certain intelligible words, which he specifies; that these words were in the Hebrew language; that he conversed with the person from whom the voice proceeded; and when he afterwards, in his epistles, declares that he had actually seen him;<sup>2</sup>—to suppose that by all this he means nothing more than that he was overtaken by a thunder-storm, and merely *imagined* these things, is so totally at variance with sound principles of interpretation, and so perfectly irreconcilable with the known sobriety

(1) Kuinoel on Acts ix. furnishes abundant specimens of the neological hypothesis.

(2) Comp. Acts ix. with chap. xxii. and xxvi.

and judgment of the apostle, (not to say absolutely incompatible with the inspiration under the influence of which he spoke,) that it seems next to incredible how any persons, not led away by the love of novelty, or determined *per fas et nefas* to procure support to some favourite theory, should, for a moment, succumb to such an opinion. If Paul had been a hot-brained enthusiast, and there had been no attendant circumstances to control the account which he gives of his individual experience, the possibility of a mental illusion might be admitted; but taking into account the high and unbending claims of his personal character; the facts that the voice was heard by his attendants as well as by himself; and that both Ananias and Barnabas expressly declare that he had seen the Lord Jesus; the frequent appeals which, in subsequent life, he makes to the event; and especially the radical moral change which that event was made the means of effecting; we are warranted, without hesitation, to affirm, that it is impossible either psychologically or historically, with the least degree of consistency, to interpret the language on any other principle than that of its obvious literal meaning.

Some, however, who have ably defended the miraculous character of the circumstances in question, are disposed to think, that after all it is not necessary to adopt any *corporeal* appearance of the Lord Jesus on the occasion. But not to insist on the declarations made by Ananias and Barnabas, just referred to, it seems clear from the statements of the apostle himself, that such actually was the case. Asserting the validity of his apostleship, and his equality of rights with the

other apostles, he asks the Corinthians,—“Have I not *seen* Jesus Christ our Lord?” (1 Cor. ix. 1.) And, after enumerating the witnesses who had seen our Lord after his resurrection, he adds,—“And last of all he *was seen* by me also, as of one born out of due time.” (Chap. xv. 8.) The grand point which it is his object in this part of his epistle to establish, is the fact of Christ’s resurrection. To effect this, he adduces several instances of actual bodily appearance, which were successively afforded to the disciples and other believers after that event, than which, it is manifest, no evidence could be more satisfactory. But the addition of his own evidence, so far from corroborating that of the other witnesses, would rather have weakened it, if his vision of Christ had not been of the same description with theirs. If he had not seen the real body which was raised from the dead, but only a semblance of it, or if the vision was nothing more than an image of it impressed upon his imagination, he could not, with any propriety, have borne testimony to his resurrection, and consequently must have been disqualified from being an apostle.

It is only necessary to add, that, though the body of our Lord, as presented to the view of Paul, retained and exhibited the indubitable features of humanity, yet, as it no longer existed in the state of humiliation in which he appeared while on earth, but in the perfect and glorified condition in which he now exists in heaven, there is reason to conclude that the excessive brightness of the splendour, which so powerfully affected the apostle’s organs of vision as temporarily to deprive him of their use, consisted of the rays of

Christ's glory, which resembled the dazzling effulgence of the Shechinah, or the visible symbol of the Divine presence among the ancient Hebrews.

We now proceed to examine the import of those statements which are made in Scripture respecting the visible intervention or personal appearances of *angels strictly so called*, for the purpose of revealing the will of God to his church.

The existence of an order of spirits superior to those with which mankind are endowed, is a doctrine of pure revelation. Probable arguments in its favour have been deduced from the gradations in which all beings exist, that come within the scope of our observation, and from the universally diffused belief in intermediate intelligences between the gods and men which has existed in all ages of the world; but apart from the disclosures of holy writ, it is supported by no positive or satisfactory proof. From that source, however, the most decisive evidence is abundantly supplied; and notwithstanding all the efforts of modern Sadduceeism, put forth in the violence of interpretation, the suspicions of criticism, the contributions of oriental and popular modes of thought, and the much-boasted emancipating influence of a superior philosophy, to banish the doctrine from the domain of Biblical theology, it still continues to retain a firm hold, not only on the popular belief, but also on the minds of those who have received an enlightened and liberal education, and whose only aim is definitely to ascertain, and cheerfully to submit to, the dictates of divine truth. The attempts that have been made to reduce the angels



to mere phantoms of the human imagination, to the simple elements of nature, or to unusual physical phenomena, have signally failed; and all such attempts must fail, so long as the contents of Scripture shall be honestly judged of by tested and correct principles of hermeneutics.

The names מַלְאָכִים, and ἄγγελοι, by which these superior spirits are designated, are indicative not of their nature but of their office.<sup>1</sup> They are the *messengers* or servants of Jehovah, whose agency he employs for the revelation and execution of his will. They are represented as ministering unto him by thousands of thousands;<sup>2</sup> standing before him to receive his high behests;<sup>3</sup> flying with the utmost alacrity to perform his pleasure;<sup>4</sup> excelling in strength for the purpose of carrying into effect his wise and holy designs;<sup>5</sup> and, specially, as λειτουργικά πνεύματα, “*ministering spirits*, sent forth to minister for those who shall be heirs of salvation.”<sup>6</sup> Effects which God might have produced in a direct or immediate manner, without the intervention of secondary causes, he has been pleased, for the greater display of his infinite wisdom and goodness, to devolve upon the operation of their agency. Of the mode in which this agency is generally exercised we are totally ignorant—it being conducted invisibly, imperceptibly, and upon principles belonging to a

(1) מַלְאָכִים is derived from מִלַּךְ, an obsolete Hebrew root, which is preserved in the Ethiopic and Arabic, and signifies to send, to delegate, send or go as a messenger, render or perform any service. See Gesen. & Win. in Simon.—“Ἀγγελος λέγεται, διὰ τὸ ἀγγέλλειν τοῖς ἀνθρώποις, ὅσαπερ βούλεται αὐτοῖς ἀγγεῖλαι ὁ τῶν ὅλων ποιητής.—Justin Martyr in Dial. cum Tryph.

(2) Dan. vii. 10.

(3) Ibid.

(4) ix. 21.

(5) Ps. ciii. 20.

(6) Heb. i. 14.

higher sphere of action than that with which we are conversant. Nor can any reasonably be surprised at our ignorance on this head, who reflect on the deficiencies of our knowledge with respect to the manner in which even human spirits act on each other, or the very limited acquaintance which we possess with the nature and operations of our own intellectual powers. We receive the fact on the authority of Him who cannot deceive us; and leave the mode to be discovered, if it shall please him to reveal it, in that world where we shall enjoy immediate converse with these celestial messengers, and where, there is reason to anticipate, the history of their wondrous and greatly-diversified ministrations will furnish themes of exalted and ineffable delight.

Of the several remarkable aspects of the agency of angels furnished in the sacred volume, that presented by the accounts therein contained of their personal appearance is most calculated to strike and interest the mind. Other instances in which their ministry was employed exhibit the wonderful effects of their power, but these effects were brought about in an invisible manner. And even when they revealed the will of God in visions or dreams, presenting themselves to view on such occasions as divine messengers, this appearance did not consist in any actual contact into which they were personally brought with the sense of vision, but solely in a scenic representation, which they impressed upon the imagination of the persons to whom the revelation was made. But in the cases which we have here in view, real visible objects were presented to the organ of sight. They appear to

have usually assumed for the time a material body, in which they held converse as man with man. Of this we have examples in the xviii<sup>th</sup> and xix<sup>th</sup> chapters of the book of Genesis. At the commencement of the former of these two chapters the sacred historian informs us in general terms, that JEHOVAH appeared unto Abraham "in the plains of Mamre." He then enters into an enumeration of particulars descriptive of this Divine manifestation, from which it appears that it consisted in the presentation to the view of the patriarch of three persons in human form, whom he immediately saluted, and towards whom he proceeded to perform the customary rites of oriental hospitality. That, at this time, he conceived his guests to be more than human does not appear; that it should ever have been imagined that all three were Divine persons, seems scarcely credible; yet some injudicious advocates of the doctrine of the Trinity have actually advanced the absurd hypothesis, and thus given occasion to the Jews to turn into ridicule a truth otherwise abundantly supported by Scripture proofs of the most unexceptionable character. Yet, that one of the three was a Divine person is a fact, which even the Jews themselves have been compelled to admit, on the ground of the extraordinary reverence shown to him by Abraham; his promising to perform a miracle in restoring pristine vigour to Sarah; his being expressly called Jehovah, ver. 13, 17, 20, 22; and his having prayer and supplication addressed to him on the part of the patriarch, ver. 23—32. So powerfully have they felt the force of these reasons, that, in pointing the word which is translated "Lord" in the third

verse, they have not only given it a long vowel, pronouncing it אֲדֹנָי, *Adonái*, which is equivalent, as it regards the exclusiveness of its application, to יְהוָה, *JEHOVAH*, and thus distinguished it from אֲדֹנִי, *Adoní*, which only answers to our “Sir,” and אֲדֹנָיִם, “my lords,” but have inserted in the margin the term קֹדֶשׁ, “sacred,” to intimate that the word, as here employed, is not to be read or understood as a common term, but as a Divine name, descriptive of the sovereign rule of Jehovah. That this construction of the passage is very ancient, appears from the manner in which it is rendered by the translator in the version of the LXX. and by the Chaldee paraphrast. The reading of the former is κύριε, not κύριε μου; that of the latter יְהוָה, which is the abbreviated form of יְהוָה, *JEHOVAH*. Even Dr. Priestley admits that there was a real human appearance of Jehovah on the occasion. “There cannot,” he says, “be a doubt but that what is here called an appearance of Jehovah was in the form of man. For one of the three (who all appeared in that form) and for whom Abraham even made an entertainment of which they actually partook, addressed him in that character.”<sup>1</sup> And on the 9th verse he remarks, “That the speaker in this verse is he who assumed the character of the Supreme Being is particularly evident from verse 13.” It would seem, nevertheless, that whatever there may have been of the appearance of superiority in the person to whom the patriarch specially addressed himself, he did not at first recognise in him any strictly divine attribute; and therefore this rendering, however

(1) Note on Gen. xviii. 1.

ancient, is not to be defended or followed; but must give place to that of the Venetian Greek (δέσποτ' ἐμὲ), our own, and other modern versions, in which the language is that which may be employed in reference to any superior, or merely as a courteous form of address.

The opinion, which has very generally obtained, that there was, on this occasion, a personal appearance of the Logos, accompanied by two created angels, seems to be the only one which harmonizes all the circumstances of the narrative. It was He who assumed the language and received the homage which belonged to Jehovah alone; before whom Abraham still continued to stand, after the other messengers had departed; who responded to his pleadings in behalf of the devoted cities; and who also disappeared at the close of this wonderful scene.

The angels, in common with their Lord, whom they accompanied, partook of the patriarchal hospitality, and then proceeded to execute the commission with which they had been entrusted. In affirming that they actually ate the food which was placed before them, we simply assert what is expressly declared by the sacred penman, וַיֵּאָכְלוּ, "and they DID EAT." We are aware that the supposed absurdity of spirits consuming material food has led to the interpretation that their eating was in appearance only, not in reality. It is an interpretation of no modern date. It is found in Josephus,<sup>1</sup> in the Targum of Jonathan, in the Talmud,<sup>2</sup> and more recently in the Commentary of Solomon Jarchi, and is countenanced by a statement

(1) Antiq. lib. i. cap. ii. 2.

(2) Baba Metzia, cap. vii.

made in the fabulous book of Tobit.<sup>1</sup> It has also been adopted by Theodoret, in his Questions on Genesis, and by other Christian commentators, both of ancient and modern times; and Thomas Aquinas attempts to prove,<sup>2</sup> that no other view can be taken of it. But that it is perfectly gratuitous must be evident, when we reflect, that the bodies in which the angels appeared were not spectral illusions, or mere phantasmata, but proper organic bodies, which actually stood, walked, and gave utterance to articulate sounds, just as those do, to which our own spirits are united; and with equal consistency might it be maintained, that they really performed none of these actions, as to contend that their consumption of the food presented to them was a mere semblance of the act, and not the act itself. Whether the food thus consumed was absolutely required for the sustenance of the bodies in which they appeared, or whether it was actually converted into animal substance, it would be presumption either to affirm or deny; but that they did not literally partake of the repast which had been provided for them can only be asserted on principles of interpretation which would disturb the security of all simple historical narrative.

From the intimate coherence of the matter which forms the subject of these two chapters, it has, with the greatest probability, been inferred, that the two angels, *שְׁנֵי הַמַּלְאָכִים*, who are described as coming to Lot in Sodom, are the same who had just left Abraham. And that they appeared to him in the same human form is equally obvious from the circumstances of the

(1) Cap. xii. 10.

(2) Quest. 41 Art. 111.



story. They not only presented themselves to his bodily organs of vision, and to those of the inhabitants of Sodom, but conversed with him in an audible manner; and it is said of them in reference to the feast which he prepared for them, as it was in reference to the former instance, that "they did eat."

The principal design of their visit was to announce to Lot and his family the purpose of God to destroy the abandoned city which he had unwisely selected for the place of his residence, and to urge their immediate escape from the impending catastrophe. In making this announcement, they blended tones of earnestness with accents of mercy; and did not quit the object of their guardian solicitude till they had conducted him safely to Zoar.

Another remarkable instance of angelic appearance occurs in the history of David. We are informed, 1 Chron. xxi. that, in visitation of his presumptuous conduct in causing an enrolment to be made of all Israel, with a view, it would seem, partly to gratify a vain-glorious disposition, and partly to create a permanent military service, an angel was despatched to inflict pestilence on the land, in consequence of which not fewer than seventy thousand of the people perished. The same celestial messenger was commissioned to destroy the metropolis, and had actually begun to execute his commission, when Jehovah graciously arrested him in his progress. In order more deeply to impress the mind of the monarch with a sense of the impending judgment which he had been charged to inflict, the angel took his station by the threshing-floor of Ornan the Jebusite, where he was distinctly seen

by David, rising majestically in form, between the earth and the heaven, with a drawn sword in his hand, stretched out over Jerusalem. In the mean time he communicated to Gad a divine message, which that prophet was instructed to deliver to the king—it not being deemed proper, under the peculiar aggravation of the monarch's guilt, that he should be honoured with any direct revelation on the part of the angel.

It has been thought by some, that as the Jews were accustomed to regard certain diseases, and even death itself, as under the control and direction of individual angels, and to speak of the pestilence as “the angel of death,” the whole account of the appearance contained in this chapter and the parallel one, 2 Sam. xxiv., may be resolved into a figurative or poetical description of that awful malady. To such a construction of the narrative, however, insuperable objections present themselves. In the first place, the occurrence of a bold, poetical figure, in plain, unimpassioned prose, would be altogether out of place. Every other part of the style of this historical portion of sacred truth is of the most simple description; and the idea of any thing else being here meant by the phrase “the angel of the Lord” than a real superhuman intelligent agent, the idea uniformly attaching to it elsewhere in Scripture, would never occur to any one who was not anxious to derive support from it in favour of some preconceived opinion. Secondly, it cannot be proved that the Jewish notion respecting the angels presiding over certain diseases, obtained till after the captivity; consequently, any application of such a notion with a view to elucidate an historical document of so early

a date as that of Samuel is totally irrelevant. Like many other ideas which we find among the later Jews, there is every reason to believe it was adopted by them during the exile, when they were brought into close contact with the superstitions of their conquerors. Thirdly, nothing would be more ridiculous or absurd than to refer the different particulars, which are so definitely and specifically described, to any other than a real personal appearance. The standing between the earth and the heaven; the drawn sword in the hand of the angel; his being seen both by David and by Ornan, with his four sons, who were so struck with fear that they immediately hid themselves; and his giving an order to David to erect an altar to Jehovah—are circumstances of so marked a character, that every attempt to explain them away, or diminish their force, merits unqualified reprobation.

Of the different angelic appearances recorded in the New Testament, none are more remarkable, or exhibited with a greater degree of prominence, than those of Gabriel, of which we have an account in the first chapter of the Gospel by Luke. It is only a short time since the enemies of our Lord's miraculous conception called in question the authenticity of the initial portion of this Gospel; and Mr. Belsham had at once the effrontery and imprudence to print it with *Italics*, as if it had actually been spurious, in his "Improved Version" of the New Testament. So completely, however, has its genuineness been demonstrated, that even Paulus, the coryphæus of the Neologians, has shown that the sceptical view cannot be sustained on any grounds either of an internal or of

an historical nature ; but, true to the wretched principles of pseudo-hermeneutics with which his mind has long been imbued, he sets himself to reduce every thing of a supernatural character to the level of what he designates “ spiritual intuition ;” and, after advert- ing to what he conceives to have been the external occasion, proceeds psychologically to explain the nar- rative. According to him, the scene in which Zecha- riah was concerned was partly an optical and partly a mental illusion. Under the influence of feelings of the most profound reverence, the priest of the course of Abiah approached the altar for the first time in the performance of his duty, and, as the fumes of incense ascended to heaven, the rays of light from the seven lamps of the candlestick in the holy place were inter- cepted, and formed all kinds of shapes, and, among others, one of a most singular appearance at the right side of the altar, which he took to be a celestial genius. All that followed was the mere working of his imagi- nation, aided by the fond wishes of his heart, to which he had given utterance in prayer. The address of the angel, his own interrogatories, and the reply that was made to them, were all purely ideal ! But the psycho- logical interpreter does not stop here. By the magic touch of his hermeneutical wand, the dumbness of Zechariah is resolved into simple silence—a silence which, for the space of nine months, he was afraid to break, lest it might frustrate the hopes which had been excited in his mind !<sup>1</sup> It may truly be affirmed, that how deficient soever the Scriptures may appear in real miracles to the eye of thorough-paced Ration-

(1) Exeget. Handbuch.

alists, there is no lack of the wonderful and incredible in the expositions which they have furnished of such passages as contain them.

But what student of the Divine oracles is there who has made himself acquainted with the various circumstances connected with the early revelations, and interpreted the language of the historical documents in which they are embodied, according to just principles of exegesis, who does not discover in the account which Luke furnishes of the communications between the angel and Zechariah, features of supernatural interposition perfectly parallel in character with those which took place under preceding economies? The description here given is in the same simple, unadorned, narrative style, which we find in the writings of Moses, and other books of the Old Testament containing statements respecting the appearance of angelic beings to the servants of Jehovah. There is evidently, in this respect, an almost imperceptible transition from the ancient state of things to that which introduced the Christian dispensation. The ministering spirits who had formerly been commissioned to make known the will of God, and especially to announce important future events, are now employed to prepare the way for the grand revelation, with a prospective view to which all the others had been imparted. Of these one is selected to enjoy the distinguished honour of predicting the immediate birth of the Saviour, and of his harbinger and relative, John. On presenting himself at first to Zechariah, he is spoken of indefinitely as "an angel of the Lord;" and it is clear the officiating priest could only have regarded him as one of



those celestial messengers of whom he had often read in the holy Scriptures ; but, in the course of his interview with him, he ascertained from himself that he was the identical angel who had announced to Daniel the period of the seventy weeks, and the advent and death of Messiah. With the exception of Michael, who is designated “one of the chief princes,” (Dan. x. 13,) he is the only angel specified by name in the inspired volume. From the circumstance of his assuming the human form, and conversing familiarly as the messenger of God in that form, he was called גַּבְרִיֵּל, GABRIEL, *i.e.* “the man of God;” and it is in reference to this that Daniel describes him as קָדָשׁ גַּבְרִיֵּל, THE MAN GABRIEL, (ch. ix. 21.) He speaks of himself as standing in the presence of God, by which is intimated the favour in which he was with the Most High, and his readiness to receive and execute Divine commands. On the present occasion he was not only commissioned to promise Zechariah a son, who should prepare the world for the appearance of the long-expected Messiah, but empowered miraculously to deprive him for a time of the use of speech, as a mark of the displeasure of God on account of his unbelief.

Six months afterwards the same exalted messenger was despatched to Nazareth, for the specific purpose of communicating to the Virgin Mary the news that she was to be the mother of our Lord. His appearance filled her with perturbation of mind, which he immediately proceeded to remove ; and after delivering his message, and assuring her of the certainty of the promise which it contained receiving its fulfilment, he withdrew into the invisible world.



On comparing the instances of the actual appearance of angels, of which those we have just investigated are merely a specimen, the conviction is irresistibly forced upon the mind, that, upon such occasions, they assumed real, though not permanent, material bodies. Functions, proper to real bodies, are unequivocally ascribed to them. They became the subjects of real, not of imaginary vision. They spoke in audible language. They came into real and palpable contact with those to whom they were sent. They were recognised as real material objects, endowed with intelligence, not only by one, but by more persons at the same time. In short, the evidence in support of the conclusion at which we have arrived, is so full and satisfactory, that it is difficult to perceive how it can be resisted.

That angels are not, in their own nature, pure spirits, but are invested with tenuous, subtil bodies, is an opinion which was early imported from the Platonic school into the Christian Church. Most of the Fathers held that pure incorporeity is a property exclusively distinctive of the Divine nature, and that all other spirits have a corporeal vestment—thin, indeed, ethereal, and totally different from whatever belongs to the grossness of our material bodies, yet as completely distinguishing them from the absolutely incorporeal God, as those with which mankind are invested remove them to a distance from these celestial intelligences. So extensively did this tenet at length prevail, that at the seventh Œcumenical, or second Nicene council, held at Nicæa in the year 787, it was established as a point of orthodox belief. It was

afterwards, however, called in question by many of the schoolmen, who adopted the opinion of Lombard, that the angels have no *corpus proprium*, i.e. no body of their own, but have it in their power to assume one, in order to become visible to men.<sup>1</sup> Several of the modern continental divines, as Reinhard, Döderlein, Ammon, and Bretschneider,<sup>2</sup> have revived the ancient dogma; and it has been thought by some that the admission of such thin, subtil bodies of fire or air, would facilitate our conceptions of the operations of angels within the sphere of the material world. But an impartial investigation of the various phenomena connected with their actual appearances as described in Scripture, shows that even if we were to adopt this opinion, it would not advance us a single step in our knowledge of the subject, nor enable us to form, in any degree, a more satisfactory judgment respecting the mode in which those superior beings placed themselves in material contact with humanity. The production of those bodies or vehicles through which they held intercourse with men, was, so far as our acquaintance with material bodies goes, strictly miraculous; and it is difficult to conceive how pure spirituality on the one hand, or an ethereal corporeity of angelic nature on the other, in any way affects this undeniable fact of the case.

(1) Knapp's Christian Theology, vol. i. pp. 430, 431.

(2) Bretschneider's Handbuch der Dogmatik, vol. i. p. 597.

## LECTURE III.

DIFFERENT MODES OF INSPIRATION—(*continued.*)

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HEB. I. 1, 2.

*“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, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds.”*

IN the last Lecture a view was taken of the employment of angelic agency in revealing the will of God to his church; and several instances were adduced with a view to elucidate the manner in which it was rendered available for that end. There remains to be considered a transaction of a mixed character in the history of divine revelations, in which the angels are represented as having taken part—the giving of the law from Mount Sinai. In asserting that this transaction, so memorable in the history of the Hebrews, exhibits a mixed character, we do it on the ground that it consisted partly in the exercise of the mediatorial agency of the Logos, and partly in that of angels, and combined, in the entireness of the scene, a remark-

able personal manifestation with the employment of invisible power, and the widely-extended production of audible and intelligible language.

The presence of an immense number of angels on that occasion can only be called in question by those who make light of the testimony of Scripture, or do not believe in the existence of such beings, or in their ministry in reference to human affairs. In direct allusion to this event, the author of Ps. lxviii. 17, sings in the following strains : “ The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels : the Lord is “ among them, as in Sinai, in the holy place.” In the poem composed by Moses, and delivered to the children of Israel immediately before his death, he thus commences in language of uncommon grandeur and beauty :

“ Jehovah came from Sinai,  
He arose from Seir,  
He shone from Mount Paran :  
He came with holy myriads :  
In his right hand he had a fiery law,  
(Yet he loved the people.)  
All thy holy ones were with thee,  
They bowed themselves at thy feet ;—  
They each conveyed thy oracles.  
A law Moses ordained for us,  
An inheritance for the congregation of Jacob.  
In Jeshurun he was king,  
When the chiefs of the people assembled,  
When the tribes of Israel were one.”<sup>1</sup>

Making every allowance for the poetic costume in which the facts here described are arrayed, it is unquestionable that it is the object of the Jewish legislator to celebrate the majestic descent of Jehovah on

(1) Deut. xxxiii. 2—5. See Note H.

Sinai, the effulgence of which was reflected through the whole of the Arabian desert; that, in this descent, he was accompanied by myriads of holy angels; that the object to be attained by it was the solemn announcement of his law; that these superior spirits prostrated themselves in his presence, and received the divine commandments to promulgate among the people; that though the law was delivered under circumstances that were highly calculated to inspire the Israelites with alarm, it was nevertheless to be regarded as a signal proof of the love of Jehovah towards them; and, finally, that the law thus given became their peculiar and exclusive property.

That it was the Logos, or the Son of God, in his pre-existent manifestive character, whose glory was displayed on this occasion, is placed beyond dispute by the declaration of Stephen, that it was "THE ANGEL, τοῦ Ἀγγέλου, who spake to Moses in the Mount Sinai,"—namely, the same angel whom he had just mentioned as having appeared to him in the bush; whom he designates the angel of the Lord, and who proclaimed himself to be the God of his fathers—the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. (Acts vii. 30—38.)<sup>1</sup> Nor is the evidence of this fact less convincing which is furnished by Paul in his Epistle to the Hebrews. Warning that people against apostasy, he reminds them of the punishment which

(1) Most of the Fathers recognised the divine Logos in the angel who appeared at the bush; but none of them has expressed himself more explicitly than Theodoret: "Ὅλον τὸ χωρίον, he says, δείκνυσσι Θεὸν ὄντα τὸν ὁφθέντα· κέκληκε δὲ αὐτὸν καὶ ἄγγελον, ἵνα γινῶμεν, ὡς ὁ ὁφθεὶς οὐκ ἔστιν ὁ Θεὸς καὶ πατήρ· τίνος γὰρ ἄγγελος ὁ πατήρ; ἀλλ' ὁ μονογενὴς υἱὸς ὁ μεγάλῃς βουλῇς ἄγγελος.—Quest. V. in Exod.

had been inflicted upon those who refused to obey *Moses*, who was merely of earthly origin; and contrasting with his the superior dignity and authority of *Christ*, he adds, "WHOSE voice then shook the earth"<sup>1</sup>—a statement which is allowed by the best commentators to identify our Saviour with Jehovah, the God of Israel, whose voice convulsed Sinai, and filled the people with terror. In corroboration of this view of the subject may be adduced the circumstance, that soon after the promulgation of the decalogue, when, by special invitation, Moses, with Aaron, Nadab, Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel, ascended the Mount, they were favoured with a vision of the God of Israel. It is common, indeed, to explain the object of this vision so as to make it signify nothing more than a singular display of the Divine glory; but such an interpretation is no less at variance with the usage of the phrase than it is with other parts of the sacred narrative. To see God, in the language of the Pentateuch, signifies either to have a view of his divine essence, which is declared to be impossible for mortals, or to have such a view of him as was afforded when he is said to have appeared to any one, namely, in a certain visible form, more or less glorious according to circumstances. The Israelites saw the glory of the Lord, (Exod. xxiv. 17,) yet it is never affirmed of them that they saw the Lord himself. On the contrary, Moses appeals to their own knowledge of the fact, that no similitude was presented to their view,

(1) Heb. xii. 25, 26, "*Whose voice*," i. e. the voice of Christ: so Michaelis, Storr, Cramer, Rosenmüller, Boehme, Kuinoel, and Bloomfield. It is one of the many passages in the New Testament which ascribe to Christ the same things that are ascribed to Jehovah in the Old Testament.—Stuart, *in loc.*



(Deut. iv. 12): "The Lord spake unto you out of the midst of the fire: ye heard the voice of the words, but saw no similitude; only ye heard a voice." It was a privilege, however, which Moses enjoyed, as we are expressly informed, Numbers xii. 8: "And the similitude of the Lord shall he behold." And there is reason to believe, that though his elect companions were not permitted to obtain so full a discovery on the occasion to which reference is here made as that conferred upon him, they nevertheless did behold Him, who, before his actual assumption of human nature, existed "in the form of God," (*μορφῶν Θεοῦ*, the similitude, likeness of God,) "and thought it no robbery to be equal with God," when thus manifesting himself to his ancient people. (Phil. ii. 7.) The language of the whole passage is quite peculiar: "And they saw the God of Israel; and there was under his feet, as it were, a paved work of a sapphire stone, and as it were the body of the heaven in his clearness. And upon the nobles of the children of Israel he laid not his hand: also they saw God, and did eat and drink." (Exod. xxiv. 10, 11.)

Most of those who have admitted the fact of angelic ministration at the giving of the law, confine that ministration to their attendance in regular hosts or bands; while some go further, and maintain that they were employed in producing the awful physical phenomena which accompanied the event. The former class endeavour to find support to their hypothesis by pressing the etymological meaning of the words employed by Stephen and Paul, when describing the transaction. In his address to the Jews, the proto-

martyr states, that their ancestors, whom they resembled in obstinacy, “received the law by the disposition of angels,” εἰς διαταγὰς ἀγγέλων, (Acts vii. 53.) And the Apostle, writing to the Galatians, (ch. iii. 19,) says, that it “was ordained by angels, διαταγείς δι’ ἀγγέλων, in the hand of a mediator.” In the passage in the Acts, the original term rendered “disposition” is derived from that which, in the Epistle, is translated “ordained.” And as both have been taken in a military sense to denote the marshalling or arranging of troops in order of battle, and the divisions or squadrons thus arranged, it has been inferred that the idea intended to be conveyed is that of the regular order or arrangement which obtained among the myriads of angels who were present at the promulgation of the law. Now, though it is conceded that the verb διατάσσω is frequently used in a military sense, yet the substantive διαταγή is never so employed; and as both are applied in common usage to acts of legislation, which is the subject of which the sacred writers are treating, it seems more reasonable to conclude that they used them in their current acceptation, as it respects the act of promulgating laws, than that they only meant to say, that, when the law was given, the angels were present in cohorts or troops, attending upon the Divine Majesty. The one interpretation is tame, and little to the point; the other is appropriate to the occasion. Nor does it seem the most natural construction to be put upon the passages in question, to restrict the meaning to any thing like mere accessory subserviency, as if the angels only increased the external pomp, or at most produced the thunders, lightnings,

and tempest, but took no direct or immediate part in announcing the law itself to the assembled Israelites. It only requires a cursory glance at the parallel instances quoted by the critics to perceive, that the terms here employed express actual agency with respect to the communication of the Divine institutes, and that, if any thing less had been intended, very different phraseology would have been employed.

But what appears to set the question completely at rest is the positive manner in which the apostle speaks respecting it, (Hebrews ii. 2,) where he asserts that the word was spoken by angels, ὁ δι' ἀγγέλων λαληθεὶς λόγος. That it is the Sinaic law he means by "the word," and not any of the other communications made through their instrumentality to the ancients, is evident from the connexion, from what is predicated of those who treated it with contempt, and from a comparison with chap. x. 28, 29, and xii. 25. And it is equally clear, from the identity of the mode in which the law and the gospel are here said to have been announced, that it was a verbal ministration with which the angels were occupied at Sinai—the law which *was spoken* by them being contrasted with the message of "salvation, which at the first began to *be spoken* by the Lord, and was afterwards confirmed by them that heard him," (ver. 3.) It has been objected to this view of the subject, that no mention is made of any articulate words, enunciated by angels, in the history of the transaction contained in the Pentateuch; but that, on the contrary, whatever was spoken is said to have been spoken by God himself. But to this it is sufficient to reply, that the history makes no reference whatever

even to the presence of angels on the occasion; and that we are warranted to believe that they were actually engaged in communicating the law to the people on the very same authority on which we believe that they took any part at all in the transaction—the express testimony of the New Testament.<sup>1</sup> Nor must it be forgotten, that though the passage already quoted from Deuteronomy is not clothed in the simple style of history, but appears in the garb of poetry, it is nevertheless based upon historical facts, and, as we have already shown, unequivocally teaches both the presence of those celestial beings, and the nature of their ministry at the giving of the law. With respect to that part of the objection which asserts to Jehovah the exclusive enunciation of the decalogue, it will not weigh with any who are familiar with the circumstance, that, in the Bible, just as in other books, an individual is frequently said to do that which he really effects through the instrumentality of another, or which they do conjointly.

The fact of the case seems to have been this: God distinctly and audibly delivered his law on the mountain, and each commandment, as it was pronounced, was repeated in loud and thrilling tones by the vast company of angels by whom he was surrounded, just as afterwards, when the news of the Saviour's birth were announced to the shepherds, “there was suddenly

(1) The statements of the New Testament in regard to this subject are quite in accordance with the traditionary interpretation of the Jews. Thus Josephus puts the words into the mouth of Herod, when addressing the Jewish army: τῶν μὲν Ἑλλήνων ἱεροὺς καὶ ἀσύλους εἶναι τοὺς κήρυκας φαμένων, ἡμῶν δὲ τὰ κάλλιστα τῶν δογμάτων, καὶ τὰ ὀσιώτατα τῶν ἐν ταῖς νόμοις δι' ἀγγέλων παρὰ τοῦ Θεοῦ μαθόντων.—Antiqq. lib. xv. v. 3.

“with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host,  
“praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the  
“highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.”

It is not more difficult to conceive of the transmission of the articulate sounds in the one case than it is in the other, though it is impossible for us to form any thing like an adequate conception of the transcendently-powerful effect which must have been produced by the magnitude of sound proceeding from the united myriads, whose service was employed on the solemn occasion. While such a representation of the nature of this great transaction at Sinai cannot, it is presumed, give offence to any candid mind, it has the advantage of harmonizing the otherwise conflicting circumstances which press upon our notice. It is advanced, of course, purely as an hypothesis, as every statement necessarily must be which respects objects, the existence of which, but not the manner of whose existence and operations, is revealed to us.

We conclude what we have to offer, in this place, respecting the ministry of angels in revealing the mind of God, with the following historical remarks. In the patriarchal ages, or the periods which preceded the establishment of the Jewish dispensation, their appearances, both in real bodily forms, and in dreams, were more numerous than afterwards; which may be accounted for by the circumstance, that the Church was at that time without any public interpreters of the Divine will. Each father of a family, or he failing, the eldest son, officiated in holy things on behalf of those with whom he was connected by the ties of domestic relationship. The extraordinary dealings of

God with men possessed more of an individual character, and were consequently more limited in regard to the extent of their immediate operation and influence than they were afterwards. In the time of Moses and Joshua, no instances occur of their actual appearance—Jehovah revealing his will directly to Moses; though, as we have seen, their agency was employed at Sinai. During the period of the Judges, and of Samuel and David, they are again introduced to our notice; after which their visible ministry seems to have been withdrawn till about the time of the Babylonish captivity, and at the commencement of the Christian dispensation, when it reassumes a prominence in the history of Divine revelation. But even then it still retains much of the same character of particularity by which it had originally been marked, having immediate respect to peculiar circumstances in the experience of individuals, rather than a general bearing upon the illumination of the Church of God.

Another mode by which Jehovah signified his will in a supernatural manner was the אֲמִים וְהִמִּים, *Urim and Thummim*. Wherein precisely this mode of revelation consisted, and what is the precise import of the terms by which it is described, are points which it is impossible to determine with any degree of accuracy, owing to the limited nature of the information which the Scriptures furnish respecting them. Strictly speaking, no description whatever is given of the Urim and Thummim; which is the more remarkable, on account of the fulness and minuteness of the description furnished of the ephod and breastplate with



which they were connected. There are only two passages in the Mosaic law in which they are specifically mentioned along with the high priest's dress, but in both they are assumed as something already known. In Exod. xxviii. 29, 30, we read, "And Aaron shall bear the names of the children of Israel in the breastplate of judgment upon his heart, when he goeth in unto the holy place, for a memorial before the Lord continually. And thou shalt put in the breastplate of judgment the Urim and the Thummim; and they shall be upon Aaron's heart when he goeth in before the Lord: and Aaron shall bear the judgment of the children of Israel upon his heart before the Lord continually." And in the account given (Lev. viii. 5—9) of the investiture of Aaron and his sons, it is stated, "And he put the breastplate upon him: also he put in the breastplate the Urim and the Thummim." From the circumstance that they are expressly spoken of as being *put in* the breastplate, it is impossible to adopt the opinion of Prideaux, who, to elude the difficulties which clog the several hypotheses to which he refers, maintains that nothing more is meant by them than "the divine virtue and power, given to the breastplate at its consecration, of obtaining an oracular answer from God, whenever counsel was asked of him by the high priest with it on, in such manner as his word did direct; and that the names of Urim and Thummim were given to them only to denote the clearness and perfection which these oracular answers always carried with them." The language obviously implies that they were material substances, corresponding, in

some way or other, to the pectoral, in which they were inserted. The same fact is completely subversive of the theory of Josephus and the Jews, and generally approved by Braunius, Schröder, Dathe, Bellermann, and many other moderns, that they were merely the precious stones in the breastplate, and that they derived their name from the excessive splendour produced by the rays of light reflected from so many precious gems. In both the passages just quoted, however, they are represented as distinct—as something existing separately, before being placed in the breastplate. No mention, it is true, is made of them in Exodus, where there is a description of the stones; and in Leviticus, where mention is made of the Urim and Thummim, there is no account of the stones; but no legitimate argument can hence be drawn in support of their identity, since the breastplate, so far as the gems are concerned, was evidently complete without the Urim, which are represented as having been super-added after the gems were set. They were, in fact, no part of the breastplate properly so called.<sup>1</sup>

According to the opinion first broached by Christopher a Castro,<sup>2</sup> and borrowed from him by Spencer, who wrote an elaborate dissertation on the subject,<sup>3</sup> the Urim and Thummim were two small golden images, or one such image, in human form, through which God, or an angel commissioned by him, gave

(1) Such is clearly the view taken of the subject by David Kimchi and other rabbins: לא נהבר אצלנו מה הם האורים והתמים כי ידמה לפי—Lib. Rad. in. voc. אור.

(2) De Vaticin. lib. iii. c. 3.

(3) De Legibus Hebræorum, tom. ii. Dissert. vii.

audible responses to the high priest respecting all points of difficulty on which he applied for decision. Both authors are further of opinion that these images were adopted from among the *teraphim*, or superstitious figures, to the worship or consultation of which the ancients were greatly addicted; and that the object of their exclusive appropriation by Moses was to restrain the Hebrews from the private use of them, and teach them to look to Jehovah alone for oracular instruction. The principal passage on which this opinion is founded is Hosea iii. 4, where it is predicted that “the children of Israel shall abide many days without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice, and without an image, and without an ephod, and without *teraphim*,” where, it is maintained, the connexion of the *teraphim* with the ephod clearly shows that they occupied the same place, consequently were identical with the Urim and Thummim. But it by no means appears that such is the true construction of the passage. The prophet is describing a lengthened period during which the posterity of Abraham were to live, not merely in the disuse of the peculiar ordinances enjoined in the law of Moses, but also in a state of total abstinence from the use of idolatrous rites—precisely the state in which they have now lived for more than seventeen centuries. The passage couples four contrary objects by pairs; one of which is legitimate, and the other illegitimate. The sacrifice (זֶבֶחַ) and the ephod (אֶפֶד) were of Divine appointment; the image or pillar (מִצָּבָה) on which libations were poured, and the *teraphim* (תְּרָפִים) or penates, were either expressly prohibited, or regarded as pertaining

to idolatry. The same view of the teraphim is furnished by the connexion in which they occur in the history of Micah, (Judges xvii. 14): "Then answered the five men that went to spy out the country of Laish, and said unto their brethren, Do ye know that there is in these houses an ephod, and teraphim, and a graven image, and a molten image?" It is altogether a gratuitous assumption to assert that the ephod and the teraphim were an imitation of the dress of the Hebrew high priest. The whole appears to have been idolatrous in its character. "His mother took two hundred shekels of silver, and gave them to the founder, who made thereof a graven image and a molten image; and they were in the house of Micah. And the man Micah had an house of gods, and made an ephod and teraphim, and consecrated one of his sons, who became his priest," (ver. 4, 5.) But even on the supposition that there was imitation on the part of Micah, it does not follow, that, because the teraphim are mentioned along with the ephod, they must necessarily have symbolized other teraphim in the sacred breastplate. It is much more natural to suppose that they were designed as a substitute for the true God himself, whose responses, as we shall presently see, were vouchsafed to the high priest, when in full garniture he applied for judgment.

The idea that Jehovah, the very mention of whose name removes him to an immeasurable distance from all idols, should have introduced into one of the most solemn acts of appeal to himself, as the only living and true God, an object or objects, which had, from time immemorial, received the superstitious homage of the

great bulk of mankind, is so totally repugnant to all our conceptions of his character, and all the enactments of his law, that we can only ascribe its adoption to the powerful influence of prejudice in favour of a particular hypothesis. The incorporation of images into any part of the Mosaic institute, in accommodation to the grossness of Hebrew prepossessions, would have been an act of condescension utterly irreconcilable with the integrity of the Divine Being. So far would such an arrangement have been from suppressing idolatry, which Spencer and others state to have been its object, that it must have tended most directly to promote it.<sup>1</sup>

A modification of this opinion is that expressed by Philo,<sup>2</sup> which is still held by many, and asserted by Gesenius in his Lexicons, according to which the Urim and Thummim were two small oracular images personifying *Revelation* and *Truth*, which were placed in the cavity of the breastplate. What has been supposed to yield support to this view is the fact stated by Diodorus Siculus<sup>3</sup> and Ælian,<sup>4</sup> that the Supreme Judge among the Egyptians wore about his neck a golden chain set with precious gems, in which was an image called *Truth*, the Egyptian word for which is

(1) For a complete refutation of Spencer, see Witsii *Ægyptiaca*, and Pococke on Hosea iii. 4.

(2) *De Vita Mosis*, tom. ii. p. 152.

(3) — ἐφόρει δὲ οὗτος (ὁ ἀρχιδικαστῆς) περὶ τὸν τράχηλον ἐκ χρυσῆς ἀλύσεως ἡρτημένον ζώδιον τῶν πολυτελῶν λίθων, ὁ προσηγόρευον ἀλήθειαν.—*Biblioth. Hist. lib. i.*

(4) Δικασταὶ τὸ ἀρχαῖον παρ' Αἰγυπτίοις ἱερεῖ, ἦσαν ἦν δὲ τούτων ἄρχων ὁ πρεσβύτατος, καὶ ἐδίκαζεν ἅπαντας· ἔδει δὲ αὐτὸν εἶναι δικαιοτάτον ἀνθρώπων καὶ ἀφειδέστατον· εἶχε δὲ καὶ ἄγαλμα περὶ τὸν ἀνχένα ἐκ σαπφείρου λίθου, καὶ ἐκαλεῖτο τὸ ἄγαλμα ἀλήθεια.—*Hist. Var. lib. xiv. cap. 34.*

*Themei*, in sound resembling *Thummim*. It so happens that the LXX. have translated תִּמְמִים, *Thummim*, by ἀλήθεια, which has the same signification; and it is by no means impossible that they might have designedly adopted the term, in order to conciliate the favourable regard of the Egyptians. But granting all this, there is nothing to prove the priority of such a custom to the Mosaic institute. The writers in question flourished at too late a period to render their testimony of any value further than as it regards its existence in their time; and, in all probability, the reference made in their works would never have led to an institution of the comparison, if it had not been for the coincidence that the same term is that employed in the Greek version.

Equally unsatisfactory is the theory advanced by Michaelis,<sup>1</sup> and approved by Jahn,<sup>2</sup> that the Urim and Thummim constituted the sacred lot of the Hebrews, and consisted of three stones, on one of which was engraven י, *Yes*; on the second כ, *No*; the third being destitute of any inscription. In order to obtain a direct answer, the question, it is thought, was always put in such a way as to call forth one or other of these words, in case any answer was given.

Nor is there the smallest degree of probability in the hypothesis, which is perhaps the most generally approved of all, that they consisted in the emission of light from such of the letters composing the names of the twelve tribes engraven upon the stones in the

(1) Note on Exod. xxviii. 30, and Commentaries on the Laws of Moses. Art. cciv.

(2) Introd. § 370.



breastplate, as were required in order to form the words of the response. It having been discovered by the Rabbins, most of whom held this opinion, that the Hebrew alphabet as furnished by the names of the tribes was incomplete, they first added the names of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the progenitors of the nation; but finding that the letter Teth was still wanting, they ingeniously hit upon a whole sentence: "All these are the tribes of Israel,"<sup>1</sup> in one of the words of which it is found. That this Talmudical camel, as Spencer justly calls it, should have been swallowed by so many Christian Rabbins, is truly astonishing, and could scarcely be believed were it not for the propensity which exists in the human mind, to avow almost any opinion rather than acknowledge its own ignorance.

In contemplation of the judgment with the impartation of which the Urim and Thummim were connected, there is a singular propriety in the selection of the terms by which this mode of revelation was designated. They seem intended by way of hendiadys, to express the idea of the *clearest* or *most perfect revelation*. The decision was that of Jehovah, who could not deceive, and from whose decision, as the theocratic ruler of the Hebrews, there could be no appeal. The use of this oracle appears to have been confined to matters of importance, such as those which affected the common interest of the nation; on which account it was not consulted by the people generally, nor on ordinary occasions, but was resorted to by the monarch

(1) כל אלה שבטי ישראל.

or persons in authority, in the absence of other means of determining what was the path of duty.

On examining the different passages in which the use of the Urim and Thummim is referred to, there seems to be sufficient ground for the conclusion that, in whatever they may have consisted, the mode in which these intimations of the Divine will were obtained, consisted in an audible voice, which gave to the high priest, in brief but explicit terms, direct answers to the questions proposed. Moses, as the mediator of the old covenant had no successor. With him, as we had occasion formerly to observe, the peculiar privilege of direct and familiar converse with the Deity ceased. The only legitimate medium of approach for divine direction afterwards was the high priest, and it was unlawful even for him to apply on behalf of any person except he were arrayed in his full pontifical dress, and under circumstances of great solemnity and awe. He was to take his station before the veil, which concealed the mercy-seat, where the Divine Presence resided. Thus an instruction was given respecting Joshua: "He shall stand before  
" Eleazar the priest, who shall ask counsel for him  
" after the judgment of Urim before the Lord: at his  
" word they shall go out, and at his word they shall  
" come in, both he, and all the children of Israel." (Num. xxvii. 21.) That Saul had been accustomed to receive responses in this way is manifest from the statement, 1 Sam. xxviii. 6, that on account of his disobedient conduct they were discontinued: "And  
" when Saul inquired of the Lord, the Lord answered  
" him not, neither by dreams, nor by Urim, nor by

“prophets.” In no other passage is the use of this mode of obtaining oracular communications mentioned by name; but in the history of the judges and in that of David, it is described in language more or less indicative of its attendant circumstances. Those who availed themselves of it, are said to have asked the Lord; to have gone up to the house of the Lord; to have asked counsel of the Lord before the ark of the covenant of God; and to have called for the ephod, and then inquired of the Lord. And as the inquiry was made verbally, it seems undeniable that the answer consisted in an audible verbal communication on the part of Jehovah. Hence the children of Israel in the matter of the Gibeonites are blamed for not asking counsel at “the *mouth* of the Lord,” and in almost every instance, the response is introduced by the formula—“the Lord *said*.” To which we may add, that several of these responses are of some length, and comprise particulars which could only have been specified by a direct communication.

How long this mode of divine revelation lasted we are not informed. No mention is made of it after the time of Solomon, except in the books of Ezra and Nehemiah, where notice is taken of a decision of the governor, that those of the family of the priests who could not legally prove their genealogy, and were, as polluted or common men, put from the priesthood, should not eat of the most holy things, till there stood up a priest with *Urim and Thummim*<sup>1</sup>—language which plainly implies that it was not then in existence, though, as some suppose, it is equally expressive of an

(1) Ezra ii. 63. Neh. vii. 65.

expectation that it would be restored. Others, however, are of opinion, that as Joshua, the high priest, already officiated, and might have been employed for consultation, just as Phinehas or Abiathar had formerly been, the reference in these passages is not to the Jewish pontiff, but to the Messiah, of whom he was an illustrious type. Though now excluded from all participation with their brethren in the rights and functions of the sacerdotal office, the time would come when all ceremonial distinctions should be abrogated by the introduction of the clear and perfect dispensation of the gospel, and all the members of the church be on an equality with respect to the enjoyment of her immunities. This interpretation receives some degree of support from the declaration of Moses, recorded Deut. xxxiii. 8 : “ And of Levi he said :

“ Thy Thummim and thy Urim belong to thy Holy One,  
Whom thou temptedst at Massah,  
With whom thou contendedst at the water of Meribah.”

There is here a manifest reference to the honour conferred upon the tribe of Levi, by its having, in the person of the high priest, the exclusive right of approach to God in matters of public concernment. It alone possessed the sacred symbols of Divine adjudication. But though this was the case, these symbols had a higher reference. They more properly belonged, or had respect to HIM, whose presence accompanied the Israelites in the wilderness, and whom, as it is expressly stated, they tempted at Massah. That the person referred to was Aaron cannot be admitted, since it is contrary to the *usus loquendi* of Scripture to employ the verb נִסָּה, here rendered *tempt*, in the

sense of provoking any mere man. Besides, it does not appear that Aaron was specially the object of displeasure on that occasion. The dissatisfaction was principally directed against Moses; yet it is nowhere said that they *tempted* him. This term he exclusively appropriates to the description of their conduct towards Jehovah: "And he called the name of the place "Massah, and Meribah, because of the chiding of the "children of Israel, and because they *tempted* the "Lord, saying, Is the Lord among us or not?" (Exod. xvii. 7.) On consulting the New Testament, however, we learn that it was Christ against whom the children of Israel rebelled in the desert. "Neither," says the apostle, (1 Cor. x. 9,) "let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted him, and were destroyed of serpents."<sup>1</sup> To him, therefore, appertained the Urim and Thummim. He was the true Light, who, coming into the world, enlighteneth every man; the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, by whose complete revelation we are now to abide, and whose decisions will ultimately fix our eternal condition. In this aspect of the subject, we may acquiesce in the conclusion of Calvin: "*Neque etiam scire laboro, qualis fuerit utriusque effigies: res ipsa mihi sufficit.*"<sup>2</sup>

Besides revealing his will in modes which had no

(1) See Note I.

(2) J. B. Carpzov. *christiana de Urim et Thummim Conjectura*. Ugolini Thesaur. xii. Nos. 7, 8, 9, 10. And. Sennerti Dissert. de Urim et Thummim in Thesaur. Theo. Phil. tom. ii. p. 966. Schroeder de Urim et Thum. Stiebriz, Dissert. de Variis de Urim et Thummim Sentent. Witsius, *ut sup.* Braun. de Vestit. Sacerd. Heb. Lightfoot Opera, vol. i. p. 186. Prideaux, Connections, Part I. book iii. Schickard de jure Regio. cap. i. theor. 2. Jennings' Jewish Antiq. book i. chap. 5. Calmet's Dict. Art. Urim.

respect to any peculiarity of circumstances in the condition of those to whom it was communicated, the Most High also employed certain phenomena in their personal history as the basis on which the communications rested, or the medium through which they were made. Among these, DREAMS and VISIONS occupy a prominent place in the sacred history. That such are recognised as modes of divine revelation is evident from the declaration of Jehovah to Aaron and Miriam: "If there be a prophet among you, I the Lord will make myself known unto him in a *vision*, and will speak unto him in a *dream*." (Num. xii. 6.) And that they were actually employed, and held in high estimation, is equally clear from the history of the first Hebrew monarch, of whom it is said: "When Saul inquired of the Lord, the Lord answered him not, neither by *dreams*, nor by Urim, nor by prophets." (1 Sam. xxviii. 6.) The withdrawment of the privilege he thus bitterly laments: "I am sore distressed; for the Philistines make war against me, and God is departed from me, and answereth me no more, neither by prophets, nor by *dreams*." (Ver. 15.) And so well known was the fact of these phenomena having been selected by God for the purpose of revealing his mind, that in the days of Jeremiah it was common for the false prophets to pretend to them. Hence the protestation and appeal of the Lord: "I have heard what the prophets said, that prophesy lies in my name, saying, *I have dreamed, I have dreamed*. How long shall this be in the heart of the prophets, that prophesy lies? yea, they are prophets of the deceit of their own heart; which



“ think to cause my people to forget my name by their  
“ *dreams*, which they tell every man to his neighbour,  
“ as their fathers have forgotten my name for Baal.  
“ 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.” (Jer. xxiii. 25—28.) The same thing  
is obviously implied in the promise of the renewal of  
supernatural communications under the Christian  
economy. “ And it shall come to pass afterward, that  
“ I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh : and your  
“ sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old  
“ men shall *dream dreams*, your young men shall see  
“ *visions*.” (Joel ii. 28.)

In few things were the ancients more unanimous  
than their belief in the importance to be attached to  
*dreams*. Their histories are full of them ; and some  
of their first philosophers specially treat of their  
prognostic character. Nor can this be matter of sur-  
prise when it is considered, that notwithstanding the  
innumerable instances in which dreams are nothing  
but the idlest vagaries of fancy, and involve the most  
whimsical and trifling absurdities, important antici-  
pations have sometimes occurred in them, the verifica-  
tion of which is beyond all reasonable doubt. Between  
dreams and subsequent events, there is occasionally  
a most remarkable coincidence. To persons unaccus-  
tomed to psychological investigations, and to those  
whose views of the connexion between matter and  
mind, and the operation and influence of the one upon  
the other, were only partially enlightened, such extra-  
ordinary coincidences presented themselves in the

aspect of supernatural interpositions ; and every thing of the kind was viewed as indicative of the will of the gods.<sup>1</sup> In proportion, however, to the advance of science, and the augmentation of the number of well-attested matters of experience, light has been thrown on the subject of dreaming ; and though it belongs to a class of phenomena hitherto confessedly only partially developed, and from the invincible mysteriousness of the circumstances under which they happen, never to be fully explained, yet much of the obscurity in which it was involved has been removed. Observations have been collected and compared, and natural causes have been discovered, sufficient to account for effects which, in the absence of such knowledge, must have been ascribed to a higher source. In many instances, dreams are nothing but the resuscitation or revival of ideas, which have formerly occupied the mind. They may not be reïmbodied precisely in the same elemental combinations ; on the contrary, they rather present themselves in all kinds of heterogeneous and incoherent associations ; but still, when distinctly recollected and subjected to a strict and careful analysis, such dreams may be clearly referred to previous circumstances in the history of the individual. Sometimes they are made up of a motley group, the component parts of which are collected from certain transactions in which he was engaged on the preceding day ; at other times they are connected with events which transpired at an earlier and even a remote period of life. The

(1) — καὶ γὰρ τ' ὄναρ ἐκ Διὸς ἔστιν.—*Iliad*, A.1. 63. Jamblich. de *Myster.* sect. iii. c. 3. Cicero de *Divinatione*, lib. i. c. 19. Aristotle and Isocrates, as quoted by Wetstein on *Matt.* i. 20.

immediate link by which they are connected, or the operating cause of the reproduction, may seldom be discoverable ; but when, by the aid of memory, a comparison has been instituted, no doubt is left on the mind respecting the relation in which the one stands to the other.

It has been clearly ascertained that certain states or habits of the bodily constitution, certain organic disturbances, a change of situation or posture, and other external circumstances, which make impressions on the senses, not only exert an active influence on the production of dreams, but stamp a discriminative peculiarity of character on their phenomena. Some of these circumstances impart to them a vividness and distinctness which invest them with almost the reality of waking existence : others produce an obscurity in which the images are but dimly perceived. Sometimes dreams are of the most pleasurable character ; at others, they are characterised by all that is horrific and appalling. How inimitably graphic the description given of the latter class by Eliphaz :

“ To me a matter was secretly conveyed ;  
My ear perceived a whisper of it.  
Amid agitations from visions of the night,  
When deep sleep falleth upon men,  
Fear came upon me and tremor ;  
The multitude of my bones trembled ;  
A spirit passed before me ;  
The hair of my flesh stood on end.  
It stopped ;—but I could not discern its form ;  
A figure was before my eyes.  
There was silence :—then I heard a voice :  
‘ Shall man be just before God ?  
‘ Shall man be pure before his Maker ? ’ ”

Our object in adverting to some of the phenomena

of natural dreams is, to pave the way for the introduction of the observations which we have to offer on such as were supernatural and divine. Those who have treated on the subject appear, for the most part, to have proceeded on the principle, that the dreams mentioned in Scripture had nothing in common with those which are attributable to mere natural causes; and to have been of opinion that, being miraculous, it would derogate from their high and sacred claims to bring them in any way into comparison with manifestations which are purely the result of a morbid state of the brain. It cannot be denied, however, that, physiologically considered, they possess various palpable points of coincidence. Both classes are produced during sleep, when there is a cessation of the usual action of the sentient powers; and, so far as the body is concerned, nothing is in operation except those organic processes which are essential to the existence of animal life. In both, the imagination is the principal faculty of the mind which is in an active state. They likewise agree in the sympathy frequently found to exist between the creations that are called forth, and the character, or external and mental circumstances, of those who are the subjects of them. Those who had supernatural dreams were sometimes incapable of recollecting them when they awoke, just as it often happens in regard to such as are natural. Of these common features the last but one merits particular attention. In the dream which Abraham had, when a deep sleep, and a horror of great darkness, fell upon him,<sup>1</sup> the subject was one which had occupied

(1) Gen. xv.

his thoughts during the day,—the posterity which God had promised him. That of Abimelech had respect to Sarah, whom he had taken to his palace.<sup>1</sup> When Jacob had his dream between Beersheba and Haran,<sup>2</sup> he was exposed to attacks from the banditti in the surrounding regions, and required the particular protection of Heaven. Those of the chief butler and the chief baker of Pharaoh<sup>3</sup> had respect to their usual avocations. In that which Solomon had at Gibeon,<sup>4</sup> there was a palpable agreement between the subject of it and the previous state of his mind. It embodied the thoughts which arose from an anxious solicitude properly to discharge the duties of royalty, to which he had just been raised.

From these and similar instances which occur in Scripture, taken in conjunction with other features, some of which have already been specified, we are warranted to conclude, that when Jehovah employed dreams as media through which to reveal his will or effect his purposes, he laid under contribution the operation of ordinary causes, to the extent in which these causes were available, and only interposed his miraculous agency in the degree in which it was absolutely requisite. He made use of the instrumentality of sleep, the various affections of the physical constitution, the action of the faculty of imagination upon that of memory for the reproduction of previous ideas; and, when the mind was exactly in that state of natural preparation which was necessary for the reception of the supernatural communication, or the superaddition

(1) Gen. xx.

(2) Ibid. xxviii.

(3) Ibid. xl.

(4) 1 Kings iii.

of certain ideas or images, which could not have been produced in an ordinary way, such celestial intervention took place.

The characteristics of the supernatural in the divine dreams recorded in the Bible, are, in most cases, sufficiently obvious. They involve some circumstance or other which it lay entirely beyond the sphere of natural causation to produce. The specification of *four hundred* years as the period during which the posterity of Abraham were to be in circumstances of depression; the number *three* in reference both to the branches and the baskets in the case of Pharaoh's servants; that of *seven* in the dreams of the ears and the kine; and the characters and arrangement of the *symbols* in the dreams of Nebuchadnezzar and Daniel, are points of coincidence which no fragments of thought, however curiously combined, and no power of imagination, simply left to its own influence, could possibly have brought out.

Supernatural dreams are of two kinds: the *Monitory*, and the *Symbolical*. In *Monitory* dreams, distinct communications were made directly to the intellect of those who were the subjects of them, which carried with them such definite and unequivocal marks of a divine origin, that they were impelled instantly, and without the least degree of hesitation, to comply with them. Of this description were those of Abimelech and Joseph, already referred to; that of Laban, (Gen. xxxi. 24;) and that of the Magi recorded in Matt. ii. 12. In such instances, it does not appear that the imagination was employed further than was necessary to present those ideas which were connected with the



subjects of Divine communication, and which formed, as it were, the substratum of the information imparted from above. These intimations of the Divine will had respect to some immediate point of duty, and were accordingly couched in language the most simple, direct, and intelligible. *Symbolical* dreams, on the contrary, were emblematical and mysterious; being composed of images taken, for the most part, from natural objects, but also at times of those which were monstrous and unnatural in their character. Of the former description of symbols are the sheaves in the first of Joseph's dreams, and the sun, moon, and eleven stars, in the second; and the vine, with its branches, buds, blossoms, and grapes, the cup and the wine, in that of Pharaoh's chief butler. Of the latter, the colossal image of Nebuchadnezzar is an appropriate specimen.

Certain symbolical dreams were of easy interpretation. In the case of Jacob's ladder, as nothing further was intended to be conveyed by it than an assurance of the connexion constantly maintained between heaven and earth by the operations of Divine Providence carried on through the instrumentality of angels,<sup>1</sup> the

(1) It has been commonly supposed that Jacob's ladder was a type of Christ; but the supposition is not based on any solid scriptural foundation. The only passage which exhibits a shadow of reference to the Old Testament narrative is John i. 51, in which it is said, that the angels were to be seen, ascending and descending, *ἐπὶ, upon* the Son of Man. What consistent interpretation can be put upon the phraseology as rendered in our common version, it is impossible to divine. Every attempt which has been made to throw light upon it has only rendered the darkness more visible. The preposition in such connexion must be taken in the sense of *with, in the presence of*, like the Heb. *בְּ*, and is accordingly rendered *אִתּוֹ, apud*, in the Syriac version. The whole phrase is expressive of *attendance upon*, with a view to

patriarch required no interpretation of it. In like manner, the significance of those which Joseph related to his brethren was so palpable, that they at once understood how they were intended to apply. It was very different, however, with respect to the dream of the Babylonian monarch. How familiar soever he might be with the different parts of the image, or the additional symbols of the stone and the mountain, the whole assemblage was such, that it was as far beyond the reach of human penetration to discover its real meaning as it was to declare wherein the dream itself consisted. The successive order and appropriate minute characteristics of the four great monarchies of Babylon, Persia, Greece, and Rome; and the supernatural origin and all-subduing energies of the kingdom of Christ, were points which He alone could disclose who "revealeth the deep and secret things, who knoweth what is in darkness, and with whom dwelleth the light." (Dan. ii. 22.)

That the high and holy God should have revealed himself in this manner to idolaters, who paid a superstitious regard to dreams and employed the science of oneirocritics in subserviency to the interests of heathen worship, may present a difficulty to some minds; but when it is recollected that all the instances recorded in Scripture had an important bearing on the con-

service. See, for the fulfilment of our Lord's declaration, Luke xxii. 43; Acts i. 10, 11. Comp. Ps. lxviii. 17, 18; 2 Thess. i. 7. Thus Clarius: h. e. "in ejus ministerium, ut in Resurrectione ejus, et Ascensione factum est;" and still better Zegerus: "Hoc adimpletum est dum apparentibus Angelis visus est subvehi in cœlum: sed et manifestius adimplebitur cum venerit Filius hominis in majestate sua, et omnes Angeli ejus cum eo, judicaturum vivos et mortuos."

dition of the church, which was destined to witness for the exclusive claims of Jehovah, and against every species of superstition; and that they had the most direct tendency to convince the pagan world of the futility of human skill in its pretended attempts to penetrate into the arcana of the Divine purposes, as well as to draw its attention to the servants of the true God, and the revelations of his will, which were in their possession—they cannot but appear highly congruous, and worthy of sacred veneration.

Intimately connected with the subject of dreams is that of prophetic *visions*, which we find distinctly recognised in many parts of Scripture. So close, in fact, is this connexion, that the one species of revelation occasionally merges in the other. Thus, in the case of Abraham, recorded Gen. xv., the Divine communications first took place in a vision; but afterwards, at sun-set, they continued to be made, when a deep sleep, and a horror of great darkness, fell upon him. It is on the same principle we are to account for the circumstance, that both were combined in that described by Daniel, (vii. 1, 2,) where we read: “Daniel had a dream, and visions of his head upon his bed: then he wrote the dream, and told the sum of the matters.” From the term תְּרִמָּה, employed to designate the kind of sleep with which such night visions were connected, it is evident it was more profound than usual, amounting, there is reason to believe, to an almost entire suspension of the functions proper to the nervous system. The same word is used to describe the state into which Adam was thrown preparatory to the creation of Eve, during which his

senses were so completely locked up that he had no susceptibility of pain from the operation. The LXX. have translated it, as occurring on such occasions, by *ἔκστασις*, or trance, in which the mind is, as it were, removed from the body, or, at least, placed beyond the consciousness of any immediate influence of the corporeal world. In such a state it is so completely absorbed with the images impressed upon the imagination, that it not only regards them as realities, but conducts itself towards them as actual matters of fact.

Between divine dreams and divine visions generally there appears to exist this radical distinction, that the former necessarily took place in a state of somnolency, and were connected with brainular affections; while the latter, though sometimes physiologically originating in such a condition, did not exclude the healthy exercise of the mental faculties, and were granted in the waking state. In dreams there was a resuscitation of former ideas, more or less influenced by the condition of the cerebral organ: in visions, the mind was raised entirely above the influence of material impressions and former reminiscences, and had all its energies concentrated in the intense contemplation of the supernatural objects directly presented to its view. It is manifestly to such a state the Apostle Paul refers, when he writes, (2 Cor. xii. 1—4,) “It is not expedient for me doubtless to glory. I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord. I knew a man in Christ about fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) such an one caught

“ up to the third heaven. And I knew such a man,  
 “ (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot  
 “ tell: God knoweth;) how that he was caught up into  
 “ paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is  
 “ not lawful for a man to utter.” He was so impressed  
 with the ineffably sublime subjects which engrossed  
 his mind, that he had no consciousness whatever of  
 external or material objects, and was not able after-  
 wards to determine whether his soul was for the time  
 actually disembodied, or whether his body accompanied  
 it to the exalted regions of the invisible world. The  
 condition of the persons thus inspired is likewise  
 strikingly described by Balaam, Num. xxiv. 3, 4, and  
 15, 16:—

“ The oracle of Balaam the son of Beor;  
 The oracle of the man whose eye is unclosed;  
 The oracle of him who heareth the words of God;  
 Who seeth the visions of the Almighty;  
 Entranced, with his eyes unveiled.”

Most of the terms employed to designate this species  
 of inspiration are otherwise appropriated to the sense  
 of sight, and because the prophets were so frequently  
 favoured with it, they obtained the name of רְאִים, רוֹאִים,  
*seers*. The principle on which the metaphorical use  
 rests is, the clear and satisfactory nature of the evidence  
 which is acquired through the medium of bodily vision.  
 What the presentation of material objects is to the  
 eye, that the supernatural presentation of invisible  
 objects is to the mind. Both are impressive, distinct,  
 and convincing. In the visions of the prophets, the  
 objects brought before them were invested with a  
 peculiarity of character which rendered it impossible  
 to mistake their origin. Rapt in this state of holy



entrancement, the favoured seers had opened to their mental view every region of the visible and invisible worlds; and so powerfully were they impressed at times by the overwhelming glory, or the amazing and painful aspect of their visions, that they required to be strengthened and animated, in order to be capacitated to sustain further disclosures. Thus Daniel informs us, (chap. x. 15—19,) “And when he had spoken such words unto me, I set my face toward the ground, and I became dumb. And, behold, one like the similitude of the sons of men touched my lips: then I opened my mouth, and spake, and said unto him that stood before me, O my lord, by the vision my sorrows are turned upon me, and I have retained no strength. For how can the servant of this my lord talk with this my lord? for as for me, straightway there remained no strength in me, neither is there breath left in me. Then there came again and touched me one like the appearance of a man, and he strengthened me, and said, O man greatly beloved, fear not: peace be unto thee; be strong, yea, be strong. And when he had spoken unto me, I was strengthened, and said, Let my lord speak; for thou hast strengthened me.”

It was maintained, as we have already seen, by Philo, and the position has recently been again advanced by Henstenburg, in his *Christology of the Old Testament*,<sup>1</sup> that, during the continuance of their visions, a complete cessation of intelligent consciousness took place in the experience of the prophets; and their individual agency being suppressed by the powerful

(1) See Note K.



operation of the Divine Spirit, they were reduced to a state of entire passiveness, and the absence of all reflection. But the theory is not only totally irreconcilable with all that we conceive to be essential to the existence of the soul, but is destitute of support from the phenomena detailed by the prophets themselves. It is evidently to be traced to the influence of Platonic ideas, and a misinterpretation of those passages of Scripture in which the overwhelming effects of prophetic vision upon the body are described with great force of expression. On perusing these descriptions, as well as the prophecies generally, it is abundantly obvious that the chosen recipients of Divine revelations were conscious of the objects which passed in succession before their view; that they apprehended them, and discriminated them from each other; that they reasoned and proposed questions concerning them; and that, though they could not penetrate the obscurity, which, from various causes, must have enveloped many parts of the scenery, they nevertheless had intelligent conceptions of the general bearing and design of the whole. On no point are the Fathers more unanimous than in the opinion that the minds of the prophets were in a sound and active state during the continuance of their visions—an opinion which many of them were called upon distinctly to avow, in opposition at once to the ravings of the Montanists, and the wild impulses of the pagan priests.<sup>1</sup>

(1) The following extract from Basil may be regarded as embodying the views of the Fathers upon the subject:—*Φασι δὲ τινὲς ἐξεστηκότας αὐτοὺς προφητεῦειν, ἐπικαλυπτομένων τοῦ ἀνθρωπίνου νοῦ παρὰ τοῦ πνεύματος. Τοῦτο δὲ παρὰ τὴν ἐπαγγελίαν ἐστὶ τῆς θείας ἐπιδημίας, ἔκφρονα ποιεῖν τὸν θεόληπτον, καὶ ὅτε πλήρης γέγονε τῶν θείων διδαγμάτων, τότε καὶ τῆς οἰκείας*

From the very nature of prophetic visions, it is evident that the images presented in them were not real objects, but merely symbols or hieroglyphics, the ascertained antitypes of which constitute the true meaning. Predominating as they did in the history of that inspiration which the holy men of God enjoyed, these images have necessarily invested their writings with a large portion of emblematical instruction. Indeed, so deep were the impressions which they produced upon their minds, that the language of those parts of their predictions, which are, strictly speaking, free from scenic representations, are exuberantly charged with terms and combinations of the same figurative import. Of all the sacred writers, none received more revelations of this description than Ezekiel, Daniel, Zechariah, and John, in whose prophecies symbolical imagery of the most magnificent and comprehensive, and, at the same time, most appropriate, description abounds. All nature was laid under contribution to furnish types of invisible realities. The heavens, the earth, and the waters—the sun, moon, and stars—mountains, islands, forests, trees, deserts, rivers, fountains—winds, fire, thunder, lightning, hail, smoke, earthquakes, inundations—cities,

ἐξίστασθαι διανοίας, καὶ ἄλλους μὲν ὠφελοῦντα δι' ἑαυτοῦ, αὐτὸν δὲ τῆς ἐκ τῶν ἰδίων λόγων ἀπολείπεσθαι ὠφελείας. "Ὅλως δὲ τίνα λόγον ἀκόλουθον ἔχει, ἐκ τοῦ τῆς σοφίας πνεύματος μεμνηότι παραπλήσιον γίνεσθαι καὶ ἐκ τοῦ τῆς γνώσεως πνεύματος τὸ παρακαλουθητικὸν ἀποβάλλειν. Ἄλλ' οὔτε τὸ φῶς τυφλότητα ἐμποιεῖ, ἀλλὰ τὴν ἐκ φύσεως ἐννάρχουσαν ὁρατικὴν δύναμιν διεγείρει· οὔτε τὸ πνεῦμα σκότῳσιν ἐμποιεῖ ταῖς ψυχαῖς, ἀλλὰ πρὸς τὴν τῶν νοητῶν θεωρίαν τὸν ἀπὸ τῶν τῆς ἁμαρτίας κηλίδων καθαρεύοντα νοῦν διανίστησιν. Πονηρὰν μὲν οὖν δύναμιν συγχυτικὴν εἶναι διανοίας, ἐπιβουλεύουσιν τῇ ἀνθρωπίνῃ φύσει, οὐκ ἀπίθανον· ΘΕΙΟΥ ΔΕ ΠΝΕΥΜΑΤΟΣ ΠΑΡΟΥΣΙΑΝ ΤΑΥΤΟ ΤΟΥΤΟ ΔΕΓΕΙΝ ΕΝΕΡΓΕΙΝ, ΑΣΕΒΕΣ.—Comment. in Isaiam, vol. i. p. 806. Paris, 1618.

temples, houses, thrones—ships, animals, minerals, and an immense number of other objects form the assemblage of external images which the Holy Spirit rendered available for the communication of prophetic truth, at seasons when those whom he inspired were placed in a state of complete dis severance from all sensible contact with their prototypes. Selections were made from them, adapted to the subjects to be revealed. They were grouped together, arranged and disposed of so as most effectually to correspond with the development of the Divine purposes. In this condition of ecstatic inspiration, (*ἐν ἔκστασει, ἐν πνεύματι γίνεσθαι*, Acts x. 10; Rev. i. 10; iv. 2,) the prophets beheld the Deity himself, (Isa. vi. 1; Dan. vii. 13,) with whom, and with angelic spirits, they conversed, and received direct information respecting many of the things contained in their visions. From the books of Zechariah and Daniel, and from the Apocalypse, it appears that, besides manifestations of the Angel of Jehovah, or the Lord Christ himself, they had the ministry of a created angel specially accorded to them, in order to furnish them with a knowledge of the symbols, and otherwise reveal to them the will of God.

There is one other mode by which God was pleased to make supernatural communications to man, which claims to be noticed before we pass on to the remaining divisions of our subject, and which, though the most seldom in use, has attracted a greater degree of attention, and occasioned a wider diversity of opinion, than some of the higher and more important methods

of revelation. We refer to the REAPPEARANCE OF THE DEAD. From the deceptive and superstitious character of the numerous accounts which are still widely circulated respecting apparitions of spirits, combined with the impressions produced by the illusions of necromancy recorded in ancient history, a strong degree of mental revulsion has arisen in reference to the literal interpretation of the only passage of Scripture which contains an account of any such appearance.<sup>1</sup> It is that which relates to the scene at Endor, to which place Saul had repaired in order to obtain, by means of the nefarious and strictly interdicted art of witchcraft, that information respecting the future which Jehovah had refused any longer to communicate to him. (1 Sam. xxviii.) The enchantress to whom the monarch applied to call up Samuel from the dead, after some importunity, proceeded to comply with his request; but ere she had time to apply her necromantic art, Samuel appeared; she shrieked with terror; detected Saul in the person of her applicant; and, after answering his question respecting the form of the apparition, left the king and the resuscitated prophet to continue the solemn interview. Having

(1) Other instances occur of the reanimation or appearance of the departed, as in the case of the man who was being interred in the sepulchre of Elisha, (2 Kings xiii. 21); in that of Moses and Elijah, who appeared in glory on the mount of Transfiguration, (Luke ix. 30, 31); that of Lazarus, (John xi.); and that of the saints who rose when the rocks were rent and the graves opened at our Lord's death, (Matt. xxvii. 53): but none of them appear to have taken place for the purpose of making definite disclosures or proper revelations of the Divine will to those who witnessed them. That such were to be expected with this view, is strongly negatived by the declaration—"If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though (*ἐάν, even if*, putting the case hypothetically) one rose from the dead." (Luke xvi. 31.)

expostulated with him for disturbing the peaceful sleep of the grave, and heard his unsatisfactory reply, Samuel announced to Saul the confirmation of his rejection by Jehovah, and the certainty of his speedy death and that of his sons, together with the victory of the Philistines over Israel. This is in substance what is contained in the sacred narrative. The principal questions that have been started in reference to it are these: Did Samuel actually appear? Or was it merely a spectral illusion, a juggling trick on the part of the woman, or Satan himself personifying the prophet? If Samuel did appear, was it at the call of the woman? Was it by the exertion of demoniacal influence? or was it by the intervention of Divine power? That a direct negative must be given to each of these queries, except the first and last, appears to be the only conclusion at which we can arrive consistently with the analogy of Scripture doctrine, and the integrity of Scripture interpretation. To attempt a refutation of the hypotheses which have been constructed against the real appearance of the prophet, would occupy more time than can be appropriated to it on the present occasion. Suffice it to say that the whole strain of the narrative is opposed to the idea of any present deception on the part of the woman; that for one to be invested with the ability to work a miracle, who, with her companions in guilt, had been most solemnly execrated on account of their diabolical practices, is contrary to the first principles of the Jewish theocracy, as it is at variance with every correct notion of the holy character of the Universal Governor; that it was not in the power of the female or of any



demon to predict not merely the defeat of the Israelites, but the death both of Saul and his sons on the following day; and that, as Satan could have had no end to serve by a scene of such a character, it would be absurd to ascribe it to his influence.

On the other hand, that Samuel actually appeared, and consequently that his appearance was the result of Divine interposition, is as much a matter of simple historical fact as any recorded in the book of God. Not less than five times is it expressly stated in the narrative, that it was *Samuel*. The woman saw that it was *Samuel*, (ver. 12); "Saul perceived that it was *Samuel*," (ver. 14); "*Samuel* said unto Saul," (ver. 15); "then said *Samuel*," (ver. 18); Saul "was sore afraid because of the words of *Samuel*," (ver. 20). In this view of the case, are we not warranted to ask and to assert with Origen, "Who is the person that here speaks? Is it the Holy Spirit, by whom we believe the Scriptures to have been indited, or is it some other person? It is unquestionably the author of the history who speaks throughout, as the whole tenor of the discourse shows. But the proper author of the discourse is not man, but the Holy Spirit, by whom the penmen were moved to write."<sup>1</sup> The authority on which the statement rests is the same on which we receive other statements of Scripture. The passage is not introduced as containing an account

(1) Τίνος προσωπόν ἐστὶ τὸ λέγον, εἶπεν ἡ γυνή. Ἄρα τὸν πρόσωπον τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος, ἐξ τοῦ πεπίστευται ἀναγεγράφθαι ἡ γραφή, ἢ πρόσωπον ἄλλου τινός; τὸ γὰρ διηγηματικὸν πρόσωπον πανταχοῦ, ὡς ἴσασι καὶ οἱ περὶ παντοδαποὺς γερόμενοι λόγους, ἔστι πρόσωπον τοῦ συγγραφέως· συγγραφεὺς δὲ ἐπὶ τούτων τῶν λόγων πεπίστευται, οὐκ ἄνθρωπος, ἀλλὰ συγγραφεὺς τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον τὸ κινήσαν τοὺς ἀνθρώπους.—Comment. in Libb. Regum.



given by some uninspired person ; but as a continuation of the sacred history, and perfectly tallies with the preceding and following context. The rejection of its obvious import can only be effected at the hazard of unsettling the entire basis of divinely inspired narrative.<sup>1</sup>

Viewing this transaction, then, as real and not imaginary, and as having been effected by the power of God, it is natural to inquire—What were the ends it was designed to answer ? and what was the character of the communications which the prophet was sent to deliver ? To these questions it may be replied, that one of its most obvious designs was to teach the futility of expecting any satisfactory information from the invisible world to compensate for the righteous withdrawal of the appointed means of supernatural instruction. Saul had not complied with the intimations of the Divine will which he had already received, on which account God answered him no more, “neither by prophets, nor by dreams.” His application to Samuel was now equally unsuccessful. He received nothing beyond a repetition of what that prophet had announced to him on a former occasion respecting the alienation of the crown, if we except the prediction of the defeat which was to take place the following day, and the death of himself and his sons, which is rather, however, to be regarded as part of the punishment inflicted upon him, than as a boon resulting from pro-

(1) The contrary hypothesis, that the whole scene was purely of a necromantic character, and that there was no real appearance of Samuel, has been argued at great length, and with much ability, by my esteemed friend the Rev. Walter Scott, in the Ninth Series of the Congregational Lecture, pp. 532—546 ; but while I feel the force of some of his arguments, I cannot persuade myself to merge the repeated positive averments of the Sacred Writer in merely popular and unphilosophical language.—Note to 2d Ed.

phetic revelation. A subordinate end to be answered by the event was, a more complete exposure of gross superstition and imposture. While engaged in the wicked attempt to practise upon the credulity of the infatuated monarch, the female necromancer is suddenly arrested and confounded by the actual appearance of the venerable servant of Jehovah, the manifestation of whose omnipotent power she was compelled to acknowledge.<sup>1</sup> The publication of the whole transaction had a powerful tendency to check the propensity which existed to apply to the dead for a disclosure of the secrets of the unseen world.<sup>2</sup>

The Jews have generally supposed that, on the cessation of ancient prophecy, a new mode of revelation was employed, to which they give the name of *בית קול*,

(1) אֵלִיָּהוּ רָאִיתִי עֲלֵים כִּי־דֹאֲרָץ.

(2) It is possible that some who read these Lectures may have expected that notice would be taken of the letter which is said (2 Chron. xxi. 12,) to have come to Jehoram from Elijah the prophet: it being apparently the sense of the passage, that the missive came directly, at the time specified, which is generally supposed to have happened several years after his death. According to this interpretation the communication was transmitted from the invisible world, which Grotius believes to have been the case, though Ephraem Syrus had declared that those who dwell on the earth receive no epistles from the inhabitants of heaven. That Elijah the Tishbite is intended, and not another of the same name, as Cajetan conjectured, is beyond dispute; but the Hebrew text, וַיָּבֹא אֵלָיו מִכְתָּב בְּאֵלֵיהֶוָה הַזֶּה, does not necessarily imply that the letter was written by the prophet at the time of its delivery. The preposition *בְּ*, connects with *מִכְתָּב*, *a writing*, more readily than with the verb *בֵּא*, and refers it to Elijah *as its author*: so that it may have been composed years before it reached the hands of the wicked monarch whom it was designed to reprove. According to the best chronological computation, Jehoram must have already been grown up before the venerable servant of God ascended to heaven; and furnishing awful evidence of abandonment of character, it pleased the prophetic Spirit to dictate the contents of the present communication, which, Emmanuel a Sâ has suggested, was in all probability delivered to Elisha or some other person to be conveyed to the king, at a particular juncture, when it might be expected to operate more powerfully upon his mind.

BATH-KOL, or "the daughter of the voice." Such of them, however, as use the phrase in this sense, ascribe to it a degree of importance which elevates the communications made by it above those made by what they call the רוח הקדש, or the supernatural influence enjoyed by such as were not prophets according to the strict meaning of the term, but yet truly inspired. They make it to consist in a miraculous voice proceeding immediately from heaven, and imparting in intelligible language the knowledge of the Divine will. Yet the instances which they adduce to prove that it took place are so trifling and so completely Talmudic in their character, as at once to evince its total discrepancy from any thing justly claiming to be divine. It would seem, from statements made by some of the Rabbins, that the Bath-kol was in reality nothing but an extraordinary noise, or sound, which, from the peculiarity of the circumstances in which it was heard, might be construed into a good or bad omen, or a communication simply of portentous import. The word קול, *Kol*, being one of those by which thunder is expressed in Hebrew, it has not improbably been inferred, that, by prefixing to it the word בַּת, *Bath*, or Daughter, the Jews originally meant to express the idea of the echo or repercussion which follows a clap of thunder. Thus, indeed, it is expressly defined in the Codex Sanhedrim; "Bath-kol is when a sound proceeds from heaven, and another sound proceeds from it."<sup>1</sup> To such reverberations or distant sounds

(1) יש אומרים שלא היו שומעים קול היוצא מן השמים אלא מחוק קול אחר: —Piske Josaphoth, fol. 11, a.

—בת קול היינו כשקול יוצא מן השמים יוצא מתוכו קול אחר: —fol. 29, b.

they were accustomed to attach a monitory significance ; and so far did they carry the superstition, that, at length, any words which they might accidentally hear repeated when they were intent on ascertaining a particular fact, they viewed in the light of a supernatural intimation, or a sacred oracle, to whose import they were bound to attend.

The application of any of the notions connected with the Bath-kol of the Jews to the elucidation of the New Testament, is greatly to be reprobated. Between such notions and any of the facts narrated in that portion of the sacred volume, there exists not the slightest degree of congruity. Since the use of the phrase cannot be traced further back than an age considerably posterior to that of the apostles, we have no reason whatever to conclude that it was customary in their day thus to designate an articulate voice from heaven.

## LECTURE IV.

### THE GIFTS OF INSPIRATION.

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1 COR. XII. 4—6.

*“ Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all.”*

THAT a more copious effusion of Divine influence, both in its extraordinary and ordinary features, was to take place in the time of the Messiah, is a fact, with which the ancient church was distinctly made acquainted. Not to insist on the address in Psalm lxviii. 18,—“Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive: thou hast received gifts for men; yea, for the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell among them;” which words Paul applies to the royal donative of the Spirit, (Eph. iv. 8,)—we find a direct prophecy in reference to the subject, Joel ii. 28, 29: “And it shall come pass afterward, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young

“men shall see visions: and also upon the servants  
“and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour  
“out my Spirit.” Of the direct bearing of this prediction on the miraculous communication of spiritual gifts on the day of Pentecost, no one can doubt who peruses the narrative contained in the second chapter of the Acts, in which is recorded the inspired application of it by Peter to the unprecedented occurrences which took place on that remarkable occasion.

To the accomplishment of these prophetic declarations, our Lord obviously refers his disciples, when he gives to this effusion of extraordinary spiritual influence the name of baptism. “Wait,” he said, “for the promise of the Father, which ye have heard of me; for John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.” (Acts i. 5.) As we shall afterwards have an opportunity of shewing, the specific repetition of the promise by Christ in his last discourse before his sufferings, to which he here adverts, was intended to remove from the minds of the eleven every doubt with which they might be harassed respecting their native disqualification for the execution of the arduous task which was soon to be devolved upon them. On the advent of the Spirit of Truth they were to receive those extraordinary endowments by which they should be fully prepared to carry into effect their high commission. And we find, accordingly, both in the history of the Pentecostal phenomena to which reference has just been made, and in that of the other supernatural events which distinguished the ministry of the apostles, a profusion of proofs attesting the realization



by the church of the predicted and promised blessing. Not only were these primary and extraordinary ministers of Christ richly endowed with miraculous gifts themselves; they were also honoured instrumentally to communicate them more or less copiously to the first converts, who thus became qualified to perform those extraordinary services which the peculiar circumstances of the infant church required. This impartation generally took place during the preaching of the word, or on the baptism of the parties who were thus favoured; and appears to have consisted in an immediate exertion of Divine power attending the preaching of the gospel, or in answer to the prayer which accompanied the imposition of the apostles' hands, (Acts viii. 15, 17; xix. 6.)

To the enjoyment and exercise of these supernatural powers by certain members of the first Christian communities, numerous references are made in the apostolical epistles, but in none more amply than in that from which our present text has been selected. In the city of Corinth, the capital of Achaia, celebrated on account of its opulence and learning, as it was notorious for its effeminacy and profligacy of manners, the Apostle Paul preached the gospel with such effect, that a considerable number of Jews, proselytes, and heathens, were led to profess the faith of Christ, and unite together for the purpose of observing the rules of the Christian fellowship, in obedience to the will of their common Lord. In the course of a few years, however, besides other evils which sprang up to disturb the peace and obstruct the spiritual progress of the brethren, a jealousy of each other's gifts existed

on the part of some who had been made partakers of the extraordinary endowments of the Spirit, which produced an unhappy collision in the church generally, and not only led to the splitting of the body into separate parties, but exhibited to the view of unbelievers, who happened to visit their assemblies, scenes which were powerfully calculated to strengthen their natural prejudices against the gospel. In reply to an application, which they had agreed to make for apostolic advice, the inspired master-builder, by whom the foundation of the Christian edifice had been laid in that city, proceeds in this and the two following chapters of his first Epistle to discuss the subject of spiritual gifts, with respect to their origin, their nature, their comparative value, and their appropriate and legitimate use; and in the course of the instructions which he imparts on these several topics, takes occasion specially to enlarge on the gift of tongues, which, more than any of the others, appears to have occasioned a spirit of pride and contention.

As the term *πνευματικῶν*, ver. 1, is elliptical, some commentators supply *ἀνθρώπων*, and render it “spiritual *men* ;” viz. such as were gifted with supernatural endowments,—especially those who had the gift of tongues; others prefer *χαρισμάτων*, “spiritual *gifts*,” of which that just mentioned was held in the highest estimation. It is immaterial which mode of construction we adopt: only it is more in accordance with the apostle’s general use of the word, to understand him as referring to things rather than to persons. In opening the subject, he most appositely reminds the Corinthians of the fact, that, before those of them who

had been pagans had embraced the gospel, they had been urged on by a blind infatuation to serve idols, which, being themselves inanimate and speechless, could not possibly impart to their votaries any thing analogous to the miraculous gift of language, which had so greatly attracted their attention. He next lays it down as a principle, particularly to be borne in mind by those who had been Jews, and might still be exposed to the influence of Jewish impostors pretending to be actuated by the Holy Spirit, that no person who spoke by the inspiration of that Divine Agent could blaspheme the Redeemer,—just as it was equally certain, that no one could sincerely profess belief in his divine character and mission, except in virtue of his supernatural influence.

Having thus entered upon his subject, the apostle proceeds to shew, that how various soever were the supernatural gifts bestowed on the first Christians, they were all to be traced to the Holy Spirit as their common source. In the fourth and fifth verses he extends the idea of diversity so as to make it comprehend all the modes in which the gifts were employed, and all the results which followed their exercise, in order the more forcibly to exhibit the unity which pervades the whole of the Divine administration. It has been supposed by some, that, in the beautiful synthetical climax which he thus forms, the words *χαρίσματα*, *διακονίαι*, and *ἐνεργήματα*, are synonymous. The opinion is not new, being found in Chrysostom<sup>1</sup>

(1) Τί ἐστὶν ἐνέργημα; τί δὲ χάρισμα; τί δὲ διακονία; Ὅνομάτων διαφοραὶ μόνον, ἐπεὶ πράγματα τὰ αὐτά. "Ὁ γὰρ ἐστὶ χάρισμα, τοῦτο διακονία, τοῦτο καὶ ἐνέργειαν λέγει.

and other Greek commentators, but it is quite a gratuitous assumption; for though they all designate what the apostle describes as belonging to the subject of which he is treating, they nevertheless mark its several parts with sufficient distinctness to authorize their separate consideration. With respect to the *χαρίσματα* there can be no dispute: they manifestly signify the miraculous endowments conferred by the Spirit on certain individuals, for the purpose of qualifying them for the performance of extraordinary services in the cause of Christ. By the *διακονίαι* are meant the different forms in which these endowments were exercised, the functions by which they were called into operation, or the services engaged in by those who possessed them. The *ἐνεργήματα* were the actual effects which resulted from the application of the various supernatural powers or gifts in the modes specified; and are so called in reference to the Divine energy by which they were produced.<sup>1</sup> The term "operation," which is employed in our common version, is ambiguous. It may either signify the agency, influence, or act exerted with a view to the production of effects, or the result of such agency in the effects themselves. Though the translators appear to have understood it in the former of these significations, the latter is its only legitimate acceptance in the present connexion. This construction of the passage is found in Theodoret; only he refers it to the *χαρίσματα* themselves as miraculously produced in the

(1) Like other nouns ending in *μα*, such as *μίμημα*, *θήμα*, *γέννημα*, *ὀπίσμα*, *σπέρμα*, this term does not denote the act or action, but that which is the effect of the action.

minds of the gifted individuals:—which view, though adopted by Locke, Bloomfield, and other moderns, is decidedly objectionable on the ground of the tautology which it would introduce, and the want of harmony which would thus arise among the three several members of the climax.

That Πνεῦμα, in verses 4th, 7th, 8th, 9th, and 11th, is to be taken in a personal sense, is evident not only from the attributes ascribed to him, but from his being associated with the two other Divine Persons—ὁ κύριος, the Lord Jesus, and ὁ θεός, God the Father. And that he is a *Divine* person, is further proved by the fact of such association; by his sovereign impartation of miraculous powers; and by the identity of the phraseology employed to express the extent of his operations, ver. 11th, with the language in which that of the operation of the Father is expressed, ver. 6th. It is not a little surprising, that Bishop Middleton should have been perplexed by the ellipses, ver. 4th and 5th; and that he should have considered the concluding clause of the parallelism, ὁ ἐνεργῶν τὰ πάντα ἐν πᾶσιν, “who worketh all in all,” as intended to apply equally to all the three Persons of the Godhead. Such a mode of construction unnecessarily clogs the passage. The two preceding propositions are indeed elliptical, but the defective words are so easily suggested by the ideas contained in those which are employed, that their absence is not sensibly felt. This would at once have appeared, had these propositions stood by themselves. We should then have supplied some words in the fourth verse, expressive of the inspiring agency of the Spirit; and in the fifth verse,



such terms as convey the idea of the universal Lordship of Christ, to whom all the arrangements in the administration of the affairs of his church are subject. The gifts are the gifts of the one Spirit; the administrations are carried on under the rule of the one Lord; the results of both are effected by the universal operative power of the one Father, who is above all, and through all, and in us all. (Eph. iv. 6.)

After finishing the climax produced by the idea of *κύριος* having been suggested by the use of the correlative term *διακονία*, the apostle returns to the agency of the Holy Spirit, on which he expatiates in the remaining part of the section. The miraculous endowments by the exercise of which the influence of the Divine Donor was manifested, were not conferred for the purposes of ostentation and vanity, to which one of them at least had been awfully prostituted in the Corinthian church, but each recipient was so favoured that he might contribute that which in his particular circumstances might be most advantageous to the interests of the gospel, ver. 7.

Over the specific nature of the *χαρίσματα*, ver. 8—10, no ordinary degree of obscurity has been thrown, partly by want of due attention to the structure of the apostle's language, and partly by abortive attempts to harmonize the catalogue here given with that furnished at the end of the chapter. Because several of the gifts and offices in the one passage correspond to certain orders of persons mentioned by the same names in the other, it has been assumed that there must be an entire correspondence throughout—each co-ordinate member exactly answering to each—



whatever difficulty may be experienced in establishing it. Various schemes of parallelism and interpretation have been constructed with a view to exhibit this correspondence; of which, that proposed by Bishop Horsley, in the Appendix to his XIVth Sermon, has met with considerable approbation. Yet who that allows to sober principles of Biblical exegesis their proper influence over his mind, can possibly admit that "Teachers" of Christianity in the one table, can in any degree answer to "Faith" in the other; or that "Helps" in the one can correspond to "Prophecy" in the other; or that "Governments" in the one can properly stand over against "Discerning of Spirits" in the other? Only a fertile imagination, unbridled by habits of severe critical discrimination, could have advanced a theory so totally subversive of the meaning of language, and calculated, to the extent of its luxuriance, entirely to unsettle the interpretation of the New Testament.

That there is a beautiful symmetrical connexion in the enumeration of the gifts, we shall presently shew. With respect to the list of persons holding offices in the church, and exercising gifts of a supernatural order, it may be observed, that it discovers nothing which indicates a design on the part of the apostle to adhere to the order in which he had classed the miraculous endowments, or to place the one table in juxta-position with the other. It has generally been supposed, that in the former of the two, there are *nine* varieties of gifts; and though in the latter there are only *eight* varieties of orders or persons, there being no office corresponding to the gift of "the interpreta-

tion of tongues;" yet, as it has been supposed to be comprehended under the *γένη γλωσσῶν*, "diversities of tongues," with which the apostle concludes the list, the numbers have thus been made to coincide. If, however, we regard *πίστις*, "faith," as we must, ver. 9, not as indicative of any distinct principle with which the immediately following endowments had no connexion, but as the basis on which they rested, or the root from which they sprang, the strict number in that catalogue will be reduced to eight, which creates a fresh objection to the system of identity. That *ἀντιλήψεις*, "helps," and *κυβερνήσεις*, "governments," should signify prophets and persons endowed with the faculty of discriminating inspired men and inspired matter, is contrary to all usage and analogy. They can only, with propriety, be referred to the administration of the affairs of the church: the one appropriately designating the Deacons, whose office it was to afford *ἀντίληψις*, *aid*, to the poor, and otherwise assist in conducting the affairs of the church; and the other, the Elders or Bishops, on whom, as *προϊστάμενοι. προεστῶτες*, or *ἡγούμενοι*, devolved its *κυβέρνησις*, *direction*, in regard to worship and discipline. To this interpretation of the terms it may be objected that there is nothing so peculiar in these offices to entitle them to be ranked with the extraordinary functions pointed out by the other names in the catalogue. In reply to which we remark, that, as the circumstances which originated the apostle's argument were connected with the character of public worship in the church at Corinth, and the state of insubordination and want of discipline in many who took a

prominent part in that worship, there was the greatest propriety in adverting to the more ordinary officers, especially as he had set out by stating that the persons whom he was about to enumerate had been placed by God in the church. Add to which, that though the functions of the bishops and deacons were designed to be permanent, and, on this account, are termed ordinary, it must not be overlooked that those who were called to sustain these offices in the primitive church were such as were endowed with spiritual gifts, and might justly, on this ground, be taken into the number of gifted persons.

On examining the catalogue of *χαρίσματα* as presented in the original, it will be found to contain a three-fold classification, proper attention to which will greatly facilitate the interpretation of the passage. Instead of simply commencing with the words "to *one* is given," and then, as in the versions, repeating the words "to *another* is given," without any distinction, before each of the following subjects of the several propositions,—from which it might be inferred that no relative adaptation existed among the gifts,—there is, according to the native force of the Greek, a marked distribution of them into three orders, each of the two last of which is, in its enumeration, introduced by a term discriminating it from that which precedes it, and comprehends under it one or more subordinate species, to each of which is prefixed another term, also expressive of difference, but marking that difference much less definitely than the former would have done. The Greek scholar has only to notice the distinctive use of *ἑτερος* and *ἄλλος* in order

clearly to perceive the state of the question ; or if he will arrange the several members of the list according to the grammatical principle just noticed, he will at once become sensible of the beautiful symmetry which the passage, as thus divided, exhibits.

I. Ωι μὲν—λόγος σοφίας.

2. ἄλλω δὲ λόγος γνώσεως.

II. Ἐτερω δὲ πίστις.

1. ἄλλω δὲ χαρίσματα ἱαμάτων.

2. ἄλλω δὲ ἐνεργήματα δυνάμεων.

3. ἄλλω δὲ προφητεία.

4. ἄλλω δὲ διακρίσεις πνευμάτων.

III. Ἐτερω δὲ γένη γλωσσῶν.

2. ἄλλω δὲ ἐρμηνεία γλωσσῶν.

According to this division, “the word of knowledge” belongs to the same class with “the word of wisdom;” the “gifts of healings,” “working of miracles,” “prophecy,” and “discerning of spirits,” are assigned to “faith,” as their genus ; while the “interpretation of tongues” ranks with “divers kinds of tongues,” with which it is naturally associated. Assuming what we shall afterwards prove, that by *πίστις* here is meant what is commonly called the faith of miracles, it is self-evident that it was indispensable to the exercise of all the four species of *χαρίσματα*, which are ranged under it, whereas it was not called for in exercising any of those which belong to the two other divisions, as will be shown in its proper place.

We now proceed to consider these *χαρίσματα* separately, according to the classification which has just been pointed out.

To the *first class* belong *λόγος σοφίας*, “the word of wisdom,” and *λόγος γνώσεως*, “the word of knowledge.” That *λόγος* here is not to be taken pleonas-

tically, as by Dr. Owen and others, seems evident from the nature of the case. Nor, indeed, can the pleonastic use either of this term or the Hebrew *דבר*, to which it corresponds, be fairly established. In all the instances that have been alleged in support of it, there is something which suggests the idea of a certain subject or matter spoken of, or some communication that is made respecting it. Equally inapposite is the interpretation, adopted by many, which limits the acceptation to doctrine; for though the word is frequently employed by the apostle in this sense, as *ὁ λόγος τοῦ σταυροῦ*, “the word” or doctrine “of the cross;” *ὁ λόγος τῆς πίστεως*, “the doctrine of faith;” yet in such instances it takes the article, whereas in the present case it is anarthrous. The signification which best suits the connexion, is that of a faculty or power of communicating to others the things to which reference is made. What confirms this view of the meaning is the recurrence of the term in this acceptation, Eph. vi. 19, where the apostle requests the prayers of the brethren, that *λόγος*, “utterance,” might be given unto him, that he might open his mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel. Whatever, therefore, *σοφία*, or *γνώσις*, in this connexion may import, the *λόγος* was necessary for its impartation to others.

The former of the two species which constitute this class, is *σοφία*, WISDOM. No small difficulty has been experienced in attempting to determine the precise idea attaching to the term by which this primary endowment is designated, or the exact point of difference existing between its signification and that of

γνώσις, employed to characterise the other species of endowment which is here associated with it. That it merely signifies prudence or skill in teaching, or discreet management in adapting the doctrines or defence of the gospel to persons, occasions, and circumstances,<sup>1</sup> how important soever such a quality is in all Christian teachers (and was especially so in the apostles, who were often placed in the most difficult and trying situations), cannot be admitted to come up in any degree to the claims which the exigency of the passage presents. All ideas derived from the application of the term in systems of philosophy are no less objectionable. Bishop Horsley, carried away by its use in this sense in the classics, would comprehend under it the natural principles of reason, from which he imagines the apostles were called to argue for the conviction and conversion of philosophical infidels.<sup>2</sup> Grotius<sup>3</sup> considers it to have the same signification with the Hebrew חֵכֶּמָה, which occurs so frequently in the writings of Solomon, and explains it of grave and weighty sentences, such as those contained in the book of Proverbs. From this apparently, Bilioth, one of the most recent foreign commentators on the Epistle, adopts the notion of practical wisdom, and supposes the word to be descriptive of the kind of instruction conveyed in the parables of our Lord, and the hortatory parts of the apostolical Epistles. On the same principle of Old Testament reference, it is interpreted by Michaelis<sup>4</sup> in application to the Jewish

(1) Owen's Discourse of Spiritual Gifts; Works, vol. iv. p. 281, 8vo. edit.

(2) Append. to Sermon XIV.

(3) Annot. *in loc.*

(4) Anmerk. zum, 1 Cor. xii. 8.



philosophy, which consisted in a recondite knowledge of the ancient Scriptures, laws, and usages of the Hebrews. He accordingly conjectures that the wisdom or science here meant, was occupied with the interpretation of the Old Testament, in subserviency to the establishment of the doctrines and facts of Christianity.

Such constructions would never have been put upon the term, had due attention been paid to the peculiarly appropriated sense, in which it is used in the New Testament, especially in the present Epistle. In the second chapter particularly, after disavowing the use of the artificial means prescribed by human philosophy, the apostle takes occasion, from the introduction of the word *σοφία*, to shew, that he nevertheless did teach wisdom;—not indeed a wisdom originating in, or harmonizing with, the philosophy of the world, but the only system worthy of the name, and in itself truly divine, which, though concealed from all preceding generations, was to be traced to the eternal counsel of Jehovah, who had determined in due time to reveal it for the salvation of men. (Verses 6, 7.) The ancient church had been favoured with partial developments of the plan of human redemption; and Old Testament believers, to the extent of their knowledge of it, rejoiced in the anticipation of its execution; but it was so couched under the figurative language of prophecy, and the external types of the Jewish economy, that it was perceived only by a few. Of this we have a practical illustration in the rejection of the Messiah, and the blessings of his kingdom, by the great body of those who had been constituted its depositaries. The glorious principles, however, which this plan involved,

and which formed a system of wisdom which it was impossible for man either to have discovered or devised, God disclosed immediately to the apostles. Truths of which they could have had no conception were communicated to their minds instantaneously, without the intervention of means, by direct illumination from above. These truths relate to the development of the Divine character and purposes; the dignity of the Redeemer; the excellencies of his character; the wonders of his incarnation, obedience, atonement, and intercession; the spiritual nature of his kingdom; the person, office, and operations of his Spirit; the present privileges and future glory of his subjects; his final triumph over his enemies; his second advent; and the character and results of the general judgment. Christ "the wisdom of God" is the centre, and the sphere of his mediation is the vast circumference, within which are deposited all the treasures of *wisdom* and knowledge, (Col. ii. 3.) In the whole economy of salvation, and in each of its several parts, a display is made of Divine wisdom infinitely transcending the disclosures furnished by the natural world. It is an attribute which he hath exercised towards us in the highest degree, ἐπερίσσεισεν ἐν πάσῃ σοφίᾳ, (Eph. i. 8); and so multifarious are the exhibitions made of it in the gospel, (ἡ πολυποίκιλος σοφία τοῦ Θεοῦ,) that it furnishes themes of profound contemplation to the highest orders of created intelligences. (Eph. iii. 10; 1 Pet. i. 12.)

And as the human mind could not have contrived such a system of divine philosophy, its unassisted powers were equally inadequate to the task of teaching it to the world. The apostles of Christ were in them-

selves totally disqualified for unveiling its mysteries. They required supernatural aid; and that aid was vouchsafed by the impartation of the *χαρίσμα* of which we here treat. On receiving the “power from on high,” which was promised by their Divine Master, they not only obtained a clear insight into the doctrines of the economy of grace, but became fully competent to teach them with infallible accuracy to others. Hence Paul speaks of himself as *σοφὸς ἀρχιτέκτων*, “a wise master-builder,” (1 Cor. iii. 10); and employs a tone of confidence and authority in his Epistles, which would have been altogether unwarranted, if he had not been miraculously endowed. And Peter adduces the peculiar *wisdom* with which Paul was gifted, *τὴν αὐτῷ δοθεῖσαν σοφίαν*, as the source of his ability to compose his Epistles, “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.” (2 Pet. iii. 15, 16.) That this wisdom is equivalent to ἀποκάλυψις, revelation, and the impartation of a knowledge of Divine secrets, is evident from 1 Cor. xiv. 6; xiii. 2; in which passages these are introduced in the same relation to γνώσις, as σοφία is in the present text. “Now, brethren, if I come unto you, speaking with tongues, what shall I profit you, except I shall speak to you either by revelation, or by knowledge, or by prophesying, or by doctrine?” “And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing.”

By σοφία, therefore, in this passage, we understand the sublime truths of the gospel, directly revealed to the apostles, of which the λόγος was the supernatural ability rightly to communicate them to others.

The *second* species of this primary class of extraordinary spiritual endowments is γνώσις, KNOWLEDGE. This term, like that the import of which we have just examined, is in itself extremely simple; and perhaps the difficulties which have been felt in fixing its meaning in this and some parallel passages, are chiefly to be ascribed to the predominating influence of its common acceptation upon the mind. To form a proper idea of it, we must recollect that it is neither ordinary nor saving knowledge that is meant, but a gift peculiar to the first age of Christianity:—miraculous in its nature, and designed to contribute, by its exercise, to the establishment of the Church. This Chrysostom<sup>1</sup> and other Greek fathers lost sight of, or they would not have sunk it into a mere acquaintance with divine truth, which ordinary believers might possess without the faculty of communicating it to others. On the other hand, we must also be on our guard against the influence of the signification attached to γνώσις by the ancient Platonic philosophers, and, after them, by those of their disciples who embraced the gospel, in whose writings it incessantly occurs. Accustomed to apply it in abstract speculations respecting the Divine nature and other spiritual existences,

(1) Τὸ λόγος γνώσεως; ὅν εἶχον ἄπολλοὶ τῶν πιστῶν, γνῶσιν μὲν ἔχοντες, διδάσκειν δὲ οὕτως μὴ δυνάμενοι, οὐδὲ εἰς ἕτερον εὐκόλως ἐξενέγκειν, ἅπερ ᾗδεσαν. The same view is given in the Commentary of Theodoret.

the latter employed it in reference to the highest kind of knowledge with which the followers of Christ were favoured, or a perfect comprehension of the grand fundamental principles of his religion: whence the name *Gnostic*, which came to be commonly used in the second century, in application both to those who possessed these sublime conceptions of divine truth, and to those who merely pretended to them. Heydenreich,<sup>1</sup> Stenersen,<sup>2</sup> and Bloomfield,<sup>3</sup> adopting this acceptation of the term, reverse the order of these *χαρίσματα*, and consider *γνώσις* to be the more exalted and comprehensive of the two. In the same class of interpreters may be ranked Neander<sup>4</sup> and Bilothe,<sup>5</sup> who explain *γνώσις* of the theoretical, and *σοφία* of the practical, knowledge of religion. But to this construction of the meaning, it must be objected that it violates the principle of relation, which the apostle uniformly observes when referring to the gifts in question. Thus in ch. xiii. 2, already quoted, he first mentions a comprehension of "mysteries," and then "knowledge," just as in ch. xiv. 6, "knowledge" follows "revelation." We adhere, therefore, to the order approved by Calvin, Lord Barrington, Doddridge, Horsley, Macknight, Hales, and Townsend, who regard the "word of knowledge" to be inferior and subordinate to the "word of wisdom."

With respect to the nature of the gift itself, it

(1) Comment. in prior. du Pauli ad Corinth. Epist. Marburgi. 1828.

(2) Epistolæ Paulinæ perpet. Comment. Christianæ. 1830.

(3) Greek New Test. 2d ed. Note.

(4) Geschichte der Pflanzung und Leitung der Chr. Kirche durch die Apostel. p. 120.

(5) Comment. *in loc.*



appears to have consisted in the immediate communication of an exact and competent knowledge of the truths, which God had already revealed through the instrumentality of the inspired prophets and apostles, in consequence of which, those who possessed it became qualified, independently of the use of all ordinary means, forthwith to teach them to the church. They differed from the apostles, who possessed the word of wisdom, inasmuch as the latter had new truths revealed to them; whereas it was the department of the former, infallibly to explain truths and doctrines which had been previously divulged. They also differed from ordinary teachers—these being under the necessity of acquiring their knowledge of the great principles of revelation by a diligent study of the holy Scriptures, and all the subsidiary means at their command; whereas the primitive instructors, who were supernaturally endowed with the *γνώσις* here specified, were at once prepared to discharge the duties of their office. They had imparted to them, clear, accurate, and connected views of the Divine dispensations; a profound acquaintance with the more intricate and obscure parts of the ancient inspired oracles; and such enlarged and definite conceptions of the doctrines preached by the apostles, as enabled them by their ministry greatly to contribute to the instruction and confirmation of the disciples in the faith of the gospel. Their interpretations, proceeding from direct inspiration, possessed an authority which was tantamount to that claimed by the apostles for the new truths, which it was their province to reveal. According to this view of the gift, all difficulty in explaining 1 Cor. xiv. 6



is removed. The apostle might impart a new revelation ; he might give an infallible interpretation of some truth already revealed ; he might deliver a prediction ; or he might give instruction on some known and acknowledged points of Christian doctrine. For, as an apostle, he combined in his person, not only the *χαρίσματα* forming the present class of gifts, but a share of all the extraordinary spiritual endowments, which were at that time bestowed upon the church. Though those to whom this particular modification of divine inspiration was imparted did not possess the “word of wisdom ;” those who had the latter gift conferred upon them, possessed and exercised the “word of knowledge,” or the faculty of infallibly interpreting the Divine Revelations.

This view of the subject is substantially that adopted by Lord Barrington, Benson, Macknight, Townsend, and Macleod, in his invaluable work on the gifts of inspiration ;<sup>1</sup> though most of these writers restrict the inspired knowledge to an extraordinary ability to understand and explain the meaning of the Old Testament, particularly in reference to the person, work, and kingdom of the Messiah.

We now come to the *second class* of *χαρίσματα*, of which there are four species ranged under the general head of *πίστις*, or FAITH. Though itself a miraculous endowment, and essential to the effective exercise of those which immediately follow in the classification,

(1) A View of Inspiration ; comprehending the Nature and Distinctions of the Spiritual Gifts and Offices of the Apostolic Age. By Alex. Macleod. Glasgow, 1827.

this *πίστις* is to be contemplated, not as a separate and distinct gift, but as the immediate source to which these endowments are to be traced, or the fundamental principle by which they were called into operation. It holds the same place in regard to the succeeding *χαρίσματα* which *λόγος* does to the two *χαρίσματα* which precede. It was not required for the exercise of either of these gifts; nor was it necessary in order to the exercise either of the ability to speak foreign languages, or to interpret these languages. All that was requisite in any of these cases, was the impartation of the conceptions of the things to be revealed or interpreted, and the words to be spoken or translated. But without *πίστις* no miraculous cure could be effected; no stupendous supernatural effects produced; no prediction uttered; and no discovery made of the real state and secret thoughts of the heart.

That the faith here specified is not that of doctrines, the reception of which was essential to the salvation of those who possessed it, nor merely a firm confidence in the truth and importance of the Christian religion, as Belsham<sup>1</sup> fritters it down, but of things of an extraordinary and supernatural character to be performed for the good of others, or for the general advancement of the cause of Christian truth, was perceived by Chrysostom,<sup>2</sup> and is the construction put upon the term by nearly all, excepting those of the Neologian school, who have written on the subject. Bishop Horsley<sup>3</sup> stands almost alone in the opinion,

(1) Epistles of Paul translated, &c. Vol. ii. p. 256.

(2) Πίστιν οὐ ταύτην λέγει τὴν τῶν δογμάτων, ἀλλὰ τὴν τῶν σημείων.

(3) Ut sup.

that it signifies a depth and accuracy of understanding in the general scheme of the Christian revelation, for the improvement and edification of believers. It is in fact what the schoolmen called *fides miraculorum*, or a firm and undoubting confidence in God, produced by an immediate impulse of his Spirit on the minds of those who exercised it, that, in certain given circumstances, he would, through their instrumentality, perform acts surpassing the power of natural agency. The effects which resulted from it, did not consist simply in the performance of difficult actions, or the putting forth of extraordinary exertion, which circumstances might require. They were, in all cases, strictly supernatural. It is of this peculiar kind of faith our Lord speaks when he charges his disciples, (Mark xi. 23,)—"Have faith in God. For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, "Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; "and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe "that those things which he saith shall come to pass; "he shall have whatsoever he saith." That the form *πίστιν Θεοῦ*, which here occurs, is to be rendered "a strong faith," as some have done, on the ground of what has been called a common Hebraism, cannot be proved, since it is more than doubtful whether any such idiom really exists in the Hebrew language. *Θεοῦ* is here, as frequently, the genitive of object, and the phrase imports a firm and unshaken reliance on Divine Omnipotence. The absence of all doubt with respect to the production of the miracle is expressly declared both in this and the parallel passage, Matt. xxi. 21, to be indispensable to its performance. It

seems evident from the connection, that it is of this faith Christ also speaks, Mark xvi. 17,—“And these signs shall follow them that believe; in my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues.” It is true, he had just insisted on the indispensable necessity of that faith with which salvation is connected; but he had finished what he had to deliver respecting saving faith, in the 16th verse; and now proceeds, taking occasion from the introduction of the term, to employ it in a higher sense (ver. 17), in reference to that special endowment, which was required for the performance of those miracles which he immediately describes. That it is the same “faith” the apostle has in view, when he says, (1 Cor. xiii. 2,) “If I have all faith, *πᾶσαν τὴν πίστιν*, so that I could “remove mountains,” is evident, not only from its being classed along with prophecy, an acquaintance with mysteries, and the gift of supernatural knowledge, but from the effects ascribed to it. To the exercise of this spiritual gift in effecting miraculous cures, the Apostle James also refers, (ch. v. 14, 15,)—“Is any sick “among you? let him call for the elders of the “church; and let them pray over him, anointing him “with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer “of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise “him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall “be forgiven him.” What is here termed *ἡ εὐχὴ τῆς πίστεως*, is not that which is usually called believing prayer, or such prayer as is based on the Divine character and administration generally, or on particular promises of Scripture made to all believers, but that in which the gifted person was to engage from

a firm persuasion, supernaturally wrought in his mind at the time, that God would, on the occasion specified, miraculously restore the sick believer to health. The exercise of this gift presupposes a conviction, resting on the most solid grounds, that he, who possessed it, was called at the time to perform a miracle; and, on proceeding to the performance of it, an unwavering confidence in the power and faithfulness of God to effect it.

The first of the supernatural gifts placed under this special faith, as their operative principle, is *χαρίσματα ἰαμάτων*, THE GIFTS OF HEALING. The attempts of some foreign commentators, after Rosenmüller, to reduce this endowment to the rank of eminence in medical science, are a burlesque on the word of God, and totally undeserving of serious refutation. Heydenreich<sup>1</sup> properly designates the opinion: *Vacua et inanis conjectura*. The use of the plural in the specification of the gift, is derived from the number and variety of the diseases that were healed. When our Lord sent forth his twelve disciples, he invested them with power “to *heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease;*” and one of the prominent parts of the charge which he delivered to them on the occasion, was: “*Heal the sick.*” (Matt. x. 1, 8.) To the account given by Luke of the same commission, he adds: “And they departed, and went through the towns, “preaching the gospel, and *healing every where,*” (ch. ix. 6.) The seventy, who were afterwards sent out to announce the approach of the Divine reign,

(1) Vol. i, p. 301.



were similarly endowed, and commanded to “*heal the sick of every city* into which they might enter,” (Luke x. 8, 9.) In like manner, when the apostles received their final commission, just before the ascension of their Master, he expressly promised, that they should, in the exercise of the special *χάρισμα* of faith, *lay hands on the sick*, and they should recover, (Mark xvi. 18:)—a promise, to the accomplishment of which ample testimony is borne in the Acts of the Apostles, especially in chap. v. 15, where we read, that, in consequence of the impression made upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem by the miracles wrought by the apostles, and the vast number of conversions which took place, “they brought the sick into the streets, and laid them “on beds and couches, that at the least the shadow of “Peter passing by might overshadow some of them.”

When this gift was exercised, it was accompanied with the laying on of hands, or anointing with oil, both of which actions were symbolical of the exertion of Divine power, by which alone the cures were effected. (Mark xvi. 18; vi. 13; James v. 14.) Considering the extensive scope which there was for its exercise, it is easy to perceive of what immense service it must have proved to the gospel—confirming its truth, and conciliating the good will of the more considerate of the heathen to a religion so manifestly beneficent in its nature and effects.

The second class of effects resulting from the exercise of this gift of faith, is designated, *ἐνεργήματα δυνάμεων*, THE WORKING OF MIRACLES. Definitely to mark the distinction between this *χάρισμα* and that of



healing, has greatly puzzled many of the commentators, owing to the supposed incongruity of treating the latter separately, since nothing can be more obvious than the fact, that it also is miraculous. Pressed by the difficulty, Macknight, without any support from analogy, and depending entirely on the precarious use of the Greek preposition in the compound *ἐνεργεῖν*, maintains, that the whole phrase is to be rendered *the inworkings of powers*, though he is obliged to admit that he has opposed to him the whole current of translators, both ancient and modern. The hypothesis, which he constructs upon this single point of etymology, is, that the gift consisted in the ability to infuse miraculous powers into the minds of others:—an endowment which cannot be proved from any other part of Scripture, or from the documents of uninspired antiquity, ever to have been conferred upon man. To operate thus upon the human mind is the sole prerogative of Him, *ὁ ἐνεργῶν τὰ πάντα ἐν πᾶσιν*. (1 Cor. xii. 6.)<sup>1</sup>

That miracles, various in their character, are here intended, is evident from the plural form of the terms (*ἐνεργήματα δυνάμεων*) employed by the apostle. *Δύναμις*, which properly signifies *power* or *might*, is the word commonly used in the Gospel to denote the miracles which were wrought by our Saviour; and sometimes it expresses the power by which they were performed; sometimes the effects of that power in the miracles themselves. (Matt. xi. 20, 21, 23; xiii. 54; Mark v. 30.) It also occurs in the same acceptation in the Pauline Epistles, and is that by which the

(1) For a refutation of Macknight's arguments, see Macleod, *ut sup.* p. 267.

Christian miracles are characterised as *δυνάμεις μέλλοντος αἰῶνος*, "the powers of the world to come." (Heb. vi. 5.) The other term, *ἐνεργήματα*, occurs only here and ver. 6, and, as has already been observed, is descriptive not of the act of performing the miracles, but of the effects of that power by which they were performed. Both words may indeed be taken as a common hendiadys, and are equivalent to *ἐνεργήματα δύνата*, "miraculous results," or, as *δυνάμεις* by itself is frequently rendered in our common version, "mighty deeds."

The very selection of the terms appropriated by the apostle to the description of this gift, sufficiently evinces that he had something of no ordinary character in view, to which he thus gives expression. Though every effect produced by causes not within the course of nature is miraculous, we may conceive of a difference in the circumstances in which these causes are called into operation, and in the degree in which the supernatural energy requires to be exerted. Between the healing of a disease, for example, and the raising of a dead person to life, there exists a most palpable distinction. The former might have been effected in the course of time by the efforts of human skill. The miracle consisted in the cure being produced instantaneously and altogether independently of the use of adequate means. But to the re-animation of one who had been really dead, no mere created power could possibly pretend, under any circumstances, or by the application of any means whatever. This distinction is clearly supported by what is stated, Mark vi. 5: "And he could there do *οὐδεμίαν δύναμιν*, no mighty

“*work*, save that he laid his hand upon a few sick “folk, and healed them;” and by the declaration of Luke, Acts xix. 11: “And God wrought *ἐννάμεις* τε “*οὐ τὰς τυχοῦσας*, *special miracles*, by the hands of “Paul.”

To the production of more extraordinary and astonishing miracles of this description, the *χαρίσμα* we are now considering was applied. The restoration of the limbs or of the senses; the resuscitation of the dead; the innocuous use of empoisoned liquor; the dispossession of demons; the infliction of blindness, and even of death itself, as in the case of Ananias and Sapphira—were such stupendous effects of omnipotent intervention as could not but claim for those, in connection with whose ministry they were produced, all the deference which was due to teachers sent from God.

This view of the distinction between the two gifts, which was not unnoticed by Chrysostom, is acquiesced in by Calvin, Schlichting, Crell, Grotius, Hammond, Heydenreich, Macleod, and, on the whole, by Bilroth.

The third gift assigned to Faith, as its principle of operation, is *προφητεία*, PROPHECY. In a former Lecture it was shown, that the term prophecy is employed in Scripture with great latitude of application. To determine its signification in this passage, we must be careful not to confound it with another acceptation in which it is used in this same Epistle. In chapter xi. 4, 5; xiv. 1, 3, 4, 5, 22, 24, 31, 32, 37, 39, it is taken in the laxer sense of public teaching, in what way soever that teaching was exercised, whether by

expounding the Scriptures of the Old Testament; discoursing of the great facts and doctrines of the gospel; administering consolation; or exhorting to the performance of duty. Universal edification was its immediate and grand design. Hence it is so highly estimated by the apostle; and is, on this account, specially contradistinguished from the gift of tongues, the utility of which, except under certain circumstances, he more than questions. Those who were prophets, in this acceptation of the term, differed in nothing from succeeding pastors and teachers, or ordinary ministers in after ages, except in the enjoyment of a supernatural influence, which, though it did not elevate them to the rank of those who were gifted with the "word of wisdom" and the "word of knowledge," and thus render them infallible, nevertheless supplied the defects under which they naturally laboured, and qualified them *ex promptu* to minister instruction to the church. It is only necessary diligently to collate the several aspects under which the subject is presented in the fourteenth chapter, to be convinced that this is the only view that can be taken of it, which does not involve it in insuperable difficulties.

In the same sense the word "prophesying" is used, when the female members of the church are supposed to have engaged in it (ch. xi. 5): "Every woman, that prayeth or prophesieth with her head uncovered, dishonoureth her head." Most, indeed, interpret the passage to signify merely their joining in the public prayers and praises as a part of the congregation: but such a construction would never have been put upon

it, had it not been to make it harmonize with the prohibition, ch. xiv. 34: "Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak." Were it not for this latter passage, we should unquestionably have interpreted the fifth verse just as we do the fourth, of actual praying and preaching. The phraseology is identical; and there appears no reason why we should dispute the fact of certain female members of the Corinthian church actually engaging in these exercises. It was not the object of the apostle, however, at this stage of his argument, to condemn the practice. Having introduced it, he exposes the gross violation of eastern decorum of which they were guilty in appearing unveiled before the assembly, and reserves the express condemnation of the practice for the close of his instructions on the subject of public worship.

It is certain, however, that no such acceptance can be attached to *προφητεία* in the catalogue of supernatural gifts, since, in the obvious relation in which it there stands to *πίστις*, the term must signify a peculiar endowment, in the use of which a degree of confidence was requisite, corresponding to that which was required for the performance of miracles. That this was necessary in order to qualify the primitive teachers to communicate to the churches the ordinary instructions with which they were inspired, will not be maintained. In what sense, then, are we to understand *προφητεία* but in its highest bearing—the disclosure of future events? The position which the apostle assigns to prophecy between "miracles" and "the discerning of spirits;" his classing it along with mysteries, know-



ledge, and faith of the highest description (ch. xiii. 2); and his distinguishing it from doctrine on the one hand, and from revelation and knowledge on the other (chap. xiv. 6); clearly show, that, in all these passages, he intended it to be taken in a superior sense to that in which he employs it, when describing the more usual mode of communicating public instruction. But there is no other, except that of predicting future events, which is not included in one or other of the terms, which he here employs. That there existed, in the apostolic age, an order of men who possessed the gift of predicting future events, is beyond dispute. We are told (Acts xi. 27, 28), “And in these days  
“came prophets from Jerusalem unto Antioch. And  
“there stood up one of them named Agabus, and  
“signified by the Spirit that there should be great  
“dearth throughout all the world: which came to pass  
“in the days of Claudius Cæsar.” Of this same Agabus we further read (chap. xxi. 11), “And as we  
“tarried there many days, there came down from  
“Judæa a certain prophet, named Agabus. And  
“when he was come unto us, he took Paul’s girdle,  
“and bound his own hands and feet, and said, Thus  
“saith the Holy Ghost, So shall the Jews at Jerusalem  
“bind the man that owneth this girdle, and shall  
“deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles.” It appears also from the first Epistle to Timothy, that persons endowed with the gift of prophecy were specially excited to give utterance to predictions respecting the eminent service which that young disciple would render to the Church, (ch. i. 18; iv. 14.) With this prophetic gift Paul himself was endowed, in



virtue of which he was enabled clearly to predict the apostasy (1 Tim. iv. 1); and the rise, arrogance, and destruction of Antichrist (2 Thess. ii.); and John, the beloved disciple, possessed it in so eminent a degree, that the Apocalypse, which we have from his pen, ranks with the very first of the Old Testament prophecies. Now without the special assurance (*πίστις*) that they were divinely called to deliver these predictions, and that God would, in due time, carry them into fulfilment, they could not have ventured to publish them to the world. By uttering or recording them, they staked their own reputation in all future time on their accomplishment or non-fulfilment. It is, therefore, not without reason, that this gift is assigned to "faith" as its operative principle.

The last of the gifts, to the exercise of which the extraordinary faith specified by the apostle was necessary, is *διακρίσεως πνευμάτων*, "DISCERNING OF SPIRITS." The same principle on which we accounted for the use of the plural in reference to two of the preceding gifts will apply to the present: the occasions for its exercise being various. It consisted in the faculty of distinguishing persons who really spoke from inspiration from such as merely pretended to it. As in the case of Simon Magus, who, having witnessed the wonderful effects which resulted from the laying on of the hands of the apostles, was desirous of possessing the same power, in order that he might feed his vanity and increase his wealth, so it cannot be doubted that the excitement which was produced by the exhibition of the gifts in the Corinthian and other churches,

provoked many to imitate the spirit and actions of such as possessed them. Nor is it at all improbable, that numbers became the dupes of enthusiasm, and actually believed that they were the subjects of a divine impulse, while they spake from their own spirit. Against the influence of both descriptions of persons, it was highly important the first disciples should be put on their guard; but in the circumstances in which the church then was, this could only be effectually done by a positive determination on the part of the Omniscient Searcher of hearts, through such instruments as he should select for the purpose. Where the apostles were present, being possessed of this and all the other gifts, they could at once detect impostors and persons who were deceiving both themselves and others; but in their absence, and in the non-possession of their writings, by proper attention to which the church has since been able to judge of those who have pretended to inspiration, as well as of the truth of doctrine, a special order of divinely-accredited men was required. We say *divinely-accredited*: because without this the disciples might have been imposed upon by pretensions to this endowment equally as in regard to any of the others. Wherein their credentials consisted, we are not informed; but we may suppose, that, in many instances, they received the sanction of the apostles, or that of others who were known to be inspired; or, that the effects produced, in most instances, by the exercise of the gift itself on those who merely pretended to a supernatural impulse, were such as to convince all who witnessed them of the justness of their claims.

The reason why teachers are here called *πνεύματα*, "spirits," is, that all who were selected by God to impart instruction to the primitive church were endowed with one or other of the extraordinary gifts of the Holy Spirit. When they spake, they spake *ἐν πνεύματι*, by the Spirit, or under the influence of inspiration; and received the designation from their being the subjects of this influence. The term only occurs in this acceptation in two other passages of the New Testament: in the first (2 Thess. ii. 2), the apostle warns the brethren not to suffer themselves to be thrown into perturbation respecting the immediate appearance of Christ, either *διὰ πνεύματος*, by any one pretending to a divine revelation, by a pretended verbal communication from the apostles, or by a letter purporting to have proceeded from their pen. In the other (1 John iv. 1, 2, 3), the Christians generally are thus exhorted: "Beloved, believe not, *παντὶ πνεύματι*, "every spirit, but try, *τὰ πνεύματα*, the spirits, whether "they are of God: because many false prophets are "gone out into the world. Hereby know ye the Spirit "of God: every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ "is come in the flesh is of God: and every spirit that "confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, "is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, "whereof ye have heard that it should come; and "even now is it already in the world." By placing the *ψευδοπροφήται*, "false prophets," in contrast with the *πνεύματα*, "spirits," which were of God, it is evident, that by the latter he means teachers really endowed with the gifts of the Spirit.

It may be asked, however: In what respect was

such an eminent degree of faith required for the exercise of this gift of spiritual discernment? We reply: First, because it was necessary that the persons who were endowed with it should be infallibly certain of the correctness of their judgment in given cases, before they proceeded to deliver a decision. And, Secondly, because without such assurance they would have been ill qualified to meet the opposition which they must have experienced on the part of the false teachers and their partisans. Their office was not merely to detect, but to expose—not merely to discern, but to present the reality of the imposture to the discernment of others.

Some have referred the case of Peter's detection of the hypocrisy of Ananias and Sapphira, and Paul's exposure of the hidden wickedness of Elymas, to this gift; and Macknight attributes to it what is said 1 Cor. xiv. 25, respecting the effect produced upon the mind of a heathen, who should hear the truth intelligibly and forcibly taught in his native language; but the peculiar and appropriated signification of the term *πνεῦμα* in our present text, and in those to which we have just adverted, proves that such applications cannot be philologically sustained.

There are yet two *χαρίσματα*, forming the *third class* in the catalogue, the examination of which will occupy what remains of the time allotted for the present Lecture.

Of these the first is *γένη γλωσσῶν*, rendered in our version: "DIVERS KINDS OF TONGUES,"—a gift, to which no ordinary degree of attention has of late been

attracted, both by the philological investigations, which it has originated in Germany, and by the renewed claims to its possession, which have been advanced in our own country. As the latter aspect of the subject will properly come before us in our concluding Lecture, when the pretensions that have been made to inspiration subsequent to the apostolic age will be examined, our present observations will be confined to the gift itself, as exhibited in the New Testament, and the views, which have been taken of it by those, who have professed to determine the question on purely philological and historical grounds.

Respecting the nature of this gift, it does not appear that any essential difference of opinion obtained in the early ages of the church. Whenever it is referred to either by the Greek or Latin Fathers, it is always taken for granted that it consisted in the ability imparted to certain members of the first churches to give utterance to divine things in languages which they had never learned. The numerous succeeding writers, who have treated on the subject, have viewed it in the same light; and it was reserved for modern times to present it under aspects totally at variance with the generally received opinion. The first who excited public notice by the novelty of his hypothesis was C. G. Bardili,<sup>1</sup> of the University of Tübingen, in a small tract on the primitive signification of the word *προφήτης* as used by Plato, which he applies to the interpretation of the fourteenth chapter of the first Epistle to the Corinthians. Conceiving that there is

(1) Significatus primitivus vocis *προφήτου* ex Platone erutus cum novo tentamine interpretandi 1 Cor. xiv. Gott. 1786.



a difference between the phrases *γλώσση λαλεῖν*, “to speak with a tongue,” and *ἐτέραις γλώσσαις λαλεῖν*, “to speak with other tongues,” while he explains the latter according to the common interpretation, he considers the former to signify nothing more than the employment of the tongue as an organ of utterance to unknown sounds. The gift, which he represents to have been supernatural, excited those who possessed it to such a pitch of enthusiasm, that they were utterly deprived of consciousness; so that becoming the passive instruments of the Spirit, they discoursed or prayed in loud, broken, and half articulated tones, under convulsive affections of the body, resembling those to which the heathen priests were subject, when delivering the oracles of the gods. These accompanying phenomena he infers from certain circumstances mentioned in the second chapter of the Acts, and the passage referred to in the Epistle to the Corinthians; and the construction which he puts upon *γλῶσσα* as signifying the organ of speech, is derived from the 9th verse, where it is undeniably used in this acceptance.

The view of the subject thus advanced by Bardili was adopted by Eichhorn in his review of the work:¹ —only with this difference, that he rejected the distinction which had been made between *γλῶσσα*, “tongue,” and *γλῶσσαι*, “tongues;” and, agreeably to his well-known rationalistic principles, denying that there was any thing supernatural in the case, he resolved it entirely into the effects of bodily distemper, a heated imagination, or pagan habits, which many of

(1) Bibliothek der Bib. Liter. 2 B. 5 St. s. 757—859, and again 6 B. 3 St. s. 5.



the Corinthians had contracted, while frequenting the temples previous to their conversion to Christianity. Ziegler, Böhme, Ammon, and many others, followed on the same side; but the theory was powerfully attacked, and its leading positions completely refuted by Storr,<sup>1</sup> who successfully vindicated the supernatural origin and importance of the spiritual gifts conferred upon the Christians at Corinth; so that, since his time, it has not been advocated by any writer of note. Nor can it indeed be expected, that a notion so extravagant in itself, so destitute of foundation in Scripture, and so palpably at variance with the whole genius of Christianity, would continue to receive countenance except from those who are determined, even at the risk of sacrificing their literary reputation, to expel every thing miraculous from the Bible; or from such as realize, in their physical or mental constitution, the description which Eichhorn and Bardili furnish of what they considered to be the phenomena of the case. Is it for a moment to be supposed, that, when the apostle declares, 1 Cor. xiv. 5: "I would that ye all spake with tongues," his meaning is, that the whole community, or all the gifted persons, should assume frantic attitudes, and, by the irrational use of their tongues, give expression to sounds which were absolutely unintelligible? or that, when he thanks God, that he spake with tongues more than they all, he would be understood seriously to affirm, that he surpassed them all in the number and vehemence of the inarticulate tones, which he enunciated in a state of ecstatic elevation? Did the disciples on the day of

(1) In Paulus Neue Repertorium für bibl. und morgenl. Lit. 3 Th. S. 281-357.

Pentecost require the supernatural energy of the Holy Spirit to enable them merely to move their tongues in an unintelligible manner? Was this the amount of the gift bestowed upon Cornelius and his family, and upon the disciples of John, who were rebaptized at Ephesus? or, if inarticulate speech be intended, what are we to understand by *γένη γλῶσσων*, *divers kinds of inarticulate speech*? How could they really differ, if they were alike unintelligible?

When the apostle speaks of uttering by the tongue, *διὰ τῆς γλώσσης*, “words or discourse easy to be understood,” (ver. 9,) he is not opposing the articulate and intelligent use of speech to that which is inarticulate and unintelligible, but to the “uncertain sound of the trumpet,” mentioned in the preceding verse; and his assertion, that “there are, it may be, so many kinds of voices in the world, and none of them is without signification,” (ver. 10,) shows, that he never meant to extend his argument beyond the appropriation of real languages. That in this passage, *φωνή*, which primarily signifies *sound*, then *voice*, must be taken in the sense of *language* or *dialect*, is evident: for it would not be true, that there are no sounds or voices in the world (*ἄφωνων*) without signification, according as these terms are usually understood. The meaning is: every language is intelligible to some nation or other; and it is only to persons who are ignorant of it, that its words are destitute of signification. This the apostle illustrates in a very forcible manner: “Therefore, if “I know not the meaning of the voice (*τῆς φωνῆς*, “*of the language*,) I shall be to him that speaketh a “barbarian. and he that speaketh shall be a barbarian

“unto me.” (Ver. 11.) We shall be like two foreigners, who do not understand each other’s tongue. The very use of the terms “interpret” and “interpretation,” as applied to this subject, also proves that he could only have intelligent language in view:—it being a contradiction in terms to speak of interpreting that which has no meaning. In short, the whole of his argument proceeds upon the principle, that the tongues in question were real languages, which, how properly soever they might be used in the presence of those by whom they were understood, could not possibly serve as vehicles for imparting edification to such as were ignorant of them. For their benefit the “interpretation of tongues” was necessary, in cases in which the tongues were used.

Another hypothesis formed with a view to explain the nature of this gift, is that according to which *γλῶσσαι* signify single terms or expressions, which are either foreign, obsolete, obscure, or not in common use, and consequently not understood by all, but which poets, animated speakers, or persons in a high state of excitement, might be expected to employ. This opinion was first broached by the celebrated Herder;<sup>1</sup> it was adopted among others by De Wette; and has recently been espoused and discussed with great learning and candour by Professor Bleek, of the University of Berlin.<sup>2</sup> The arguments which he advances in his dissertation on the subject, are principally founded on the fact, which admits of no dispute, that in the Greek and Latin classics, *γλῶσσαι*, and *glossæ*, often denote

(1) Von der Gabe der Sprachen am ersten christl. Pfingstfeste. Riga, 1794.

(2) Ullman’s Studien und Kritiken, Heft 1.

antiquated terms which required interpretation ; idioms or provincial modes of expression, which were understood by those only who lived in the places where they prevailed ; the diction peculiar to poets ; and specially the poetical costume in which the Pythian priestess originally presented her oracles, but which was afterwards exchanged for that of prose. In support of these acceptations, he produces unequivocal quotations from Galen, Marcus Antoninus, Aristotle, Sextus Empiricus, Plutarch, Quintilian, and Pollux ; and, certainly, were we to confine ourselves to the simple philology of the question, as furnished from these extraneous sources, it might be difficult to disturb the position which he occupies : but we no sooner bring to bear upon it the various historical circumstances, under which the subject is introduced to our notice in the New Testament, and one or two points of New Testament philology, than it becomes totally untenable.

Applying his principle, however, to the statements of the sacred writers, the Professor attempts to show, that when persons are said to have spoken with *γλῶσσαι*, the meaning is, that they gave expression to their new religious views and feelings in language, which differed as much from that of common life as lyric poetry did from simple prose ; and as they were men of plain habits, who had possessed no literary advantages, and from whom the use of such a style was not to be expected, their possession of the gift could be ascribed to no other cause than the supernatural influence of the Holy Spirit, whom Christ had promised to bestow on his followers. By the extraordinary disclosures that were made to them, and the

extraordinary emotions of spiritual gratitude and joy to which these disclosures gave rise, they were excited to bursts of feeling in the loftiest strains of praise. While thus engaged, their higher faculties were so overpowered by supernatural influence, that they lost the possession of intelligent consciousness, and employed expressions which were at once unknown to themselves, and unintelligible to their hearers. When this state of ecstasy subsided, they possessed no recollection of what they had uttered, consequently were unable, without receiving the gift of interpretation, to translate or explain their discourse. The end to be attained by the collation of this *χαρίσμα* was twofold: a demonstration to unbelievers of the indwelling power of the Holy Spirit, and the personal edification of those who possessed it.

Such is briefly the theory of Bleek, which is invested with a considerable degree of interest by the coincidence existing between the results of his learned researches, and the light in which the "gift of tongues" is viewed by some in this country, who have recently published upon the subject, without being at all aware of the philological principle on which his hypothesis is founded.

To the adoption of this theory, or of any of its modifications as held by Neander,<sup>1</sup> Olshausen,<sup>2</sup> and Billroth,<sup>3</sup> insuperable objections must occur to those, who take into consideration all the circumstances of the case, as presented to our view in the Scriptures.

(1) *Geschichte der Pflanzung*, &c.

(2) *Commentar zu Ap. Gesch.* 2. 4—11; and in *Ullmann's Studien*, 2 B. 3 Heft.

(3) *Ut sup.*



Nor, indeed, is it possible to account for the sanction which it has received from these biblical scholars, on any other ground than the influence of a mystical notion, which seems to predominate among most of the recent German supernaturalists, that those who experienced the extraordinary influences of the Spirit, had their intelligent consciousness repressed, and enjoyed most of the Divine life in the soul, when destitute of the power of intelligent development.

It is obvious, that if the term *γλῶσσα* is to be applied in its peculiar classical acceptation to all the passages of the New Testament in which the subject occurs, it will follow that the apostles and others exercised the power in certain forms, before they were endowed with it in others. In the promise made by our Saviour, Mark xvi. 17, it is expressly stated, that those who believed should speak *γλῶσσαις καιναῖς*, "with *new* tongues." And in the account given of the phenomena on the day of Pentecost, it is as expressly declared, that the disciples began to speak, *ἐτέραις γλώσσαις*, "with *other* tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." (Acts ii. 4.) Now if the word rendered "tongues" signifies by itself exalted, unusual, or unintelligible modes of speech, the addition of the qualifying adjectives "new" and "other" was quite unnecessary; or if they be allowed to retain their usual force, their adoption necessarily goes to prove, that other modes of the same description had previously been employed by the disciples—the bare mention of which is its own refutation.

That the *γλῶσσα*, "tongues," with which they spoke on the day of Pentecost (Acts ii. 4), were identical



with *ἰδίαί διαλέκτοι*, the *vernacular languages*, (verses 6th and 8th,) of the different nations, specified by the sacred historian, is incontrovertibly evident from the declaration made ver. 11: "We hear them speaking, *ταῖς ἡμετέραις γλώσσαις*, in our own tongues." The fact, indeed, is admitted by Professor Bleek, who unsuccessfully attempts to get rid of the difficulty by the supposition, that Luke, not having been an eye-witness, may have stated the circumstances differently from the order of their occurrence. Those who insist on our adoption of the interpretation given of *γλῶσσα*, must, to be consistent, maintain that the terms and phrases selected from each of these foreign languages on this occasion, consisted exclusively of such as were antiquated and unintelligible (*ταῖς ἡμετέραις γλώσσαις*); yet the persons from the different nations, who heard them, found no difficulty in understanding them, but at once declared their import to be "the wonderful works of God." In the verse last quoted, the term is manifestly employed in its usual acceptation as signifying language generally, without any particular modification of meaning; and since it is used in reference to the same subject with that introduced at the commencement of the chapter, it would be a violation of all hermeneutical propriety to interpret it differently when it occurs there. But if the languages in which the disciples spoke on that occasion were the ordinary languages of the nations, many of the inhabitants of which were then present, and the miraculous collation of the ability to discourse in them was the fulfilment of the promise of Christ, it not only follows that this is the construction to be put upon the words of the

promise, which specifies "new tongues," but that the same construction must be put upon all the other passages, in which similar phraseology occurs. It follows, moreover, that the gift being the same wherever conferred, it had always the same object. But the object of its original bestowment appears from the unstrained purport of the narrative to have been to qualify the first Christians for the work of publishing the gospel in the different languages, spoken by those to whom they had access: consequently its future collation was designed to furnish the means of instruction to those, who must otherwise have been debarred from enjoying the benefit of their labours. Its importance to the members of the Church at Jerusalem, who were so soon to be scattered abroad amongst various nations, and who, when thus scattered, went every where preaching the word, (Acts viii. 4); to Cornelius and his family, who were thereby qualified to publish the glad tidings to the mixed population of Cæsarea, (ch. x. 44—46); and to the disciples at Ephesus, the much frequented capital of Ionia, (ch. xix. 6)—must be apparent to all.

The whole subject of the gift of tongues has been involved in much obscurity by unfounded assumptions respecting its appearance among the Corinthians, and the manner in which it is treated of by the apostle in the fourteenth chapter of his First Epistle to that church. It is taken for granted, that its exercise was designed to be a regular and standing part of divine worship, so that at each meeting of the church, if provision were made for interpretation, it would be proper to employ it; that one of its ends was self-edification;

that the person who used it had not the power of translating what he had spoken into the language generally known in the church, though he himself understood that language; that his understanding was perfectly dormant during the exercise—the gift being the prostration of human intellect; and that the utterance was the effect of an immediate operation of the Holy Spirit. But a definite and impartial view of the circumstances to which the reasoning of the apostle applies, and an unprejudiced examination of the meaning of his language, cannot but induce the conviction, that there is not the slightest ground for any of these positions.

The city of Corinth, being situated most advantageously for the purposes of trade, was a place of great resort by merchants from Asia and Africa, from Italy and other parts of Europe. Amongst its mixed population, a diversity of languages must have been spoken; and consequently very considerable scope afforded for the exercise of the gift in question. In their intercourse with unbelievers of different nations, those who possessed it would appropriately employ it; but its exercise in the church, in which the vernacular Greek was used, could only have been called for on special occasions, and even then it would have been proper to have confined it within narrow limits. It evidently appears, however, that many who had received this *χαρίσμα*, either at Corinth or elsewhere, abused it in the church at that place, to the gratification of their own vanity; obtruded themselves in numbers upon the attention of the assembly; interrupted the procedure of the worship; and thus prevented general edification.

It may, to some, appear unwarrantable to speak of the abuse of such a gift; but the apostle's reasoning clearly presupposes the fact. Though supernatural in its bestowment, the linguistical knowledge, which had thus been obtained, was permanently inherent in its possessors; and might be employed by them in the same way as that of any language which they might have acquired by ordinary means. In this respect the gifts of tongues, and the interpretation of tongues, differed essentially from the other *χαρίσματα*: a momentaneous illumination or impulse of the Spirit being, from their very nature, always indispensable to the exercise of the latter: whereas the former were constantly available without further miraculous intervention. The persons, therefore, who abused the gift, were not, at the time, under the Divine influence; they were actuated simply by their own spirit; and ungratefully applied to purposes of personal ostentation and ambition what, at some previous period, they had received from above for the purpose of advancing the cause of truth.

When the apostle refers to a person speaking, *γλώσση*, with a tongue, (1 Cor. xiv. 2, 4,) he is not sanctioning it as a stated exercise in the church; but only supposing the case of a foreign language being employed when no persons were present, except the speaker, to whom it was known. In such a case, whatever the individual might pretend or imagine, he was not really speaking to men: God alone knew the import of his discourse. He might derive benefit (*πνεύματι*) to his own mind by giving utterance to the sublime doctrines of the gospel, (which he could not

have done, had he not understood what he spoke,) but others, not being able to attach any ideas to his words, were unedified.

In the directions, which he gives with respect to the exercise of this gift, (vv. 13, 26, 28,) he evidently treats it as something which was occasional, and not as a stated or regular ordinance. There might be occasions, when a number of foreigners were present, which called for its introduction into the service: but even then he prescribes, that it should be restricted within certain limits, and that it should always be accompanied with an interpretation into the current Greek. In this way only could the meaning of what was expressed become profitable to the body of the church, (ver. 14.) He takes it for granted, that those, who spoke in these languages, might not know the Greek: being themselves foreigners, or at least not sufficiently versed in it to translate into it, in an edifying manner, what they had delivered in a foreign tongue. In such case, they were to pray for the additional gift of interpretation, if no one was present endowed with that faculty.

The opinion, that those who possessed the gift of tongues, were deprived of the use of their mental faculties, so as to be totally unconscious of what they said, while engaged in the exercise, cannot be held by any, who come, with unfettered minds, to the study of the sacred Scriptures. For assuredly there is nothing contained in these Scriptures, which, in the smallest degree, clashes with the principle, that the religion which they inculcate is, in all its aspects and bearings, "a reasonable service." It is represented as engaging,



maturing, and strengthening, never as prostrating, debilitating, or annihilating the powers which man has received from his Maker. Some, indeed, have imagined, that they discovered the contrary in the language of the apostle, (vv. 14—16), “For if I pray “in an unknown tongue, my spirit prayeth, but my “understanding is unfruitful. What is it then? “I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the “understanding also: I will sing with the spirit, and “I will sing with the understanding also. Else when “thou shalt bless with the spirit, how shall he that “occupieth the room of the unlearned say Amen at “thy giving of thanks, seeing he understandeth not “what thou sayest?” Here, it has been affirmed, we are pointedly taught, that it is possible for a person to be moved by the Spirit to give utterance to prayer or praise, while his understanding is perfectly inactive, and derives no benefit from the exercise. But nothing can be more alien from the sense of the passage. What the apostle means by τὸ πνεῦμά μου is neither the Holy Spirit moving him to speak, nor any spiritual endowment with which he was gifted, but, as the phrase signifies in other passages, in which it occurs, (Rom. i. 9; 1 Cor. v. 3; 2 Tim. iv. 22; Philem. 25,) his own mind with which he engaged in the service. By νοῦς, as contrasted with this, it is manifest he cannot mean his faculty of understanding—for it is comprehended under the former term πνεῦμα. The word must, therefore, signify the *meaning* or *sense* which he attached to the language he employed—an acceptance in which he uses the term, ver. 19. So far as he himself was concerned, he derived benefit—



connecting as he did intelligent ideas with the words to which he gave utterance ; but the meaning of what he uttered (*ἄκαρπος*) produced no fruit in the hearers, inasmuch as they did not understand him. It must be observed, however, the apostle is here only supposing a case, such as that which frequently presented itself in the church at Corinth—not that he would have it to be believed, that it ever occurred in his own experience. On the contrary, he avers, that whenever he engaged either in prayer or praise, it was in a way which was intelligible and consequently profitable both to himself and others—*τῷ πνεύματι—τῷ νοῷ*.

It was not the design of Paul to depreciate the gift of speaking in foreign languages. On the contrary, he was desirous that all who had received this gift should employ it on proper occasions ; but he declares, that, in relation to the edification of the church, it would not bear comparison with that of teaching in the vernacular tongue, (ver. 5.) It was a gift, which he himself enjoyed in an eminent degree, and which he used, when brought into contact with foreigners who understood no language but their own ; but *in the church* he would rather speak five words, in a manner that would convey his meaning to those who heard him, than ten thousand words in a language to which they were strangers, (vv. 18, 19.)

On the whole, we consider the gift of tongues to have been an endowment, by which those who received it were miraculously furnished with such a knowledge of languages, which they had never learned, as enabled them to communicate to those, by whom these languages were spoken, the glorious truths of the gospel

of Christ. Its impartation, which had been predicted by the prophet Isaiah, (xxviii. 11, 12 ; 1 Cor. xiv. 21,) took place on the day of Pentecost, and during the continuance of the first age of the church : and, while it lasted, not only presented a standing miracle to the view of unbelievers, but paved the way for the more rapid spread of Christianity in the world.

On the last of the gifts, *ἐρμηνεία γλωσσῶν*, THE INTERPRETATION OF TONGUES, it is not necessary to enlarge. It was merely a modification of that which has just engaged our attention, and could only be necessary on special occasions. When any one who had received the gift of speaking a language which was new to him, addressed an audience composed of such only as understood that language, no interpretation was required ; but if he spoke in a mixed assembly, it was necessary for general edification, that his discourse should be translated into a tongue or dialect intelligible to those who were unacquainted with that in which it had been delivered. Sometimes both endowments were combined in the same individual, but, in most instances, they appear to have been conferred on different persons. Thus the apostle directs (1 Cor. xiv. 13,) that he who speaks in a language unknown to an assembly, or, at least, to the bulk of those composing it, should pray (*ἵνα διερμηνεύῃ*) that he might be enabled to interpret, just as he had declared, ver. 5, that such a speaker would only be upon a par, in point of utility, with one who prophesied, if he furnished an interpretation of what he had delivered. He otherwise ordains, that, under present circumstances

at Corinth, one, whom, from the office, he designates *διερμηνευτής*, *an interpreter*, should convert, into the vernacular Greek, whatever might orderly be delivered in a foreign language, vv. 27, 28.

To conclude: the bestowment of these various *χαρίσματα* being, as the term imports, purely gratuitous; and having for its object the promotion of the spiritual good of the kingdom of Christ; not only those who possessed them, but all who were brought within the sphere of their influence, were bound to cherish feelings of lively gratitude to the Triune God, from whom they proceeded, and to whom alone they owed their efficiency. And as, with all the diversity which characterised them, there existed a blessed unity, it became both the gifted and those for whose benefit they were conferred, to maintain "the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."

## LECTURE V.

### INSPIRATION OF THE SCRIPTURES.

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I COR. X. 15.

*"I speak as to wise men : judge ye what I say."*

REVELATION appeals to the understanding as well as to the heart. It requires no man to believe without evidence. So far from shrinking from inquiry or inculcating prostration of intellect, it courts the fullest investigation, and submits its claims to be tried by the unbiassed exercise of the judging faculty. To the task of determining whether these claims are divine, it uniformly assumes that faculty to be competent; and while it furnishes abundant criteria by which to arrive at a satisfactory conclusion respecting its celestial origin, it clearly indicates the cause to which, in all instances, its rejection is to be traced, and emphatically pronounces the doom of those who shall be found chargeable with such rejection. "This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil." (John iii. 19.)

Hitherto our attention has been directed to some of the leading questions connected with the exertion of supernatural influence in general, as it respects the various modes in which a knowledge of the will of God was imparted to those who were honoured to be its original recipients. We now proceed to bring under your notice the exertion of the same influence in regard to its operation upon such of these recipients as were divinely commissioned to deposit in writing the knowledge thus acquired, together with other points of knowledge, which they had opportunities of acquiring from ordinary sources, and which Infinite Wisdom deemed fit should be preserved for the instruction of future generations. Much of what was communicated by Jehovah to mankind in ancient times, being designed merely to answer temporary purposes, was confined within the breast of the inspired individuals, or within the narrower or more extensive circle with which they were placed in immediate contact. Of all that the holy and devoted Enoch was inspired to prophecy, nothing, that can be depended upon as genuine, remains, but the small fragment preserved in the Epistle of Jude;<sup>1</sup> of the prophecies of Ahijah the Shilonite, Shemaiah, Azariah, Hanani,<sup>2</sup> and others who were the subjects of Divine inspiration, only a few scanty portions have come down to our times; and even the visions of Iddo, though committed to writing, doubtless most interesting in their character, and serving as a book of infallible appeal at the time the writer of the second book of Chronicles lived,<sup>3</sup> have

(1) See Note L.

(2) 1 Kings xi. 29—39; xii. 15, 22; 2 Chron. xi. 2; xii. 7; xv. 1; xvi. 7.

(3) 2 Chron. xi. 29; xii. 22.

long ago irrecoverably perished. In like manner, how little comparatively do we possess of the inspired discourses of the apostles of Christ! From most of these heaven-taught ambassadors not so much as a single word has been transmitted to us. Like the holy men of God, who flourished before the birth of our Lord, some of whose names have just been specified, they laboured each in his own individual sphere; and their labours were blessed for the establishment, and promotion of the cause of God during their lifetime, and, after their death, through the instrumentality of the disciples, who learned the truths of Christianity from their inspired lips, and conveyed it to the generation which followed.

It would seem unreasonable to maintain, that the documents, which compose the canon of the New Testament are the only writings that proceeded from the pens of those to whom they are ascribed. They had, in all probability, frequent occasions to send written messages or shorter epistles to individual Christians, some of which may have been inspired, and others not, according to the nature of their contents, or the exigency of the circumstances under which they were written; but these communications, having answered the momentary or more limited ends, which they were intended to accomplish, were never published—it not having been deemed proper that they should be preserved for any purposes of future and general edification. It even appears certain, that an epistle was sent by Paul to the church at Corinth prior to the first in our canon, but which now no longer exists. The point, indeed, is contested, and many respectable authorities



may be produced in favour of the opinion, that the document to which the apostle refers, 1 Cor. v. 9, is no other than that which he was then writing ; but no construction can, in my judgment, be more violent, or further removed from that which the language naturally suggests. In fact, we cannot well conceive how such a construction ever could have obtained, but for the influence of a covert, if not openly avowed indisposition to admit, that any writing can possibly have been lost which was penned by an inspired apostle. But what real difficulty is there in this, or any other supposable case, more than in the universally admitted fact, that a portion only of the gracious and Divine words, which proceeded out of the mouth of the Saviour himself, has been preserved to us ? How important soever may have been the instructions communicated in the lost Epistle to the Corinthian church in their bearing upon certain local and private points, we cannot imagine, that, in a general aspect, or as it regards the edification of the church in all future ages, they possessed half the interest of much that Christ himself taught during his public ministry, respecting which we read, Mark iv. 33: "And with MANY SUCH parables spake he the word unto them, as they were able to bear it." Yet what he thus taught has not been transmitted for our instruction. In reference to this and all other matters of Divine ordination, it is our wisdom to acquiesce in the exact modes and proportions in which they have been administered, and on no occasion to adopt any hypothesis, to uphold which it would be necessary to misconstrue, or do violence to any part of the word of God.

When investigating the different modes in which the Deity supernaturally revealed his will in ancient times, we took for granted the authenticity and credibility of the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament, from which alone all our knowledge of the subject is derived. We appealed to them as sources containing divinely authorized statements respecting facts of history, and points of doctrine and practice, which are essential to our instruction and moral improvement as responsible agents under the government of God. We now advance a step further, and inquire on what ground we attribute to these Scriptures divine authority? What are the characters of that supernatural stamp with which they are believed to be impressed? In other words: what is the nature of that inspiration under the influence of which it is affirmed they were written, and which is regarded as imparting to them an infallibility and authority to which no pretensions can be made by any merely human writings?

In treating this part of our subject it is not necessary to enter into a discussion of the evidences of Divine Revelation any more than it was necessary, when treating of those divisions which have already come under our consideration. We still assume it as matter of fact, that the books of Scripture were written by those whose names they bear, and that what they contain is entitled to our belief on grounds of a purely historical nature. But it must be obvious, that, before moving the question respecting the nature of inspiration, considered in the more limited point of view, which restricts it to the qualification of the sacred writers infallibly to embody in the forms of written

language those truths and facts, which it pleased God should be transmitted to after ages, it is necessary to examine the evidence on the ground of which such high and paramount claims are advanced on their behalf. For not only is such the more logical method of proceeding, but it has this additional recommendation, that during the process of investigation to which the evidence will be submitted, much general information will be obtained respecting the subject itself, the importance of which, in preparing the mind for its direct and immediate discussion, cannot fail to be appreciated.

The proofs of the inspiration of the Scriptures naturally admit of a twofold division: those which are merely *presumptive*, resting on a more or less probable basis, and deducible in the way of fair logical inference from certain incontestible criteria, by which the Scriptures are distinguished; and such as are *positive*, consisting in authoritative affirmations made respecting these Scriptures by those whose divine credentials have been fully established.

What we propose in the present Lecture is to review some of the leading arguments which afford *presumptive* evidence in favour of the Divine Inspiration of the Bible.

The first of the *à priori* arguments to be adduced is: the reason of the case. If God has been pleased to make a revelation of his will to mankind, it must have been made in such a way as to secure the great ends of its impartation. In the relation in which we stand

to him, as the subjects of his moral government, it is of supreme moment, that we possess positive and accurate information respecting his character, the principles of his legislation, the precise nature and modes of those duties which he requires of us, and what treatment we have reason to expect from him both in this and the future world. In the absence of such information, it would be absolutely impossible for us fully to ascertain our moral relations, or satisfactorily to determine the character of moral actions. In proportion as we might indulge in processes of reflection and reasoning, our minds would become the abode of anxious solicitude; no well-grounded hope would cheer or animate our bosom; the present would be charged with inconsistency and contradiction; while over the future nothing would hang but dense clouds of doubt or despair. To relieve us from the perplexities, which our natural circumstances obviously involve, and of which the wisest of the ancient philosophers were painfully conscious; to furnish us with palpable evidence of his own existence; to impart to us the knowledge of that moral constitution of things over which he presides; to acquaint us with our obligations and liabilities as free agents subject to his control, and amenable at his tribunal; to communicate to us intelligence respecting the provision which he has mercifully made for our deliverance from the evils which we feel we have entailed upon ourselves by sin; and to unveil the otherwise impenetrable mystery, which envelopes the future issues of human conduct:—these are objects infinitely worthy of an all-wise, holy, and benevolent Deity. Whether we regard the capabilities of the

human soul, or the character of its Omnipotent Creator, it seems diametrically opposed to every dictate of sound reason to suppose, that no means would be employed to remove the obstacles, which naturally intervene between man and the ascertainment of these necessary moral truths. Such means the Scriptures profess to furnish. They bear on their very surface the avowed character of a Divine revelation. They develope statements regarding God and his intelligent and responsible creation, which it is of the highest importance for man to know: statements, which every rightly constituted mind must intuitively perceive are precisely adapted to the actual condition and circumstances of mankind, and which it cannot but instinctively feel to be most desirable should rest on a fixed and stable foundation. But no such basis can exist in the absence of inspiration. Except we are assured that God actually did reveal the truths in question; in other words, that the books in which they are contained were written under his express sanction, and by the aid of his divine influence, and that they were sealed with the infallible stamp of his authority, we must still labour under the painful apprehension, that, notwithstanding all the intrinsic excellence, and admirable adaptation, which we discover in them, they may have originated in human sagacity. The statements which they contain respecting our highest interests may be true in themselves, but nothing less than a well-grounded conviction that they proceed from a divine origin can satisfy the reflecting and inquisitive mind. The question, Has GOD spoken? is that which must ever unavoidably press upon it.



The inspiration of the written documents in which the revelations of the Divine will are deposited is essential to their character as an infallible authoritative rule of faith. If the instruments by whom they were penned merely wrote according to the best of their native ability ; if what they have stated be simply the result of their own observation ; or, if the arguments and proofs which they employ be referable to no higher source than the bare exercise of their intellectual and moral faculties—it matters not how high might be our opinion of their honesty and ability—they could not advance any authoritative claims on our submission, nor furnish us with an unerring standard to which we should be bound to conform either in belief or practice. Or, admitting that the prophets and apostles were divinely commissioned to teach their contemporaries, and that what they thus taught was binding upon the conscience of every one who heard them, it is nevertheless evident, that their doctrines and precepts could not possibly possess any direct obligatory power over us, except they had been handed down to us in the shape of a standing rule, expressly vindicating to itself the infallible claims of Divine authority. They must be embodied in documents to which a final appeal may safely be made as the records of God. Nothing but “Thus saith the Lord,” either in the way of direct communication, or through the medium of those whom he has charged and qualified, without lapse or failure, to instruct us, can oblige us to surrender our judgment, or yield a cordial and unreserved obedience. And as, in the absence of uninterrupted miraculous agency, this



instruction could only be infallibly conveyed to future generations through the medium of written documents, to prove effectual in securing its ends, it must, as thus transmitted, be invested with absolute autocracy. It is the bar before which every question of a religious nature must be brought, and from which there is no appeal: to the decision, which is there pronounced, every mind must unhesitatingly bow. "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." Isaiah viii. 20.

Another presumptive evidence of the inspiration of the Scriptures is derived from the incongruity of supposing, that such writings could have proceeded from the pens of those to whom they are ascribed, except they had been the subjects of supernatural influence. It is not our design to enter into an investigation of the contents of each book which is found in the sacred canon, or even of the entire contents of any one of such books. Their claims will be considered under a separate head of argument. Nor do we intend to discuss the subject of the style, with respect to which we would only remark, that such are its characteristic features in the different writers by whom the Scriptures were composed, and such its complete harmony with their age, rank, and culture, that it forms one of the most satisfactory evidences of the authenticity of their writings. But the point of view in which we now regard them respects the peculiar nature of the leading subjects which they develop, compared with the native character of the penmen, and the circumstances in which they are known to have been placed

previous to their being engaged in making such disclosures to the world. The simple consideration of the nature of some of the subjects, which incidentally arrest our attention, forces upon the mind the conviction, that the knowledge of them never could have originated in the operations of their own intellect, or been derived from a merely human source. Without jeopardizing the authority of Scripture by making it dependent on any modern theory of geology, it cannot but strike every candid mind, as a remarkable circumstance, that several of the statements contained in the Mosaic account of the formation of the globe exactly tally with those results at which, after most laborious researches, some of the ablest scientific men of the present age have arrived, but the knowledge of which Moses cannot be supposed to have obtained in any other way than by Divine revelation, or, at all events, from sources originally supplied by previous revelations. How could the Jewish Legislator have acquired his knowledge of facts, the truth of which has only recently been established on a scientific basis? He was learned indeed in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, (Acts vii. 22,) but we possess no evidence whatever by which to prove, that the philosophy of that people clearly or distinctly recognised these facts. From the accounts furnished us by Diodorus Siculus, Diogenes Laertius, Jamblicus, and other ancient writers, who have treated of Egyptian affairs, it is evident, that Moses might have ransacked all the archives of the country, without lighting upon any cosmogony corresponding to that which he has given in the beginning of Genesis.

Most of the facts, to which reference has just been made, took place before the creation of mankind—consequently were not susceptible of human testimony. Nor could the knowledge of them have been the result of early scientific research: for the investigation of subjects connected with natural history was too limited and partial in the ancient world, to admit of such discoveries as the facts in question involve; and it is notorious, that it is only within the space of a few years, that they have been satisfactorily established.<sup>1</sup>

The whole system of Hebrew theology, as laid down in the Pentateuch, likewise corroborates our position. It is in the highest degree improbable, that Moses could have derived his sublime ideas of the unity, self-existence, and moral perfections of Jehovah, the universal superintendence of Divine Providence, and the great principles of moral action, which are so prominently exhibited in his writings, from a school in which polytheism, idolatry, and human degeneracy reigned with the most unlimited sway. The utter rejection, too, of all superstition, and the uncompromising demands which are made on the homage of the heart, are points which we cannot conceive to have spontaneously sprung up in the mind of an Egyptian philosopher. At all events, it requires the utmost stretch of credulity to believe, that, circumstanced as he afterwards was among a people, who had evidently been brought up under the influence of Egyptian ideas and customs, he would have attempted, or would have succeeded in the attempt, to enforce such pure and

(1) See an Argument to prove the truth of the Christian Revelation, by the Earl of Rosse. London: 1834.

exalted principles of religious belief, or a code of laws so perfectly different from any to which they had been accustomed, and which bore on its very front, characters of restraint that the least degree of foresight must have shown would prove intolerably irksome to the turbulent and licentious passions of the human breast. In fact, the constitution of the Hebrew state, its grounds of separation from the rest of the world, the sublimity of its religious creed, the design of its ceremonial observances, the principles of its penal code, its purity, strictness, equity, benevolence, and wisdom, discover such a superiority to every system then existing, and a totality of character so perfectly unique, that to attribute its origination to any human source would be to contradict every principle of fair and unprejudiced induction. To no human circumstances in the history of the times, can it with the least semblance of argument be traced.

In proof of our general position, let us select another portion of the Old Testament Scriptures—the Book of Psalms. Of the collection of sacred odes contained in this book, it may, without exaggeration, be affirmed, that it is altogether unrivalled. Not only does the religious poetry of all the other nations of antiquity fall infinitely short of it with respect to the pure elements of devotion; but the subsequent hymnology both of the Jewish and Christian churches has nothing that will bear to be compared with it. Were we to select the most admirable psalms of mere human composition, and from these to make a further selection of the most exquisite and felicitous portions, and then estimate their merits in relation to the compositions of

“the sweet singer of Israel,” how vast the distance at which they would stand from these divine songs! Even those poetical effusions which have been inspired by the devotional flame caught at the altar of David, lose immeasurably when placed by the side of the inimitable models after which they have been formed. The dignity, the solemnity, the force, the pathos, the splendour, the elevation, the sweetness, the tenderness, the inexpressible aspirings after moral purity and God, by which these models are characterised, irresistibly carry the mind to a higher source than mere poetical genius in the Hebrew monarch—even to that Divine Agent to whom he unequivocally ascribes his inspiration. (2 Sam. xxiii. 2.) The more we catch the spirit of these sublime odes, and the more our moral feelings are in harmony with the sentiments to which they give expression, the more we become conscious of a proximity to the fountain of eternal blessedness, and the more our affections are elevated above the grovelling objects of sense.

Of the inspiration of the Hebrew prophets, strong presumptive proof is supplied by the circumstances connected with the discharge of their official duties, as well as by the nature of the messages they were called to deliver. How different their character and predictions from those which distinguished the vates and the oracular responses of the heathen! They were the guardians and interpreters of no oracle. The delivery of their prophecies was not purchased by costly presents, confined to certain days and places, or preceded by any particular ceremonies. Their announcements were not made in scanty and obscure

sentences, in answer to superstitious applicants, and in terms of amphibological import. Neither were they characterised by those hollow and unearthly sounds, which marked the responses of the Dodonæan, the Delphic, and other ancient oracles.<sup>1</sup> The prophets had no mysteries to conceal from the light of day. The signs which they furnished were publicly exhibited; they were submitted to the view equally of the prince and the peasant; they invited the belief of the pious, while, at the same time, they challenged the opposition and braved the contempt of the wicked. The holy seers were an order of men who transacted the whole of their affairs with the utmost publicity. Instead of shrouding themselves in the gloom of a cave, and enunciating their predictions with the studied caution and the base timidity of conscious imposture, they appeared in the centre of the metropolis, in the palace of the monarch, before the gate of the city, and in the court of the temple, and denounced in the boldest and most unequivocal terms the judgments of God against every rank of transgressors. So far were they from amassing wealth, and living in luxury, by the price of their announcements, that the only rewards they received were hatred, derision, imprisonment, and death. Where, it may fearlessly be asked, is a parallel to be found in all the ancient world? Does not the case stand out in bold relief from every thing exhibited in connection with the functions of religious teachers or divine interpreters on the pages of profane history? Was it in human nature to have acted the

(1) See Note M.



part ascribed to the Jewish prophets, if they had not really been the subjects of divine inspiration?

The same conviction in favour of the inspired claims of these holy seers must be produced by an impartial consideration of the nature of their messages. Not to insist on the exalted characters of majesty and moral excellence in which they depict the Divine Being, and the pure and forcible principles of moral obligation which they uniformly inculcate—we have only to examine the predictions contained in their messages, and compare with these predictions the events in which most of them have received their accomplishment, in order to be satisfied, that on no solid ground can the exact coincidence be accounted for, except that of a direct revelation from Him, who knew the end from the beginning, and shewed to his servants the things which were surely to come to pass. As the just conceptions of God and divine things with which the prophets were evidently familiar, were altogether foreign to their contemporaries, and we can only admit the possibility of the fact, on the principle of their having enjoyed a celestial tuition peculiar to themselves, it is most reasonable to refer their predictions to the same superior and infallible source. The knowledge of future events, which they communicated, was obviously miraculous. For though a shrewd and experienced politician, who is well versed in the history of the past, and commands an extensive and accurate view of the present, may draw many successful conclusions respecting the future, taking it for granted that the same causes will always produce the same events; yet to predict what lies in the distant as well as the more

immediate future ; to describe, with the utmost minuteness and particularity, circumstances which, to human view, could have been connected by no intermediate links with existing phenomena ; to depict the distinctive fates of nations in unborn generations ; and to fix, with the utmost definiteness, centuries beforehand, the time and place of our Lord's appearance, his birth, manner of life, sufferings, death, resurrection and glory ; the abolition of the Jewish polity ; the spread and corruptions of Christianity :—argues a penetration to which the unassisted faculties of the human mind cannot, under any circumstances, pretend—the operation of a prescience absolutely divine. With respect to the prophets themselves and those among whom they lived, the events which they foretold were perfectly contingent. It was neither in their power to contribute, in the smallest degree, to their occurrence, nor, by any conjecture or presentiment, to anticipate them. To foresee and reveal them belonged to Him alone in whose hand are the reins of universal government, to whom is known the whole series of future events, and who executes all things according to the counsel of his own will.

Taking now for granted the reality of the predictions contained in Scripture, *i.e.* that they were actually delivered at the time assigned to them, the Divine inspiration of the records, in which they are deposited, follows as a necessary consequence. For it is evident they were not delivered merely for the benefit of those who lived at the time, but to guide the views, sustain the hopes, and strengthen the faith of the church between the period of their announcement, and that in

which their fulfilment should transpire ; and, specially, to furnish to those who should witness their completion, and to all future generations, the most convincing evidence of the truth of Divine Revelation. But it is equally manifest, that they could not have answered these ends, if they had not been infallibly committed to a medium of transmission, by which the certain knowledge of them would be supplied in all coming time. The discussions which have arisen on the subject of prophecy, evince the importance of the utmost accuracy :—a trifling variation in a date, an historical circumstance, or any other part of a prediction, frequently involving consequences highly momentous in its interpretation, and dangerous in its application to actual events.

It is therefore most reasonable to conclude, that He by whose inspiration the prophecies were originally announced, must have exerted such a degree of supernatural influence upon the minds of those by whom they were committed to writing, as secured their faithful deposition in the form in which they have come into our hands.

The support derived to our argument from the character, circumstances, and compositions of the writers of the New Testament is equally powerful and satisfactory. It is impossible carefully to examine the accounts which these writers ingenuously furnish respecting their previous habits, prejudices, and expectations, and then candidly to contrast with these their subsequent spirit and demeanour, the peculiarity of the new principles which they taught, and the extensive influence which they exerted upon the state of

human affairs, without admitting that they had become the subjects of an inspiration in harmony with the effects which it produced—an inspiration superhuman, holy, and divine. How otherwise can we account for the fact, that persons of ordinary talent, untutored in the schools of philosophy, dull of apprehension, pusillanimous in spirit, narrow in their opinions, secular in their hopes, and strongly imbued with national prepossessions, should all at once have displayed the most extraordinary mental energy, a superiority to every earthly consideration, a profound acquaintance with truths of the most sublime character, and of the deepest interest to the whole human species, and an expansion of benevolence, which embraced every nation and every human being on the face of the globe? To the operation of what causes within the compass of those principles of action which govern mankind, are we to ascribe the sudden and entire transformation undergone by the plain, illiterate fishermen of Galilee, and the bigoted and zealous disciple of Gamaliel? Assuredly they were the most unlikely persons in the world to embrace the spiritual, catholic, and universal views of religious truth, to the propagation of which they forthwith and ever after devoted their lives; or, having embraced them, to succeed in procuring for them any degree of approbation or extent of currency among those to whose attention they recommended them. All the phenomena of the case are precisely the reverse of any thing we should have expected to result from their character, and from the circumstances in which they were placed: and we are irresistibly led to the conclusion, that they were

supernaturally qualified—having had imparted to them that immediate divine instruction, and the ability to communicate this instruction to others, which their high commission as the legates of Christ indispensably required.

But as they were the chosen instruments of Jehovah in making the final disclosures of his will to mankind, and as it was of the highest importance that these disclosures should be preserved unimpaired in integrity and undiminished in authority—being the charter of the new constitution of religion, which was established by the Messiah, and is to remain valid till the end of time—it is natural to infer, that the documents in which they were deposited must have been furnished with the seal of their great Author, and thus be entitled to claim for themselves the most unqualified reception as the oracles of God. If the apostles required supernatural influence when engaged in imparting oral instruction respecting the doctrines and laws of Christ to those among whom they laboured, it must have been at least equally necessary for them when performing the task of registering these divine institutions for the benefit of future ages. In the former case, their communications terminated on a limited number of persons, most of whom had opportunities of repeatedly listening to the truth from their lips: in the latter, their statements were designed to tell on all succeeding generations of mankind. On the supposition, that their writings are not inspired, we possess no certain divine rule of Christian faith. We may peruse these writings as the productions of honest, well-meaning men, who were sincerely attached



to their Master, and zealous for the interests of his kingdom ; and we may derive edification from the perusal of them, just as we do from other human productions written on the same subjects : but, it is evident, we should not be influenced by them in the way of authority beyond the power of moral evidence, which the truths they teach bring along with them. Nothing contained in them could possibly come home to us with the force of Divine law. If indisposed to receive the testimony, either as to the doctrines or the facts which it exhibits, we should only have to call in question the knowledge, the judgment, or the accuracy of the writers ; and opposing our own opinions, as founded on the principles of what we might deem a sounder and more liberal philosophy, to those which they entertained in a remote and barbarous age, we should feel ourselves at perfect liberty to deal with them according to the dictates of individual conceit or caprice. There would be no entire and unreserved submission of the understanding to their dicta as authoritative announcements of the will of God.

The intrinsic character, however, of these documents is such, that, viewed apart from all positive testimony to the inspiration of the writers, it furnishes a powerful presumptive argument in favour of their divine original. The very form and disposition of the materials—so unlike that which the wisdom of man would have selected, yet so admirably adapted to arrest the attention, convince the judgment, and win the heart ; the perfectly unsystematic and practical manner in which didactic truth is exhibited ; the plenitude of moral instruction with which every part of the history



is charged ; the one grand leading purpose, which they constantly keep in view, and to which, how diversified and minute soever their subordinate points, every thing is laid under contribution ; the striking harmony, which, without the smallest marks of concert or imitation, is found to pervade them ; the infinite ease with which subjects of the loftiest character are stated and enforced ; the total absence of every thing like effort or colouring ; the want of emotion, seemingly bordering on insensibility, which marks those narrative portions, the scenes depicted in which were calculated to call forth the most impassioned description and appeal ; the confident assurance and high tone of authority every where evinced ;—these and other characteristics, that might be enumerated, advance on behalf of the instruments to which they attach, claims that can be advanced in favour of no work of merely human origin, and naturally dispose the mind to ascribe to their composition the operation of a divine influence, controlling, directing, and assisting the writers, so as to secure the infallible communication of the results contained in them.

Nor must the excellence of the doctrines and precepts contained in the Apostolic writings be left out of the account : for though objections have been taken against constituting this a direct or positive proof of the inspiration of the writers, on the ground that there are other books, which advance no such claim, but are nevertheless remarkable for the excellence of their contents ; yet, when we reflect on the superior and unparalleled degree of the excellence in question, and contrast with this the native character, education,

habits, and abilities of the writers, it cannot be conceived how it was possible for them to attain to such an elevation, without the intervention of supernatural influence. They could not have reached it by the improvement of any natural means, to which they had access. Those pure and exalted ideas of the Divine Being and attributes; those lucid exhibitions of the principles of the Divine government; those impressive views of the turpitude of moral evil; those developments of the eternal purposes of Jehovah; those testimonies to the infinite dignity, the all-sufficient propitiation, and the continued effectual mediation of the Son of God; those promises of gracious and efficient aid on the part of the Holy Spirit; those strict and impartial yet reasonable rules of morality; those motives to the practice of piety; those supports under the trials and sufferings of life; those antidotes against the fear of death; those clear and definite statements respecting the immortality of the soul, the resurrection of the body, and the opposite states of eternal enjoyment and suffering, with which their compositions abound, were such as they could have deduced from no existing school either in the Jewish or Pagan world. With respect to the Heathen philosophers, how speculative, defective, and erroneous were their choicest descriptions of Deity! How dark and incoherent their views of the government of the world! How slight and superficial their rules of morality! How profound their ignorance on the paramount subject of pardon and acceptance with God! How uncertain, vague, and inconsistent their reasonings respecting the immortality of the soul, and a future

state of retribution ! Then as it regards the Jews, at what a low ebb was theology among that people at the time ! How selfish and unworthy the conceptions entertained by the Pharisees respecting the character and providence of God ! How blind to the spirituality of his law ! How inflated with proud notions of their own merit, and confidence in the Divine favour ! To the sect of the Sadducees, it were equally vain to look for a solution of the problem. Nor should we prove more successful, were we to compare the matter of apostolic teaching with the tenets of the Essenes—the only remaining religious section of Judaism. Distinguished as that portion of the community was by simplicity of habits, rigidity of morals, and strict observance of the services of religion—there is no evidence by which it can be proved, that its members held any of the peculiar principles of the Christian system, or that any intercourse subsisted between them and the Founder of that system, or his disciples, out of which these peculiar principles might gradually have sprung.

It may be alleged, that the principles which we have enumerated were already laid down in the Old Testament, and that it was only necessary for the apostles to study those religious records in order to construct from them the more matured system of belief contained in their writings. But to this it is sufficient to reply, that, while it is readily admitted that these religious truths are taught in the ancient Scriptures of the Jews, yet it is certain they are found there only in the germ. The light, which shines in them, is not that of the day, or the day-star, but obscure, like that

of a lantern shining in a dark place. (2 Pet. i. 19.) Now is it supposable, that the apostles were so far in advance of their age and nation, as to be capable, by their own native abilities, to evolve, with so much clearness and force, from this common source, what lay undiscovered by their contemporaries? Would it not argue the greatest credulity to believe, that individuals of their rank in life and their general habits could be at all qualified, in the unassisted use of their own faculties, to seize the existing materials of theology, and work them into the admirable, consistent, matured, and perfect forms in which they are found in their writings? They were proverbially "slow of heart to believe all that the prophets" had spoken respecting the Messiah and his kingdom. (Luke xxiv. 25.) Their understanding was shut against the entrance of the truths which had formerly been revealed respecting these important subjects. What they have written, therefore, must be referred to a higher influence; and, being the result of such influence, must be received as divine.

It may be objected to the necessary inspiration of the Gospels, that, since they contain nothing but what was taught by Christ, or witnessed by his apostles, those by whom they were written were perfectly competent to describe them afterwards from memory. But the persons who make this objection cannot have maturely reflected on the fact, that, with all their honesty and fidelity, these witnesses never could have been able, after the lapse of fifty, twenty, or even ten years, to give an accurate account of lengthened discourses, which they were ill prepared to understand,

and which in fact they but partially understood at the time they were delivered. They took no notes on the spot: they had no documents from which to draw, or by which to refresh their memories. Yet with what minuteness and exactitude are the precise words of the Saviour recorded!—words which, from their singularity, their significance, their point, could only have been employed by such a teacher as Jesus, and could not, by any possibility, have been invented by the historians themselves. For instance, how could they have given the discourse on the Mount, or that which our Lord delivered immediately before his apprehension by the Jews, if they had not been the subjects of supernatural aid? Had they been left to themselves, or had not their minds been invigorated by direct supernatural influence, they could not have failed to forget some parts of their Master's instructions altogether, and blend ideas or views of their own with their accounts of the doctrines which he delivered.

A third presumptive argument in favour of the divine inspiration of the Scriptures, is furnished by the miracles which were wrought by Moses and the apostles, who either wrote these Scriptures, or gave their sanction to them as divine. It would be altogether out of place here to enter into any discussion of the question of miracles generally, either as it respects their reality, or the evidence, which, on the supposition of such reality, they afford in attestation of the divine commission of those by whom they were performed. These are points which have been satisfactorily disposed of by those who have professedly

entered the lists with deistical writers, and by others who have treated of them as they incidentally came in their way. The aspect under which we now consider the miracles, regards the support which they yield to the doctrine of inspiration. That they afford any direct support has been denied. Dr. Woods, in his valuable Lectures on Inspiration, asserts, that “miracles furnish no *direct* or *certain* proof, that those who perform them are under divine inspiration.”<sup>1</sup> He allows, indeed, that they prove their commission, but he considers their inspiration to depend on the nature of that commission. Now it will not be denied, that miracles wrought by inspired persons do not directly attest the fact of such inspiration, if by direct attestation be meant, that they were wrought specifically or exclusively with the view of attesting the divine authority of their writings. With respect to the miracles performed by Moses, it is clear, they were not immediately designed to vindicate to his writings the claims of inspiration. He does not appear to have wrought any of them with this view. Their great design was to prove, that he was a Divine Legate; that he stood in a supernatural relation to Jehovah; and, as they were in themselves calculated to impress the mind with a sense of the Almighty power of that Being, to whose interposition alone they were referable, so they were, in the highest degree, fitted to excite attention to those communications, which he might be pleased to make through the instrumentality in connection with which they were performed. We accordingly find Moses repeatedly appealing to the mighty

(1) Lectures on the Inspiration of the Scriptures, p. 15.



deeds which the Lord had achieved, when he is inculcating the precepts which he had received to deliver to the people. Now it was impossible for them not to combine in their minds with the idea of the achievement of these deeds, that of the agency of Moses, at whose instance they had seen them effected. Nothing could be more natural than the conclusion, that they were bound implicitly to believe whatever doctrines he might propound to them. Nor was this obligation restricted to any particular mode of delivery. It was their duty to attend to his written instructions, just as much as it was to attend to the verbal messages, which he delivered from the mouth of God.

On the same principle, the design of the miracles wrought by the apostles was to accredit them generally as teachers sent from God, and to fix the seal of heaven to whatever they might teach in his name. But, in writing the documents which we have from their pens, they were discharging the office of divinely commissioned teachers, just as much as when they taught and preached Jesus Christ by word of mouth. If, when communicating oral instruction on the doctrines or precepts of the gospel, they were warranted to appeal to the miraculous gifts with which they were endowed, on what principle can it consistently be maintained, that, when committing the same things to writing, in order to their being transmitted to some distant church, or published for the benefit of Christians generally, they were debarred from making a similar appeal? Are we to suppose that they forewent the use of the credentials thus furnished them, when they performed the task of scribes? Does not the apostle directly

appeal to his power of inflicting miraculous chastisement on the church at Corinth, when he asserts, in writing, his high commission?—"Now some are puffed up, as though I would not come to you. But I will come to you shortly, if the Lord will, and will know, not the speech of them which are puffed up, but the power. For the kingdom of God is not in word, but in power. What will ye? Shall I come unto you with a rod, or in love, and in the spirit of meekness?" (1 Cor. iv. 18—21.) Does he not equally appeal to his miraculous power, as that by which the authority of his epistles was to be estimated? "Do ye look on things after the outward appearance? If any man trust to himself, that he is Christ's, let him of himself think this again, that, as he is Christ's, even so we are Christ's. For though I should boast somewhat more of our authority, which the Lord hath given us for edification, and not for your destruction, I should not be ashamed: that I may not seem as if I would terrify you by letters. For his letters, say they, are weighty and powerful; but his bodily presence is weak, and his speech contemptible. Let such an one think this, that, such as we are in word by letters, when we are absent, such will we be also in deed, when we are present." (2 Cor. x. 7—11.) In the last of these verses, he attaches precisely the same degree of authority to his epistles that he does to his personal ministry, in the exercise of which he takes it for granted, that he would exert a miraculous influence. The *deed* (ἔργον) which he here opposes to *word* (λόγος) is evidently a miracle: for in this acceptation it is usually to be taken, when the terms

are thus contrasted in the New Testament. Now the Corinthians had already been furnished with proofs of the divine commission held by Paul. "Truly," he says, "the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds," (2 Cor. xii. 12); where it is to be observed, he employs the term sign (*σημεῖα*) in a twofold sense:—first, in that of evidence or proof—that by which any person is shown actually to sustain the character to which he pretends, or really to hold the commission with which he professes to be vested. By prefixing the article to the word apostle, τὰ σημεῖα τοῦ ἀποστόλου, a peculiar degree of emphasis is given to it:—the proofs of *a true* apostle. Such Paul had exhibited in the signal instances of miraculous agency, which had been exercised by him during his abode at Corinth, to which he here specifically refers, and in characterising which he further employs the term *σημεῖα* in the sense of a miracle, or supernatural operation. On the ground, therefore, of the vouchers of the apostolic authority, with which they had been abundantly supplied, the members of that church were bound to submit to the instructions transmitted to them by letter from the apostle, with the same readiness, and the same religious deference, which they had evinced in receiving his oral testimony. The displays of divine interposition, which accompanied the exercise of the apostolic ministry, operated in the way of sanction and evidence upon every act of that ministry. They accredited the apostles as instruments specially employed by Christ in making known his will, in whatever manner they divulged it. Their influence,

in this respect, was universal; extending to all the apostles wrote for the benefit of the church, and to all that they taught in the way of oral communication.

Nor is the proof of inspiration afforded by miracles to be confined to that of the books written by those who performed these miracles: it is also valid in its bearing upon other books or writings, which they may have sanctioned as divine. If, for example, any of the apostles are found to ascribe divine authority to the Old Testament Scriptures, such testimony must be received as decisive, on the ground of the evidence which they furnished of a divine commission, by the supernatural gifts with which they were endowed, and which they exercised in effecting results not to be accounted for on any principle of natural causation. Declarations made by them in the course of the discharge of their official duties, claiming for the Jewish Scriptures an unqualified reception as the word of God, are to be sacredly regarded in the light of authoritative proofs of the inspiration of these Scriptures: in other words, that they were written under the special direction and aid of the Divine Spirit. In like manner, the sanction given by one apostle to the writings of another, or to any other writing forming part of the New Testament Canon, is to be viewed as *à priori* settling the point of the Divine authority of such writings. But we shall afterwards have occasion to enter more fully into this aspect of the subject.

The last proof of a presumptive nature which we shall adduce, is the original reception of the books of

Scripture as inspired writings by the Jewish and Christian churches.

That the Pentateuch has been in the possession of the Jewish people from the time of Moses is an historical fact, which cannot, with any show of reason, be contradicted. Attempts have been made, indeed, by De Wette,<sup>1</sup> Gesenius,<sup>2</sup> and other German writers, to bring down its antiquity partly to the time of the Jewish monarchy, and partly to that of the captivity; but the arguments, by which Eichhorn,<sup>3</sup> Jahn,<sup>4</sup> and Rosenmüller,<sup>5</sup> have refuted their positions, triumphantly vindicate its Mosaic origin; and those which have been employed by Graves<sup>6</sup> and Marsh<sup>7</sup> in our own country, not only go to prove the same point, but furnish strong collateral proofs of the divine inspiration of the writer. Not only is the volume recognised as sacred, after and in the time of the exile, but it is repeatedly appealed to as of divine authority in a chain of testimonies from that period, back to the days of Joshua, the immediate successor of Moses. In these testimonies, it is expressly spoken of as "the Law of Moses," "the Book of the Law of Moses," and "the Book of the Law of God." But is it for a moment to be imagined, that it ever could have been imposed upon the Jewish people, if it had not been delivered to them, under the peculiar circumstances

(1) *Lehrbuch der Histor. Krit. Einleitung in die Bibel*, 1 Theil. § 158, p. 228.

(2) *Geschichte der Hebr. Sprache und Schrift*, pp. 19, 23.

(3) *Einleitung*, § 432—§ 445.

(4) *Einleitung*, 2 Theil, § 1—§ 22.

(5) *Scholia. Prolegom.* § 5. See also Hengstenberg's *Contributions*, ii. and iii. volumes; and especially Hävernicks admirable *Introduction to the Old Testament*, vol. i.

(6) *Lectures on the Four Last Books of the Pentateuch*.

(7) *Authenticity of the Five Books of Moses*.

which it describes as accompanying its reception? If they had not enjoyed ocular demonstration of the divine legation of Moses, they never would have submitted to the restraints of the institutions contained in the Mosaic code. In the pride of their hearts, they would have rejected with contempt the humiliating description given of them as a nation; and for ever consigned to oblivion a record, which, while it represented them as having been from the commencement entirely destitute of merit, denounced the most awful judgments of the Almighty against their anticipated crimes. In opposition, however, to all those corrupt principles which must have disposed them to repudiate the inspired claims of the books written by their legislator, they were compelled by irresistible evidence—evidence carrying with it the force of mathematical demonstration—fully to admit them, and adopt the laws, civil, ceremonial, and moral, which they contained, as the rule of their future conduct. Notwithstanding their natural aversion to the holiness of the religion inculcated by Moses, they became its faithful depositaries, in the assured conviction that God was its author; and, although they were often seduced to a course of action at variance with its requirements, they never attempted to raise any historical doubts by which to suppress the painful feelings, which a sense of guilt must have inspired. Their written code continued to be the burden of their songs, and the legacy, which, from one generation to another, they bequeathed to their children. The other books of the Old Testament were successively received into the collection of sacred writings—being attested as the productions of men



actuated by the Spirit of God, and designed for purposes of general and permanent instruction. From the Jewish church, by which they had been religiously preserved, these writings were received by the first Christians, who had the direct sanction of Christ and his apostles, in corroboration of their divine authority.

The books of the New Testament having been written to individuals, or to individual churches in different places, some time elapsed before a complete collection of them was obtained, and consequently before any appeal could be made to them collectively, as divinely inspired. But whenever they are quoted separately, the reference is obviously made to them as writings possessing more than human authority, and, in this respect, differing from all other works; and when collected, after their claims and those of other books pretending to inspiration had been thoroughly sifted, they are spoken of in the identical language that was employed respecting the scriptures of the Old Testament, with which they were placed upon a level, and along with which they were read in the public assemblies of the Christians. They are called: The Divine Gospels, the Scriptures of the Lord, the Oracles of the Lord, the Holy Scriptures, Divine Scriptures.

Now those who spoke of them in these exalted terms, and who regarded them with sacred veneration, were not individuals of little note, destitute of critical judgment, or removed to such a distance, in point either of time or place, from the sources to which they are to be traced, as to create doubts of their competency to appear as witnesses in the case; but men of

information, who diligently investigated the claims of these Scriptures, and only received them on the conviction, that they were the genuine productions of those whose names they bear, and to whom, on indisputable grounds, they were compelled to ascribe a divine commission. While they repudiated the claims of the numerous apocryphal gospels and epistles, which were attempted to be palmed upon the world as the productions of apostles or apostolic men, they admitted those which compose our canon as entitled to implicit reception. The very circumstance, that some of the books were not at first universally received, proves the extreme scrupulosity with which their claims were weighed, and that no writings were received as inspired, which did not possess indubitable marks of apostolicity. Nor must we omit adverting to the corroboration of this exalted and sacred estimate of these books, which is afforded by the light in which they were viewed by the early heretics. It was obviously the interest of those who opposed the truths taught in the apostolic writings, to endeavour to bring them into discredit, by denying their authority, and rejecting the evidence which they might furnish contrary to their favourite tenets; but, if we except one or two, who had the effrontery to mutilate the Scriptures, and practise forgeries, in order to procure support to their peculiar views, and of whom no account is made by any who impartially study the records of ecclesiastical history, it will be found, that the heretics unanimously admitted the claims of the New Testament, and, equally with the orthodox, appealed to it as an ultimate rule of decision in all matters of religious controversy. The

question between them was not ; What books are of divine authority ? but, What is the testimony of the canonical Scriptures in reference to the subjects in dispute ?

From these circumstances, a presumption is created in the mind, that the books of the New Testament must, from the very period of their publication, have obtained a reception very different from that given to any works of mere human composition, and that this reception is to be ascribed to the evidence which accompanied them, that they were of divine origin. The tone of authority with which they spoke was found to be perfectly supported by external criteria. The links of the chain, which connected those who received them during the three first centuries with the churches to which they were originally delivered, or the individual Christians to whom they were addressed, were so few, that it was easy to trace them up to the circumstances under which they were written, and the persons by whom they were penned ; and the concurrent enlightened testimony of all who flourished during the intervening period, ascribing their composition to men who experienced an extraordinary intervention of the Deity ; it was impossible, comparing this external evidence with the intrinsic characteristics of the books themselves, to withhold a rational assent from them as divinely authenticated.

Without anticipating what will more properly come to be considered under the head of the Canon of Inspiration, we may remark in conclusion, that the Romanists cannot, with any shadow of reason, maintain, that our appeal to the Fathers in proof of the

reception given by the primitive church to the books of Scripture is an admission of their dogma of tradition, or that we are entirely beholden to tradition for the Scriptures. It was avowed, indeed, by Augustine : “ Evangelio non crederem, nisi me ecclesiæ moveret autoritas ;” but it is obvious from the connection, that he did not mean by *autoritas* the mere delivery of an opinion, which, as announced by the church, every one was bound to receive ; but the testimony, which she bore to the simple matter of fact, that such and such books were originally committed to her charge. Her authority is not that of a Judge definitively pronouncing upon the matter in point of law, but the evidence, which, in the character of a witness, she honestly and unhesitatingly gives at the bar of reason. She does not, like the church of Rome, arrogate to herself the right to stamp divinity on any book or number of books ; all she pretends to is to convey down the testimony—a testimony corroborated by abundant evidences both of an internal nature furnished by the books themselves, and those which are external, arising from the versions, and from the admissions of heretics and pagans, by whom, in various forms, Christianity was attacked at a very early period. It is with the worst possible grace that the western church presses us on this point, since it is a notorious fact, that her tradition is any thing but fixed and determinate. At first, for instance, she received the Epistle to the Hebrews into her canon ; afterwards rejected it ; and, at a subsequent period, restored it again to its place ! Besides, we require not so much as her testimony on the subject. We might leave her witnesses altogether out of the

account. Those furnished by members of the Greek and other churches are quite sufficient for our purpose; and we admit them to give testimony, not in the character of members belonging to any particular church or churches, or in any ecclesiastical capacity whatever, but simply as persons worthy of credit, and competent to avouch the truth of this, as of any other matter in the history of literature, with which they were acquainted. If the Church of Rome had never existed, the Christian world would possess precisely the same number of sacred books which it now does. The Epistle addressed to the church at Rome would have reached us in the same way as that addressed to the church at Corinth.

We, therefore, take our ground in primitive times, anterior to the rise of that system of sacerdotal power, which assumes as its exclusive prerogative, the title of "The Church." We receive the depositions of the witnesses in regard to the actual fact of the case in their day; and, taking into consideration all the circumstances under which they aver, that the Scriptures were written by men under the influence of divine inspiration, we are compelled to admit the high probability, that such was actually the case. The positive evidence of such inspiration will be adduced in our next Lecture.

## LECTURE VI.

INSPIRATION OF THE SCRIPTURES--(*continued.*)

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2 TIM. III. 16, 17.

*“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.”*

HAVING, in the foregoing Lecture, adduced some of those probable arguments which go to prove that the Scriptures are of divine inspiration, we now proceed to investigate the statements advanced in these Scriptures themselves in reference to the subject, by which we are furnished with evidence of the positive and direct kind.

It must be obvious, that nothing short of this description of evidence can form a proper basis of positive religious faith. The arguments which have occupied our attention may go far towards removing doubts from the mind, and preparing it carefully and conscientiously to prosecute the study of the doctrine, and impartially to receive whatever farther light may be thrown upon it; but it is not their design, as it is not



within their province, to impart a perfect conviction of its truth, or give to it such a lodgment in the soul, as shall inspire an unhesitating reliance upon the testimony of the Bible as the sure and infallible word of God. This conviction can only be produced by evidence, which positively evinces, that the persons by whom the Scriptures were written were in actual correspondence with the Deity; that they wrote by his direction and assistance; or, that what they have delivered to us possesses his sanction as an infallible rule of faith. Except these points be made good, we shall never be practically influenced by their writings, but shall feel more or less at liberty to treat them as we do standards of mere human fabrication—assenting to them or departing from them, as may best accord with our own previous notions of truth and duty.

It has been customary, without any preliminary or qualifying consideration, to maintain, that the doctrine of inspiration is to be received simply on the declarations of those by whom the Scriptures were written;—that they were infallible, and consequently if they have expressly affirmed, that they were the subjects of such extraordinary divine influence as the term inspiration implies, we are bound, without any further inquiry, to abide by their testimony. On this ground, the doctrine is supposed to possess all the authority of a direct divine sanction; and to press for further evidence is deemed unwarrantable, if not profane. But it must be evident to every one, who takes a more minute view of the subject, that, to say the least, this is merely to beg the question. It is taking for granted the very point to be proved. It amounts in effect to nothing

more than this: the Bible is inspired, because those who wrote it declare that they were inspired—a statement, however, which is by no means universally true; for though it may be shown, that some of the writers do advance such a claim, it by no means holds true of them all. We may argue *à priori* in support of the question, and may establish positions in reference to it, which it might be difficult to overturn; but with persons of reflecting minds, the inquiry will still return:—What positive grounds have we for believing, that the authors of the books of Scripture really were inspired to write them?—or, in other words, that these books possess a plenary divine sanction?

In such a view of the case, the only fair and satisfactory process to be pursued is to narrow the question within certain definite limits, and endeavour to ascertain whether any primary basis can be found, on which it may rest, undisturbed by the attacks of scepticism and unbelief. Now it appears to us, that there is only one position, which, in the first instance, we can safely and fearlessly occupy, and within the limits of which we must primarily concentrate our forces, if we would not expose ourselves to the reproach of inconsistency, or surrender the truth into the hands of its adversaries. That position is *the authority of the Son of God*, which none can consistently call in question, who does not reject the entire mass of historical and moral evidence by which his mission and the religion which he founded, are immovably supported. If it can be proved, that the Lord Jesus Christ has attributed to the Scriptures of the Old Testament the qualities and claims of inspiration, then we are bound

to receive them as inspired simply on the ground of his declarations to that effect; or, if he has affirmed, that such endowments should be vouchsafed to his apostles as would invest their writings with similar claims—we are equally bound to acquiesce in the decisions contained in these writings, as the infallible dictates of Jehovah. Whatever, as the Great Messenger sent from the Father, he has been pleased to reveal, it is our duty implicitly and cordially to believe.

In determining, however, whether our Lord imparted any information upon the subject or not, and if he did, what are the nature and amount of that information, we must, at the present stage of our inquiry, call in the testimony of those who have furnished us with accounts of his doctrines simply as that of honest and competent witnesses:—men of unimpeachable integrity, who had no worldly interest to support by giving a colouring to any thing he might have communicated on the subject; and who, to the best of their ability, have discharged the task which they undertook; in furnishing the world with a history of the principal events of his life, and the leading topics, which constituted the themes of his ministry. The question as thus narrowed is purely historical. We take it up precisely as we would any other question in the history of dogmatics, and decide upon it as we would upon an opinion which may have been ascribed to one of the ancient Fathers, or to any other religious teacher, who flourished in an age removed from our own. If, for example, we were desirous of ascertaining any particular sentiment held by the German Reformer,

respecting which he has published nothing himself, we should be perfectly satisfied with the testimony of Melanchthon, Bucer, or any other contemporary, who was intimately acquainted with him, and who may have declared, that he heard him deliver his views in the language, which he describes. Taking into consideration the character of these men, we should do them injustice, if we did not give entire credence to their testimony. On the same principle, without, in the least, detracting from the high claims which the apostles possess, and which will afterwards be allowed their full force in application to the subject before us, but regarding them now simply in the light of historians, who faithfully tell us what they heard from the lips of their great Master, we are bound, except counter-evidence can be produced, to believe their report of what he taught. And though in the last Lecture we have expressed a decided conviction, that their memories would not have enabled them to retain all that he delivered, so as to reproduce it in the identical order and terms in which it was originally spoken, we feel no hesitation in asserting, that they were quite competent to give an accurate account of his doctrine respecting inspiration. His promise to furnish them with supernatural assistance was invested with a degree of interest too momentous for them ever to forget. The very words, in which it was expressed, must have been indelibly imprinted upon their minds.

Proceeding, therefore, upon the assumption, that we are warranted to place the fullest confidence in the testimony of those witnesses on the point before us, we now advance to the investigation of those passages

in their writings, in which the statements referred to are contained. In prosecuting this investigation we might be expected to commence with those declarations of our Saviour, which bear upon the inspiration of the Old Testament, and then to consider those which relate to that of the New Testament: and certainly, in so far as priority of arrangement in regard to the books is concerned, this would be the more appropriate method. But as there are numerous testimonies in the apostolic writings, in support of the inspiration of the Old Testament, we shall obviously gain even in point of order by first establishing that of the apostles, inasmuch as we shall then have it in our power to combine at once the testimonies borne by them, with those which our Lord himself delivered in divine authentication of the Jewish Scriptures.

That the apostles were to be the subjects of an extraordinary and strictly divine assistance, by which they should be qualified infallibly to teach the doctrines and inculcate the precepts of Christianity, during the whole course of their future lives, was expressly and unequivocally promised by their Divine Master. The promise is as follows: "And I will pray the Father, "and he shall send you another Comforter, that he "may abide with you for ever; even the Spirit of "truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it "seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know "him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you."— "These things have I spoken to you, being yet present "with you. But the Comforter, which is the Holy "Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he "shall teach you all things, and bring all things to

“ your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.”—“ But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceeded from the Father, he shall testify of me.”—“ I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit, when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come. He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you. All things, that the Father hath, are mine: therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shew it unto you.” (John xiv. 16, 17; xv. 26; xvi. 12—15.) By the promise, thus emphatically repeated, the disciples were assured, that though they were now to be deprived of the presence of their Master, and consequently of the benefit of his personal instruction, they should be no losers as it regarded their further illumination on all points connected with divine truth, and those qualifications, which it was requisite they should possess, in order properly to discharge the important functions to which he had called them. On the contrary, he declares, that his departure would prove advantageous to them, inasmuch as it would furnish an occasion for the advent of the Divine Spirit in the plenitude of his miraculous gifts, by the reception of which they would be rendered superior to their own natural deficiencies, and be fully prepared to meet every exigency that might arise in the course of their apostolic ministrations. That by the Spirit here promised, we are to understand the



Divine Person, who is so frequently designated by this term in other passages of Scripture, is evident from the personal attributes which our Lord predicates of him, and the personal acts which he was to perform. The language, therefore, is not metaphorical, or capable of being limited in its meaning so as to indicate nothing more than superior mental endowments, an extensive acquaintance with divine truth, or the spiritual doctrines of the gospel itself. And he is called "the Spirit of truth," (τὸ πνεῦμα τῆς ἀληθείας,) not in reference either to the reality of his existence, or the veracity of his testimony, but in designation of his character as the author and revealer of that which, in the New Testament, is emphatically styled *the truth*, i. e. the doctrines relating to the Divine plan of human redemption through the mediation of the Lord Jesus Christ. He is also called the Paraclete (ὁ παράκλητος), a term which has been variously rendered by the words *Comforter, Teacher, Monitor, Leader, Advocate, Helper, Adjutor, Supporter*; but none of which, taken singly, fully expresses its import. It occurs only once besides in the New Testament, namely, 1 John ii. 1, in which it is applied by the same writer to Christ, and describes the powerful influence which he employs in heaven in behalf of his people. It is a term very general and comprehensive in its meaning: embracing every kind of assistance, whether it be in the way of consolation, instruction, mental invigoration, support, advocacy, or any other efficient aid. The sense, however, in which it is specifically to be taken in application to the Holy Spirit, whom our Lord promises to send to his disciples, is properly to

be determined by the adjuncts found in the connections in which it here occurs. Now, on examining these connections, the following appear to be the principal features of the office which he was to sustain.

First, As the Spirit of truth, he was to guide the apostles into the whole of that system of truth, with which it was necessary for mankind to become acquainted in order to their full enjoyment of the blessings of salvation: *ὁδηγήσει ὑμᾶς εἰς πᾶσαν τὴν ἀλήθειαν.* (Ch. xvi. 13.)

Secondly, He was to recall to their memory all the instructions, with which they had been favoured during their attendance on the ministry of our Lord, but which they had forgotten, or might but imperfectly recollect, *ὑπομνήσει ὑμᾶς πάντα ἃ εἶπον ὑμῖν.* (Ch. xiv. 26.)

Thirdly, He was effectually to teach them the meaning of those doctrines, which had been propounded to them by their Master, but which they had not been in a state rightly or fully to comprehend, together with all the other doctrines pertaining to the divine counsel and economy of grace: *ἐκεῖνος ὑμᾶς διδάξει πάντα, κ.τ.λ.* (*Ibid.*)

Fourthly, He was to endow them with a knowledge of future events, so that they should be qualified to predict them for the information, guidance, and consolation of the church: *τὰ ἐρχόμενα ἀναγγελεῖ ὑμῖν.* (Ch. xvi. 13.)

Fifthly, He was specially to disclose to their view the dignity and excellence of the Redeemer, imparting to them an accurate knowledge of his Divine Person, his official relations and functions, and the glorious results of his Mediatorial undertaking, that through

their instrumentality, others might be brought to know, acknowledge, and honour him: *ἐκεῖνος ἐμὲ δοξάσει.* (Ver. 14.)

Sixthly, He was to confirm all that he enabled them to teach respecting the Messiah, by affording sensible demonstrations of the truth of their divine commission in the miracles which they performed in the name of Jesus, and the supernatural gifts which should accompany their ministry: *μαρτυρήσει περὶ ἐμοῦ.* (Ch. xv. 26.)

Seventhly, By means of this miraculous interposition, he was so to qualify the apostles, that they should bear ample and infallible testimony respecting all that they had seen and heard as personal attendants on the Saviour, from the commencement of his public ministry: *καὶ ὑμεῖς δὲ μαρτυρεῖτε, ὅτι ἀπ' ἀρχῆς μετ' ἐμοῦ ἔστε.* (Ver. 27.)

Eighthly, He was to effect all these things by means of an invisible, consequently a supernatural influence exerted upon their minds or in connection with their ministry, of which the world could have no perception, but which, in its results, was to leave them without excuse: *ὁ, ὁ κόσμος οὐ δύναται λαβεῖν, ὅτι οὐ θεωρεῖ αὐτό, οὐδὲ γινώσκει αὐτό· ὑμεῖς δὲ γινώσκετε αὐτό, ὅτι παρ' ὑμῶν μένει, καὶ ἐν ὑμῶν ἔσται.* (Ch. xiv. 17.)

Finally, He was to render them this supernatural assistance permanently, so that whatever light or ability they required at any period of their future life would assuredly be vouchsafed to them: *ἵνα μένη μεθ' ὑμῶν εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα* (xiv. 16); *παρ' ὑμῶν μένει.* (Ver. 17.)

Is it now possible carefully to weigh these several particulars, and especially to form a proper idea of the collective import of the character, which they were to

impart to the apostles, without arriving at the conclusion, that, by the accomplishment of the promise here repeatedly made to them, they were to have all the disadvantages removed, under which they naturally laboured in regard to the discovery and communication of Divine truth, and to be qualified to become the infallible interpreters of the will of God? Who, that attaches any just or adequate meaning to language, and places implicit reliance on the testimony of the Son of God, can feel the smallest degree of hesitation in according to these divinely accredited messengers the most cordial reception, and to the doctrines, which they teach, absolute submission? Since the supernatural agency of which they were to be the subjects was to be constantly exerted while they continued through life to discharge the functions of the apostleship, it is obvious, that, in what way soever their instructions were to be communicated, whether orally or by writing, they were equally to claim an unqualified reception on the part of all to whom they might be addressed. Whatever these ambassadors of heaven might teach was to be received, not as the word of men, but, as in truth, the word of God.

That the reception of the supernatural gifts of the Holy Spirit, with which the apostles were to be favoured, was to stamp infallibility on all that they taught, their Divine Master further expressly assures them (John xx. 21, 22), "As the Father hath sent me, even so send I you. And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith 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.” The commission with which they were to be entrusted was equally divine with that which Christ himself had received from the Father. It had, in one point of view, the same object—the certain and infallible communication of religious truth to mankind. As it respects authority, their delegation was upon a par with his own. And, in order that they might not be discouraged by a sense of the disparity, which existed between himself and them with respect to qualifications for the discharge of the office, he once more repeats the promise, which he had formerly made to them—accompanying its repetition with an action strikingly symbolical of the nature and manner of its fulfilment: *ἐνεφύσησε, he breathed into them.* The consequence of their reception of the supernatural influences of the Holy Spirit (*πνεῦμα ἅγιον*) was to be the authoritative and irreversible decisions, which they would be enabled to give on every point connected with human salvation. Of the various doctrines which this momentous subject involves, our Lord selects one of the deepest interest—the pardon of sin ; leaving it to be inferred, that if they were endowed with power infallibly to pronounce who were to be the subjects of that boon, and who were to be denied it, they might well be supposed to be qualified to teach with certainty and without any admixture of error, every other branch of the grand system of revealed truth. That, by the declaration here made, we are to conceive of any power delegated to the apostles literally and in their own persons to remit sin, or that any such power was to be transmitted

through them to those who succeeded them in the ministry of the word, would be completely at variance with the whole tenor of the Bible in reference to this subject—such an act being uniformly vindicated to Jehovah as his peculiar and inalienable prerogative. The phraseology is nearly parallel with that which our Lord employs, when addressing Peter, as the representative and spokesman of the disciples (Matt. xvi. 19), “And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.” Than this no language could more strongly express the plenary power with which they were to be furnished, authoritatively to announce and enforce every thing connected with the kingdom of heaven. Whatever they were to declare to be lawful, whatever they were to teach, permit, or constitute in the exercise of their apostolic functions, was to be ratified, and hold good with God, and consequently was to be held sacred by men; and so in regard to the contrary.<sup>1</sup>

Another proof of the infallibility which was to attach to all the instructions of the apostles, is furnished by the declaration made by Christ in his promise to afford them every requisite assistance when called to defend his cause before human tribunals: “But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak: for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak. For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father, which speaketh in you.” (Matt. x. 19, 20.) In this passage

(1) Bloomfield, *in loc.*



he not only selects an appropriate instance of the Divine aid, that would be vouchsafed to them in the discharge of their office—assuring them, that nothing should be lacking, how great soever the emergency of the circumstances in which they might be placed—but also, that, upon all occasions, they were to regard themselves merely as the instruments of a higher agent—the Divine Spirit, who should employ them as instruments, through whom to reveal the knowledge of God and his will to the human race. The 20th verse is evidently supplementary, and general in its bearing, and contains the ground of the special promise made in that which precedes it. The words: “It is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you,” contain a comparative negation. The apostles were to employ human language, but this language was not to be the mere fruit of their own mental operations; it was to result from the supernatural influence of the Holy Spirit, prompting, controlling, and guiding these operations, so as to produce appropriate and infallible defences of divine truth.

The endowments in which the legates of Christ were to participate, and which he designates “the promise of the Father,” because he had promised that the Father would bestow them, he expressly characterises as power immediately derived from heaven, with which they were to be invested: *ἐνδύσησθε ἑνέραμιν ἐξ ὑψους*. (Luke xxiv. 49.) It was therefore to be strictly supernatural, and being designed fully to fit them for the apostolic office, must be viewed as extending to every department of that office.

Of the accomplishment of the promises thus made to the apostles, we are furnished with abundant proof by the surprising change which took place in their views and conduct on and after the day of Pentecost, and by the miraculous gifts which were then conferred upon them: but, as these topics have already occupied our attention, it is unnecessary to say more at present than simply to advert to them, for the purpose of substantiating, on historical grounds, the extraordinary authority of their character, as the ambassadors of Christ, and asserting the religious deference, which is due to whatever statements they may have made relative either to the doctrines taught by our Saviour himself, or to those communicated through them by his Spirit. Endowed with the infallible inspiration of this Divine Agent, they claim to be heard with implicit belief. The testimony, which they have borne in their written documents, is equally entitled to our reception, as that which they delivered to the audiences which they orally addressed, was to theirs. Both in speaking and in writing they acted as divinely commissioned instructors. In the former case, the result was more limited; for, though it consisted in laying the foundation of the new state of the church, which was to continue till the end of time, yet the infallibility, that attached to their doctrines, did not extend beyond their oral communication. When received by those to whom they were delivered, these doctrines became liable to all the modifications and changes by which they have more or less been characterised in the confessions and writings of uninspired men from the apostolic age to the present. In the latter case, the

result is permanent, and extends to all succeeding ages:—their writings, propagated throughout the world, possessing all the indubitable certainty, and all the infallible authority, which belonged to the narratives and doctrinal statements originally communicated by word of mouth to individuals or communities.

Having thus established the infallibility of the apostolic teaching, we are prepared to enter upon an investigation of the testimony borne in the New Testament Scriptures to the inspiration of those of the Old Testament, in prosecuting which, we shall first consider the amount of that furnished by our Lord himself, and then that of those passages in the apostolic epistles in which it is either expressly taught, or obviously implied.

And here it is important to remark, that the references to the Old Testament, which we find in the discourses of Christ, are not to be understood in application to the dispensation itself, which was established by Moses at Sinai, but to the books or writings, containing the records of that dispensation, and received as divine by those to whom it had been committed. Whatever fact he specifies, or whatever precept or doctrine he quotes, is uniformly to be regarded as embodied in the sacred Scriptures, which were then in the hands of the Jews, and to which he appeals as decidedly possessing divine authority.

First, He mentions several of the writers by name, and ascribes to them in this capacity an authority, which he would not have conceded to any ordinary or uninspired author. Thus he speaks of the gift that

Moses commanded (Matt. viii. 4); his ordinance respecting divorce (xix. 8); his seat, or the elevated place, whence his writings were read in the synagogues (xxiii. 2); his accusing the Jews (John v. 45); his law prescribing circumcision (vii. 19, 22). When quoting his book, he expressly designates Isaiah, "the prophet" (Matt. viii. 17; xii. 17); speaks of his prophesying (xv. 7), and his prophecy (xiii. 14), which he more than once declares was to be fulfilled. He recognises David as an inspired prophet (xxii. 43), and repeatedly quotes the book of Psalms (xiii. 35; xxi. 16, 42). He likewise, when referring to their writings, calls Daniel and Jonah prophets (xii. 30; xxiv. 15); and quotes Hosea and Zechariah (xii. 7; xxvi. 31), as furnishing the words of Jehovah.

Secondly, He refers his hearers to the Old Testament Scriptures, with the question: "Have ye not read?" (Matt. xix. 4; xxii. 31); intimating, that, if they had perused them, they would have ascertained the will of God on the subjects respecting which they had interrogated him.

Thirdly, He speaks of them as a definite collection of writings, an acquaintance with which would prove an effectual preservative against error in matters of religion; and he reproves the Sadducees, who neglected to employ them for this purpose: "Ye do err, not knowing *the Scriptures*, τὰς γραφὰς, nor the power of God." (Matt. xxii. 29.) He further ascribes to these Scriptures, as thus collectively existing, the power of imparting instruction respecting the momentous subject of eternal life, and himself as the way to it; and commends the study of them on that account:

“ Search the Scriptures, *ἐρευνᾶτε τὰς γραφὰς*, for in them ye think ye have eternal life; and they are they which testify of me.” (John v. 39.) Biblical critics are divided, indeed, with respect to the manner in which the principal verb here employed is to be construed:—most of the ancients, and many moderns, rendering it in the imperative, as it is done in our own and almost all the received versions, while by far the greater number of those, who have been most distinguished for critical acumen, read it in the indicative, which unquestionably is more agreeable to the context. But translated indicatively, “Ye search the Scriptures,” &c., it still conveys a commendation of the practice; for our Lord proceeds to declare, that the Scriptures bore testimony to him as the Messiah; and, in the course of a few verses, he expressly states, that Moses wrote of him in that character. From the circumstance, that the writings of Moses are thus introduced into the connection, Storr concludes,<sup>1</sup> that the Scriptures mentioned, ver. 39, are necessarily to be restricted to those of the Pentateuch; but this by no means follows. The reference to Moses and his writings is altogether distinct from that before made. Our Lord, after telling the Jews, that, notwithstanding their perusal of the Old Testament, which pointed to him as the only Saviour, they would not come to him, that they might have life, discloses the true cause of their unbelief—the preference, which they gave to human and worldly considerations. And lest they should accuse him of the intention of bringing a judicial charge against them, and thus be the more rivetted

(1) Storr and Platt's Bib. Theology, vol. i. p. 234.



in their prejudices against him, he directs them to their own lawgiver, whose testimony respecting him was sufficiently clear to afford ground for the condemnation of all who professed to receive it, and yet disallowed his claims to the Messiahship (ver. 45—47). On another occasion, when convincing them of the aggravated guilt which they contracted by rejecting him, he asks: “Did ye never read in the Scriptures,” ἐν ταῖς γραφαῖς, and then quotes the cxviii<sup>th</sup> Psalm, which the ancient Rabbins interpreted of the Messiah. (Matt. xxi. 22.)

Fourthly, Our Lord also repeatedly speaks of the Old Testament in the singular number, calling it the Scripture, ἡ γραφή (vii. 38, 42; xiii. 18; xvii. 12); and most peremptorily vindicates its authority as “the word of God,” which could not be set aside or rendered void—consequently was, in point of religious obligation, binding upon all into whose hands it came: “Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods?” “If he called them gods, unto whom the word of God came, and *the Scripture cannot be broken*, say ye,” &c. (John x. 34—36.) By law, in this place, he does not mean the Pentateuch, but the whole of the Old Testament, only specifically quoting from the Psalms, as a part of the whole:—an idiom frequent both in the Scriptures and in the Rabbinical writings. And of this Scripture, ἡ γραφή, he expressly affirms, that οὐ δύναται λυθῆναι, it cannot be invalidated—its authority cannot be called in question—it must be received and treated as coming from God.

Fifthly: He further speaks of the writings of the Old Testament, under the designation of “the law and



the prophets," *ὁ νόμος καὶ οἱ προφῆται*. (Matt. vii. 12 ; xxii. 40. See also Luke xvi. 16 ; Acts xiii. 15 ; Rom. iii. 21.) That by this designation is meant the whole compass of the Jewish Scriptures :—these two divisions forming its two grand component parts—the “law” comprehending the five books of Moses ; and the “prophets,” all the other books, beginning with Joshua, the first in the list of the prophets according to a classification in use among the Jews, is admitted as beyond dispute by all commentators. And agreeably to another mode of classification, he divides the books of the Old Testament into the “Law, the Prophets, and the Psalms,” (Luke xxiv. 44)—the book of Psalms being the first of the third class, as commonly divided by the Jews. Now of these Scriptures our Lord, the great Prophet, whom they predicted, declares, that their Divine authority was perpetual. It was not the object of his advent to absolve men from their obligations to receive the doctrines and keep the moral precepts therein contained, or in any way to teach a less perfect or a superficial system of moral duty (*καταλῦσαι*) ; but, on the contrary, to lead mankind into a more thorough and extensive acquaintance with their demands, the great designs they were given to accomplish, and the ratification, which they were to receive in the new economy about to be founded in his name (*πληρῶσαι*). So far was it from being intended by the doctrines which he and his apostles promulgated, to supersede the use, or lower the claims of the Old Testament Scriptures, that they were only thereby to acquire their full significance, and be more abundantly honoured. But it cannot, for a moment, be

supposed, that Christ would have spoken in this manner of any merely human writings. And indeed the terms, by which he designates them, imply, that they were of divine origin:—nothing being more common than the interchange of the forms “the law,” and “the law of the Lord,” as synonymous in signification; and the prophets having been all actuated by a divine impulse, whatever they committed to writing possessed the stamp of divine authority.

From these and other passages which might be adduced from the Gospels, it is apparent, that our Saviour fully admitted the inspired authority of the entire codex received in his day as divine by the Jews in Palestine. The doctrine of its inspiration is not taught by him in so many express words; but it is so clearly implied in many of his discourses, and is so fairly deducible from the manner in which he refers to it, that, on the contrary supposition, his appeals would lose their force, and his reasonings be rendered totally inapposite and nugatory. Indeed, so manifestly is the doctrine taught by implication in the discourses of our Lord, that its opponents, in order, if possible, to get rid of it, are compelled to adopt the hypothesis of accommodation:—maintaining, that, when he spoke in such exalted terms of the Jewish Scriptures, and appealed to them as divine, he did not express his own sentiments on the subject, but merely adapted himself to the opinions then prevalent among his contemporaries: but such a theory, being at once inconsistent with the integrity, and derogatory from the dignity of the Redeemer, violates one of the fundamental rules of interpretation. It is only necessary to

compare the doctrines which he taught with those which were peculiar to the Scribes and Pharisees, in order to perceive the contrast in which they stand to each other ; and so far was he from succumbing to popular opinion, or feigning acquiescence in any of the erroneous views or principles of his hearers, that he was most pointed in their condemnation, and opposed his own high authority to that of the whole body of the Rabbins. His agreeing with them on any point could only be viewed as improper, on the assumption, that their entire system of belief was a tissue of falsehood and error, and merited indiscriminate reprobation. But that such an assumption is perfectly gratuitous, must be evident to all, who reflect, for a moment, on the facts of the case. The public teachers among the Jews inculcated the traditions of the elders, and, by so doing, virtually made the commandment of God, in many instances, of no effect ; but they did not avowedly reject the principles inculcated in the law. They allowed the law to occupy the place, which had ever been assigned to it in their peculiar constitution ; and only added to it certain notions or opinions of their own invention. That veneration for the sacred books of the nation was one of these cannot be proved. It was a duty, which, from the most ancient times, was considered to be binding upon them as a people : and was founded on the assurance, which they had, from well-authenticated testimony, that the books containing it were written by men who stood in direct communication with Jehovah, whose Spirit prompted them to write, and assisted them in executing the task. This ascription of the Hebrew Bible to God as its author,

our Lord sanctioned and approved, and thereby threw the weight of his authority as the Messiah into its scale.

The testimony which Christ thus bore to the divine claims of the Jewish Scriptures, was clearly illustrated by that of his apostles, when writing under the inspiration which he had promised them. Of the various passages which contain this testimony none is more celebrated than our present text (2 Tim. iii. 16, 17), "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." It may, indeed, be properly considered as the principal *dictum classicum* to which, more than to any other, the supporters of the doctrine of inspiration have appealed; and which, in consequence, has also received a considerable degree of attention from those who have opposed that doctrine. This celebrity is owing partly to the occurrence of the compound *θεόπνευστος*, *divinely-inspired*—a term which, as we have already seen, is not employed elsewhere in Scripture, but which strikingly expresses the quality, which is inherent in the Scriptures, as the result of a divine influence exerted on their composition; and partly to the use of the adjective *all* (*πᾶση*), which has generally been considered as predicating the universality of the Scripture (*γραφή*) here stated to be inspired. On the subject of the apostle's predicate, a wide difference of opinion has obtained. The greater number of critics and commentators consider

it to be the Old Testament, though they are divided respecting the construction and the sense which is dependent upon it:—some comprehending under the term *γραφὴ* the whole of that ancient volume, and others restricting it to those parts only of which they think *θεόπνευστος* may be predicated. A second class regard it as designating not only the inspired codex of the Jews, but also such of the apostolic writings as had then appeared; while a third class confine it exclusively to the latter.

That the Scriptures of the Old Testament are intended, is unquestionably the construction best supported by the preceding context. Even on the supposition that no reference had previously been made to any specific writing or collection of writings, it was most natural for Timothy, who had received an early Jewish education, of which the study of the Scriptures formed a prominent part, to understand the apostle to mean these Scriptures:—*γραφὴ*, the term here used in the singular number, being in common use in application to them, especially to any particular passage which might happen to be quoted. He had been taught to regard them as the productions of men who were actuated by the Spirit of God, and who consequently wrote what was agreeable to his will. The very terminology, therefore, independently of any thing else, would, at once, lead his thoughts to these Scriptures as the collection to which reference was made. But the circumstance, that, in the verse immediately preceding, the apostle had expressly mentioned *τὰ ἱερὰ γράμματα*, “the Sacred Scriptures,” as those which Timothy had known from his earliest age, would



seem to place the matter beyond dispute. It is in the closest connection with the statement there made respecting these Scriptures, that the subject of the present text is introduced; and it is evidently introduced by way of supplement to what had been there taught. The train of the argument is this: Not only are the Divine Scriptures with which you are familiar, capable of furnishing you with the knowledge requisite for your own personal salvation, by pointing to Christ as their end or scope; but they altogether form a rich treasury of inspired wisdom, from which you may bring forth matter adapted to all the various departments of the office, with which you have been invested.

It cannot be denied, that a considerable proportion of the books of the New Testament already existed at the time the apostle wrote these words, which is generally supposed to have been about the year sixty-five; and it must also be admitted, that, on the supposition that it is to these the apostle refers in the phrase *πᾶσα γραφή*, there would be an appropriate connection between what he affirms of them, and what follows in this and the succeeding verse. In addition to the Scriptures of the Old Testament, Timothy also possessed those of the New, which were given by inspiration of the same Spirit by whom the former had been dictated; and being full of matter bearing more directly on the affairs of the Christian church, they might be expected to supply every information, which he would require as an Evangelist—every thing requisite to perfect his qualifications for his sacred and important work. But in order to establish this con-



struction of the passage, it must be proved, that the term *γραφὴ*, "Scripture," is to be taken here, not in the collective, but in an individual or distributive sense; and the adjective *πᾶσα* must in this case be rendered "every," and not "all." But though numerous attempts have been made to justify this rendering, they have never succeeded. For those who translate the words, "Every writing is inspired of God, and profitable," &c., expose themselves to the absurdity of making the apostle affirm, that every composition without exception is of this high character—an absurdity which led some in the time of Theophylact to ask, "Are then the writings of the Greeks also inspired?"<sup>1</sup> It may be thought, this is pressing the words beyond what is clearly their meaning—since the apostle could of course intend such books only as were written by inspired men; but it is evident there is nothing in the context that would naturally suggest any other writings of this description but those of the Old Testament mentioned in the preceding verse. Besides, if we except the Gospel of Matthew, two or three of the Pauline Epistles, and those of James and Peter, Timothy required no information respecting the inspired authority of such New Testament writings as had by that time been composed, since, in most of them, his own name is conjoined with that of Paul in the titles. But the adjective here employed, if taken in a distributive sense, obviously supposes a number of writings, every one of which, according to the proposed interpretation, laid claims to inspiration:

(1) Ζητοῦσι δὲ τίνες πῶς εἶπε Πᾶσα γραφὴ Θεόπνευστος· Ἄρα οὖν καὶ αἱ τῶν Ἑλλήνων θεόπνευστοι—Comment. *in loc.*

consequently there could have been no propriety under the circumstances in which Timothy was placed to address him in such terms. In short, this construction of the words is so forced, that none have ventured to defend it, except those who have been determined, at all hazards, to extract from them an inspired proof of the inspiration of all the writings contained in the New Testament.

Nor is the translation, "Every divinely-inspired writing is also profitable," &c., though sanctioned by a much more numerous class of interpreters, entitled to a more favourable reception. To say nothing of the awkwardness and total want of point introduced into the passage, by giving to the copulative conjunction καὶ the signification of *also*, which even Geddes allows it requires some straining to make it bear in this place,<sup>1</sup> we may remark, that such a mode of construction is at variance with a common rule of Greek syntax, which requires, that, when two adjectives are closely joined, as θεόπνευστος and ὠφέλιμος here are, if there be an ellipsis of the substantive verb ἐστὶ, this verb must be supplied after the former of the two, and regarded as repeated after the latter. Now there exists precisely such an ellipsis in the case before us; and as there is nothing in the context which would lead us to take any exception to the rule, we are bound to yield to its force, just as we would in any similar instance. In support of this rendering, an appeal has usually been made to the Syriac, Arabic, and Latin versions; but it is, to say the least, very doubtful whether these versions really convey the idea, which

(1) Bible, vol. ii. Pref. p. xi.

is thus endeavoured to be attached to them. With respect to the two former, it is well known to oriental scholars, that the word translated "every" is more properly a substantive signifying *totality* than an adjective; while the Latin *omnis* is also often used for *tota*; so that all the versions in question may as properly be rendered, "The whole of Scripture, which is divinely inspired, is profitable," &c., as "Every Scripture," &c. The evidence in favour of the translation in our common English Bible, derived from the Fathers, and almost all the versions, among others, the modern Greek, which reads ὅλη, "the whole," is most decided. The opposite interpretation, however, was eagerly adopted by Semler, who, in his work on the canon, endeavoured to prove that the design of the apostle in this text is to furnish the criteria, by which to judge whether any work be inspired or not – namely, its religious and moral utility; and having, as he imagined, established this point, he proceeded to apply the principle to the books of the Old Testament, and, without ceremony, lopped off not fewer than eight of them, as, in his judgment, not possessed of the requisite marks of legitimacy. Most of those critics, who, like him, have been dissatisfied *à priori* with certain portions of the Jewish Scriptures, have eagerly adopted and perseveringly propagated his hypothesis: so that most of the German divines without hesitation give it their suffrage. Knapp, however, Storr, and others, contend for the common rendering. Convinced that this rendering is the only correct one, we consider the passage as throwing an impenetrable shield round the sacred books of the Jews, and stamping

every portion of them with the seal of divine authority.<sup>1</sup>

A similar testimony, of great weight in the present argument, is furnished by the Apostle Peter (2 Epist. i. 19—21), “ We have also a more sure word of prophecy; “ whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a “ light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, “ and the day-star arise in your hearts: 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.” Having directed the attention of the elect strangers to whom he wrote, to the immovable foundation on which their faith was built, and assured them that those, to whom they were indebted for the knowledge of that foundation, had not been the dupes of credulity, but witnesses of the most convincing testimony that had been given from heaven to the divinity of the claims of Christ as the Saviour of the world, the apostle, in contemplation of the irresistible proof which was thus afforded, proceeds to state, that they were thereby supplied with an additional confirmation of the truth of the Old Testament Scriptures, one of the prominent features of which was the chain of predictions contained in them respecting the Messiah and his kingdom. The prophetic word, τὸν προφητικὸν λόγον, to which he refers, is not any new communications with which the apostles had been favoured,—in other words, New Testament prophecies,—an hypothesis which has been

(1) See Note N.

advocated by Warburton, Griesbach, and others; nor the declaration made by the Father on the Mount, as Erasmus and Beza violently interpreted; but the ancient prophetic oracles of the Jews, which, having been written by men under a prophetic impulse, came to be spoken of under the general designation of prophecy, *προφητεία*. These had ever been in the highest estimation with all who feared Jehovah. They delighted in the study of them. They believed the truth of their contents, though they but imperfectly understood them. But now that the most important of these prophecies had received their fulfilment in the appearance, sufferings, and glorification of the Redeemer, their certainty was confirmed (*βεβαιότερον*), and their authority heightened in the minds of believers. In themselves, they could receive no increase of certainty, being the words of Him of whom it is declared, "Hath he said, and shall he not do it? or "hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?" but subjectively, or as received by men, they were susceptible of increasing degrees of certainty, in proportion as subsequent predictions threw light upon those which had previously been given, and especially as the events transpired to which they pointed.

The apostle commends the diligent investigation of this prophetic word; which, though, when compared to the sun, might be said to be only a lantern, the light of which but dimly discovers the objects upon which it shines, yet would afford certainty to all who availed themselves of its aid. It shed its light, comparatively feeble as it was, during the dark ages which preceded the advent of the Messiah. That portion



of the Christian church to whom this Epistle was written, being composed, for the most part, of converts from Judaism, had been accustomed to peruse the Scriptures of the Old Testament, which contained the prophecies; and no doubt still continued to do so, after having received the Gospel. Peter exhorts them to adhere to the practice; as, by that means, they would improve in knowledge and be preserved from apostasy, till the copious flood of New Testament light should break in upon them through the instrumentality of the inspired writings of the apostles of Christ. In all probability, their opportunities of Christian instruction had been limited; and perhaps this and the former Epistle were the only parts of the Scriptures of the New Covenant which many of them had yet seen. It was, therefore, important for them diligently to avail themselves of the ancient revelations, and to rest in the conviction, that, though they had not attained to the same degree of assurance with the apostles, who had been eye-witnesses of the accomplishment of the prophecies contained in them, yet the time would soon arrive when they too should be made fully acquainted with such fulfilment by means of the written Gospels and Epistles, which originated in the influence of the same Spirit, under whose impulse the Scriptures of the Old Testament had been composed. In prosecuting this investigation of the prophecies, however, they were to lay it down as a first principle (*τοῦτο πρῶτον γινώσκοντες*), from which, notwithstanding the obscurities in which some of them might be involved, they were never to suffer their minds to be moved, that they were all of divine origin. None of



them was the result of mere human disclosure, or an interpretation of the will of God delivered by an unauthorized individual. The reason (γὰρ) is obvious. At no time was prophecy brought in by human volition; on the contrary (ἀλλὰ), it was under the impulse of the Holy Spirit that the holy men of God spake, by whom it was delivered to the church.<sup>1</sup>

Such appears to be the tenor and bearing of this confessedly difficult passage. Its bearing on the subject of inspiration must now be considered. By most of those who have employed it in support of this doctrine, it has been considered as furnishing one of the clearest and most decisive proofs to be met with in the sacred volume. And, unquestionably, if we simply regard the act of inspiration, or the exertion of supernatural influence on those who were the recipients of Divine communications, it must be confessed, that no language can more expressly assert such an exertion—no statement can more explicitly deny the human origin of the communications just mentioned, or more convincingly attribute them to God as their author, than that which is here employed. It may, however, be objected to the appropriation of this language to the Old Testament universally, that the term prophecy, which repeatedly occurs in the passage, necessarily restricts the influence in question to the predictive portions of that book, and that the reference is not made in any respect to the committal even of these prophecies to writing, but merely to their oral annunciation. The holy men of God *spake* as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. But the objection may partly be met by

(1) See Note O.

the remark, that, as the special subject of prophecy here referred to is the Messiah, and the predictions respecting him are not confined to the prophets strictly so called, but are likewise found in the writings of Moses, Samuel, David, and other Old Testament writers, any construction, which would go to exclude these writers, is inadmissible. And it is further to be observed, that whatever books of Scripture are found to contain prophecies written by inspired men, are to be regarded as divine, not merely in so far as the exhibition of the prophecies themselves is concerned, but through the entire extent of their composition; inasmuch as they obviously constitute one whole, and every part is more or less necessary in order to furnish an infallible historical basis, on which the evidence of the several predictions may rest. For, if we separate the prophecies from the rest of the matter with which they are connected, we completely isolate them, rid them of their sacred character, and place them upon a level with the Sibylline oracles, or any other unauthenticated predictions of antiquity. It is because they are found in the writings of those, who held a divine commission, and were communicated by them to the church of God at the time, and under the circumstances which these writings definitely specify, that we allow the authority of their claims. In this point of view, it is important to notice the peculiar phraseology employed by the apostle in the text under consideration. His language is not, as Erasmus interprets it: <sup>1</sup> *no prophetic Scripture*, but *πᾶσα προφητεία γραφῆς, οὐ, κ. τ. λ. no prophecy of Scripture*, i. e. no

(1) Nov. Test. *in loc.*

prophecy contained in Scripture—thus extending the reference to *the entire code* in which the Divine predictions are deposited. Without such reference, the allegation would have been nugatory. And thus, whenever the oracular announcements of the Old Testament prophets are quoted by our Lord, or his apostles, the indisputable claims of that division of the sacred volume are either expressly asserted, or obviously assumed. Indeed it was impossible for a Jew to disconnect, in his own mind, the idea of a prophecy from that of its existence in the volume, which had been handed down to him from his ancestors as the book of God ; or rather he completely identified them—conceiving only of the prediction as embodied in the document which had served as the vehicle of its transmission. The former he invested with paramount authority, on the ground of the divine authentication of the latter. It is upon this principle, that Paul, referring to the ancient announcements, which Jehovah had made relative to the gospel dispensation, declares : “ Which he had promised afore by his prophets in the “ holy Scriptures,” (Rom. i. 2,) in which passage he fully expresses what is implied in that now under consideration, namely, that the Scripture, in which the prophecies are deposited, is *sacred*—a term not only implying the destination of that of which it is predicated, but also its origin—the sacred or divine influence of the Holy Spirit.

We are, therefore, warranted to maintain, that this passage does, to a certain extent, contain a cogent proof of the inspiration of the Old Testament. The writings of which it is composed are spoken of by the

Apostle Peter precisely in the same style as we have seen they are spoken of by the Apostle Paul. They both designate them by the collective term *Scripture*, (*γραφῆ*)—a term, which, from its peculiarly appropriated acceptation when employed to denote the sacred books of the Jews, evidently invests them with an importance, which cannot be claimed in behalf of any human writings. This importance is here clearly recognised. But this, I conceive, is the entire amount of the proof which the text affords. To extend to the whole Scripture what the apostle specifically affirms of its prophecies, namely, that it is not of private interpretation—though true in itself and provable from other sources, is, in our opinion, to compel him by torture to give utterance to what did not, at the time, exist in his mind. It is of the prophetic word, or the prophecies universally, he predicates absolute Divine authority, human agency having had nothing whatever to do with their origination. His mention of the Scriptures is merely made in passing—the prophecies being contained in these Scriptures, as the divinely constituted and infallible medium of their preservation for the benefit of future ages.

Another passage in which an express sanction is given to the inspired authority of the Old Testament is Rom. xv. 4, in which the apostle, after quoting from the lxxixth Psalm, states: “For whatsoever things “were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we, through patience and comfort of the “Scriptures, might have hope.” We are here taught not merely, that such practical lessons are deducible

from the ancient Jewish Scriptures, but that they were composed definitely with a view to communicate such instruction. And that the intention or design to which he refers was not that of the writers, but that of God himself, appears from the intimate connection of this and the following verse, in which, repeating the two benefits which he had mentioned, he expressly ascribes them to God as their author. They are conferred by the Scriptures only instrumentally: but He who is the true source from which they spring, so ordered it, that, when these Scriptures were composed, precisely such things were selected to form their contents as should subserve the edification of his people in all future time. No argument can more conclusively prove, that the books included in the Jewish canon were inspired. That it is to these books the apostle refers, is evident from his use of the appropriated term *αἱ γραφαί*, *the Scriptures*; from his having just made a quotation from the Psalmist; and from his assigning the time when the things spoken of were written, to a period antecedent to the introduction of the Christian economy. They are things that, *προεγράφη*, *were written aforetime*. Nor must the universality of the language here employed be unnoticed. It is not certain parts or portions only of Scripture that were written by divine appointment to promote our benefit, but the whole, not excepting any portion whatever. For while the special correlative *ὅσα* is most comprehensive in its import, obviously conveying the idea of quantity or number, it, at the same time, expresses the minutest parts of a whole, how great soever the whole may be. Hence the Syriac renders the passage:



“ For *every thing that was anciently written*, was  
 “ written for our instruction.”<sup>1</sup> A similar declaration  
 relative to speciality of design is furnished, 1 Cor. x.11:  
 “ Now all these things happened to them for ensamples,  
 “ and were written for our instruction, upon whom  
 “ the ends of the world are come.”

Numerous other texts might be adduced from the  
 apostolic writings, in support of the doctrine of the  
 inspired authority of the books of the Old Testament,  
 such as those in which they are expressly called  
 τὰ λόγια τοῦ Θεοῦ, the oracular announcements of God<sup>2</sup>  
 (Rom. iii. 2 ; Heb. v. 12) ; or in which they are ascribed  
 to the influence of the Holy Spirit (Acts xxviii. 25 ;  
 Heb. iii. 7 ; ix. 8 ; x. 15) ; but what has already been  
 quoted may suffice. I would only remark, in this  
 place, that so deeply were the minds of the apostles  
 impressed with a sense of the importance and authority  
 of these Scriptures, that, comparatively limited as their  
 writings are, the Epistles and the book of the Revela-  
 tion alone contain upwards of *four hundred and fifty*  
 passages in which they are either expressly quoted,  
 or marked reference is made to them ; or their  
 language is employed in a way which evinces that they  
 were regarded by these inspired ambassadors of Christ  
 as truly of divine origin. In the Epistles of Paul  
 alone, upwards of *two hundred and fifty* such quota-  
 tions or references are found.

Since the testimonies, which are furnished in such

(1) *ἡ καθ' ἑαυτὴν ἀρχαία γραφή, ἡ ἡμετέραν γραφήν ἐκτείνουσα.*  
*ἡ καθ' ἑαυτὴν ἀρχαία γραφή.*

(2) Λόγια. Hesych. Θέσφατα, μαντεύματα, φῆμαι, χρησμοί.



abundance in the New Testament, are so conclusive, it were altogether superfluous to enlarge upon those which are contained in the Old Testament itself. Suffice it, in brief, to remark, that Moses was expressly commanded to *write* the account of the war with Amalek in the book, which he had already begun to compose, and which was, in all probability, the preceding part of the Pentateuch (Exod. xvii. 14); that David, in one of his most striking prophetic Psalms, which treat exclusively of the Messiah, introduces him as declaring: “In *the volume of the book* it is written “of me” (Ps. xl. 6); that Isaiah distinctly recognises a book, which he designates THE BOOK OF THE LORD, which he calls upon his readers to investigate (xxxiv. 16); that he and the prophets Jeremiah and Habakkuk are charged by the Lord to commit their predictions to *writing* (Isa. viii. 1; xxx. 8; Jer. xxx. 2; xxxvi. 2, 4; li. 59, 60; Hab. ii. 2); that Daniel was commanded to shut up the words, and seal *the book* of his prophecy (ch. xii. 4); that he closely connects the word of the Lord, which was delivered by Jeremiah, with certain *books*, by the study of which he ascertained the exact length of the captivity; that Jehovah asserts to himself the composition of the documents, which had been put into the hands of the Israelites (Hosea viii. 12); and finally, that not unfrequently later writers quote or borrow passages from those who preceded them, in a way which implies their divine authority (Is. xv. xvi.; Jer. xlviii.; Jer. xlix. 7—17; Obad.; Exod. xv. 2; Ps. cxviii.; Is. xii.; Deut. xxv.; Jud. v.; Ps. lxviii. &c.)

These and similar notices, which meet the eye on

perusing the sacred pages of the Old Testament Scriptures, cannot fairly or consistently be explained upon any other principle, than the admission of a Divine authority attaching to the book, or those portions of the book to which reference in each case is made.

It only remains, on the present occasion, to bring forward the evidence, which the books of the New Testament furnish of their own inspiration.

Assuming it as proved, that the writers of the books which were composed under the old economy, enjoyed the privilege of infallible Divine assistance or the supernatural communication of truth, it may be presumed, that those of the New, which is a dispensation of more enlarged privilege, and more abundant in extraordinary gifts, should likewise have stood under the immediate guidance of the Holy Spirit. We have shown, that, as it was more important for the church to be furnished with an unerring standard of faith and practice in all ages, than merely to possess such an undoubted rule of authority during the lifetime of the apostles, in their oral decisions, there is every reason to believe her allwise and gracious Head has made special provision for the supply of such a standard; especially since he expressly promised them the efficient aid of the Paraclete in the execution of their high commission. We take it for granted, that, if they actually enjoyed the extraordinary influences of this blessed Agent, when preaching the doctrines of the kingdom by word of mouth, they must equally have enjoyed those influences in the composition of their written documents.<sup>1</sup>

(1) See Note P.

But it is not to presumptive arguments we now appeal. We take up the authentic writings of the ambassadors of Christ, and we learn, from their own testimony, that they were inspired. Not that the doctrine is formally asserted with any degree of frequency. The circumstances in which the apostles were placed rendered the announcement of such a proposition, in most cases, perfectly unnecessary. All that we have any right to expect is the incidental mention of it, on certain particular occasions which called for its assertion.

The prefixing of the term “apostle,” as descriptive of office, to the different epistles, was obviously intended to stamp with divine authority whatever they might contain. It is a notification, that the person who laid claim to the title, was under the special direction of the Spirit of truth, whom the Redeemer promised to confer upon his apostles to qualify them for their work. It is the seal-royal of heaven, giving a divine sanction to all the instructions contained in the documents to which it is attached. Suppose that any of us had lived in the time of Paul, and been acquainted with all the circumstances of his history, and a letter had been addressed to us individually, beginning as follows: PAUL, AN APOSTLE OF JESUS CHRIST BY THE WILL OF GOD—should we not have considered ourselves sacredly bound to receive its contents, and comply with its requisitions? Admitting the fact, that he held a Divine commission, we could not, with the smallest degree of consistency, have rejected his authority as thus announced to us through the medium of a written communication.

It is not, however, at the commencement of their letters merely, that the apostles assert their inspired authority: they also vindicate it in the course of their written instructions. "I say the truth in Christ; "I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness "*in the Holy Ghost.*" (Rom. ix. 1.) Not only was what he was about to deliver agreeable to the relation in which he stood to the Saviour; it was also the result of what his inward consciousness assured him was a dictate of the Holy Spirit, by whom he was inspired (ἐν πνεύματι ἁγίῳ). In a subsequent part of the same Epistle, he ascribes the boldness with which he wrote to the special grace of apostleship: "Nevertheless, brethren, I have *written* the more boldly "unto you in some sort, as putting you in mind, "because of the grace that is given to me of God," &c. (Rom. xv. 15, 16.) At the conclusion of his instructions to the Corinthian church on several questions connected with marriage, he states as a valid reason why they should be received: "I think also that I "have the Spirit of God." (1 Cor. vii. 40.) Not that he stood in any doubt with respect to the fact of his being under the infallible direction of the Holy Spirit: he only expresses himself in language adapted, by the very peculiarity of its construction, to silence any who might be disposed to call his inspiration in question.<sup>1</sup> Some commentators, it must be admitted, have advanced the hypothesis, that, in this and other parts of the chapter, the apostle disclaims inspiration, and merely delivers his own private opinion, which it was at the option of those to whom he wrote, to receive or reject

(1) See Note Q.

at pleasure. The passages are as follows: "But I speak this by permission, and not of commandment." "And unto the married I command, yet not I, but the Lord." "But to the rest speak I, not the Lord." "I have no commandment of the Lord: yet I give my judgment as one that hath obtained mercy of the Lord to be faithful." "I think also that I have the Spirit of God." (1 Cor. vii. 6, 10, 12, 25, 40.) But such a mode of construction as that just noticed cannot be reconciled with the representations which the apostle otherwise makes of the authority with which he was invested, and the obedience which he claims to his decisions, as those of the Master by whom he had been sent. It is at variance even with the language which he employs in the chapter itself. For though he declares at the 12th verse: "To the rest speak I, not the Lord," yet, after giving the directions to which that formula is introductory, he concludes: "And so ORDAIN I in all the churches." (Ver. 17.) The term *διατάσσομαι*, here rendered *ordain*, is equally authoritative with *ἐπιταγή* and *παραγγέλλω*, which he uses to denote the commandment or ordinance of the Lord himself. When he asserts (ver. 6) that what he spoke was *κατὰ συγγνώμην, οὐ κατ' ἐπιταγὴν*, "by permission, not by commandment," it is evident from the structure of the words, that he did not mean, as Wahl explains in his Lexicon, to leave it to the pleasure of the Corinthians, which course they would adopt. The preposition *κατὰ* points out equally in both cases the origin or author of the communications of which he speaks. The directions, which he had just given, did not originate with himself. Had he been left to advise



according to his own views and feelings, he would (*θέλω, I could wish* for *θέλωμι*) unquestionably have delivered a different judgment (ver. 7); but what he wrote was the result of a concession directly made to him by the Holy Spirit, of which he was distinctly conscious at the time. In like manner, when stating (ver. 25) that he had no specific commandment of the Lord, and being about to employ the verb *νομίζω*, "I judge," he qualifies his statement in such a manner as must convince every impartial reader that he attached to the judgment he was about to deliver an importance to which it would not have been entitled, if he had not been writing under the influence of inspiration. His meaning evidently is: "I give my judgment, as one who has been so graciously dealt with by the Lord, as to be put into the apostleship, and thus to be worthy of entire credit. It is not an ordinary minister of Christ who addresses you, but an apostle endowed with the Holy Spirit." And, as we before observed, the way in which he expresses himself (ver. 40), when concluding this part of his Epistle, evinces his conviction, that, notwithstanding the distinction which he had made between the Lord and himself, the decisions which he had given were the result of the infallible guidance of the Spirit of God.

We are, therefore, compelled by the simple showing of the phraseology which the apostle uses in this chapter, to search for a solution very different from that which would represent him as delivering mere human opinions respecting the subjects in question. And there appears no just reason why we should



depart from the interpretation adopted by Chrysostom, Calvin, Mills, Witsius, and many others, that, in the one case, there is a reference to certain special instructions which the Lord Christ had given during his personal ministry, and in the other, to instructions which were now being delivered by the Holy Spirit through the instrumentality of the apostle. On the subject of the conduct of married persons, referred to verses 1—5, and that of virgins, ver. 25, our Lord had said nothing while upon earth; it was, therefore, necessary for the apostle now to decide upon them, which he did under the unerring direction of the Holy Spirit. On other subjects, such as divorce, ver. 10, Christ had already decided (Matt. v. 32; xix. 3—10); in which case it was proper simply to avow, that the reply to the question which had been proposed, was founded, not on a judgment similarly produced, but upon the recollection of the Saviour's commandment. The same remarks will apply to 2 Cor. viii. 8, 10: "I speak not by commandment, but by occasion of the forwardness of others." "And herein I give my advice;" and in some measure to ch. xi. 17, of the same Epistle: "That which I speak, I speak it not after the Lord;" though in the latter passage it is the example of Christ (*κατὰ Κύριον*), and not his precepts, to which the apostle refers.

Clearly, however, as this appears to be the meaning of the passages quoted, it may not be inapposite to observe, that, on the supposition that Paul did intend to disclaim inspiration in these particular instances, it follows from the very circumstance of his making them exceptions, that all the other parts of his epistles

were inspired. Mr. Belsham, indeed, contends, that “the contrary conclusion would be most agreeable to reason, viz. that, wherever he does not expressly assert his inspiration, he is not to be regarded as inspired. For inspiration is a miracle, which is never to be admitted but upon the clearest evidence. And the apostle nowhere claims unlimited inspiration.”<sup>1</sup> But the question is not left to the decision of reason: the apostle did demand unlimited submission to whatever he taught. What can be more positive than his language, for instance (ch. ii. 16), “We have the mind of Christ”? *i. e.* as the same author paraphrases the words, “we, who are authorized apostles, and who have learned the Christian doctrine by the instruction of the Spirit of God, and by supernatural illumination, are assured, that we are in possession of the genuine truths of the Christian religion, and that we are duly authorized and qualified to communicate these important truths to all.—And being in possession of the true doctrine of Christ, and having given the most satisfactory proofs that we are so, *we have a right to challenge the attentive and persevering regard of our hearers.*”<sup>2</sup>

That the apostle considered himself to be under the infallible influence of the Spirit of God in all that he wrote to the churches, is most evident from his absolute and uncontrolled declaration (1 Cor. xiv. 37, 38), “If any man think himself to be a prophet or spiritual, let him acknowledge, that the things that *I write*

(1) Apostolical Epistles, *in loc.*

(2) Ibid.

“unto you, are *the commandments of the Lord*. But “if any man be ignorant, let him be ignorant.” The comment of the writer just quoted, on the last of these verses, is too remarkable to be omitted; and we can only express our astonishment, that any person, who could employ such language, should himself, in his theological writings, have furnished so awful an example of the case which he deprecates. “If any “one pretends, that he is not satisfied concerning my “apostolic authority, and that he sees no obligation “to submit to my decisions, after all the proofs which “I have alleged of the commission under which I act, “I shall take no further pains to convince him; his “ignorance is wilful. LET HIM AND HIS ASSOCIATES “TAKE THE CONSEQUENCES OF THEIR VOLUNTARY “ERROR.”

In his second Epistle (ch. x. 11), the apostle, as we have already had occasion to observe, places his epistles precisely upon the same footing in point of authority with his personal labours. “Let such an one think “this, that such as we are *in word by letters*, when we “are absent, such also are we in *deed*, when we are “present.” They equally possessed miraculous influence: his oral teaching or enforcement of discipline being accompanied by the Divine sanction supernaturally evinced; his letters not containing the mere results of his own invention or reasoning, but the unerring dictates of the Spirit of God.

When exhorting the members of the church at Thessalonica to maintain purity of conduct, he most unscrupulously avers: “He, therefore, that despiseth, “despiseth not man, but God, who hath also given

“unto us his Holy Spirit.” (1 Thess. iv. 8.) Though he had just inculcated the duty, yet he would have the attention of the Thessalonians entirely directed away from himself as the instrument to the real author of the injunction. The negation is not comparative, as some would construe it: “He, therefore, that despiseth, “despiseth not so much man as God,” &c., but absolute.<sup>1</sup> The duty is enjoined by Divine authority, which whoever rejects, must abide the consequences. To confirm his statement, however, the apostle adds: “Who hath also given unto us his Holy Spirit.” He and his fellow apostles were the subjects of divine inspiration, so that the instructions which they imparted were to be received as divine, not merely in the present instance, but on every occasion, and without any exception. Whenever they taught, either orally or by letter, they merely communicated what they were commissioned by the Holy Spirit to impart. The words, to have any force in such connection, must be thus interpreted.

In his second Epistle to the same church, the apostle attaches to his epistolary communications an importance, which he never could have done, had they not been the result of inspiration: “If any man *obey not our word by this epistle*, note that man, and have no “company with him,” &c. (ch. iii. 14); and so important did he consider it to have his apostolic authority clearly established in the minds of those to whom he addressed his letters, that, on closing the present communication, he adds, “The salutation of Paul with

(1) Winer's Gram. pp. 414, 415.

“ mine own hand, which is the token in every epistle :  
 “ *so I write.*” (Ver. 17.)

To the inspiration of the Pauline Epistles, an unequivocal testimony is borne by Peter in his second Epistle (iii. 15, 16), “ Even as our beloved brother  
 “ Paul also, according to the wisdom given unto him,  
 “ hath written unto you ; as also, in all his epistles,”  
 &c. ; on which we observe : First, that what Paul wrote is here expressly ascribed to supernatural wisdom : it was not the result of his own reasoning, nor deduced from any school of human philosophy, but was the effect of that divine teaching to which he repeatedly refers in his writings. Secondly, there is in the words a distinct recognition of a definite number of epistolary writings, which were known to have been composed by the same apostle, and of which it is also of course to be predicated, that he wrote them in consequence of the same divinely inspired wisdom. Thirdly, by “ the other Scriptures,” τὰς λοιπὰς γραφὰς, the apostle most probably means the writings of the Old Testament. If so, then, by placing the Epistles of Paul in the same category with them, he invests them with equal authority, and furnishes us with the earliest instance, in which the term Scripture, which we have seen was appropriated to the Old Testament, is, by implication, extended to at least a considerable portion of the New. Grotius, however, supposes the Gospels and Acts to be meant, which amounts to the same thing.

That John was inspired, the Book of the Revelation bears most ample testimony—the whole being composed either of visions, which were presented to him

in a state of the highest inspiration (*ἐν πνεύματι*, chap. i. 10), or epistles, which were dictated to him immediately by the Lord Jesus, to be despatched to the seven churches of Asia Minor.

There is only one passage more, which it would be injustice to our subject not to quote. It is that in which Peter, after having adverted to his former Epistle, and that which he was then writing, claims for the instructions given by himself and the other apostles an authority equivalent to that with which the doctrines and precepts delivered by the prophets of the Old Testament were invested: "That ye may  
" be mindful of the words which were spoken before  
" by the holy prophets, and of the commandments of  
" us the apostles of the Lord and Saviour." (2d Epist. iii. 2.)

Such are some of the testimonies to be found in the books of the New Testament to the fact of the inspiration of the writers; and certainly,—bearing in mind what has already been hinted, that they are, for the most part, incidental, and not put forth systematically in support of the doctrine,—they are so highly satisfactory in their character, that, had we no other evidence, we should be perfectly warranted in ascribing all that can be ascertained to have proceeded from the pens of these men, or to have received their sanction, to the same divine influence, which Moses and the prophets enjoyed under the former dispensation. The language is of the most explicit and positive nature; and describes an inspiration, which extended to all that the writers communicated. They vindicate to themselves and their associates a tuition, which they could only



have enjoyed as the result of the accomplishment of our Lord's promise of the Holy Spirit; and they speak in a tone of authority and infallibility, which none was warranted to assume, who did not stand in direct correspondence with heaven, and to which such men as the disciples of Jesus could not possibly have pretended, had they not been specially called to the office which they sustained.

## LECTURE VII.

INSPIRATION OF THE SCRIPTURES—(*continued.*)

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HOSEA VIII. 12.

*"I have written to him the great things of my law."*

WE have now arrived at one of those divisions of our subject, which has been regarded as clogged with more than ordinary difficulties, and with respect to which, as may easily be imagined, a great diversity of opinion has prevailed. In the introductory Lecture, a general view was taken of the different lights in which the doctrine of inspiration has been contemplated in various sections and in successive ages of the church. Certain aspects under which it has been presented, are obviously to be attributed to the distorted mediums of prejudice, and the false colours of unenlightened zeal, through which it has been viewed. In many instances, the love of system, or sheer opposition to all system, has exerted a baneful influence on the adjudication of the question; and, while, on the one hand, there has been exhibited a contractedness, a dogmatism, and an asperity, not less unfriendly to the discovery and communication of truth, than dishonourable to all who

would identify themselves with its interests ; there has frequently, on the other hand, been displayed a vagueness of conception, a temerity of reasoning, a rashness of conclusion, and a levity and flippancy of language, egregiously out of place at all times when brought into contact with subjects of grave and serious import, but more especially, when applied to the treatment of a subject of so sacred a character, as that of Divine Inspiration.

The fact of a divine influence having been exerted in the composition of the Scriptures, is expressly asserted by Jehovah himself, in the words which we have just read from the prophet Hosea. That we are to limit the sense of the words to the decalogue simply, which is described by Moses as having been written by the finger of God, there is nothing in the connection to warrant : on the contrary, there is reason to believe, that the declaration was designed to be extended to the whole of the Mosaic law, if not to all the other portions of divine revelation, which had been written prior to the time of the prophet. The Hebrew גְּבִי, rendered in our version “the great things,” may equally well be translated “the numerous things;” and the use of the future tense of the verb (אֶכְתָּב) conveys the idea of communications being continuously committed to writing. With these the Israelites had been favoured, but they made no account of them : preferring the worship of idols to the service of the only God, and the impure gratifications of sin to the satisfaction connected with obedience to his law.

With respect to the two tables of stone, which Moses received on Mount Sinai, there can be no doubt, that

they were miraculously prepared, and that the writing which was inscribed upon them was likewise of Divine workmanship. It has been maintained, indeed, by some, that the language is merely figurative, and that nothing more is meant, than the communication of the ten commandments to Moses, and his writing them upon the tables by order and according to the direction of God: but the terms of the sacred description are so explicit, and the repetitions of the fact so evidently introduced for the purpose of creating a contrary belief, that we must either reject the testimony of Moses altogether, or abide by the literal interpretation. The decalogue had been proclaimed in the hearing of the whole nation of Israel, encamped before the mountain; but awful as were the circumstances which attended its promulgation, it would soon have passed into oblivion, if a permanent mode of preserving it had not been adopted. Moses was, therefore, invited to go up to Sinai, in the following words: "Come up to me into the mount, and be there: and I will give thee tables of stone, and a law, and commandments, *which I have written*; that thou mayest teach them." (Exod. xxiv. 12.) He next informs us, chap. xxxi. 18, "And he gave unto Moses, when he had made an end of communing with him upon mount Sinai, two tables of testimony, tables of stone, *written with the finger of God.*" But the most complete description is given, chap. xxxii. 15, 16: "And Moses turned, and went down from the mount, and the two tables of testimony were in his hand, the tables were written on both their sides; on the one side and on the other were they written. And the tables were

“ the work of God, and *the writing was the writing of God*, graven upon the tables.” And though, after they had been broken, Moses was commanded to hew two tables like unto the first, yet it is again expressly stated, that “ *the Lord wrote* on the tables, according “ to the first writing, the ten commandments.” (Deut. x. 1—5.) It is impossible for language more explicitly to teach the immediate operation of Deity, than what is employed by Moses in these several passages of the Pentateuch.<sup>1</sup>

It may strike some minds, that there was no occasion for this intervention of Jehovah, since Moses was already acquainted with writing, and might, with the utmost ease, have inscribed on the tables whatever it pleased the Almighty to reveal through his instrumentality. That he was previously initiated into the art of writing is past dispute, since he received a command to enter, in the register of events which he kept, an account of the victory gained over the Amalekites, some time before the transactions which took place on Sinai. (Exod. xvii.) Attempts, it is true, have been made to explain this passage so as to get rid of its evidence against the theory, that there was no writing whatever before the time of Moses : but they have completely failed, and it must ever prove an insuperable barrier to the adoption of any such hypothesis.

It is, however, extremely probable, that, previous to this period, Moses was only acquainted with the hieroglyphic mode of writing, which he must have learned in Egypt ; but, partly in order to discountenance image-worship, and partly with a view to give

(1) See Note R.

facility to the transmission of the truths of divine revelation, God furnished him, on this occasion, with an important specimen of alphabetic Scripture, and taught him how to compose in it the other laws and ordinances, which he revealed to him. At all events, it is certain, we possess no accounts from antiquity, which go to show, that alphabetic characters were invented prior to the time of the Jewish legislator; while the concurrent testimony of ancient writers, referring their introduction to some period near to that in which he flourished, corroborates the opinion, so naturally suggested by the sacred narrative, that they were of divine origin.

In the composition of this divine autograph of the decalogue, we possess the only instance on record of inspiration, in the highest and most perfect, though not the ordinary, acceptation of the term. On all other occasions, and in reference to all that we now possess in writing, as the result of a divine operation, human agency was employed. The copy of the decalogue itself, which was designed for common use among the Hebrews, was written by the hand of Moses. It becomes, therefore, a question of deep interest: How was human agency employed in committing to writing the contents of Holy Scripture, so as to invest them with the authoritative character of a divine revelation? In other words: What was the nature of that influence which was exerted on the minds of the writers? And, how did it operate to the production of that unerring standard of truth which their writings comprise?

To some all such questions may seem to savour of presumption, and to spring from a profane desire to



penetrate into arcana, which must ever remain inaccessible to human investigation. They may be decried as unhallowed speculations, and as giving rise to fruitless and unscriptural theories: but if the subject is really presented to our view in the word of God, not merely as to the matter of fact, but under a variety of aspects and bearings, can it possibly be wrong to contemplate it in the various lights in which it is thus presented? Or rather, we may ask: Must it not, to say the least, be ungrateful to refuse to examine it according to those points of view in which the Author of revelation has been pleased to place it, and which afford manifest illustrations of his infinite wisdom and goodness? If certain phenomena are exhibited on the pages of Scripture in connection with what it teaches respecting the doctrine of inspiration, is it not reasonable to expect, that an impartial examination of these phenomena will greatly facilitate our attempts to ascertain the particular bearings of the sacred influence which the writers enjoyed? And if a diversity of forms and modes of expression are employed in the descriptions which are given of that influence, can there be any thing improper in fully weighing the import of such phraseology according to just principles of interpretation, and framing our views in accordance with the hermeneutical results which may thus be brought out?

It is obvious, that, not possessing the consciousness of ever having ourselves been acted upon by any such influence, the subject in itself is one which lies entirely beyond the sphere of our actual experience. None of us has ever been favoured with miraculous communications from the Father of lights. The secrets of the

invisible world have not been directly unveiled to us. To our view the vista of future events has not been opened. The knowledge of divine things, which we may possess, we are able, more or less, to refer to some instrumentality within the range of secondary causes—though we cannot but ascribe the arrangement, operation, and efficiency of these causes to the positive, though invisible, accompanying influence of Him, who worketh all in all. The utmost latitude that can be conceded to experience, in reference to the point before us, is simply to determine how, according to its native constitution, the human mind is acted upon, in order analogically to deduce certain inferences respecting the manner in which it became susceptible of impressions produced upon it by its Maker, always soberly keeping within the limits prescribed by the representations of sacred Scripture. If the admired position be indeed just, that, when God makes the prophet, he does not unmake the man, it may rationally be concluded, that, in exerting a supernatural influence upon the powers of the human mind, he did not act contrary to the nature of the functions which he has allotted to them ; but, on the contrary, operated upon them precisely as they are ordinarily operated upon—the only difference consisting in the super-addition of mental vigour, which it was not in the power of inferior agency to supply, and the infallible certainty of the sequences resulting from his immediate operations. In bringing those powers into action, the influence exerted would be such as, in each particular case, was necessary to secure the proposed end. Sometimes one faculty would be called into exercise, sometimes another ; but each,

or more of them combined, as the exigency of the occasion required. In arresting the attention ; presenting objects of sensation and perception ; creating and guiding processes of ratiocination ; suggesting new elements and combinations of thought ; prompting to investigation ; producing elevation of feeling ; reviving former impressions and associations ; or preserving from fallacy and error—there is reason to believe, that the Holy Spirit conducted his administration so as not to do violence to any of the natural faculties with which he had endowed the agents whom he condescended to employ. They were his instruments, but not blind or unconscious mechanical instruments of his will. They continued to be the subjects of perception, memory, imagination, judgment, and will, all of which he sanctified for the execution of the important task to which he called them.<sup>1</sup>

Such a view of the subject is completely borne out by the facts of the case, as presented on almost every page of the Bible. Instead of appearing there in the character of mere passive agents, the writers display evident marks of conscious and rational activity. They relate facts, teach doctrines, inculcate duties, lay down premises, draw conclusions, reflect, remember, resolve, hope, fear, rejoice, grieve, &c., so far as the natural constitution of the mind is concerned, in a way precisely analogous to what they would have done, had no supernatural influence been exerted. In fact, to such an extent does the active agency of the instruments pervade the composition, and so manifestly does it appear, that, when adverting to any particular

(1) Witsii Miscell. Sac. lib. i. cap. xxii. 12.

passage, nothing is more common than for writers of opposite views of the subject to employ the language: "according to the reasoning of the apostle;" "Paul says;" "it is affirmed by John," &c.—language, which would be altogether destitute of meaning, if the ordinary exercise of their faculties had been counteracted or suspended while the process of inspiration was being carried on by the higher Agent, in whose service they were engaged. Nor is it unusual for the New Testament writers themselves to speak in the same style: "Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man;" "Moses saith:" "Paul hath written—as also in all his Epistles, speaking of these things."

It has been customary to speak of inspiration in language which conveys the idea, that every thing contained in Scripture was immediately revealed to the writers at the moment of its composition. They have been represented as the simple and momentary recipients of the communications which they were to reduce to a documentary form; and the whole of the result as presented in their compositions has been unconditionally attributed to the Holy Spirit, without making any allowance whatever for human agency. Indeed, to take this agency at all into the account has been thought to derogate from the honour of the Divine Instructor, and to be calculated to diminish our regard for his dictates. Nearly allied to this prejudice is another, which exerts a powerful influence over some minds, namely, that, as every part of the Bible is inspired, we ought to rest satisfied with the fact of such inspiration, without inquiring whether any distinctions obtained in the mode of its operation.

But it appears truly surprising how such conclusions could have been arrived at by any, who allowed the facts and phenomena of the case, which stand out with so much prominence in the Scriptures, impartially to engage their attention. That they should have disapproved of much that has been written on the subject cannot be matter of wonder; that they should have opposed the spirit and condemned the reasonings of some who have rejected the views which they regard to be alone just and scriptural, might naturally be expected; but that they should have hazarded the position, and even gone so far as to constitute it an article of Christian faith, that no difference whatever existed in reference to the way in which the Holy Spirit acted upon the writers of the Bible, must have exceeded belief, had it not been placed beyond all doubt by documents which are before the public. With the statements put forth on the subject by Le Clerc, Semler, Eckermann, Priestley, Belsham, De Wette, Wegscheider, and others of various grades in the same school, we confess we have no sympathy. They are entirely subversive of that full and implicit confidence in the word of God, which it unconditionally claims. The treatment which divine truth has experienced at the hands of those who have advocated them, cannot but inspire all who are supremely attached to that truth with abhorrence of the source to which it is manifestly to be traced. Results, that would annihilate every point of revelation which renders it either necessary or valuable, are totally incompatible with a consistent belief in its supernatural character.

But are such men as Baier, Calixt, Hollaz, Carpov,

Baumgarten, Pfaff, Baxter, Clarke, Stackhouse, Doddridge, La Mothe, Stennett, Parry, J. Pye Smith, Horne, Knapp, Dick, and Wilson, to be branded as heretics, or suspected of infidelity, because, compelled by the evidence before them, they have admitted the distinction in question? If the simpler aspect had been found to satisfy the exigencies of the various passages of Scripture in which the doctrine is taught, these writers would have been the last to abandon it; but while their belief in plenary inspiration was as firm, and, as their writings and lives have proved, as influential as that possessed by their opponents, and they would on no consideration have sacrificed an iota of revealed truth to meet prejudice or support a theory, still they found it impossible to shut their eyes against the light, which an impartial study of the sacred word supplied. The opinions which they have given to the world, were not crudely formed, nor hastily embraced; but the result of much patient investigation, the free and unfettered pursuit of truth, comprehensive views of the contents of divine revelation, and a perception of the entire bearing of the question on the interests of the kingdom of God. They may occasionally have employed a term or a phrase, in which the keen eye of criticism may discover a want of strict consistency with the general principles, which they have unequivocally avowed: but it is not from incidental expressions, which may fall from an author, that we are to form our judgment of his system, but from his statements and arguments taken as a whole.

It will be convincingly evident to all, who may take the pains to peruse the works in which what we deli-



berately term the contracted view of the question is advocated, that it never could have been adopted, but as the result of confining within too narrow limits, the import of certain metaphorical terms employed by the sacred writers to describe their own inspiration, or that of the Scriptures of which they treat. Instead, for instance, of allotting to *θεόπνευστος* all that latitude of meaning, which the various circumstances connected with the composition of the different books imperatively demand, it has been limited so as to signify nothing more than simple infusion, or the direct communication of all that is written to the minds of the authors. According to this view, no room is left for the operation of any mediate causation, either in the minds of the writers or extrinsical to them, which the Spirit might have employed to the extent of its efficiency; but the whole is resolved into his own immediate and exclusive agency. The effect of this agency was, it is maintained, analogous to that experienced by those who consulted the pagan oracles. Their inspiration was of the highest kind, without any variation or exception; or rather there was but one kind—the strict infusion of the ideas and words, which they were to commit to writing.

It is a principle, which no one will deny, who possesses enlightened views of the character and government of God, that the introduction of miraculous agency takes place only where the efficiency of ordinary causes fails to produce results, which, for wise, holy, and benevolent purposes, it is necessary should be brought into existence. So long as the laws of nature, both of the physical and mental order, continue, by

their sustained operation, to effect the Divine will, (and to the extent in which they can be rendered subservient to its accomplishment,) their All-wise Author and Controller employs them for this end; and it is not till a new order of causation is required, and precisely in the ratio of the degree in which it is required, that it is made to tell upon the affairs of the universe. It is only when second causes cannot, in any way, contribute to the achievement of higher ends than those for which they were originally adapted, and to which they are perfectly adequate, that the Great First Cause interposes his own immediate agency, and then also exactly in proportion as the exigencies of particular cases may demand.

Upon this principle, which is universally admitted in its application to miracles generally, it seems perfectly lawful to reason with respect to that special kind of miraculous influence, which was exerted on the penmanship of the sacred Scriptures. It is an incontrovertible fact, that those by whom the sacred books were written, possessed, to a greater or less extent, a previous acquaintance with many of the subjects of which they treat. These subjects were of an historical nature; they came under the cognizance of their senses; or they were matters of inward personal experience and consciousness. Now is it not absolutely preposterous to maintain, without any reserve or qualification, that they had the knowledge of these things infused into them? How are we to conceive of an immediate impartation of that which they already possessed? Was it necessary, for example, that Moses should have communicated to him the knowledge of the circum-

stance, that "the children of Israel went into the midst  
" of the sea upon dry ground, and that the waters were  
" a wall unto them on their right hand and on their  
" left?" (Exod. xiv. 22.) Or Matthew, that "as Jesus  
" passed from Nazareth, he saw a man named Matthew,  
" sitting at the receipt of custom?" (Matt. ix. 9.) Or  
Paul, that "Achaia was ready a year ago" with her  
contributions, and that the zeal of the believers had  
provoked very many? (2 Cor. ix. 2.) These were  
circumstances which they could not but know, and,  
therefore, they required no inspiration to make them  
acquainted with them. Innumerable instances of a  
similar description might be adduced; and indeed the  
fact is so notorious, that it is only necessary to mention  
it, in order at once to produce a vivid impression of its  
bearing on the present discussion.

The charge of absurdity, which so manifestly lies  
against the hypothesis we are combating, may be  
attempted to be met by the remark, that, in reference  
to such cases, the inspiration did not consist in the  
actual impartation of such knowledge to the writer,  
but merely in impelling and enabling him to record it.  
But who does not perceive, that this completely shifts  
the ground; or rather, that it is an abandonment of  
the position, which is incessantly reiterated respecting  
the immediate infusion of ideas and words; and an  
adoption of the very principle, in one of its most  
important bearings, which so much pains have been  
taken to bring into discredit? If this view of the  
subject be once admitted, there can be no consistency  
in reprobating the opinion, that there did actually exist  
a distinction in the method adopted by the Spirit of

God, when employing human agency in writing the Scriptures. Such a distinction is *ipso facto* granted; and if conceded with respect to one point, without endangering the divine authority of the record, it may, with equal safety, be conceded in regard to other aspects, under which the doctrine is presented to our notice.

Having made these preliminary observations, for the purpose of clearing the ground which we intend to occupy, it may now be proper to give a general definition of what we conceive that inspiration to have been, which the sacred writers enjoyed, when composing the Scriptures. In furnishing this definition, we are anxious to express it in terms, which shall, in their unstrained import, embrace the whole of the case, while they leave the particular aspects, under which it may be viewed, unforeclosed, and susceptible of further determination, according to the different classes of phenomena that are presented for investigation. Divine Inspiration, then, we consider to have been :  
AN EXTRAORDINARY AND SUPERNATURAL INFLUENCE EXERTED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT ON THE MINDS OF THE SACRED WRITERS, IN SUCH MODES AND DEGREES AS TO LEAD TO, AND SECURE, IN DOCUMENTARY FORMS, THE DEPOSITION OF SUCH HISTORICAL, DIDACTIC, DEVOTIONAL, AND PROPHETIC TRUTH, AS INFINITE WISDOM DEEMED REQUISITE FOR THE IMMEDIATE AND FUTURE BENEFIT OF MANKIND.

In defining the influence in question as *supernatural* in its character, we wish clearly to distinguish it from those operations of Divine Providence, by which intelligence and genius are imparted to the human mind,

and which, being gifts proceeding from above, and not acquired by human effort, are spoken of in a lower sense by Job as inspiration. "But there is a spirit in man; and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding." (Chap. xxxii. 8.) To these natural gifts the Rationalistic writers would reduce all that the Scripture teaches on the subject of Inspiration; and, in recommendation of their hypothesis, they quote innumerable passages from the classical writers of antiquity, in which poets and others of distinguished mental endowments are spoken of as inspired. But the cases are by no means parallel. The writers of the Bible were men of sound natural parts, but there is nothing in their history or writings, which, except we beg the question, can be at all admitted to prove that they were naturally possessed of extraordinary abilities. On the contrary, their own admissions on the point evince, that they were not thus distinguished. Besides, it is impossible to sustain this hypothesis, without doing violence to all the passages of Scripture, in which the doctrine is taught. In proof of this we need only refer to the treatises of Hencke, Tieftrunk, Eckermann, and Wegscheider, in which is exhibited an incomparably larger mass of perverted philology and criticism, than is to be found within the same compass, in any theoretical works, published on subjects connected either with profane or sacred literature. The influence, or inspiration asserted in behalf of the prophets and apostles, was a direct miraculous interposition on the part of God,—an exertion of divine energy totally different from any which he puts forth either in the original creation of our mental powers, or in their



subsequent preservation. It was an application of power and intelligence transcending any thing of the kind that takes place in his ordinary governance of human affairs. Nothing short of this can, in any degree, meet the demands which are made upon our understanding by the grammatico-historical interpretation of the Scriptures, or satisfy a mind thoroughly alive to the momentous concerns of religion.

We have further defined inspiration to be *extraordinary* as well as supernatural, with a view to discriminate it from the gracious operations of the Spirit of God on the hearts of the regenerate. Such operations, like the influence of which we treat, are indeed supernatural: they belong to an order of causation superior to any existing in the ordinary departments of the Divine operations; but they are common to all genuine Christians, whatever may be their station in the church. When unbelievers are described as “sensual, not having the Spirit,” (Jude 19,) mere animal men (*φυχικοί*), destitute of those higher or spiritual influences by which alone the degenerate family of Adam can attain to the enjoyment of adequate happiness—the description obviously implies that such influences are enjoyed by those to whom the character does not belong. And that they are the privilege of all believers without exception, we are expressly taught in the very solemn and emphatic words: “If any man “have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.” (Rom. viii. 9.) Wherever he is pleased thus to operate, saving effects are infallibly produced, consisting in “love, joy, peace,” &c. (Gal. v. 22, 23;) and just in proportion as these appear are Christians furnished



with evidences of their actual interest in the blessings of redemption.

But the extraordinary influence in which inspiration consists, is perfectly distinct from that exerted for the production of these blessed effects, and might have been brought into operation in the entire absence of true piety. In the case of Balaam, the prophetic impulse operated in direct opposition to the principles and feelings of his unsanctified heart. He would have pronounced a curse against the people of God; but he was compelled to bless them. And if it had pleased the great Head of the Church to employ unconverted men to compose the Holy Scriptures, how greatly soever it might have changed the aspect of the case as it regards their personal testimony, the results would have been equally infallible: what would have proceeded from their pen must have been the word of God just as much as that which we now possess. But such has not been the mode of the Divine procedure. Not only are the Scriptures *holy* as proceeding from the infinite Source of purity, but also because they were written by "*holy* men of God." Those whom he selected to be the instruments of communicating his will to the world were previously the subjects of his spiritual and saving grace; their best feelings were in harmony with the sacred truths of which they were the medium of conveyance; and thus a striking congruity was maintained between the moral and the miraculous character of the Divine government.

This fact being assumed as indisputable, a new feature of the case presents itself for our consideration. We have already adverted to the powers of the human

mind, as operated upon by the inspiring influence according to circumstances, without taking into account the regenerate or unregenerate state of these powers. Our object then was simply to point out the untenableness of any theory, the tendency of which goes to suspend or supersede their exercise, and reduce the writers to the character of mere passive instruments. What here claims our attention is the circumstance, that the Holy Spirit not only renewed and sanctified their minds by his saving operations, before he employed them in writing the Scriptures, but also specially laid his own gracious work in their souls under contribution when he thus employed their instrumentality. That this was really the case must be evident on even a cursory perusal of inspired writ. Who can read the Psalms of David, and not perceive that most of the subjects which he has embodied in sublime verse were the subjects of his own deep-felt and various experience? With what prominence do the gracious workings of the mind of Paul appear in all his epistles! And as to the beloved disciple, how is every thing which proceeded from his pen deeply imbued with that spirit of intense affection with which he was baptized! Though inspiration, therefore, is to be conceived of as something distinct from the spiritual influence ordinarily exerted on believers, yet it is not to be separated from the results of such influence in the experience of those who were selected to write the Scriptures; but, combining itself with these results, and rendering them subservient to the attainment of more comprehensive ends, its operation gave occasion to a more illustrious exhibition of their moral excellence. Had the Apostle

of the Gentiles, for instance, never written a line of Scripture, the constellation of his Christian graces must have shone with a brilliant light in numerous parts of the Roman world; but the orbit, in which it would have revolved, must have been confined to an incomparably narrower space than that which it describes on the widely diffused pages of inspiration; and have disappeared in the course of a few years, instead of continuing upwards of seventeen centuries to occupy one of the first positions in the Christian zodiac.

The Holy Spirit has not only secured to us the transmission of all the religious truth, which it is proper for us to know in the present state of our existence; but he has secured a large share of it in those interesting and attractive forms of experimental and practical godliness, of which there exists a counterpart in the heart of every believer. It is not conveyed to us in the language of angels, but in the language of "men of like passions with ourselves," who had "the treasure in earthen vessels," and who not only could avow—"We have the mind of Christ," but also—"We believe, and therefore speak."

This view of the nature of inspiration affords a two-fold illustration of the Divine goodness. It displays the exercise of that attribute towards the inspired instruments, in permitting them to give expression to the decisions of Christian judgment, and the interesting feelings of Christian experience, while in the act of recording the will of God—a privilege, which they clearly could not have enjoyed, if they had performed a mere mechanical part, or if their intellectual faculties had merely been a channel for the conveyance of

abstract truth. Theirs was not the cold and heartless task of communicating matters in which they had no concern, but the exalted felicity of imparting to others, what most deeply interested their own minds. To this there may seem to be an exception in the case of the writers of prophecy, who did not fully understand the import of those visions with which they were favoured. But whatever imperfections may have accompanied their subjective knowledge of the truths which they delivered, it is manifest from the statements which they have made respecting the manner in which their minds were exercised in reference to them, that they experienced a powerful excitement, and were led to institute certain courses of pious action, which most delightfully harmonized with the nature of the heavenly communications. Examples in abundance occur in the books of the prophets Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, Zechariah, and in that of the Apocalypse.

Nor is the manifestation of the goodness of God less conspicuous in such a view of the subject, in regard to the persons for whose benefit the Scriptures were written. These Scriptures are presented to our view, not in the shape of abstract uniform documents, but of historical, epistolary, didactic, prophetic, and devotional monuments, the endless variety of which, created chiefly by the diversity of situations in which the writers were placed, is admirably calculated at once to please and to instruct; while the conviction, that those by whom they were composed were persons who more or less took part in the transactions which they describe—whose temptations, difficulties, and dangers were, in many respects, similar to our own, is equally fitted to

awaken our attention, inspire us with a deep interest in the subjects brought under our review, and produce impressions of a highly powerful and practical character. We naturally identify ourselves with the writers, or with those whom they describe. We are conscious of a sympathy of feeling in all that we possess in common as fallen and redeemed creatures ; and before we are aware, we become possessed of many truths, which, but for the vital forms in which they are thus conveyed to us, might not so easily have obtained a lodgment in our minds.

The great end for which the extraordinary supernatural influence in question was exerted was, to provide mankind with a depository of divine truth, out of which all that variety of instruction might be derived, which should be adapted to the diversified exigencies of the human condition and character, and to which, as to an infallible standard, an ultimate appeal might be made in all matters of conscience towards God and man. In producing such a collection, it was not necessary to exert the influence always precisely in the same way. Many truths had already been communicated to the Church, and required only to be brought together and stamped with the seal of Divine approval. Others were elicited by the peculiar circumstances and occurrences, in which the prophets and other messengers of the Divine will were placed : while certain leading subjects of doctrinal and prophetic import were directly revealed to the sacred penmen. But in what way soever the deposition of these truths was effected, the whole took place under an infallible influence from the Holy One, securing to what was



written the high and sacred character of *The Word of God*.<sup>1</sup>

It is upon the different phenomena which the history of revelation presents, that divines have established the fact of a diversity of operation in regard to the influence supernaturally exerted upon the minds of those by whom it was penned. They have not indeed agreed respecting the extent of this diversity, and the points of view in which it may be contemplated—but it would be, in the highest degree, unfair to argue from this circumstance, that all such distinctions are groundless, since it palpably arises from the difference of construction which is put upon some of these phenomena, and not from any uncertainty in regard to the fact itself. Such a representation of the subject is by no means new. Baier, Hollaz, and other Lutheran theologians of the old school, together with several of the reformed divines, employed it in their systems of theology. It was also adopted by Lowth, Williams, La Mothe, Clarke, Calamy, and Doddridge; and has more recently been sustained by Stennett, Parry, Dick, J. Pye Smith, Scott, Horne, and Wilson, either in distinct treatises upon the subject of inspiration, or in works in which it has necessarily come under their consideration. Nor have the attacks that have been made upon it at all disturbed the foundation on which it rests. Imperfect or even unscriptural statements on the part of some of its advocates may have been exposed; but it is only necessary coolly to peruse the treatises which have been opposed to them, to be convinced that the general principle remains untouched. Were it in-

(1) See Note S.



tended, by asserting different degrees or modifications of inspiration, that there are degrees or modifications of the authority given by inspiration to the Scriptures, according as it might be proved that different portions were the result of their exertion, then undoubtedly the theory by which they were attempted to be supported must meet with unqualified reprobation, from every one who “trembles at the word of the Lord.” But, if it can be proved, that what was written under the influence of the lowest conceivable degree of inspiration possesses the Divine sanction equally with that which was written under the most elevated—being the operation of the same Holy Spirit, and intended for the spiritual good of mankind, those who maintain such a distinction cannot justly be charged with lowering the inspiration of the word of God, or, in any way, making it void. They simply view the subject in the lights in which it is placed in the Scriptures, and, taking them for their guide, they feel assured that they cannot be in error.

Let us now inquire in what lights the subject is placed by an impartial and complete view of the case.

In the first place, the sacred penmen were the subjects of a *Divine Excitement*, when they proceeded to commit to writing those matters which it was the will of God should be permanently preserved. By this excitement we understand both the supernatural intimation given to the writers, that it was the pleasure of the Most High they should pen any particular book or portion of Scripture, and also the influence by which they were impelled to comply with such intimation.

With respect to the former of these modes of operation, we find that sometimes it was immediate, and sometimes mediate in its character. Of immediate or direct excitement, we have instances in the express command to Moses: "And the Lord said unto Moses, "Write this for a memorial in a book, and rehearse it "in the ears of Joshua: for I will utterly put out the "remembrance of Amalek from under heaven," (Exod. xvii. 14;) to Isaiah: "Moreover the Lord said unto "me, Take thee a great roll, and write in it with a "man's pen concerning Maher-shalal-hash-baz," (chap. viii. 1,) "Now go, write it before them in a table, and "note it in a book, that it may be for the time to come "for ever and ever," (chap. xxx. 8;) to Jeremiah: "Thus speaketh the Lord God of Israel, saying, Write "thee all the words that I have spoken unto thee in a "book," (ch. xxx. 2;) to Habakkuk: "And the Lord "answered me and said, Write the vision, and make it "plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it," (ch. ii. 2;) and to John: "What thou seest, write in "a book, and send it unto the seven churches which "are in Asia," (Rev. i. 11,) "Unto the angel of the "church of Ephesus, write," (ch. ii. 1, &c.,) "And I "heard a voice from heaven, saying unto me, Write, "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from "henceforth: yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest "from their labours; and their works do follow them," (ch. xiv. 13,) "And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed "are they which are called unto the marriage-supper "of the Lamb," (ch. xix. 9,) "And he said unto me, "Write; for these words are faithful and true," (ch. xxi. 5.) In all such cases, God signified his will

to his servants by an internal communication, or by vision, in a way which so clearly evidenced the Divine origin of the intimation, that no doubt was left upon the mind of the recipients in regard to it. They had a vivid impression of the nature of the task assigned to them, and a conviction that it was their duty to proceed at once to execute it. As prophets or apostles, they stood in an immediate relation to the Deity, and received repeated commissions without the intervention of any secondary causes, which they could not but construe into an intimation, that they were divinely called to engage in composition. In consequence of this high relation, they were also frequently the subjects of a Divine impulse operating in a silent or imperceptible manner, yet infallibly prompting them to undertake the penmanship of such matter as God had purposed should form part of the inspired volume.

On other occasions, (and these, there is reason to believe, by far the more numerous,) the Spirit of Inspiration condescended to employ a variety of mediate agencies in exciting the sacred penmen to the performance of their work. Peculiar circumstances, for example, in the history of David, or peculiar states of mind superinduced by these circumstances, called forth the effusions of his sacred muse: at which times he proceeded either to pen them himself, or to dictate them to his amanuensis. It was in this way subordinatedly that Luke was excited to compose his Gospel. Theophilus, a person of dignity, who had been converted to Christianity, but whose situation in all probability precluded him from enjoying the oral instruction of the apostles, and who was in danger of

being misled by imperfect accounts of the life and doctrines of our Redeemer, required to be put in possession of full and accurate information on these points. Luke, excited by the consideration of these circumstances, composed his Gospel, and forwarded it to him for his immediate and private benefit; though the Divine Spirit, under whose invisible influence he wrote, intended that the work should not only answer this end, but serve as a source of perpetual and universal instruction. In like manner, Paul was induced by the accounts which reached him respecting the state of affairs in the church at Corinth, and especially by the letter which had been addressed to him, requesting his decision in regard to several questions of practical import that were agitated among them, to write the epistles which are inserted in our canon under their name. And so with respect to other portions of the sacred volume, many of the circumstances leading to the composition of which are notorious matters of fact; and others, though not recorded, may easily be imagined to have arisen out of the position occupied by the writers, or the relations in which they stood to the communities or individuals to whom they wrote. But whatever these circumstances or occasions may have been, they were all under the control of the Holy Spirit, by whom they were employed to indicate to his inspired instruments that it was his pleasure they should reduce to writing what, in each particular case, he might commission them to deliver. The penmen exercised their own judgment, and felt the force of such motives as the nature of each case suggested; yet in the formation of this judgment, and in the presenta-

tion of these motives, a special divine influence was exerted, which invested them with a cogency and efficiency, which infallibly secured the certainty of the result.

The excitement, however, of which we treat, did not consist merely in the presentation to the mind of the sacred penmen of a divine command, or of such circumstances as unequivocally indicated the Divine will: it further included the impelling power of the Spirit, by which they were rendered willing to undertake the task which he assigned to them. Owing to a variety of causes, they might, like Jonah, have refused to comply with the will of God. The depravity of their nature might have overpowered the gracious principles which would otherwise have induced them to engage in the work. To counteract the influence of this depravity, and to give a decided preponderance to their better views and feelings, the Sovereign Agent, from whose ordinary operations these had sprung, superadded those degrees of miraculous influence which the mental condition of each required. Possessed of omnipotence, he might have operated upon their minds as he did upon that of Balaam, and compelled them, contrary to their natural inclination, to perform his will; but such a mode of effecting his purpose would have ill accorded with the state of acceptance, and other spiritual relations, in which they stood. His inspiring influence was exerted in harmony with the work of grace of which they were the subjects, and wrought specially upon their wills, effectually inducing them to a cheerful concurrence in the act of recording matters of Divine revelation. The impulse by which



they were excited was powerful, but placid ; efficacious, yet gentle in its operation on their rational faculties.

Secondly, there was an *Invigoration* experienced by the inspired writers, by which their natural faculties were elevated above the imperfections, which would have incapacitated them from receiving those communications of a higher order with which they were favoured ; and by which also they were enabled perfectly to recollect and infallibly to reason respecting truths and facts, with which they were previously acquainted, but which, owing to the lapse of time or the decay of mental vigour, they were unfit, without such supernatural aid, accurately and fully to make known to the world. To this modification of the Divine influence is usually given the name of elevation, which is sufficiently appropriate as denoting the capacity that was imparted to the inspired recipients of divine truth to apprehend the more sublime and transcendent subjects, which they were to communicate to others ; but it does not so properly express the removal of those other disabilities under which they naturally laboured. To express both, the term *invigoration* is preferable, and its adoption is the more appropriate, as it corresponds to that of *δύναμις*, or *power*, which the Saviour specially promised to his disciples to qualify them for the discharge of their important functions. (Luke xxiv. 49 ; Acts i. 8.) It is to the direct influence of this supernatural energy, that Paul refers, when he avows, that he and his fellow-labourers possessed no native power of their own to excogitate or produce any of those truths which



they taught: "Not that we are sufficient of ourselves  
 "to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency  
 "is of God." (2 Cor. iii. 5.) Their entire fitness for  
 the service which they were called to perform, he  
 ascribes to the operation of "the power of God."  
 (Ch. vi. 7.)<sup>1</sup> This energy strengthened their mental  
 powers—giving expansion to the understanding, quick-  
 ness to the perception, vividness to the imagination,  
 vigour to the memory, and solidity to the judgment,—  
 whereby they were rendered capable of receiving and  
 communicating those matters of Divine revelation, to  
 which their minds were otherwise totally inadequate.  
 In vindicating to the sacred writers this invigorating  
 influence, we would not be understood as maintaining  
 that it imparted to them properties in any degree  
 bordering upon omniscience or impeccability. All we  
 contend for is, that, in proportion as they required its  
 exercise in order to capacitate them, as percipient and  
 intelligent instruments, infallibly to publish or record  
 the truths and facts of revelation, it was vouchsafed to  
 them. At other times, and in reference to other sub-  
 jects, it left them in the ordinary circumstances of  
 humanity. Hence we find, that, at the very time when  
 Paul addressed language to the high-priest Ananias,  
 which cannot be viewed in any other light than that of  
 a prophetic denunciation, he was left in ignorance of the  
 station which Ananias filled. On being reproved for  
 using such language, he replied, "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." Attempts have been made to defend the plenary inspi-

(1) Compare τῷ ἐνδυναμώσαντί με Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ. (1 Tim. i. 12.)

ration of the apostle on this occasion, but they are too arbitrary and forced to admit of adoption: the only construction that the words will fairly bear is, either, that, strictly speaking, he did not know who the individual was who had ordered him to be struck; or, that he had not, at the moment, considered or recollected the office which he held. The former solution seems the preferable: but, according to either the apostle spoke from ignorance, which the Holy Spirit did not see fit to remove. The same fact is confirmed by the manner in which he speaks of the number of converts, whom he had baptized at Corinth: "I baptized also the household of Stephanas: besides, I KNOW NOT whether I baptized any other." He here admits that his memory did not serve him so as to enable him accurately to specify the persons in question: which proves, that, how powerful soever might have been the invigorating influence of inspiration, which was vouchsafed to him at other times, that specific kind of influence was not put forth on this occasion, though he was otherwise inspired at the moment he wrote. The reason must be obvious to every one. It was a matter of no moment whatever that the apostle should definitely fix the number of persons whom he had baptized: all that it was requisite for him to know and state was their paucity, which he appositely alleges in proof of his disinterestedness and freedom from party-spirit, when labouring in the city of Corinth. His zeal was not a zeal for baptism, but for the gospel of Christ.

In like manner, the promise made by our Saviour, that the Holy Spirit should aid the memories of his disciples, is necessarily to be restricted to their recol-

lection of such things as pertained to the discharge of their office. They are indeed limited by himself to those instructions which he had orally imparted to them. "He shall bring all things to your remembrance, " whatever I have said unto you," (John xiv. 26;) but since the promise was designed to assure them of their complete qualification for their work, and since they were to bear testimony to what Jesus had done and suffered as well as to what he had taught, they might justly infer, that they would be endowed by the Comforter with the recollection of every point, even the most minute, which had any bearing upon the efficient execution of their trust. Beyond this, however, we have no warrant to extend it.

In the third place, it clearly appears from the facts of the case, that, in writing many parts of Sacred Scripture, the divine influence enjoyed by the penmen was that of simple, yet infallible, *Superintendence*. By this is meant the watchful care which was exercised over them, when, in performing their task, they made use of their own observation, or availed themselves of their previous knowledge, of existing documents, or of other external sources, to which they had access. In virtue of this divine guardianship, they were preserved from all error or mistake, and committed to writing for the benefit of posterity nothing but what was deemed proper by Infinite Wisdom. That they actually knew much of what they have written, independently of the aid of inspiration, cannot be denied. They only required, therefore, in such case, to be excited to commit what they thus knew to

writing, and to be so controlled, while engaged in writing, as to produce it with accuracy and truth. As long as their natural faculties were adequate to the task, and when, on being supernaturally excited, they took precisely that course which its proper execution required, they were employed without further aid by the Spirit of Inspiration: but whenever they would have taken a wrong direction, or when there was the slightest liability to present the matters to be recorded in a light, or in an order, that would, in any degree, have deteriorated from their utility, his divine influence interposed to prevent or remove it. By the law of association, when one idea is awakened in the mind, it gives rise to a train of other ideas, which more or less possess a natural connection with it. Now there is no reason to believe, that the operation of this law of combination and correspondence was suspended in the sacred writers. On the contrary, it is in accordance with all that we otherwise know of the Divine works to conclude, that it was rendered available to the extent of its efficiency, and that it was only where it failed to produce correct and appropriate results, that a higher degree of inspiration was employed.

That the book of Genesis was, in part, composed from previously existing documents, or from true traditional accounts existing in the church at the time of its composition by Moses; that the books of Kings and Chronicles are chiefly made up of extracts or abridgments from the original annals or diaries of the several kings of Judah and Israel; that Ezra availed himself of authentic documents, which he found among the Jews on his arrival at Jerusalem; and that the

book of Esther is, for the most part, a translated extract from "the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Media and Persia;"—are points which are now very generally admitted among those who are conversant with Biblical criticism.<sup>1</sup> Now we contend, that, in composing or writing out these books, when once the minds of the writers had been prompted by divine influence to commence at any given point, they could not possibly require further assistance than such as preserved their natural faculties in a sound and composed state, or such as prevented them from committing any errors of transcription, which might at all affect the truth or effectiveness of their copies. Where selection, omission, or addition took place, a higher influence of course was necessary, and, when thus required, was doubtless vouchsafed: but apart from any such modifications of their labour, they appear to have pursued the same track, which they would have taken had they been acting from a mere impulse of their own minds—only under the constant supervision and infallibly conservative influence of the Divine Spirit.

To this view of the subject it has been objected, that "superintendency is not inspiration," that it includes nothing but what may be claimed by uninspired men, and consequently, that if the theory which asserts it be true, the greatest part of the Bible is not the word of God at all. All this seems very specious; but it cannot, for a moment, be admitted by any, who look fairly at the facts of the case, and whose views are based, not upon an isolated, monogrammatic idea of inspiration, but upon the broad foundation furnished

(1) See Note T.



by the sacred history, and our knowledge of the analogous proceedings of the Divine Being. If inspiration were, in all cases, nothing else than a simple and immediate infusion of the matter and words into the minds of the writers, then, it must be allowed, all distinctions would not only be useless but impious ; but, if there be satisfactory evidence to prove, that such was not the case, but that it consisted in the employment of Divine influence, modified according to the exigency of circumstances, so as to secure to the entire record the indubitable character of THE BOOK OF GOD, the objection is perfectly nugatory, and leaves the question precisely where it was.

It may be said, that superintendence cannot be called inspiration, since it is merely a negative quality, whereas inspiration is positive in its nature. But the objection would only apply on the principle, that the term inspiration is to be restricted in its signification to the idea of direct or immediate revelation. Taken in its more extended acceptation, as comprehending the totality of supernatural influence employed by Jehovah for the production of the sacred Scriptures, it may include superintendence as well as any other of the modes in which that influence was made to tell on the rational instruments by whom they were composed. It is not, however, correct to assert, that superintendence is negative and not positive in its nature. Is there nothing positive in that superintending Providence, by which the order of things in the vast universe of being is maintained ? Is the God in whom we believe, like the deity of the ancient philosophers, who, after having arranged the different parts of the



world from pre-existing materials, abandoned it to its fate, having no intercourse with its inhabitants, looking at it from a distance, and taking no further efficient concern in its affairs? Do we not rather attach to the superintendence of his Providence the idea of watchful and active control, by which the universe is preserved in being, and prevented from taking any course for which no provision was made in his eternal, all-wise, and holy scheme of government? When we speak of the care with which he watches over our interests, we justly conceive of it as an active vigilance, which is incessantly exerted, in consequence of which all that would prove injurious to us is warded off, and every thing supplied, which is contributory to our good. In like manner, the special superintendency experienced by the inspired writers was an active, preserving influence, in virtue of which, they were positively prevented from inserting in their compositions any thing that would prove inconsistent with their design.

We now proceed, in the fourth place, to remark, that *Guidance* was another of the modes in which divine inspiration operated upon the penmen of Scripture. This view of the subject is suggested by that part of our Lord's gracious promise to his apostles, that the Paraclete should "*lead* them into all truth." The word selected for the purpose of expressing this guidance (ὁδηγεῖν), properly signifies to point out, or lead any one into a road, and, metaphorically, to teach or instruct. In the latter sense, it is used by the Ethiopian eunuch, when intimating the impossibility of his understanding the passage of Isaiah, which he had been

reading, without foreign assistance, by which he might be put into the right track, and arrive at a proper conception of its meaning. It is also employed in the LXX. to express the signification of the Hebrew verbs *הָלַךְ*, *הָלַץ*, *הָלַץ*, *הָלַץ*, *הָלַץ*, to cause to walk, or lead in a way, conduct, point out, teach, (Josh. xxiv. 3. Exod. xiii. 7. Ps. lxxx. 2; lxxxvi. 11; xxv. 5.) By the influence thus exerted, the apostles were to be directed into *the whole truth* (*παᾶσαν τὴν ἀλήθειαν*), or the entire system of Christian doctrine;—comprehending the (*πολλὰ*) numerous topics on which they needed instruction, but which, during our Lord's public ministry, their prejudices and slowness of comprehension had prevented him from bringing before them. (John xvi. 12.) By the descent of the promised Spirit these impediments were removed, and they were conducted to deeper and more enlarged views of the great principles of the gospel dispensation. Under his direction, they taught both orally and by writing; and as the same Spirit, in former times, moved "the holy men of God," or bore them onward to the delivery of his messages, it is obvious both prophets and apostles were upon a level in regard to the infallible guidance which they enjoyed. They were not left to choose their own way. The path in which they were to proceed was pointed out to them. They were supernaturally excited and strengthened to walk in it. Supernal guardianship was vouchsafed to them; and whatever instruction they required with respect to the regions of truth, which lay before or around them, was fully imparted. Moses was unerringly taught what to incorporate of the pre-existent documents, which had served as

repositories of the divine revelations, and what historical facts to select from the events of his own times; Samuel, and the prophets that followed, what historical, devotional, ethical, and prophetic matter to collect and record; the evangelists, what portions of our Lord's discourses and what incidents of his life to appropriate; and the apostles, what points of doctrine and duty to choose, and what aspects of truth to present in their epistolary writings, which should, when ultimately embodied in one whole, prove a copious storehouse of inspired directions for the benefit of the church in all future ages. In the selection, order, and combination of the facts to be narrated; in the particular line of argument to be employed; in the directions and admonitions to be tendered; and in the peremptory decisions to be given on all points connected with the kingdom of God—they were favoured with the teaching of an infallible guide, to whose omniscient view were present at the time all the diversified circumstances of those into whose hands the Scriptures would come, and who adapted his instructions so as most exactly to meet them. This arrangement of the sacred materials is vastly different from that which human wisdom would have adopted; but this very circumstance only furnishes an additional proof, that the writers were not abandoned to the operations of their own intellect, but were specially aided by wisdom given to them from above. (2 Peter iii. 15.)

The last and highest species of inspiration, with which we believe the sacred penmen to have been endowed, is that of *direct Revelation*. Besides the

various subjects to which we have adverted, as coming within the sphere of their external cognizance, or that were matters of personal consciousness, in recording which they only required to be under the special superintendence and direction of the Holy Spirit, many are to be found in their writings of a description, which clearly evinces that they were the result of an immediate influence upon their minds, by which conceptions were produced without the interposition of any human agency whatever. To this head are to be referred all those doctrines, which had previously been hid in the Divine mind; all knowledge of past events, respecting which no record or tradition existed; all acquaintance with circumstances present in point of existence, but of which the writers could not but be totally ignorant; and all communications respecting future contingent events, the foreknowledge of which is the sole prerogative of Deity. Whatever is found in Scripture in the form of a divine purpose, promise, or threatening, comes under this class. Now with these both the prophetic and apostolic Scriptures abound. How frequently are such portions of the Old Testament introduced by the solemn formula: **THUS SAITH THE LORD!** The matters contained in them were directly imparted to the holy seers, to whose mental vision were presented scenes of present or future reality, which no effort of human imagination could possibly have depicted. Times, places, persons, occurrences, were distinctly brought under their view; and though, with respect to some of these, they were not able to form definite conceptions, yet the Spirit of prophecy enabled them, without abatement, addition,

or colouring, to enter them correctly in the records of truth. Where verbal inspiration was necessary, it was vouchsafed to them.

Nor was this direct revelation confined to the prophets under the ancient economy. It was likewise granted to the apostles under the new. When Paul is contrasting the simplicity of the gospel with the high-sounding philosophy of the world, he declares that such was nevertheless the profoundness of its doctrines, that the human mind had never conceived of them; and then specifies the manner in which he and his fellow-labourers had been made acquainted with them. "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God HATH REVEALED THEM UNTO US BY HIS SPIRIT: for the Spirit searcheth all things; yea, the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man, which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God." (1 Cor. ii. 9—12.) With respect to the apostle himself, he explicitly teaches the Galatians that his knowledge of the gospel was matter of pure revelation: "But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which is preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but (ἐν ἀποκαλύψεως Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ) BY THE REVELATION of Jesus Christ." (Gal. i. 11, 12.) It had neither been communicated to him, in its first



principles, by any human being, nor had he received more mature instruction in these principles from any who had been in Christ before him. He was indebted for the truths which he taught to no external means whatever, but exclusively to a supernatural or direct revelation made to him by the Redeemer. The same fact he asserts Eph. iii. 1—5: “For this cause I Paul, “prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles: if ye have “heard of the dispensation of the grace of God, which “is given me to you-ward: how that (κατὰ ἀποκάλυψιν), “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 “(ἀπεκαλύφθη) REVEALED unto the holy apostles and “prophets BY THE SPIRIT.” To immediate inspiration he also ascribes his knowledge of the ordinance of “the Lord’s Supper,” (1 Cor. xi. 23,) which circumstance, taken in connection with certain others occasionally occurring in his Epistles, clearly establishes the principle, that his acquaintance with the institutions, as well as the doctrines of Christianity, was wholly the result of direct communications from above. That these were numerous is implied in his statement: “It is not expedient for me doubtless to glory. I will “come to visions and (ἀποκαλύψεις) REVELATIONS of “the Lord.” (2 Cor. xii. 1.) The language which he employs, when about to describe the characters of the apostasy, conducts us to the same conclusion: “The Spirit speaketh expressly.” That, by this clear and unequivocal enunciation of the Spirit (ῥητῶς, σαφῶς



φανηρῶς) we are to understand what the Spirit immediately spoke through him at the moment he was writing, and not any predictions of the Old Testament, nor any prophetic oracles delivered by other inspired men in the apostolic age, appears best to comport with the nature of the subject, and the high station which the apostle occupied in the church. We remark, finally, that the inspired title of the last book in the New Testament canon conveys most pointedly the idea of instruction supernaturally communicated: Ἀποκάλυψις Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, a development of future events directly furnished by the Son of God to the Apostle John in ecstatic vision.

From a review, therefore, of all the facts of the case, and from analogy, it appears convincingly evident, that a diversity of degrees or modes of operation did exist in regard to the extraordinary influence which was vouchsafed to the penmen of sacred Scripture; and that this diversity was the result of infinite wisdom, adapting its operations to the existing circumstances of the instruments who were thus employed, and to the nature of the subjects which they were to record. And it appears equally clear, that, except we admit such diversity, it is impossible to form correct scriptural ideas of the subject, or to arrive at those conclusions respecting it, which shall prove satisfactory to the inquisitive mind.

Nor can the distinction, which we have endeavoured to establish, be justly chargeable with an aspect, in the slightest degree, hostile to the divine authority of any part of Scripture. There is no portion of that holy

book which was written independently of miraculous influence. Those parts, as we have already observed, which were composed under what may be considered as the lowest degree of inspiration, are, in so far as the book itself is concerned, equally inspired with that which resulted from the highest. In either case, and in all the supposable intermediate stages, the end was infallibly attained, viz. the commitment to writing of precisely such matters as God designed for the religious instruction of mankind. The whole volume is divinely inspired. Every part of it is to be received in the light in which it has been presented by the Holy Spirit; and is to be applied to the holy purposes for which he caused it to be written. Exceptions have been inconsiderately taken against such passages as those in which Paul advises Timothy, "Drink no longer water, but use a little wine for thy stomach's sake, and thine often infirmities;" and desires him to bring "the cloak which he had left at Ephesus," &c. (1 Tim. v. 22; 2 Epist. iv. 13); but neither these, nor hundreds of similar passages, would ever have proved a stumbling-block to any, had it not been for the contracted hypothesis of inspiration, with which they certainly are in direct collision. On the principles which we have laid down, they present not the smallest difficulty, since they were dictated by him who could say: "We have the Spirit of Christ;" and who was as really inspired when he wrote them, as he was when he wrote to the Ephesians, "Be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit;" or when he ordered his Epistle to the Colossians to be read also in the church of the Laodiceans, (Col. iv. 16.) In all

such cases the sacred penmen wrote what had for its object, not merely the immediate benefit of individual persons, or individual churches, but what would be useful to Christians in all future times. In the minute as well as in the great; in matters which relate to civil life and bodily comfort, as well as in those which respect the soul and the world to come, the Divine wisdom is apparent; so that, contemplating the most inconsiderable of them, we are compelled to say: "This also cometh forth from the Lord of hosts, who "is wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working."

## LECTURE VIII.

INSPIRATION OF THE SCRIPTURES—(*continued.*)

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1 COR. II. 13.

*“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.”*

IN the last Lecture, we entered at some length into the nature of the superior influence, which the writers of Scripture enjoyed when composing the sacred books, and showed, that, though there was a diversity of operation in the employment of this influence, adapted to their different circumstances and exigencies, it was, in all cases, such as to claim for every portion of the work, which they executed, the high character of a Divine sanction. Their inspiration was proved to be plenary, and, consequently, demands for the writings to which it attaches, an unqualified reception from all within whose reach they are placed.

We now advance to the discussion of the question respecting VERBAL INSPIRATION, which embraces both the style of the sacred writers, and the single terms, in which they have expressed themselves. As appeared

from our Introductory Lecture, there have been and still are those who maintain, that these writers not only had all the ideas immediately communicated to their minds by the Holy Spirit, but that their very style, including every word, syllable and letter, was equally the result of pure organic inspiration. To deny this, is, in their opinion, to sap the very foundation of the doctrine; to withhold from the Scriptures that sacred veneration to which they are entitled; and to reduce them to a level with mere human writings. Others, who as decidedly believe in the complete inspiration of the Bible, and will not concede that any part of it was written independently of Divine influence, nevertheless hold, that the hypothesis of an universal, immediate verbal inspiration cannot be sustained; but that a modified view may be taken of the subject, which will reconcile apparently conflicting phenomena, and present it in a light which must recommend it to all persons of calm and impartial minds.

To the latter view we frankly confess we are compelled to give our adhesion. Not that we approve of much that has been written by authors, who at different times have opposed the contrary opinion. It is manifest, that owing both to the want of precision in their conceptions of the subject, and the unguarded manner in which they have expressed themselves, many of them have given a handle to the verbalists, of which they have not been slow to take advantage, to the no small disparagement of the cause of truth, and the unjust aspersion of some of its advocates. But while we object to certain representations which have been

made, and certain terms which have been employed by these authors, it is our settled conviction, that accurate views of that side of the question, which they have generally supported, are alone compatible with the aspects, under which the doctrine is exhibited in the holy Scriptures.

That, to a certain extent, verbal inspiration, or the inspiration of words, took place, is not denied. In recording matters immediately spoken at the time by an audible voice by Jehovah, or by an angel-interpreter; in giving expression to points of revelation which entirely surpassed the comprehension of the writers; in recording prophecies the minute bearings of which they did not perceive; in presenting views of truth, or enacting institutions, which belonged to a different economy, and to which there was nothing analogous in preceding dispensations; in short, in committing to writing any of the dictates of the Spirit, which they could not otherwise have accurately expressed, the writers were supplied with the words as well as the matter.

But, that on other occasions, and in reference to other matters, the appropriate terms were either mediately suggested by the ideas, or presented in documents which were rendered available for the purposes of divine revelation, is a position which we conceive we are fully authorized to maintain. Before proceeding, however, to discuss the subject of the inspiration of single words, it may be proper to make a few remarks on that of style; since, how closely soever they are connected as parts and a whole, they are clearly susceptible of separate consideration, and may or may



not have been the distinct effects of direct inspiration. The existence of great diversity of style in Scripture will be denied by none but persons entirely destitute of critical discrimination. Even the ordinary readers of a translation cannot but be more or less struck with this diversity ; but it is more perceptible by persons of cultivated minds, and especially by such as are capable of perusing the originals. Not only are there all the essential differences by which poetical and prose compositions are distinguished from each other—the former exhibiting the varied characters of the Lyric, the Epic, the Elegiac, the Parabolic, and the Didactic ; and the latter those of the Historical and Epistolary ; but every writer has his own characteristics, and different parts of the same book are marked by peculiarities of feature, in perfect accordance with the varied state of the author's feelings, or the different subjects of which he treats. No two of the sacred penmen were placed in precisely the same circumstances. They were men of various talent ; unlike in their habits of thought, and dissimilar in their natural temperament and dispositions. From Moses the commander and legislator, or David and Solomon the monarchs of Israel, to Amos the herdsman of Tekoah ; and from Luke the physician, to Peter the fisherman of Galilee—we meet with all the diversified grades of intellectual endowment and mental culture, which might be reasonably expected in persons so circumstanced. Hence the corresponding diversity of style, which is presented to view in their compositions:—the antique simplicity and the energy of Moses ; the feeling and gracefulness of David ; the sententiousness and elegance of Solomon ; the majesty

and sublimity of Isaiah; the sensibility and plain-tiveness of Jeremiah; the magnificence and solemnity of Ezekiel; the argumentativeness and vehemence of Paul; and the tenderness and affection of "the disciple whom Jesus loved." They have each his own peculiar character—a character, which they have in so remarkable a degree communicated to their writings, that it furnishes one of the most striking and satisfactory evidences of their authenticity. They severally exhibit a distinctiveness of cast or manner, which, nevertheless, in each is perfectly natural—being that which exactly agrees with our historical knowledge of his times and circumstances.

The several particulars that have just been enumerated relate to the bolder features of style by which these writers are distinguishable. Besides these, there exist numberless minute peculiarities of diction, such as the frequent recurrence of favourite words, niceties of grammatical construction, idiomatic combinations, dialectic differences, groupings of synonymes, and the like, which most distinctly mark the authors of the respective books.

With these matters of fact before us, what is the conclusion to which we should reasonably come respecting the source to which they are to be traced? Prejudice apart, should we not ascribe them to a diversity of natural talent, to the various situations of the writers, to the character of the subjects on which they wrote, and to the impressions which such subjects were calculated to produce upon their minds? Would it be imagined by any who are at all conversant with enlightened principles of mental philosophy, or with

the general procedure of Divine Providence, that on such an occasion, God entirely departed from his usual method of operation, and, by an immediate action of his Spirit upon the minds of the holy penmen, produced a class of phenomena, which, though not perhaps all in the same degree, have assuredly existed in numberless instances in the ordinary history of mankind? If we take up the human productions of any given age, and compare them with each other, we find a similar diversity of style pervading them:—a diversity for which we account on principles of acknowledged validity in their application to the case. But the same principles apply to the case before us; and must be regarded as equally valid in their bearing upon it, except it can be shown, that there is something in inspiration, which requires an exception to the rule.

It is readily conceded, that, on many occasions, the diction of the Biblical writers was the result of immediate inspiration, and was such as they would not have employed but for this inspiration. But in other instances, we contend, that the Holy Spirit made use of their natural style or manner of writing. Whatever change Divine grace effected in their character, it neither destroyed nor disturbed their peculiar intellectual operations, but, turning them into a new and nobler channel, consecrated them to the service of God. In like manner, when they became the subjects of that extraordinary miraculous influence in which we have defined inspiration to consist, he did not unmake their mental constitution, suspend the natural operation of their faculties, or prevent them from being acted upon

by circumstances ; but adapted his inspirations to the physical and intellectual features of each, and rendered these, to the extent in which they were available, subservient to the revelation or the recording of his will. It was only when the style or diction in which these features became embodied, proved inappropriate, that a direct supply was afforded, and then only so long as the exigency continued. They otherwise wrote, each in his own manner, yet always secured by celestial influence against the adoption of any forms of speech, or collocations of words, that would, in any degree, have injured the exhibition of divine truth, or that did not adequately give it expression.

There has unaccountably been mixed up with the question of style, in its bearing upon inspiration, another respecting classical purity, which has nothing whatever to do with it. To contend for Attic purity and elegance in the writings of the apostles, may have been deemed requisite at a time when disputes ran high on the subject of the New Testament Greek—just as it was at one time accounted heterodox to doubt of the divine origin of the Hebrew vowel points ; but now that the contest has in a great measure ceased, and Biblical scholars have very generally settled down into moderate views, the hypothesis that, if the language was inspired at all, it must necessarily exist in a state of perfect freedom from what are commonly termed barbarisms or inelegancies, will not be maintained by persons of any pretensions to a competent acquaintance with the subject. The style of the writers of Scripture, notwithstanding its distinctive varieties, is precisely that which, as a whole, was best adapted to be

a medium for the conveyance of truths, that were designed not for the polished and learned only, but for men of every nation under heaven, and of all the diversified conditions of human life. For while there is nothing in it that is calculated to give offence to persons of enlarged and cultivated minds, it possesses a genuine simplicity, and a condescension to men of low estate, which renders it attractive to those on whom classical elegance would have been lavished in vain.<sup>1</sup>

Some, who strenuously contend for verbal inspiration, allow that there is a variety in this general style of language which it pleased Divine Wisdom to select, and that every feature by which one writer was distinguished from another was natural to him, and accorded with the particular tone or state of his own mind; but still they maintain that it was a matter of immediate direct inspiration. Now no position can be more glaringly inconsistent or self-contradictory. If the characteristic differences were immediately inspired, they could not by any possibility have been natural to the writers, nor can they in any sense be called their own; and if they were already in possession of them, it would be an utter perversion of language, and the very acme of absurdity, to assert that they were now first supernaturally infused. It is one thing for the Holy Spirit to have employed these styles, and something altogether different for him to have created them. Existing, as we conceive them, for the most part, to have done, previously to their being used for the nobler purposes

(1) See on this subject a beautiful passage in Origen cont. Celsum, lib. vii. towards the close.



of inspiration, they were called forth quite in a rational way; *i. e.* those, whose language they characterised, on being acted upon by the Divine Spirit, expressed themselves, on the whole, just as they would have done in ordinary circumstances. Some may deem it a lowering of the subject to admit that the influence of an Infinite and All-perfect Agent should in any shape or degree have been moulded by individual character, or the peculiar conformations of intellectual and moral habits; or, that it should at all have accommodated itself to existing circumstances in the history or experience of its recipients. But the question relates to matter of fact. It is not for us to argue what it might, or might not, be proper for God to do, or that such and such modes of procedure would be derogatory to the majesty and glory of his character as a Being of infinite perfection. The query is, Whether sufficient data be not furnished by the history of the inspired penmen and the results of their inspiration as exhibited in their writings to prove, that, whatever may be the stamp of perfection which attaches to the matter of revelation, considered absolutely in itself, yet in passing through their minds as rational instruments, or in assuming the ordinary forms of human language, it was adapted to the peculiar moulds into which it thus flowed? If we find that the sacred influence has actually been exerted in this manner, instead of stumbling at the fact, it becomes us to admire the infinite condescension which has been displayed in providing us with the certain means of spiritual instruction in a way so manifestly accommodated to the diversified states of the human intellect.



In entering upon the subject of verbal inspiration strictly taken, or the consideration of the hypothesis, that in committing the contents of the Bible to writing, the penmen had all the terms immediately supplied to them by the influence of the Holy Spirit, it may be necessary to premise, that nothing can be more unjust than to charge those who deny it with a rejection of the doctrine of inspiration, while they most explicitly avow their belief in its plenary and infallible characters. It is possible, indeed, to make a profession of belief in any doctrine, and yet to give the lie to this profession by conduct at variance with the claims advanced by the alleged object of faith; but if any person solemnly protests, that he holds no partial or imperfect inspiration of the Scriptures, but regards them as entirely the result of divine intervention, and in his treatment of them furnishes convincing evidence that he does so regard them—receiving their contents with a mind willing in all things to yield uncompromising obedience to their dictates, as the oracles of Jehovah,—we are bound to give credit to his asseveration, and consider him as a consistent believer, whatever consequences others may draw from his premises, or in what light soever they may think fit to represent him. That the position at issue is perfectly untenable we maintain on the following grounds.

First, The universality of the immediate inspiration of the words *is nowhere asserted in Scripture*. From the degree of confidence with which the contrary opinion has been advanced, it might be imagined that divine testimonies in its favour were neither few nor

obscure ; or rather, it might be expected, that they were so numerous, and so clear and definite in their character, as irresistibly to compel assent from all who bow to the authority of Scripture. And it must be confessed that its advocates have not been slow in producing quotations both from the Old and New Testaments, which, in sound and appearance, yield a plausible support to their views. To the specious weight of authority thus presented, numbers have succumbed, the piety of whose feelings naturally revolted from the idea so loudly reprobated, that any part of the Bible should be conceived of as not having proceeded directly from the Holy Spirit, but whose acquaintance with the history of revelation, and a just method of interpretation, was too limited to enable them to detect the false construction that has been put upon the texts to which the appeal has been made. When brought, however, to the touchstone of sober and impartial criticism, and viewed, not in the light of arbitrary etymologies and false emphases, or wholly independent of the connections in which they occur, but according to the correct application of grammatical and hermeneutical rules, founded on the general principles of language, and the circumstances peculiar to the writers of Scripture, including all the phenomena of the particular cases, it will be found that the terms or statements in question give no countenance to the theory into the service of which they have been pressed. The doctrine of inspiration many of these texts most unequivocally teach. We have employed them in proof of it. But who, that reflects for a moment on the subject, will contend, that, because they teach the

doctrine as a general matter of fact, they must necessarily exhibit a certain assumed aspect of it to the exclusion of every other? Who does not perceive, that the complete and universal inspiration of the word of God, and the immediate communication to the writers of every single term of which that word is composed, are positions so perfectly distinct, that, though the one may be clearly established, there may not be the slightest vestige of evidence by which to substantiate the other? The force of these observations will appear on investigating the principal passages usually alleged in defence of direct verbal inspiration in all cases, without exception.

Of these the first place is generally assigned to 2 Timothy iii. 16: "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God." Here, as we have already proved, the divine inspiration of the whole of the Old Testament Codex is expressly taught; and the text will ever prove an insurmountable barrier against all attempts that may be made to invalidate the supernatural claims of that fundamental portion of the sacred volume. But on what principle is the theory of direct verbal inspiration attempted to be built upon it? First, it is maintained, that as Scripture signifies writing, and all writing is made up of written words, or words, syllables, and letters, to say, that a writing is inspired, while the words are uninspired, is a contradiction in terms. Unfortunately, however, for this argument, it assumes two points, neither of which will be admitted by those who take the opposite view of the subject. It takes for granted that verbal inspiration is totally or in every sense denied, which is, by no means, the

case; and it also affixes to the term inspiration the idea of the direct impartation of the words on all occasions without exception, wholly irrespective of existing circumstances in the previous state of the writers' mind. It is self-evident, that, if the Scriptures are inspired at all, the meaning is, they are inspired as written documents: in other words, their contents were committed to writing or sanctioned by men, who were under the special and extraordinary influence of the Holy Spirit. They are the result of the exertion of this influence. So much the text asserts, but nothing more. It does not affirm, that every word contained in the book was supernaturally suggested to the penmen. It simply vindicates to the sacred volume the passive quality of containing whatever the Spirit of God caused to be written for our instruction—implying of course the fact of that causation. The position taken by those who contend for verbal inspiration in the sense which we oppose, can only be consistently defended by going the whole length of the rigid punctists, who extended the divine influence to every point and accent in the Hebrew Bible, as well as to the consonants or alphabetical letters. “If,” says Dr. Gill,<sup>1</sup> “*all Scripture* or the *whole writing* of the Bible is “*by inspiration* of God, then not the matter only, but “the words in which it is written, are of divine inspiration; and indeed what else are meant by *the words* “*the Holy Ghost teacheth*, (1 Cor. ii. 13:) and if the “words of Scripture are of divine inspiration, and “given by God himself, then, surely, not half-words,

(1) Dissertation concerning the Antiquity of the Hebrew Language and Letters, p. 271.

“as consonants without vowels are: and if whole words, which is most agreeable to the wisdom and honour of the Divine Being, then both consonants and vowels were given by inspiration.” Extravagant as this mode of reasoning may appear, it is not more so than that by which it is attempted to deduce the universality of verbal inspiration from the declaration of the apostle in the text before us. For, supposing the divine origin of the points and accents to be denied, it may still be argued: As written words are made up of letters, and cannot exist without them, it follows that every letter of Scripture, as well as every word, must have been immediately suggested to the writers by the Holy Ghost. But is any person in the present day prepared to maintain, that Moses was inspired to write the feminine pronoun *וְהָיָה* with a *Vau* instead of a *Yod* so frequently in the Pentateuch? Or that the writer of the Books of Chronicles was directed by the same immediate suggestion to omit the *Yod* in the proper names of David, (*דָּוִד*), and Jerusalem, (*יְרוּשָׁלַם*)? Or, that it was by this verbal inspiration that Isaiah wrote in full, chap. xxii. 14, *וְנִגְלָה בְּאָזְנִי יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת*, “It was revealed in mine ears by Jehovah of Hosts;” but in chap. v. 9, only elliptically *בְּאָזְנִי יְהוָה*, “In mine ears—Jehovah of Hosts:” and that the New Testament writers sometimes observe the order *σὰρξ καὶ αἷμα*, “flesh and blood,” and sometimes invert it, as Eph. vi. 12, “we wrestle not against *αἷμα καὶ σάρκα*, blood and flesh?” Or finally, (for it would be endless to quote examples,) that, when specifying the number of the thousands that were sealed, (Rev. vii.) John required inspiration to direct him to employ *ἑβ'*, two Greek



letters having the numerical power of twelve, rather than write the word in full, or *vice versâ*? Strange to say, there are still those who confidently hold to such positions—actually believing that these minute points were the result of Divine suggestion. Yet, whoever will attentively examine these, and similar phenomena which the sacred text presents to our notice, must perceive, that to account for them on the principle of immediate inspiration is not only to assert what has no foundation in the testimony of Scripture, but what is ridiculous in itself, and perfectly degrading to the subject in support of which it is alleged.

Not satisfied with a wire-drawn exposition of the term *γραφῇ* (*Scripture*) as here used by the apostle, the advocates of direct verbal inspiration also insist on the meaning and force of the compound *θεόπνευστος* as employed to express the inspired quality of the sacred writings. As we have already had occasion to remark, this term, according to its etymological import, strictly signifies *divinely-breathed*. Some, indeed, consider it to have an active signification, and render it *divinely-breathing*; understanding it to express the fact, that the Bible is full of God; that through the Bible as a medium, God breathes forth, or communicates, in human language, his will to mankind. But, though it cannot be denied, that, according to the analogy of *ἄπνευστος*, *one who does not breathe*, the word is susceptible of this active signification, yet such a construction by no means suits the connection, and is not the meaning otherwise attaching to the word, or to others similarly compounded. The rendering in our common version "*given by inspiration of God*" seems to be



derived partly from the Vulgate, and partly from Luther's German,<sup>1</sup> of which considerable use was made in the execution of most of the translations now publicly in use in the different Protestant countries of Europe; and it is to the influence of the latter, that we are, in some measure, to ascribe the extent to which the idea of verbal inspiration has prevailed. If the Scriptures were *given* and *wholly given* by divine inspiration, then, it is argued, the words must have been supernaturally imparted. They could not have previously been at the command of the writers; for, if this had been the case, they cannot, with propriety of language, be said to have been given to them. But this reasoning is altogether fallacious. It is based not only on a free translation of the original term, but upon the strained interpretation of the words of which that translation is composed. It attaches to the word *given* a degree of emphasis which it does not possess, and which, if it did, could not be admitted in critical argument to be of any weight, except the same degree of emphasis were discoverable in the original. Yet all our translation fairly implies is, that, when the Scriptures were delivered to men, it was effected by divine inspiration. There is not a word to intimate that the operation consisted in the communication of the terms to the minds of the penmen. The general doctrine of inspiration is taught; but nothing whatever by which to determine the particular mode in which the inspiration operated. And such clearly is the open state in which the question is left by the original, and by all the versions.

(1) Alle Schrift von Gott eingegeben.

Another passage to which an appeal is frequently made in support of the hypothesis of universal verbal inspiration is that which contains our text: "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." Here, it is maintained, verbal inspiration is expressly asserted. The apostles had not only the matter communicated to them by the Spirit which they were to teach to others, but they were furnished with the very words in which it was to be expressed. That Paul unequivocally ascribes both the doctrines, which he and his fellow-labourers taught, and their manner of propounding them, to the influence of the same Divine Agent, is past all dispute; but that this influence was exerted in the way of directly imparting to them every term which they employed, has never yet been proved to be the idea which he intends to convey. The phrase in the original *διδασκτοῖς πνεύματος*, does not necessarily imply this. On the contrary, it merely conveys the idea that the style or mode of expression which they used was such as they were *instructed* by the Spirit to employ. It is not asserted that the words were furnished to them, as Hooker expresses it, "syllable by syllable, as the Spirit put them into their mouths;"<sup>1</sup> but that they were the result of instruction—that heavenly instruction or guidance which the Saviour promised to his disciples. What proves this to be the meaning is the contrast in which *διδασκτοῖς πνεύματος*, "the words taught by the Spirit," stands to *διδασκτοῖς ἀνθρωπίνης σοφίας λόγοις*, "the words taught by human

(1) First Sermon on Jude, sect. 5.

wisdom." By the latter, the apostle obviously intends, not the single expressions, but the whole manner of wording their discourses, on which the Greek rhetoricians so much prided themselves. In the schools that were instituted on purpose to teach the art of eloquence, special rules were laid down; artificial figures and forms of speech were introduced; and every thing was inculcated that could invest human speech with the irresistible power of persuasion. The apostles had not been in any such schools: nor did they imitate the style which was there taught. They enjoyed the benefit of a higher tuition: and as what they delivered did not depend for its efficiency on the embellishments of human diction, but on the power of God, they never attempted to recommend it by the persuasive arts of oratory, but employed that sober and simple style which alone comported with the spiritual doctrines they were commissioned to teach. In delivering these doctrines, they were under the constant guidance of the Great Instructor, and clothed them in that garb, which he directed them to use. That this is the only construction we are warranted to put upon the passage, the actual circumstances of the Corinthian Church at the time, and the whole of the preceding context, abundantly shew. In fact, the words are little else than a repetition of the statement made in the fourth verse, as must be evident on their being placed together in juxta-position:

ver. 4. οὐκ ἐν πειθοῖς [ἀνθρωπίνης] σοφίας λόγοις,  
ἀλλ' ἐν ἀποδείξει πνεύματος καὶ δυνάμεως.

ver. 13. οὐκ ἐν διδακτοῖς ἀνθρωπίνης σοφίας λόγοις,  
ἀλλ' ἐν διδακτοῖς πνεύματος [ἁγίου].

Now, as the subject of the preceding statement is not

*words* simply ; but a particular kind of words, or rather the manner and style of expression, viz. that splendid and imposing eloquence, which the Greeks so highly extolled ; it follows, that it is not single terms to which the apostle refers in the latter, but the entire character of the style, which the first teachers of the gospel were taught to use in announcing its all-important doctrines.

Besides, Paul himself furnishes us with the key to his meaning, when he adds : *πνευματικοῖς πνευματικὰ συγκρίνοντες*, “Comparing spiritual things with spiritual.” We are here expressly informed, that so far were the apostles from having every word immediately supplied to them without the intervention of means, that the teaching of the Spirit consisted in exciting them under his infallible guidance to exercise their own judgment upon the *πνευματικὰ*, spiritual subjects which he revealed to them ; and by comparing these with *πνευματικοῖς*, similar subjects revealed by inspired prophets under the Old Testament, to employ, so far as it went, identical phraseology. By this means, a beautiful harmony or agreement in style was effected between the two departments of Divine Revelation. From this passage, therefore, no support can be derived to the hypothesis of verbal inspiration.

It has frequently been asserted that the doctrine is clearly involved in the terms of the promise, made by our Lord to his apostles in anticipation of their being called to defend his cause before earthly tribunals. The words as given by Matthew, ch. x. 19, 20, are these : “But when they deliver you up, take no thought  
“how or what ye shall speak ; for it shall be given

“you in that same hour what ye shall speak. For it “is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father “which speaketh in you.” The legitimacy of the application of this passage as an indirect proof of the general inspiration of the apostles, we have already admitted; but it remains to be shown how it bears directly on our present argument. That universal or direct verbal inspiration is pledged by the Saviour, as it respects even the extraordinary occasions to which he refers, is more than can be proved from the words in which the promise is expressed. The apostles are supposed to be solicitous about both the *πῶς* and the *τί*—the *manner* and the *matter* of their defence: and they are exhorted not to give way to such solicitude: but it is worthy of notice, that, in the promise itself, no regard is had to the *manner* (το *πῶς*) in which they were to express themselves. It is quite general in its terminology. “It shall be given you in that same hour *what* (τί) ye shall speak.” “The Holy Ghost shall teach you in the same hour *what things* ye ought to say,”—ἀ δέ τι εἰπεῖν. (Luke xii. 12.) It is the subject-matter of apology that was to be supplied to them; and they might be well-assured, that if this, which was the more important, was secured by divine intervention, the mere expression would not be wanting. To remove, however, all ground of hesitation from their minds, our Lord adds: “For it is not ye that speak; but the Spirit of your Father, which speaketh in you.” By his teaching and superintending influence, they would always be enabled to express themselves in a manner worthy of the divine cause, which they were called to defend:—a manner, to which they could never



have attained by the exercise of their own unassisted powers; so that, though these powers were not to be superseded but engaged, it was to be as the organs of the divine agency by which they were employed.

Were we to grant, however, that universal verbal inspiration was, on such occasions, vouchsafed to the apostles, still we could not justly infer that they were the subjects of the same kind of inspiration, when composing their writings. The cases were altogether different. In the former, they were called upon to speak extempore, and were liable to be perpetually interrupted by the interrogatories of their judges, or the captious insinuations of their accusers: in the latter, they had leisure to exercise thought, choose expressions, and arrange their ideas, according to the nature of the subjects, or the peculiar claims of existing circumstances, which might be brought under their notice. It is easily to be imagined, therefore, that though, as to all practical purposes, they were under the influence of divine inspiration in both, it was nevertheless modified, or adapted in its exercise according to the necessities of their condition.

The statement made by Luke, that, on the day of Pentecost, the apostles "were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance," has also been advanced in proof of the same view of the subject. That, on this occasion, verbal inspiration, in the strictest acceptance of the term, took place, cannot, for a moment, be doubted by those who allow, that the languages in question were tongues with which the speakers had before been totally unacquainted. The immediate



supply of words was, in this case, absolutely necessary; and the same direct communication must have taken place in all similar instances during the apostolic age. But surely a moment's reflection must convince every impartial person of the perfect irrelevancy of such a proof to the point under discussion. If the writers of Scripture had composed in languages to which they had been entire strangers, then indeed we should be compelled to infer, that the infusion of every term was granted to them; but nothing can be more absurd than to argue from a case of absolute necessity to one in which only to a certain extent, any necessity can be supposed to have obtained. With respect to the authors of the books contained in the canon of the Old Testament, every one knows, that they wrote in their native language, or in a dialect with which they were equally familiar; and as it regards the New Testament writers, there cannot be a doubt on the subject of their previous acquaintance, in a greater or less degree, with the language in which they penned their books. Considerable diversity of opinion has existed respecting the original language of the gospel of Matthew: some maintaining that it was Hebrew, or the Aramaic dialect, spoken in Palestine in the time of our Lord; and others, that it was Greek.<sup>1</sup> If the former, then the evangelist belongs to the same class with the writers of the Old Testament; if the latter, which seems the more probable, he will occupy much the same place with Peter, James, and Jude, in

(1) For an account of the different authors who have written on this litigated question, see Horne's Introduction, vol. iv. p. 262, and Schott's *Isagoge Histor. Crit.* p. 70.

point of his knowledge of Greek. The fact is now well established, that this language was, in their time, extensively understood in Palestine ; and there is every reason to presume, that the apostles, being natives of Galilee, where a more than ordinary intercourse with foreigners prevailed, were more or less acquainted with it. Indeed their writings furnish satisfactory proof that their knowledge of this tongue was chiefly derived from common usage, the constructions of words and phrases being such as obtained in ordinary conversation.<sup>1</sup> This being the case, it follows that all attempts to prove from the fact of the gift of tongues, the immediate communication of every word of Scripture to the sacred writers, must ever prove completely nugatory. They were already in possession of a considerable proportion of the terms, and consequently did not require their infusion.

No small degree of confidence has been placed on the evidence supposed to be yielded in support of this view of the subject, by the numerous passages, in which the terms—*the word*, or *the words of the Lord* ; *the Lord spake*—*thus saith the Lord*, &c. occur. But against this argument lies the same objection, which we have urged in refutation of that which has just occupied our attention. It is the extension of what belongs to a particular to the exigencies of a universal proposition. It is fully conceded, that, in a vast majority of the instances in which these formulas occur, they are to be regarded as descriptive of immediate verbal communications. The single terms and

(1) Plank on the Greek Diction of the N. T. ; Biblical Cabinet, vol. ii. p. 112.

all their collocations were the simple result of a miraculous exertion of divine power.

But, on the other hand, it is equally manifest, that there are numerous passages of the Old and New Testaments, in which the phrase, *the word*, or *the words of the Lord*, is not to be understood in this restricted acceptation. The Hebrew  $\text{דְּבָרִים}$ , and the Greek  $\text{λόγος}$ , are used with great latitude by the sacred writers. Besides denoting *verbum*, a single term or expression, or *dictum*, an assertion or declaration, they are frequently taken in the sense of *sermo*, “discourse,” and of *res*, “thing,” “matter,” or, that which is the subject of discourse. How often does David speak of the *word* of God, when he means the entire divine testimony, or the promises, threatenings, directions, &c., which it contains, without respect to any particular mode of its composition or delivery. (Ps. cxix.) The Apostle James, referring to the prediction contained in the book of the minor prophets, respecting the re-establishment of religion in the days of the Messiah, speaks of it, as consisting in  $\text{οἱ λόγοι τῶν προφητῶν}$ —“the words of the prophets,” (Acts xv. 15,) which he then proceeds to quote, yet not in the identical terms which are there employed. In the New Testament, the phrases, “the word of God,” and “the word of the Lord,” are frequently employed to designate the doctrine preached by the apostles, without any other idea being attached to it, than that of the message which they were commissioned, and, by divine inspiration, enabled infallibly to deliver. See Acts vi. 2; viii. 14; xi. 1; xiii. 7, 26, 44, 48, 49; 1 Cor. xii. 36; 1 Thess. ii. 13; 2 Tim. ii. 9; and numerous other passages.

It may be said, that divine doctrine delivered either orally or in writing being presented through the medium of speech or discourse, the individual terms in which it is delivered must necessarily have been inspired, inasmuch as all speech is composed of single words. If the speech be inspired, the words must be inspired of course. But this conclusion can only be drawn from the premises advanced by those who hold, that, in all cases, the words were immediately communicated. It is founded on a signification being universally attached to the term inspiration, which can only be allowed to it in a limited number of instances. Remove this restricted acceptation, and invest the word with the whole extent of meaning which the phenomena of Scripture require, and there will be no absurdity in maintaining, that a discourse may be inspired, though the single terms of that discourse may not have been directly imparted to the writer. According to the doctrine laid down in a former Lecture, the penmen of Scripture wrote under a Divine influence so exerted as to secure the proper deposition of those matters, which were to be transmitted in writing for the benefit of mankind; and, till it can be shown that this could not be effected without the immediate communication of every single word to their minds, the assertions advanced respecting the component parts of speech must be regarded as quite aside from the point.

The same remarks will more or less apply to those passages in which God is said "to put his word into the mouth" of his messengers; to be "a mouth and wisdom" to them; to be "with their mouth," to "touch their mouth," and the like. (Exod. iv. 10—12; Jer. i. 9.)

The phraseology is descriptive of that divine assistance, which they enjoyed, in virtue of which they were qualified to give utterance to "the things of the Spirit;" and from the circumstances of some of the cases, it may be admitted, that with respect to them, direct verbal inspiration is implied; but in others, there is clearly a recognition of boldness of delivery, or a readiness of speech generally, rather than the special infusion or absolute dictation of single words.

On the whole, it will be found, that the appeals, which have been made to Scripture in defence of the theory we are opposing, are the result either of a contracted notion of the general subject, or of misapprehension with respect to the force and bearing of those passages in the inspired records, which have been pressed into its service. A thorough-going and consistent comparison of "spiritual things with spiritual" will evince, that it derives no legitimate support from this quarter.

Our second objection to the universality of direct verbal inspiration is:—that *it was unnecessary*. In examining the dogma of the immediate revelation of all that the sacred penmen wrote, we tested it by the axiom, that miraculous influence is never resorted to except where natural causes prove insufficient. To the same process we would also subject the present question respecting the absolute organic revelation of words.

If the apostles had been totally unacquainted with the Greek language, universal verbal inspiration would have been indispensably requisite. They must, in that



case, have had the *ipsissima verba* immediately revealed to them. To the extent in which they wanted appropriate terms and phrases in which properly to express the conceptions of their minds, the supply must have been made in this way. But to hold, that all their previous knowledge of the language was superseded; that no room was left for the exercise of memory and judgment; and, that the identical terms and combinations of speech, which the exercise of their mental faculties must otherwise have spontaneously produced, were immediately derived from a supernatural source, is not only to suppose a fact to which, so far as we know, there is nothing analogous in the government of God, but is so diametrically opposed to the established methods of the Divine procedure, that an explicit revelation would be absolutely necessary to convince us of its existence.

The true state of the case appears to be this. When excited by the Holy Spirit to compose any original writing, the penman had the ideas produced in his mind. If these ideas represented objects with which he was previously familiar, he naturally clothed them in the words by which he had been accustomed to express them. Thus Moses, when designating the Nile, employed the term יַם, *Yeor*, corresponding to the Egyptian word ἰαπο, or ἱεπο, and not the proper Hebrew נָהָר, which is commonly used to denote larger rivers; just as he naturally called the Euphrates κατ' ἐξοχήν, הַנָּהָר, *the River*, and the Mediterranean הַיָּם הַגָּדוֹל, *the Great Sea*, or הַיָּם הַחֲדָרָן, *the hinder sea*. Thus also Paul spontaneously gave to the Jewish feast of weeks the name of Πεντεκοστή, *Pentecost*, (1 Cor. xvi. 7;) to



Luke, the professional title of Ἱατρός, *Physician*, (Col. iv. 14;) and the designation φελόνης to the travelling bag, which he had left at Troas, (2 Tim. iv. 13.) Nor is the principle to be confined to single terms: it may be extended to phrases and more elaborate forms of expression, such as; הָרָם אֶת־עֵינָיו, *He lifted up his eyes*, (Gen xxii. 4;) מִצְרַיִם הָיָה, *the abomination of the Egyptians*, (Exod. viii. 22;) וַיָּבֹא אַחֲרֵי מוֹת שָׁאוּל, *And it came to pass after the death of Saul*, (2 Sam. i. 1;) Οὐ γὰρ ἐπαισχύνομαι τὸ εὐαγγέλιον, *I am not ashamed of the gospel*, (Rom. i. 16,) Εὐχαριστῶ τῷ Θεῷ, πάντων ὑμῶν μᾶλλον γλώσσαις λαλῶν· *I thank God, I speak more in foreign languages than all of you*, (1 Cor. xiv. 18.) In these and innumerable parallel instances, the moment the things became matters of consciousness on the part of the writers, the verbal signs which corresponded to them would necessarily be called forth by the natural law of association.

The same holds good in regard to much that was the subject of revelation through the medium of visions or dreams. In what has been not inappropriately termed symbolical inspiration<sup>1</sup> scenes were depicted to the imagination, comprehending a vast multitude of objects otherwise of familiar occurrence, with respect to the natural characteristics of which no hesitancy whatever could exist in the mind. No person of sound intellect, on being furnished with such a pictorial representation, could be at a loss to discriminate the different objects, and without any extrinsic or superior aid, clearly and definitively to appropriate to them

(1) Notes to Hartley on Man, by Pistorius, vol. iii. p. 571. ed. Lond. 1791.

their respective names. Take an example from the prophecies of Zechariah. "I saw," he declares, "by night, and behold! a man riding upon a red horse, and he stood among the myrtle-trees, that were in the shade, and behind him were red horses, speckled and white." (Ch. i. 8.) Take another from the Apocalypse: "I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns. And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion." (Ch. xiii. 1, 2.) Is it for a moment imaginable that any additional supernatural process was necessary in order to supply either of these prophets with the names of the different symbols composing the hieroglyphic groups, which they have described? Were they not of themselves competent to allot to each its distinctive character, just as they would have done, had they furnished us with a description of any real scene in which these objects were exhibited apart from inspiration?

What, then, we contend for is, that, to the extent in which the ideas or symbols were clearly perceived by the sacred writers, and they were sufficiently acquainted with the language in which they wrote to be able to reduce them to verbal forms, they did not require the immediate communication of these forms, but naturally connecting the one with the other, or rather the one being insensibly produced by the other, they gave them expression, under the superintendence of the inspiring Spirit. Where their memory did not readily suggest the corresponding words, they doubtless experienced

the exertion of a Divine energy; and on no occasion, and in regard to no subject, were they left to express themselves in a way that would prove injurious to the matters which they were commissioned to make known to the world.

With respect to communications of a more peculiar character, to which there was nothing analogous in the range of their previous ideas, and which, by necessary consequence, they could not have appropriately expressed in words, direct verbal inspiration became indispensably requisite. To this head we refer all instances in which the prophets and apostles were employed to commit to writing what they did not clearly comprehend; instances in which the subjects were perfectly new to them; and instances in which they entirely surpassed the grasp of human intellect. Without the immediate supply of apposite terms, it was altogether impossible for them, in such cases, to express themselves with accuracy: for, by no process of mental abstraction, by no inductive reasoning, by no elevation of thought, could they ever have brought the topics in question within the determining influence of any previous habits of intellection; nor, on the supposition, that this had been in their power, were they possessed of external signs at all adapted for their revelation to others.

Some of those, who advocate universal verbal inspiration in the strict acceptation of the term, are in the habit of appealing in defence of their theory to what they consider to be an established fact in the philosophy of the human mind—the impossibility of thinking except in words. We have only, it has been said, to

attend to the operations of our own minds in order to be conscious, that, whenever we prosecute any train of ideas, the operation is effected through the medium of language, and that where this is not the case, our ideas are indistinct and confused. That this is, to a certain extent, true, may be granted. In processes of abstract reasoning, where the utmost nicety of comparison and discrimination is necessary in classing and methodizing ideas, language becomes a powerful instrument of thought. The philosopher has recourse to its symbols as so many steps by which to proceed, or to retrace the ground over which he has gone; and were he to lay aside the use of these symbols, his ideas would become more or less indistinct and obscure. But to what is this to be ascribed? To any thing physiologically inherent in the constitution of the human mind? or to artificial habits, that have been created by accidental circumstances, or that are the result of tuition and imitation? To attribute it to the former would be to confound cause and effect. Words, so far from being subjectively the original sources of ideas, are strictly and properly the mere organs of their expression to others. They were not primarily designed to facilitate our mental processes, but to be the vehicles by which ideas might be transmitted from one mind to another. That they have been rendered subservient to these processes is not denied; but that they are indispensably necessary to thought cannot be admitted, while daily experience evinces its rapidity to be such, that frequently it is incapable of becoming embodied in words. The current is too rapid to be arrested by the sensible signs by which it might otherwise be expressed.

But it may reasonably be asked ; What real connection is there betwixt this alleged phenomenon in the history of the human mind, and the subject of inspiration ? Divine revelation forms a perfect contrast to the laboured productions of human reason. So far as the mental operations of the inspired writers were concerned, they appear to have been of the simplest character. Unlike the metaphysician, or the speculative philosopher, the prophets and apostles were strangers to abstraction. With them all was instinct with feeling. They wrote, as they spoke, because they believed. Even Paul, in his closest reasonings, is pouring forth the spontaneous effusions of a mind excited, enlightened, and strengthened from above. To the extent of their knowledge of the languages in which they wrote, the ideas which they conceived would readily suggest the appropriate terms ; where that knowledge was defective, the terms would be suggested by supernatural influence ; and in matters of direct revelation, of which they could form no adequate conception, such as those relating to the Divine Essence, the mutual relations of the sacred Three, the counsels of God, the realities of the invisible world, the words immediately supplied must have been invested with much of the same obscurity to them in which they present themselves to us—an obscurity arising, not from the terms themselves, but from the great subjects to which they refer, and the comparatively small degree of light that is imparted concerning them in Scripture.

In the third place, the dogma of the absolute dicta-



tion of every word to the sacred writers *is invalidated by the fact of the existence of various readings in the original Scriptures.* That such readings do exist, and that to a vast amount, is matter of ocular demonstration. When first made public, considerable offence was taken by those who had been unaccustomed to the study of Biblical criticism, and much hostility was shown against those who were implicated in their publication. Among other reasons assigned for rejecting them were their supposed incompatibility with the inspiration of the original texts, and the dangerous consequences which must result to the authority of the Bible, if their existence were granted. It is truly humbling to find such an eminent divine as Dr. Owen stating, that “it is true we have not the *αὐτόγραφα* of Moses and the prophets, of the apostles and evangelists; but the *ἀπόγραφα* which we have, or copies, contain every *iota* that was in them.”<sup>1</sup> Of the fact of the existence of the various readings he was not ignorant. He admits it; but, in order to elude the force of the argument, which might be deduced from it against his views of the purity and integrity of the text, he maintains in regard to the Keris and Chethibs of the Hebrew Bible, that they were found in it in the time of our Lord, consequently received his sanction, and contain between them the genuine readings; and with respect to the Greek New Testament, that it likewise is preserved entire in the different manuscripts, how greatly soever they may vary from each other. “In them all,” he says, “is every letter and tittle of the

(1) Works, vol. iv. p. 393.



word." Since his time the labours of Kennicott, De Rossi, Mill, Wetstein, Griesbach, Matthæi, and Scholz, have greatly augmented the mass of various readings; and the light that has been thrown on the history of the text by these, and other writers who have availed themselves of the published results of their researches, or instituted separate examinations of particular passages, evinces the extreme folly of contending for a literal identity between any copies now extant, and the originals as published by the sacred penmen. Nor could any such identity have been preserved through the course of transcription without the intervention of a perpetual miracle; it being impossible, in the exercise of the greatest care, and by the application of every human means of conservation, absolutely to secure the text from the irruption of errors and mistakes. At the same time, it is equally beyond dispute, that, in exact proportion to the increase of discovered manuscripts, by which the aggregate of readings has been successively swelled, has been the amount of corroborative evidence which they have supplied of its doctrinal integrity and purity. The identical books, and the essential text, which composed the original canon, are exhibited in one and all of them. The most imperfect copy contains every article of faith, every ethical precept, and every source of consolation, to be found in the most correct. By far the greatest part of the variations are of no moment whatever, consisting merely in the omission or addition of a letter, the transposition of a word, the substitution of a synonyme, and such like, by which not the slightest change is produced in the meaning of the record; while such as

wear a more serious aspect are so controlled by concomitant circumstances, that no substantial detriment can possibly accrue from them.

It appears from ancient testimonies that varieties of readings existed at a very early period. Origen, who flourished within a hundred years of the time of the apostles, not only admits the fact, but is loud in his complaints in reference to it; and the allegations which he makes are fully borne out by the quotations which occur both in his own writings, and in those of the fathers who were contemporary with him, or who lived between his time, and that in which the books of the New Testament were written. They are also corroborated by the ancient Syriac and Latin versions, which belong to the same period. Nor is it at all improbable, that *variæ lectiones* existed in the very first copies that were transcribed from the inspired idiographs, or from the autographs which were dictated to amanuenses, and accredited by the apostolic signature. It may by some be deemed presumptuous to hazard such a supposition; but Dr. Owen himself, though he lays considerable stress on the first copies having been given out to faithful men, whilst the infallible Spirit continued his guidance in an extraordinary manner, nevertheless allows, that none of the first transcribers of the original copies were ἀναμάρτητοι, and θεόπνευστοι, infallible and divinely-inspired, so that it was impossible for them in any thing to mistake. Religious care and diligence in their work, with a due reverence of Him, with whom they had to do, is all he ascribes to them.<sup>1</sup>

(1) Works, vol. iv. p. 458.

Now the question which is naturally suggested by these considerations, in application to the subject of inspiration, is this: Is it at all supposable, that the writers of Scripture should have every word and syllable immediately dictated to them, in order to constitute their books or letters a perfect standard of doctrine and practice in all ages, since the result of such inspiration could not be transferred, except by inspired transcription, from the divine archetypes? That the Bible was intended to be such a standard is avowed by all who strictly admit the supernatural claims of revelation; and on all points with respect to which there may arise a difference of opinion, an appeal is made to it, as containing the inspired decisions of the supreme and infallible Arbiter of truth. But if the perfection of this ultimate rule of judgment consist in words absolutely and immediately dictated by the Spirit of truth to the original writers, it is obvious we possess no such rule; for these words, as thus dictated, cannot now be in every case ascertained. They may all exist in the multitudinous mass of Hebrew and Greek manuscripts to be found in different parts of the world; but where is the collator, who will bring them together? or where is the critic, who will arrange them precisely as they originally stood? Much has been effected, especially of late years, in the way of collecting various readings, and restoring the text to its pristine state of verbal integrity; but many principles still remain to be settled, and much more critical and hermeneutical skill than has yet been brought into operation must be applied, before any thing nearly approaching to a literal identity can be expected; and,

as to a perfect identity in this respect, supposing it ever to be produced, no person would be qualified, without a special revelation, definitively to assert its existence.

We are reduced, therefore, to this dilemma: either the Bible is a sufficient and authoritative rule of faith, though not verbally existing in the condition in which it was published by the writers: or, we have not, and never can expect to possess, any such rule. The latter alternative no one will admit, who takes a fair and enlightened view of the subject. Without being dependent on the judgment of the church of Rome, in what shape soever she may pretend to express that judgment, or upon the ultimate decisions of Biblical critics, every person who will consult the Scriptures in their connection, comparing one passage, phrase, and term with another; calling in to his aid those subsidiary means, which the present times abundantly supply; and humbly imploring the promised illumination of the Holy Spirit; may confidently expect to attain to that certainty, which is essential to his satisfactory determination of all points connected with truth and duty. Though he may not be able to ascertain in every case the particular words, which actually proceeded from the Spirit, he will not be left at a loss with respect to the "MIND of the Spirit:"—there being attendant circumstances which frequently point out that mind as distinctly as if it had been expressed in a precise number of terms, or in one term rather than another.

But, if the books of the Old and New Testaments as existing in the *textus receptus*, or as they have existed

in different manuscripts, from the time the first copies were taken, are sufficient to answer all the purposes for which revelation was given, and there is no reason to believe that they will ever be restored to their original state of absolute purity—is there not the strongest possible presumption against the position, that, in order to their production at first, a kind or degree of supernatural influence was exerted, by which every word was immediately communicated to the writers? For what conceivable purpose were all the words thus miraculously imparted, if, with respect to many of them, they were so soon to undergo those changes, to which we have seen they were subjected, almost under the eye of the apostles? Was it merely that the first churches might enjoy the exclusive prerogative of having an inspired book in their possession? To be consistent, those who adopt the theory of universal verbal inspiration must deny that we now possess the inspired volume. By way of courtesy, they may speak of the Bible in this or similar language; but what, according to their view, they mean, is the book of God, not as it now exists, but as it was given forth by God. In order to carry a speculative point, they must sacrifice the practical authority of the doctrine.

That the inspired authority of a document does not depend on its verbal accuracy, but on the matters which it contains having been committed to writing by the special will and sanction of God, may be argued from the fact, that the Hebrew Scriptures to which our Lord and his apostles ascribe inspiration, were not the original manuscripts, but merely copies of them, which had been taken by uninspired scribes. Their appeal



was not to the manuscripts laid up in the temple, with respect even to which it is matter of doubt, whether any of them were the sacred autographa, but to those which were in current use among the Jews in Palestine, and the different countries of the dispersion. Now, there is no reason whatever for supposing, that these copies were exempt from many of the imperfections, which more or less characterise later transcripts. Notwithstanding the scrupulosity which the Rabbins have discovered in their treatment of the letters of the law, and their assertion, that, upon each tittle of it whole mountains of doctrine are suspended, these letters have undergone numerous changes and transpositions; and though it cannot be proved, that they wilfully corrupted the text, either before or after the time of our Lord, it is past all dispute, that it was by no means possessed of literal perfection at that period. Yet to these very manuscripts he gives the sacred title of "the Scriptures," "the Scripture," and "the word of God;" and it is of them (if indeed it is not of the LXX.) and not of the divine autographs, the apostle affirms, that they were *θεόπνευστος*, *divinely inspired*, and which he designates as *τὰ ἱερὰ γράμματα*, "*the Holy Scriptures*," which are able to make us wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus. (2 Tim. iii. 15, 16.) If this fact had been adverted to, the world would have been spared much of the extravagant argumentation, which has been founded upon these texts, and the doctrine of inspiration would never have been obscured by the mists, in which it has been enveloped.

A fourth argument against the notion of an entirely



literal inspiration of the sacred Scriptures, *is its tendency to sink the authority of faithful translations, by depriving them of all claim to that quality.* That the authors of such translations were or may be inspired, will not be pretended in the present day. The story of the inspiration of the LXX interpreters, who are said to have produced, in their separate cells at Alexandria, without communicating with each other, as many Greek versions of the law, possessing a perfect literal identity, however firmly it was believed by Philo and the Christian Fathers, and, by the latter, for obvious reasons, extended to the whole of the Old Testament, has justly been treated as a fable since the time of Humphry Hody, whose complete and luminous history of the Septuagint, in his celebrated work *de Textibus Originalibus*, has left little to be added on the subject. The exclusive claims of the Latin Vulgate also, though advocated by certain of the members of the Council of Trent, on the alleged ground that it was dictated by the same Holy Spirit who dictated the sacred originals, and finally pronounced by the “sacred, holy, œcumenical, and general council,” to be the only *authentic* standard of truth, are now equally repudiated by every enlightened and candid Roman Catholic. But still, since all versions of the Scriptures, which faithfully represent the contents of the divine originals, express “the mind of the Spirit,” it is obvious they must be regarded as possessing that inspiration which demands for the truths they reveal a cordial and unhesitating reception. They do not indeed contain the words, syllables, and letters which originally constituted the book of inspiration, nor an identical number of words,

syllables, and letters corresponding to them ; but they contain the same truths, breathe the same spirit, and exhibit the same general structure or cast of language, the same conformation of sentences, the same choice of epithets, the same selection and combination of images, the same order and dependence of ideas, and the same stamp of divine authority, as a communication of the will of God to mankind. They are not the primary fountain, but they are reservoirs, close by its side, into which its fresh and limpid waters have been conveyed.

In asserting that every faithful translation possesses, as a Divine Revelation, the same authority that attaches to the original Scriptures, the statement is of course to be understood in a practical point of view. Speculatively, or rather critically considered, there must ever, as it regards authority, be a degree of difference between them ; just as there must ever be between the most correct copy of the Hebrew and Greek Scriptures, which can now be obtained, and the immaculate autographs of these Scriptures ; but for every practical and saving purpose the authority is strictly tantamount. Take, for example, our common English version, the general fidelity and truth of which have always commanded the assent of the most competent judges. What revealed truth, or what essential aspect of revealed truth, does it not teach ? Is it not the same Eternal, Omnipotent, Omniscient, Benevolent, Holy, Righteous, and All-Perfect God, whose character is there displayed, whose will is there disclosed, and whose rule is there established ? Are not the same features of human character and condition there portrayed ? Does it not disclose the same blessed

Redeemer; the same glorious plan and means of salvation; the same privileges of believers; the same moral precepts; the same positive laws; the same states of future and eternal retribution? What motive is urged in the one, that is not urged in the other? What promise, encouragement, threatening, warning, invitation or expostulation is contained in the one, which is not equally contained in the other? In point of practical authority, therefore, such versions are perfectly upon a par with the originals. And then as to practical effect: who, that is conversant with the subject, will deny, that fear of God, trust in his mercy, faith in the Mediator, dependence on the Holy Spirit, devotedness of heart, and holiness of life, have been produced by the Divine blessing on the simple perusal of the English Scriptures, equally as in those cases in which the Hebrew or Greek texts have been the instrumentality employed? Rather, we may say: how limited are the effects resulting to scholars, compared with those which result to the unlearned! Where there is one Junius, whose mind has been savingly affected by the reading of the original, there are thousands and hundreds of thousands to whom the Divine word, contained in their vernacular versions, has proved the power of God unto salvation.

Contemplating the subject, then, in this light, in which alone it must be viewed, in connection with the grand design of Revelation, are we not fully authorized to advance a claim to inspiration in favour of the versions in question? Do they not contain a transfusion of the original inspiration, in so far as the truths which they exhibit are concerned? And is it not this trans-

fusion, as identified with these truths, that stamps the versions with an authority, which never can attach to any work of merely human origin or composition? Possessing this authority, we scruple not to assign to them the paramount and sacred designations: "The oracles of God;" "the Words of Eternal Life."

That we are warranted to speak in this style of the contents of Scripture as existing in translations, is convincingly evident from the language employed by the inspired writers of the New Testament respecting many of the quotations, which they make from the Old. To whatever lengths the controversy may formerly have been carried, it is now universally acknowledged, that, in a very considerable number of instances, the quotations found in that portion of the sacred volume were not made from the original Hebrew, but from the Greek version of the LXX. which was then generally known and read among the Hellenistic Jews. Many indeed of these citations are only partially in the words which the text of this version exhibits: while others are taken from it verbatim, in instances in which it differs from the Hebrew text: yet not the slightest distinction exists between the formulas by which they are introduced, and those prefixed to such as are made from that text. Of the one class equally as of the other, it is affirmed: "It is written:" "thus it is written:" "the Scripture saith:" "the Holy Ghost saith." Can any thing more clearly evince, that the apostles were taught to regard the inspiration of the Old Testament, as consisting, not in any quality inherent in a definite set of words and phrases, but in the truths,

which God of old communicated to the church, and which were available for Christian instruction, and equally binding upon the conscience, whether presented through the medium of the original Hebrew, through that of the Septuagint text, or by means of a version differing from both, either executed previously, or made at the moment under the influence of inspiration?

With the fact of such quotations from the LXX. those who advocate universal verbal inspiration have been not a little perplexed; yet they have generally endeavoured to escape from the dilemma on the grounds taken by Dr. Owen—that the New Testament writers only used that liberty, which the Holy Spirit gave them, without any prejudice to the truth, or to the faith of the church; or that the passages in the LXX. which they appear to quote were not originally in that version, but have been afterwards foisted into it from the New Testament by Christian transcribers, with a view to remove the discrepancies which exist between them.<sup>1</sup> The latter hypothesis, though attempted to be sustained by Ernesti, has been sufficiently refuted by Michaelis in his Introduction to the New Testament,<sup>2</sup> and will not now be advanced by any Biblical critic. The former reason is virtually a concession of the principle for which we contend; and only requires to be combined with the import of the formulas, to which reference has just been made, in order to give consistency to our views respecting the inspiration of Scripture.

(1) Exposition of the Epistle to the Hebrews, Exercit. v.

(2) Vol. I. chap. v. sect. iv.



In the last place, we object to the universality of verbal inspiration, because *it is flatly contradicted by the facts of the case, as presented by the sacred text itself*. It must have struck the most superficial reader of Scripture, that, in almost all the instances in which there is a repetition of the same discourse, though the meaning is identical, a greater or less degree of diversity obtains with respect to the terms in which it is couched. The production of a few of these instances will sufficiently illustrate and establish our position. In the two editions, which we have, of the Decalogue—(Exod. xx. and Deut. v.), besides one or two literal discrepancies, such as the omission or insertion of a *Vau*, or the change of a *Jod* into a *Vau*, there is a totally different phraseology employed in certain parts of the fourth commandment. As presented in the two books, they stand thus:—

EXODUS XX.

REMEMBER the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work : But the seventh day is the sabbath of the LORD thy God ; *in it* thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that *is* within thy gates : for *in* six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea and all that in them *is*, and rested the seventh day : wherefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it.

DEUTERONOMY V.

KEEP the sabbath day to sanctify it : as the LORD thy God hath commanded thee. Six days thou shalt labour, and do all thy work : but the seventh day is the sabbath of the LORD thy God : *in it* thou shalt not do any work : thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, nor thy man-servant, nor thy maid servant, nor thine ox, nor thine ass, nor any of thy cattle, nor thy stranger that *is* within thy gates : that thy man-servant and thy maid-servant may rest as well as thou. And remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt, and *that* the LORD thy God brought thee out thence through a mighty hand and by a stretched-out arm : therefore the LORD thy God commanded thee to keep the sabbath day.



A similar discrepancy occurs in the wording of the fifth commandment.

EXODUS.

HONOUR thy father and thy mother; that thy days may be long upon the land, which the LORD thy God giveth thee.

DEUTERONOMY.

HONOUR thy father and thy mother, as the LORD thy God hath commanded thee: that thy days may be prolonged, and that it may go well with thee, in the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee.

In like manner the phraseology differs in the two editions of the tenth commandment.

EXODUS.

THOU shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maid-servant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that *is* thy neighbour's.

DEUTERONOMY.

NEITHER shalt thou desire thy neighbour's wife, neither shalt thou covet thy neighbour's house, his field, or his manservant, or his maid-servant, or his ox, or his ass, or any *thing* that *is* thy neighbour's.

Another instance in the Old Testament, which strikingly corroborates our argument, is that contained in the two accounts, which we find of the message of Jehovah to David by the prophet Nathan. They are as follows:—

2 SAMUEL VII. 4—17.

AND it came to pass that night, that the word of the LORD came unto Nathan, saying, Go and tell my servant David, Thus saith the LORD, Shalt thou build me an house for me to dwell in? Whereas I have not dwelt in *any* house since the time that I brought up the children of Israel out of Egypt, even to this day, but have walked in a tent and in a tabernacle. In all the places wherein I have walked with all the children of Israel spake I a word with any of the tribes of Israel, whom I commanded to feed my people Israel,

1 CHRON. XVII. 3—15.

AND it came to pass the same night, that the word of God came to Nathan, saying, Go and tell David my servant, Thus saith the LORD; Thou shalt not build me an house to dwell in: for I have not dwelt in a house since the day that I brought up Israel unto this day; but have gone from tent to tent, and from *one* tabernacle to *another*. Wheresoever I have walked with all Israel, spake I a word to any of the judges of Israel, whom I commanded to feed my people, saying, Why have ye not built me an house of cedars? Now there-

SAMUEL.

saying, Why build ye not me an house of cedar? Now therefore so shalt thou say unto my servant David, Thus saith the LORD of hosts, I took thee from the sheep-cote, from following the sheep, to be ruler over my people, over Israel: and I was with thee whithersoever thou wentest, and have cut off all thine enemies out of thy sight, and have made thee a great name, like unto the name of the great *men* that *are* in the earth. Moreover I will appoint a place for my people Israel, and will plant them that they may dwell in a place of their own, and move no more; neither shall the children of wickedness afflict them any more, as before-time, and as since the time that I commanded judges *to be* over my people Israel, and have caused thee to rest from all thine<sup>c</sup> enemies. Also the LORD telleth thee, that he will make thee an house. And when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build an house for my name, and I will stablish the throne of his kingdom for ever. I will be his father, and he shall be my son. If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men: but my mercy shall not depart away from him, as I took *it* from Saul, whom I put away before thee. And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee: thy throne shall be established for ever. According to all these words, and according to all this vision, so did Nathan speak unto David.

CHRONICLES.

fore thus shalt thou say unto my servant David, Thus saith the LORD of hosts, I took thee from the sheep-cote, *even* from following the sheep, that thou shouldst be ruler over my people Israel: and I have been with thee whithersoever thou hast walked, and have cut off all thine enemies from before thee, and have made thee a name like the name of the great men that *are* in the earth. Also I will ordain a place for my people Israel, and will plant them, and they shall dwell in their place, and shall be moved no more; neither shall the children of wickedness waste them any more as at the beginning, and since the time that I commanded judges *to be* over my people Israel. Moreover I will subdue all thine enemies. Furthermore I tell thee that the LORD will build thee an house. And it shall come to pass, when thy days be expired, that thou must go *to be* with thy fathers, that I will raise up thy seed after thee, which shall be of thy sons; and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build me an house, and I will stablish his throne for ever. I will be his father, and he shall be my son: and I will not take my mercy away from him as I took *it* from *him* that was before thee: but I will settle him in mine house and in my kingdom for ever: and his throne shall be established for evermore. According to all these words, and according to all this vision, so did Nathan speak unto David.

To these we shall only add one instance, selected from many, that might be adduced from the New Testament. In the accounts given us of the institution of the Lord's Supper in the three synoptic gospels, verbal differences occur, which, how trivial soever in themselves, are important in their bearing upon the question of verbal inspiration. They may be exhibited thus:—

MATT. XXVI. 26—29.

AND as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed *it*, and brake *it*, and gave *it* to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave *it* to them, saying, Drink ye all of it: for this is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom.

MARK XIV. 22—25.

AND as they did eat, Jesus took bread, and blessed, and brake *it*, and gave to them, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. And he took the cup; and when he had given thanks, he gave *it* to them; and they all drank of it. And he said unto them, This is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many. Verily I say unto you, I will drink no more of the fruit of the vine, until that day, that I drink it new in the kingdom of God.

LUKE XXII. 19, 20.

AND he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake *it*, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body, which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me. Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup *is* the New Testament in my blood, which is shed for you.

To these statements might be added that given of the same transaction, which Paul received by immediate revelation from the Lord, as he expressly states, 1 Cor. xi. 23—25; but it is not necessary to do more than refer to it.

Without dwelling upon the verbal discrepancies which these several passages present, in their relation

to each other, or stopping to show how they may be reconciled, and that, so far from detracting from the credibility of the sacred history, they only tend more strongly to confirm it, the single point to which we wish to give prominence is this: that, in each case, *the words* specified in the accounts are expressly stated to be THOSE WHICH WERE DELIVERED ON THE OCCASIONS DESCRIBED BY THE SACRED PENMEN. The Decalogue is thus introduced in Exodus: "And God spake *all these words*, saying." In Deuteronomy, it is prefaced as follows: "The LORD talked with you face to face in the mount out of the midst of the fire, *saying*;" and it is added at the close: "*These words* the LORD spake unto all your assembly—and *he added no more*." And he *wrote* them in two tables of stone, and delivered them unto me." In the same way the message of Nathan is introduced in Samuel and Chronicles by the formula: "*Thus saith the Lord*;" and in both is added: "According to *all these words*, and according to all this vision, so did Nathan speak unto David." And in all the three evangelists, the words of the institution of the supper are preceded by the declaration: "Jesus *said*," or by the term "*saying*," which amounts to the same thing.

Now we contend, that it is absolutely impossible to reconcile these phenomena on the principle of universal organic inspiration. If the words are to be pressed in such cases, as they are in reference to the subject generally, and we are to take either of the combined statements as *bonâ fide* furnishing us with the identical words which were spoken on the several occasions, then it is demonstrably evident, that the words,

contained in the corresponding statement, could not, so far as they differ from the former, have been delivered. If they are both to be considered strictly, and *ad literam*, what was communicated, there is manifestly a contradiction in terms, which no possible ingenuity can remove. It is of no use to tell us that they are both inspired. We admit this. But then we hold it on an entirely different principle—a principle which allows of the variety in the accounts of the discourses, without doing the least violence to any part of the language employed. There is throughout a substantial agreement. Each writer states the matters in his own way; or the same writer varies his statement, in the repetition, in some immaterial circumstances, which affect neither their accuracy, nor his veracity as a narrator. In superintending or controlling their procedure as inspired instruments, the Holy Spirit permitted them to employ different phraseology, according to the particular aspect in which, at the moment, the subject was presented to their minds. He might have so strengthened their memory as to qualify them infallibly to repeat the same words and phrases, and that to any imaginable length. But he has not seen fit always to exert his inspiring influence in this degree. While he has preserved them from using any terms that would derogate from the truth or propriety of their narratives, he has condescended to avail himself of the variable state of their mental faculties in composing them, in such a way as must necessarily have produced the diversities in question. The words in these instances were not infused into their minds, but suggested by their own recollection; and conveying



in substance the same truths or matters of fact, they were deemed equally worthy of a place in the Divine record with those which were directly imparted. When they inform us that such and such words were spoken or delivered, they speak according to the influence of the peculiar view which they were then led to entertain of the subjects; and there being nothing essentially different in their accounts, we hesitate not to receive both as they are presented to our notice. They could, with the strictest propriety, adopt the language: "These are the *words*," meaning thereby the *matters*, though what follows does not exhibit the identical words of the original communication. But if the whole was composed as the result of direct verbal infusion, and the formulas are to be understood in the restricted sense in which they are interpreted by those who take this exclusive view of inspiration, we must inevitably abandon the consistency and truth of the documents altogether. To maintain that the Holy Spirit might immediately inspire the different wordings, and yet declare that they are verbally the original communications, is worse than trifling; it is to turn the truth of God into a lie; to expose it to the scoff of the infidel; and to cast a stumbling-block in the way of the honest inquirer. It is lamentable to reflect on the obstacles which have thus been interposed between the word of God and the human mind by the false and inconsistent interpretations which have been given of that word by its sincere friends. Speculative notions are hastily adopted, or a pertinacity to defend certain received modes and forms of expression is unwisely indulged in, by means of which distorted conceptions



of truth are formed, and representations of its character and claims presented to the world, which are altogether unsanctioned by holy Scripture.

We here close what we have to offer on the subject of verbal inspiration. Our next Lecture will contain a determination of the question: *What Books are inspired?*—involving a variety of topics connected with the history of the sacred canon, and the grounds on which we receive as divine a certain number of writings to the entire exclusion of all others.

## LECTURE IX.

### THE CANON OF INSPIRATION.

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#### JEREMIAH XXIII. 35.

*“What hath the Lord spoken?”*

NEXT in point of importance and interest to the fact that the sacred writers were inspired, are the questions: What are those books, on behalf of which the claim of Divine Inspiration is advanced? And what is the evidence on which we believe, that a certain specific number are exclusively entitled to this distinction? It is notorious, that nothing like unanimity respecting these points prevails. Not only have they been keenly agitated among theologians of different periods, but collections of books, differing more or less in point of size and number, yet all comprehended under the general name of “the Holy Bible,” have obtained in several of the churches in Christendom. The Scriptures, as generally received by us, differ from those in accredited circulation among the Lutherans; the books, to which inspiration is ascribed by that body, are not numerically the same with those for which it is claimed by the Roman Catholics: the catalogues of sacred writings sanctioned in the Romish and Greek churches also differ from each other; while the Armenian Bible

contains more books than are to be found in any other. With respect indeed to the books which are commonly circulated in this empire as Divine, and which accord with those composing the Hebrew Bible and the Greek New Testament, there exists no disagreement in the creeds of the different churches. In all and each of these creeds, the claims of the whole Scripture, to the extent in which it is approved by us, are unhesitatingly admitted. But most of the foreign churches have appended to them, intermixed with them, or sanctioned, by promoting their joint circulation, other books or portions, which possess no claim to inspiration. On the other hand, the demands made on our religious regard by some of the books of the Old and New Testament have been called in question both in ancient and modern times.

The term *canon*, which may be considered as now possessing classical authority in reference to the present division of our subject, is, like many other ecclesiastical words, originally Greek; but for the sake of convenience, it has been adopted into all the languages of modern Europe, just as it was anciently into the Latin, and into the Syriac, Ethiopic, Arabic, Armenian, Slavonic, and other languages in use in the Oriental churches.

In ecclesiastical usage, *κανὼν* was anciently employed to designate a book or catalogue; a book containing a list of the different persons belonging to any church, particularly those who officiated at the public services; the liturgical writings used on such occasions; and whatever else appertained to the edifice. It was also taken in the sense of a publicly approved catalogue of

all the books, which might be read in the public assemblies of the Christians; and in that of a collection of writings divinely inspired. Finally, in application to one of the great ends of such writings, according to its original and literal signification, it was used to denote such writings viewed in the light of an infallible RULE of faith and practice. In the last acceptation the word is repeatedly employed by Irenæus, Tertullian, Origen, Clement of Alexandria, and Isidore of Pelusium:—a circumstance of no small moment, as furnishing us with an idea of the paramount importance attached by these fathers to the sacred Scriptures, but which appears to have been entirely lost sight of by many of those who have treated on the subject. In modern usage, *canonical* and *inspired* are, for the most part, convertible terms: and, indeed, with many of the ancients, those books alone were considered to be canonical, (κανονικά, κανονιζόμενα,) which were recognised as divine, and to which they gave the character of ἐνδιά-θηκοι, ἐνδιάθετοι, διαθηκόγραφα, γνησία, ὁμολογούμενα, writings found or entered in the Testaments, genuine, and universally acknowledged to be of divine authority. But as the word was frequently used, in the third and following centuries, in reference to all books that were read in the churches (and other writings besides those which were inspired had this honour conferred upon them), a considerable degree of vagueness came to be attached to it, in consequence of which no small difficulty has attended the attempts that have been made definitely to separate the one class from the other in the works of the Fathers. To the books which have been universally received, Roman Catholic writers give

the name of *Proto-canonical*; and to those which have not been thus received, that of *Deutero-canonical*:—a distinction, however, which is not allowed by Protestants, who consider those only to be entitled to a place in the canon, which can be proved to have been divinely inspired.

The canonicity of the books of Scripture has more or less occupied the attention of all who have applied themselves to the study of their history. It was treated on more or less fully in the ancient church by Melito, Origen, Eusebius, Athanasius, Jerome, Augustine, and others; and since the Reformation, it has generally occupied one or more sections in the leading bodies of divinity which have appeared in the Roman Catholic and Protestant churches: besides having been discussed in separate works, of which those by Cosins, Jones, Du Pin, Ens, Storch, Schmid, Alexander, and Stuart, possess distinguished merit. Since the publication of Semler's Free Inquiry respecting some of the books of the Old Testament in 1771, in which he advanced sentiments that went completely to unsettle the grounds on which the question had been placed, and the appearance of a work on the same subject, and leading to the same results, by Corrodi, it has been much agitated in Germany; and numerous attempts have been made to subvert the entire canon of the Hebrew Scriptures, as well as to exclude as spurious whole books of the New Testament. A powerful reaction, however, was produced by the portions of Eichhorn's Introduction,<sup>1</sup> in which the subject is handled with consummate historical ability; and ever

(1) § 15 to § 57.

since, there has been a gradual abandonment of the hypothetical reasonings, which had been advanced respecting it; and, on the whole, an approximation to the views which were entertained prior to the time of Semler, is now visible in most of the works in which it comes under review.

Owing to the absence of minute historical data, the history of the canon, so far as its formation and completion are concerned, is involved in considerable obscurity. In this respect, little difference exists between that of the books which compose the Old Testament, and that of those which form the New—there being no definite or positive information relative either to the exact period when they were collected, or the persons by whom the collection was made. But though this deficiency in point of minute and particular data must be admitted, it cannot be denied that we possess evidence of a more general character, which, in view of all the circumstances of the case, is highly satisfactory.

With respect to *the Canon of the Old Testament*, it is evident its formation must have been progressive and protracted. Upwards of a thousand years elapsed between the publication of the first and the addition of the latest books which it contains. From the same premises it follows, that it must have been very unequal in its extent at different periods of its history. Originally it consisted only of the Pentateuch, part of which relates to events which transpired before the time of Moses; but most of it is occupied with matters in which he was personally concerned, and its internal economy is such as is sufficient in itself to induce the belief that he was the writer. Though now divided



into five parts, there is no historical evidence to prove the primitive antiquity of this division. Moses himself uniformly speaks of it as a whole whenever he adverts to its composition. In Deut. xxxi. 24—26, we read: “ And it came to pass, when Moses had made an end  
“ of writing the words of this law in a book, until they  
“ were finished, that Moses commanded the Levites,  
“ which bare the ark of the covenant of the LORD,  
“ saying, Take *this book of the law*, and put it in the  
“ side of the ark of the covenant of the LORD your  
“ God, that it may be there for a witness against thee.” Some, indeed, have maintained, that the document here specified contained simply the legal enactments, apart from all historical matter; but the reason assigned for its preservation sufficiently proves the contrary. It was to furnish to that and all succeeding generations a faithful testimony of the dealings of Jehovah with his church, and of the conduct of her members towards him from the beginning. It also appears from Exod. xvii. 14; xxiv. 4, 7; Num. xxxiii. 2; that Moses committed to writing accounts of the Divine appearances, and other historical facts tending to illustrate the character of the ancient economy, and not merely the statutes of ceremonial and judicial legislation. What he thus successively wrote was solemnly delivered to the sacerdotal and civil officers of the nation, and ordered to be deposited beside the ark, and to be brought out and read to the whole body of the people every seventh year. To the Pentateuch, the names “ The Law,” and “ the Book of the Law,” were given, not because it contained nothing but the national code, but because that code constituted the most important

part of it, as prescribing positive rules of conduct, and contained the charter of privileges to the Hebrew people. So far, therefore, as the Mosaic canon is concerned, there is reason to believe that it was completed before the death of the writer himself, and that by his own pen, with the exception of the concluding chapter, which was, in all probability, added by his assistant and successor.

The first augmentation which the Divine canon received was made by Joshua, to whom we have just ascribed the probable composition of the last chapter of the Pentateuch. Not only did he receive an express charge to occupy himself incessantly with the study of what is emphatically called "*This* book of the law," (ch. i. 8;) but we are informed, that, after he had made a covenant with the people in Shechem, just before his death, he "wrote these words in the book of the law of God," (ch. xxiv. 26.) How much more he may have inserted, we are not told; but, considering the importance that attaches to the description which his book contains of the tribal divisions of the land of Canaan, and which must have been written by himself, the hypothesis that it also was added, possesses a high degree of verisimilitude. That any other part of the book of Joshua had this honour conferred upon it, or that any of the succeeding historical books were inscribed upon the same roll or rolls, is destitute of all evidence; but that writings composed by inspired men were deposited beside the Pentateuch in the holy of holies is admitted on all hands. Thus it is expressly stated, that, when Samuel had told the people the manner of the kingdom, he "wrote it in a book, and

*laid it up* before the Lord." (1 Sam. x. 25.) It is also clearly taken for granted by Isaiah, that his prophecies would be enrolled in a collection of sacred oracles, which he designates "the Book of the Lord," the consultation of which, with a view to compare the predictions with the events, would convincingly prove their divine origin. "Seek," he says, "out of the book of the Lord, and read: no one of these shall fail." (Ch. xxxiv. 16.) The very words, וְרָשִׁי מִלְּפָנָי, compared with the language of our Lord, ἐρευνᾶτε τὰς γραφὰς, (John v. 39,) seem to intimate, that such a sacred codex had already become the subject of study. And Daniel informs us, (chap. ix. 2,) that he understood by *the books*, סְפָרִים, the number of the years of the captivity: which books Michaëlis, Gesenius, and Bleek, believe to have been the Scriptures of the Old Testament, which then existed in a collective form: though others, as Bertholdt and De Wette, think they were only a collection of the prophetical writings. How difficult soever it may be to determine which of these two opinions possesses the higher claim on our reception, this much is certain, that a particular collection of sacred books must have existed in the time of the prophet, since he never would have used the plural number when referring to the book of Jeremiah, from which alone he could have obtained the information spoken of, except that book had existed among others, to which it was assimilated by the sacredness of its character; and, that these were, in an eminent sense, סְפָרִים, "*the Books*," τὰ βιβλία, αἱ γραφαί, in other words, "the sacred writings," is supported by the traditional interpretation of the Jewish punctators,

who have pointed the preposition so as to express the article.

From the former of these passages it may be inferred, that, while the original writings were deposited in the Temple, copies were taken and circulated throughout the land. That copies were taken is certain from the facts, that the Levites and priests, whom Jehoshaphat sent to teach in the cities of Judah, took the book of the law of the Lord with them, (2 Chron. xvii. 9 ;) and that the Samaritans were in possession of the five books of Moses, prior to the captivity. And though there is reason to believe they did not exist in great numbers during the idolatrous periods which immediately preceded the deportation of the Jews to Babylon, nothing was more natural than an increased attention to the Law of God, after that event, to which, in combination with their afflictive circumstances, may, in a great measure, be ascribed their complete abandonment of idolatry, and return to the pure worship of Jehovah.

On the return of the captives to Judea, and the restoration of their ancient polity, an anxiety to conform in every point to the requirements of the divine law, may easily be imagined. And that such an anxiety did exist is evident from the distinct and repeated references made to the law of Moses in the books of Ezra and Nehemiah ; and especially from the eagerness with which the people listened to it, when read at their own special request, on the first day of the year, by the former of these patriots. "And all the people "gathered themselves together as one man into the "street, that was before the water-gate ; and they

“spake unto Ezra the scribe to bring the book of the  
“law of Moses, which the Lord had commanded to  
“Israel. And Ezra the priest brought the law before  
“the congregation both of men and women, and all  
“that could hear with understanding, upon the first  
“day of the seventh month. And he read therein  
“before the street, that was before the water-gate, from  
“the morning until mid-day, before the men and the  
“women, and those that could understand ; and the  
“ears of all the people were attentive unto the book of  
“the law. And Ezra the scribe stood upon a pulpit  
“of wood, which they had made for the purpose ; and  
“beside him stood Mattithiah, and Shema, and Anaiah,  
“and Urijah, and Hilkiah, and Maaseiah, on his right  
“hand ; and on his left hand, Pedaiah, and Mishael,  
“and Malchiah, and Hashum, and Hashbadana, Zecha-  
“riah, *and* Meshullam. And Ezra opened the book  
“in the sight of all the people ; (for he was above all  
“the people ;) and when he opened it, all the people  
“stood up : and Ezra blessed the LORD, the great God.  
“And all the people answered, Amen, Amen, with  
“lifting up their hands : and they bowed their heads,  
“and worshipped the LORD with their faces to the  
“ground. Also Jeshua, and Bani, and Sherebiah,  
“Jamin, Akkub, Shabbethai, Hodijah, Maasseiah,  
“Kelita, Azariah, Jozabad, Hanan, Pelaiah, and the  
“Levites, caused the people to understand the law :  
“and the people *stood* in their place. So they read  
“in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave  
“the sense, and caused them to understand the  
“reading.” (Neh. viii. 1—8.) They again assem-  
bled daily for a whole week for the same purpose ;



and on the great fast, which was afterwards celebrated, no less than a fourth part of the day was occupied in this exercise, (ch. ix. 1—3.) Such an instance of deep interest in the holy Scriptures is unparalleled in the history of the Jewish nation ; and at this, if at any period of that history, we might expect to find extraordinary exertions made to render the canon as complete as possible. It is accordingly to the combination of events which then took place, that both Jewish and Christian writers have, in general, attributed the formation of the collection of Old Testament writings now in our possession. The Rabbins have a tradition, that, on the rebuilding of the temple, Ezra assembled a college of a hundred and twenty scholars, commonly known by the name of *הַגְּדוּלָּה הַגְּדוּלָּה*, *The Great Synagogue*, for the express purpose of collecting and arranging, under his inspection, all the sacred books, which were then found in the hands of the Jews. Some degree of discredit has been thrown on this statement by the fabulous additions which have been made to it by the author of the second book of Esdras, and others, to the effect, that the law having disappeared at the destruction of the temple by Nebuchadnezzar, it was necessary that Ezra should have it all restored to him by immediate inspiration ; which favour having been vouchsafed, he dictated it to his colleagues, who had no sooner completed their task, than the Temple copy preserved by Jeremiah was discovered, and on comparing the two together, it was found that they did not differ in a single letter. But, apart from these marvellous addenda, the tradition must commend itself to our judgment as, on the whole, possessing a high degree



of probability. Indeed, if something of the kind had not taken place, it does not appear how the belief of it could have so generally prevailed. And who was so competent to conduct such a work as Ezra, whose skill in sacred literature was so distinguished, that the honourable name of כֹּהֵן, *priest*, was almost entirely merged in that of סֹפֵר, *scribe*, and to mark whose proficiency in literary labours, the epithet *ready* was annexed to the appellation : כֹּהֵן קָדִיר בְּהוֹרָה מֹשֶׁה, “and he was a READY SCRIBE in the law of Moses ?” That a college of learned men did exist after the captivity, is proved by a passage in the first book of Maccabees, (vii. 12,) where it is called συναγωγὴ γραμματέων, *a Synagogue of scribes*, which, in all probability, was a continuation of that founded by Ezra, and the same which afterwards, with considerable modifications, existed under the name of the Sanhedrim. It is not necessary to suppose that the collecting of the Sacred Books was the sole end for which the members of this assembly were convened : this was, in all probability, only one among many points to which their attention was called ; and after these had been effected, it was quite natural for them to prosecute their labours in reference to any affairs of difficulty that might arise in the public administration. In this way, what was originally designed to be temporary became permanent.<sup>1</sup>

To what length towards its completion the canon was, at this time, carried, we possess no positive historical information from which to determine. According to a statement made in the Talmud, the members

(1) Stuart on the Old Testament Canon, pp. 82, 83.

of the Great Synagogue copied Ezekiel, the twelve minor prophets, Daniel, and the book of Esther, while Ezra wrote the book which bears his name, and the genealogical tables in the Chronicles down to his own time. It is generally supposed that Nehemiah, who is said to have founded a sacred library in the Temple, (2 Macc. ii. 13,) and Malachi, the last of the prophets, put their seal to the sacred collection by the addition of their own writings; though some are of opinion that it was not finally closed till the time of Simon the Just, who flourished about the beginning of the third century before Christ. The books were now translated into Greek; and we not only find them divided into three parts by the translator of the book of Ecclesiasticus, in the year B. C. 130, corresponding to the classification in our present Hebrew Bible, but this division is spoken of as possessing some degree of antiquity by the author of the book himself, who is supposed to have lived nearly two centuries before the birth of our Lord.

On the ground that certain books are found in the Greek version of the Old Testament, which were never known to exist in the Hebrew Canon, Semler,<sup>1</sup> Corrodi,<sup>2</sup> Augusti,<sup>3</sup> and others, have maintained, that the Egyptian Canon differed from that of Palestine. Nothing, however, in the shape of positive proof, has been adduced in support of this opinion; and even the conjectures which these authors have advanced in its justification, have been shown by Eichhorn<sup>4</sup> and

(1) *Apparatus ad liberalior. V. T. interpret.* p. 18.

(2) *Versuch einer Beleuchtung, &c.* part i. chap. 2.

(3) *Einleit. ins Alte Test.* p. 72.

(4) *Ut supra.*

Bauer<sup>1</sup> to be without foundation. Not only does it appear, that, notwithstanding the jealousy with which the Palestinian Jews regarded the efforts of their brethren in Egypt to support a separate religious establishment, the latter never lost their attachment to the country and institutions of their ancestors, and therefore were not likely to deviate so far from their received faith, as to admit mere human writings into a collection, which they had been taught to regard as exclusively divine ; but the classification of the sacred books above referred to, which was made by Jesus, the son of Sirach, and that which is essentially the same, furnished by Philo, both of them Alexandrian Jews, clearly evince that the Apocryphal books formed no part of the Egyptian Canon. And, indeed, the former of these writers carefully distinguishes between the inspired books and the moral sayings of his grandfather, his translation of which forms one of the books in question. Apologizing in his Prologue for any imperfection which might be found in the work, he writes, “ Wherefore let me entreat you to read it with favour  
 “ and attention, and to pardon us, wherein we may  
 “ seem to have come short of some words, which we  
 “ have laboured to interpret. For the same things  
 “ uttered in Hebrew, and translated into another  
 “ tongue, have not the same force in them ; and *not*  
 “ *only these things, but the law itself and the prophets,*  
 “ *and the rest of the books,* have no small difference,  
 “ when they are expressed in their own language.” The circumstance too, that though Philo was acquainted with the Apocryphal Books, yet he never quotes any

(1) Einleit. § xxxvii.

of them, shows, that he viewed them in a very different light from that in which he regarded the Canonical Scriptures, which he cites and treats as inspired. To which we may add the testimony of Josephus,<sup>1</sup> that no Jew had ever ventured to *add to* or detract from the twenty-two national books—which obviously applies to his brethren in Egypt as well as in Palestine ; and to the Greek translation equally as to the Hebrew original.<sup>2</sup>

To the canon of the Old Testament as existing in their day, our Lord and his apostles have, as we have shown in a former Lecture, given their unqualified sanction. They not only allowed, but expressly maintained and vindicated the divine authority of the books of which it was composed. Their frequent appeals to these books ; the importance which they attach to their decisions ; and their direct and positive ascription of them to a supernatural influence ; prove that they singled them out from the mass of works then extant as alone worthy of the religious faith and confidence of mankind. They speak of them as a *corpus librorum*, a definite collection of holy writings, well known as such to the Jews, in whose hands they were. If, in addition to this, they had specified by name the different books in the Jewish canon, no question respecting any of them could have been fairly agitated by those who bow to the high authority with which they were invested ; but this not being the case, it remains to be proved, that the books which we now find in the canon are precisely those which it contained in their time.

(1) Contra Apion. lib. i. § 8.

(2) Stuart on the Old Testament Canon, pp. 298—300.

Except we are satisfied in regard to this identity, we cannot ascribe to our collection as a whole, the same authority which they ascribed to the collection that formed the subject of their appeals.

It will be admitted, that the only proper method of proceeding with the investigation in reference to these books is, to examine the witnesses who lived in or near the time to which reference is made, and carefully to weigh and compare the testimonies which they have furnished on the subject. In conducting this examination, however, we must discriminate those who incidentally advert to it, or assert the authority of certain books, or classes of books, or quote from them, from such as professedly treat of the canon: since it must be evident, that omissions on the part of the former are not to be placed in the same estimate with those which might be found in the latter.

The earliest testimony which bears upon the Jewish canon is that contained in the book of ECCLESIASTICUS, which Eichhorn considers to have been written within two centuries before Christ. In this work we discover manifest indications of the books which were accounted sacred at the time when it was written. Commencing with Moses and Joshua, whom he designates the successor of the former in prophecies, the author enumerates Samuel, David, Solomon, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and the twelve prophets, as those who had furnished, in their writings, the knowledge of the various topics which he celebrates, or whose actions, as described in these writings, form the subject of his discourse. It deserves special attention, that he takes the sacred writers in the order of chronology, just as

they commonly stand in our Bibles; and that though he brings his story down to the time of Simon the Second, the minor prophets are the last of whom he predicates the gift of inspiration. (See chapters xlix. 1.) To Solomon especially he ascribes songs, proverbs, parables, and interpretations, by which last he most probably means the book of Ecclesiastes.

In the NEW TESTAMENT the collection of Divine Scriptures is represented as commencing and ending with the same books that occupy the first and last place in our present canon. Thus our Lord, designing to comprehend all the instances in which innocent blood had been shed, cites that of Abel from Genesis, and that of Zacharias from the close of the Second of Chronicles, which is the last book in the Hebrew Bible. (Matt. xxiii. 35.) It is also divided into "The LAW of Moses, the PROPHETS, and the PSALMS," (Luke xxiv. 44,) the third of which classes comprehends the Chethuvim, or Hagiographa, according to the custom of the Jews to designate by synecdoche a book, or number of books, from that with which it commences. It also contains direct quotations from, or obvious references to all the books now in the Old Testament canon, except those of Ruth, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, the Song of Solomon, Lamentations, and Ezekiel; to which, however, on the presumption that they existed, it does not appear the writers had any occasion to advert. In the present case, as we have already shewn, the testimony is strictly divine, being that either of the Son of God himself, or of his apostles who were infallibly taught by the Holy Spirit.<sup>1</sup>

(1) Stuart on the Old Testament Canon, § 17—§ 19.



Our next witness is PHILO, who was contemporary with Christ and his apostles. He nowhere professes to give us a complete catalogue of the books of the Old Testament ; but, in his book on a Contemplative Life,<sup>1</sup> when treating of the Therapeutæ, he distinguishes between those compositions which had been written by the founders of that sect, and “the Holy Scriptures,” which he divides into the LAWS, the divinely-inspired PROPHEPIC ORACLES, the HYMNS, and THE OTHER BOOKS, and of which alone he asserts that they were admitted into their sacred places.<sup>2</sup> We farther find scattered through his works, express or more current citations from all the books, which we now possess, or some mention made of them, with the exception of Ruth, Chronicles, Nehemiah, Esther, Lamentations, Daniel, Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Solomon.

Nor can his silence with respect to these be fairly construed into a proof against their existence in the canon, since they may all be classed under one or other of the books, the authors of which he expressly specifies ; or it may be assumed, that his subject furnished no occasion for a separate reference to them.

The most complete of the ancient testimonies is that borne by JOSEPHUS in his first book against Apion. It is as follows : “It was neither permitted to every  
“one who pleased to write, nor does any discrepancy

(1) Tom. ii. p. 475. Ed. Mang.

(2) Ἐν ἐκάστῃ δὲ οἰκίᾳ ἱερὸν, ὃ καλεῖται σεμνεῖον καὶ μοναστήριον, ἐν ᾧ μονούμενοι τὰ τοῦ σεμνοῦ βίου μυστήρια τελοῦνται, μηδὲν εἰσκομίζοντες, μὴ ποτὸν, μὴ σιτίον, μηδὲν τι τῶν ἄλλων, ὅσα πρὸς τὰς τοῦ σώματος χρεῖας ἀναγκαῖα, ἀλλὰ ΝΟΜΟΥΣ, καὶ ΛΟΓΙΑ θεσπισθέντα διὰ ΠΡΟΦΗΤΩΝ, καὶ ὙΜΝΟΥΣ, καὶ ΤΑ ἌΛΛΑ, οἷς ἐπιστήμη καὶ εὐσέβεια συναύξονται καὶ τελειοῦνται—Ἐντυγχάνοντες γάρ τοις ἹΕΡΟΙΣ ΓΡΑΜΜΑΣΙ, φιλοσοφοῦσι τὴν πάτριον φιλοσοφίαν, κ. τ. λ.

“ exist in the things which are written ;—the prophets  
“ alone, having been taught by inspiration of God,  
“ wrote the earliest and most ancient events, and accu-  
“ rately recorded those of their own times, as they  
“ happened. For we have not innumerable books,  
“ which are discordant and conflicting, but only twenty-  
“ two, containing a history of all past time, and justly  
“ believed to be divine. Of these, five are from Moses,  
“ containing the laws and the account of the origin of  
“ mankind, and extend to his death, thus including a  
“ period of nearly three thousand years. And from  
“ the death of Moses till the reign of Artaxerxes, who  
“ reigned over the Persians after Xerxes—the prophets,  
“ who lived after Moses, have recorded in thirteen  
“ books the things which were done in their time.  
“ The remaining four contain songs of praises to God,  
“ and precepts for the government of human life. From  
“ the time, indeed, of Artaxerxes to our own, every  
“ thing has been recorded ; but these accounts are not  
“ deemed worthy of the same degree of credit with  
“ those written earlier, owing to the absence of a  
“ regular succession of prophets. The faith with which  
“ we receive our Scriptures is manifest : for though so  
“ long a period has already elapsed, no one has dared  
“ either to add to, detract from, or alter them in any  
“ respect. It is an innate principle with every Jew,  
“ by which he is influenced from his very birth, to  
“ regard them as announcements of the Divine will,  
“ perseveringly to adhere to them, and if necessary,  
“ willingly to die for them. Hence many of our nation,  
“ who have been captives, have often been seen to  
“ submit to racks and all kinds of death in the theatres,

"because they would not utter a word against the laws, and the records which accompany them. But which of the Greeks would be willing to suffer, or incur the least danger, though all their writings were to be destroyed? And no wonder; for they regard them merely as discourses framed according to the pleasure of those who wrote them."<sup>1</sup>

On this important statement, furnished us by one who was so competent to decide on a subject of this nature, we remark,

First, That Josephus clearly distinguishes the books which were received by his nation as sacred and divine, from others written afterwards, on behalf of which no such claim could be advanced. The attachment of the

(1) — ἄτε μήτε τοῦ ὑπογράφειν αὐτεξουσίου πᾶσιν ὄντος, μήτε τινὸς ἐν τοῖς γραφομένοις ἐνούσης διαφωρίας· ἀλλὰ μόνων τῶν προφητῶν τὰ μὲν ἀνωτάτω καὶ τὰ παλαιότατα, κατὰ τὴν ἐπίνοιαν τὴν ἀπὸ τοῦ Θεοῦ μαθόντων, τὰ δὲ καθ' αὐτοὺς ὡς ἐγένετο, σαφῶς συγγραφόντων. Οὐ γὰρ μυριάδες βιβλίων εἰσὶ παρ' ἡμῖν, ἀσυμφώνων καὶ μαχομένων· δύο δὲ μόνα πρὸς τοῖς εἴκοσι βιβλία. τοῦ παντὸς ἔχοντα χρόνου τὴν ἀναγραφὴν, τὰ δικαίως θεῖα πεπιστευμένα. Καὶ τούτων πέντε μὲν ἐστὶ τὰ Μωϋσέως, ἃ τοὺς τε νόμους περιέχει, καὶ τὴν τῆς ἀνθρωπογονίας πορίδουσιν, μέχρι τῆς αὐτοῦ τελευτῆς. Οὗτος ὁ χρόνος ἀπολείπει τρισχιλίων ὀλίγον ἔτων. Ἀπὸ δὲ τῆς Μωϋσέως τελευτῆς μέχρι τῆς Ἀρταξέρξου, τοῦ μετὰ Ξέρξην Περσῶν βασιλέως ἀρχῆς, οἱ μετὰ Μωϋσῆν προφῆται τὰ κατ' αὐτοὺς πραχθέντα συνέγραψαν ἐν τρισὶ καὶ δέκα βιβλίοις. Αἱ δὲ λοιπαὶ τέσσαρες ὕμνους εἰς τὸν Θεὸν καὶ τοῖς ἀνθρώποις ὑποθήκας τοῦ βίου περιέχουσιν. Ἀπὸ δὲ Ἀρταξέρξου μέχρι τοῦ καθ' ἡμᾶς χρόνου γέγραπται μὲν ἕκαστα· πίστεως δὲ οὐχ ὁμοίας ἡξίωται τοῖς πρὸ αὐτῶν, διὰ τὸ μὴ γενέσθαι τὴν τῶν προφητῶν ἀκριβῆ διαδοχὴν. Δῆλον δ' ἐστὶν ἔργῳ πῶς ἡμεῖς τοῖς ἰδίοις γράμμασι πεπιστεύκαμεν. Τοσούτου γὰρ αἰῶνος ἦ ἡ παρωχηκότος, οὔτε προσθεῖναι τις οὐδὲν οὔτε ἀφελεῖν αὐτῶν, οὔτε μεταθεῖναι τετόλμηκε. Πᾶσι δὲ σύμφυτόν ἐστι εὐθὺς ἐκ τῆς πρώτης γενέσεως Ἰουδαίοις, τὸ νομίζειν αὐτὰ Θεοῦ δόγματα, καὶ τούτοις ἐμμένειν, καὶ ὑπὲρ αὐτῶν εἰ δεοὶ θνήσκειν ἡδέως. Ἦδη οὖν πολλοὶ πολλάκις ἑώρανται τῶν αἰχμαλώτων, στρέβλας καὶ παντοίων θανάτων τρόπους ἐν θεάτροις ὑπομένοντες, ἐπὶ τὸ μηδὲν ῥῆμα προέσθαι παρὰ τοὺς νόμους καὶ τὰς μετὰ τούτων ἀναγραφάς. Ὁ τίς ἂν ὑπομείνειεν Ἑλλήνων ὑπὲρ αὐτοῦ, ἀλλ' ὑπὲρ τοῦ καὶ πάντα τὰ παρ' αὐτοῖς ἀφανισθῆναι συγγράμματα, τὴν τυχούσαν ὑποστήσεται βλάβην; λόγους γὰρ αὐτὰ νομίζουσιν εἶναι, κατὰ τὴν τῶν γραφάντων βούλησιν ἐσχεδιασμένων.—*Contra Apionem*, lib. i. cap. 7, 8.

Jews to the former was strictly religious, and, for this reason, unconquerable.

Secondly, They were held in so high a degree of veneration, that any attempt to introduce an alteration into them would be regarded as an act of atrocity unheard of in their history. They were carefully preserved, and transmitted without augmentation, diminution, or mutation, from one generation to another.

Thirdly, The same classification, which we have noticed in the preceding testimonies, is here expressly recognised: the sacred books being divided into the PENTATEUCH, the PROPHETS, and the REST of the books not included in these two classes.

Fourthly, The writer specifies the period during which the series of sacred books was written: viz. from the time of Moses to the reign of Artaxerxes Longimanus, a mode of expression which is evidently so indeterminate, that it may be made to comprehend the whole of the reign of that monarch. The last of the books in point of time, which he assigns to the canon, is that of Esther, the events narrated in which chronologically belong to the reign of Artaxerxes.

Fifthly, According to the investigations of Eichhorn<sup>1</sup> and Jahn,<sup>2</sup> the following is the specific arrangement of the books, which composed the Jewish canon in the days of Josephus. *First class*, THE FIVE BOOKS of Moses: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy.—*Second class*, THIRTEEN PROPHETICAL BOOKS: 1. Joshua. 2. Judges and Ruth. 3. Two books of Samuel. 4. Two books of Kings. 5. Two books of Chronicles. 6. Ezra and Nehemiah. 7. Esther.

(1) Einleitung, § 50.

(2) Introduction, § 28.

8. Isaiah. 9. Jeremiah and Lamentations. 10. Ezekiel. 11. Daniel. 12. The Twelve Minor Prophets. 13. Job. —*Third class, THE REMAINING FOUR:* 1. Psalms. 2. Proverbs. 3. Ecclesiastes. 4. Song of Solomon. The sum total of the books thus classified amounts to *twenty-two*, to which number the Jews are supposed to have reduced them in order to make it correspond with the number of letters originally in their alphabet; just as, in the opinion of Jerome, the Hellenists afterwards enlarged it, by separating Ruth from Judges, and Lamentations from Jeremiah, in order to make it twenty-four, the number of letters in the Greek alphabet. That they were accustomed to count two or more books as one, we learn from Origen; and nothing could be more natural than the combination of Ruth with Judges, Nehemiah with Ezra, Lamentations with Jeremiah, and the two books of Samuel, Kings, and Chronicles respectively with each other. In fact, most of them continued undivided till the time of Bomberg, who introduced the separation into one of his celebrated editions of the Hebrew Bible, in the commencement of the seventeenth century. The reckoning of all the Minor Prophets to one book, must be very ancient, since we meet with a reference to them under the designation of "*The Book of the Prophets.*" (Acts vii. 42.) The only apparent discrepancy in this arrangement is the allotting to Job a place among the prophets: but this discrepancy vanishes, when it is recollected, that the term prophets in application to the sacred books of the Hebrews comprised such writings as were composed by inspired men: hence Joshua, Judges, Ruth, &c. are reckoned in the common Jewish



division of the canon among the former prophets. Besides, the book of Job being regarded as a true narrative clothed in a poetic dress, came naturally to occupy a place among historical books of the class to which reference has just been made.

Although the celebrated passage on which we have made these remarks is the only one in the writings of the Jewish historian, in which he professedly treats of the canon of the Old Testament, it must not be inferred, that his works contain no further allusions to it. On the contrary, his pages constantly exhibit the designations, "the ancient books," "the books of the Hebrews," "Hebrew books," "the sacred books," "the books of the sacred Scriptures," "the books of prophecy," &c. and allege statements from most of them, according as the subjects of which he treats required. He regarded them in their collective state as long ago complete; and, like the rest of his nation, considered them to be so sacred as not to allow of being tampered with in any respect whatever.<sup>1</sup>

Next to the testimony of Josephus ranks that of MELITO, bishop of Sardis, about the middle of the second century, who travelled into the East expressly for the purpose of ascertaining from the Jews resident there the number and order of the books in their canon. The result he communicated in a letter<sup>2</sup> to Onesimus,

(1) Stuart ut sup. pp. 308—318.

(2) Μερίτων 'Ονεσίμῳ τῷ ἀδελφῷ χαίρειν· ἐπεὶ δὲ πολλάκις ἡξίωσας σπουδῇ τῇ πρὸς τὸν λόγον χρώμενος γένεσθαι σοι ἐκλογὰς, ἐκ τε τοῦ νόμου καὶ τῶν προφητῶν περὶ τοῦ σωτῆρος καὶ πάσης τῆς πίστεως ἡμῶν. Ἐτι δὲ καὶ μαθεῖν τὴν τῶν παλαιῶν βιβλίων ἐβουλήθης ἀκρίβειαν, πόσα τὸν ὕριθμον, καὶ ὅποια τὴν τάξιν εἶεν, ἐσπουδάσα τὸ τοιοῦτο πράξαι, ἐπιστάμενός σου τὸ σπουδαῖον περὶ τὴν πίστιν, καὶ φιλομαθὲς περὶ τὸν λόγον. Ὅτι τε μάλιστα πάντων πόθῳ τῷ πρὸς Θεὸν ταῦτα προκρίνεις περὶ τῆς αἰωνίου σωτηρίας ἀγωνιζόμενος· ἂν ἐλθὼν οὖν εἰς τὴν ἀνατολήν, καὶ ἕως τοῦ τόπου γενομένου ἐνθα ἐκηρύχθῃ κα



containing a catalogue, in which all the books now in the canon are specified, excepting Nehemiah, Esther, and Lamentations;—with respect to which it may be sufficient to remark, that it was customary to reckon the book last mentioned to that of Jeremiah; and, as Ezra and Nehemiah were frequently considered as one, it is in the highest degree probable that Melito comprehended under Ezra all the three books, which treat of the historical affairs of the Jews after the captivity.<sup>1</sup>

In the ecclesiastical history of Eusebius we are furnished with a catalogue of the canonical books of the Jews as given by ORIGEN in his Exposition of the First Psalm,<sup>2</sup> in which he assigns to them the number

ἐπράχθη καὶ ἀκριβῶς μαθὼν τὰ τῆς παλαιᾶς διαθήκης βιβλία, ὑποτάξας ἐπεμψά σοι· ὧν ἐστὶ τὰ ὀνόματα. Μωϋσέως πέντε· γένεσις, ἔξοδος, λευιτικόν, ἀριθμοί, δευτερονόμιον· Ἰησοῦς ναυῆ, κριταί, ρούθ· βασιλεῖων τέσσερα, παραλειπομένων δύο. Ψαλμῶν δαβίδ, σαλομῶνος παροιμιαί, ἥ καὶ σοφία, ἐκκλησιαστής, ᾠσμα ᾠσμάτων, ἰώβ. Προφητῶν, ἡσαίου, ἱερεμίου, τῶν δώδεκα ἐν μονοβιβλῳ, δανιήλ, ἰεζεκιήλ, ἔσδρας· ἔξ ὧν καὶ τὰς ἐκλογὰς ἐποίησά μιν, εἰς ἕξ βιβλία διελών.—Eusebii Hist. Eccles. lib. iv. cap. 26.

(1) Eichhorn's Einleit. § 52, and Bruns in his Edition of Kennicott's Dissert. General. p. 178.

(2) Τὸν μὲν τοίγε πρῶτον ἐξηγούμενος ψαλμὸν, ἔκθεσιν πεποίηται τοῦ τῶν ἱερῶν γραφῶν τῆς παλαιᾶς διαθήκης καταλόγου, ᾧ δέ πῶς γράφων κατὰ λέξιν· οὐκ ἀγνοητέον δ' εἶναι τὰς ἐνδιαθήκους βίβλους, ὡς Ἑβραῖοι παραδιδόασιν, δύο καὶ εἴκοσι· ὅσος ὁ ἀριθμὸς τῶν παρ' αὐτοῖς στοιχείων ἐστίν· εἴτα μετὰ τινα, ἐπιφέρει λέγων· εἰσὶ δὲ αἱ εἴκοσι δύο βίβλοι καθ' Ἑβραίους αἰδε· ἡ παρ' ἡμῖν γένεσις ἐπιγεγραμμένη, παρὰ δὲ Ἑβραίοις ἀπὸ τῆς ἀρχῆς τῆς βίβλου βρήσιθ, ὅπερ ἔστιν ἐν ἀρχῇ· ἔξοδος, οὐαλεσμῶθ, ὅπερ ἐστὶ ταῦτα τὰ ὀνόματα· λευιτικόν, οὐέκρᾱ, καὶ ἐκάλεσεν ἀριθμοὶ ἄμμεσφεκωδείμ· δευτερονόμιον, ἔλλε ἀδδεβαρίμ, οὔτοι οἱ λόγοι· Ἰησοῦς νιδς Ναυῆ, Ἰωσῆ βέν Νοῦν· κριταί, ρούθ, παρ' αὐτοῖς ἐν ἐνὶ σωφετίμ· βασιλειῶν πρώτη, δευτέρα, παρ' αὐτοῖς ἐν Σαμουήλ, ὁ θεόκλητος· βασιλειῶν τρίτη, τετάρτη ἐν ἐνὶ οὐαμμέλεκ δαβίδ, ὅπερ ἐστὶ βασιλεία δαβίδ· Παραλειπομένων πρώτη, δευτέρα, ἐν ἐνὶ, διβρή ἰάαμμ, ὅπερ ἔστι λόγοι ἡμερῶν· ἔσδρας πρῶτος καὶ δεύτερος ἐν ἐνὶ ἐζρᾱ, ὁ ἔστι βοηθός· βίβλος ψαλμῶν σέφερθελλίμ. Σολομῶντος παροιμιαί, μεσλῶθ, ἐκκλησιαστής, κωέλεθ, ᾠσμα ᾠσμάτων, σίρ ἄσσιρίμ· ἡσαίας, Ἰεσαία. Ἰερεμίας σὺν θρήνοις καὶ τῇ ἐπιστολῇ ἐν ἐνὶ, Ἰερεμία. Δανιήλ, Δανιήλ. Ἰεζεκιήλ, Ἰεζεκήλ. Ἰώβ, Ἰώβ. Ἐσθῆρ, Ἐσθῆρ. Ἐξω δὲ τούτων ἐστὶ τὰ Μακκαβαϊκά, ἅπερ ἐπιγράφεται Σαρβήθ σαρβαν ἐ ἔλ.—Eusebii Hist. Eccles. lib. vi. cap. 25.

twenty-two, and mentions all now received, if we except the minor prophets, which must have been omitted by some copyist, since it is evident from other parts of the writings of that father, that he regarded them as inspired. What renders the testimonies of Melito and Origen of greater importance, is the circumstance of their having both lived in the second century, and the former especially so very near the time of Josephus.

There are only two additional sources of evidence to which it is necessary to refer, since the other testimonies, which are exceedingly numerous, exactly correspond with them. The former of these is JEROME, who flourished in the fourth century, and is justly regarded as the first Biblical critic in point of eminence to be found among the Fathers. Among other subjects of investigation, in connection with the Hebrew studies which he prosecuted in Palestine, that before us claimed his special attention; and he gives us the result of his inquiries respecting it in his celebrated *Prologus Galeatus*, in which he specifies every book at present in the Hebrew canon, and shews how the number might be estimated either at twenty-two or twenty-four, according as the books of Ruth and Lamentations were or were not reckoned along with Judges and Jeremiah respectively.<sup>1</sup> The other source

(1) Viginti et duas litteras esse apud Hebræos, Syrorum quoque lingua et Chaldæorum testatur, quæ hebrææ magna ex parte confinis est. Nam et ipsi viginti duo elementa habent, eodem sono et diversis characteribus. Porro quinque litteræ duplicis apud Hebræos sunt, Caph, Mem, Nun, Pe, Sade. Unde et quinque a plerisque libri duplices existimantur, *Samuel, Melachim, Dibre Hajamim, Esdras, Jeremias* cum Cinoth, id est lamentationibus suis. Quomodo igitur viginti duo elementa sunt, per quæ scribimus hebræice omne quod loquimur, et eorem initiis vox humana comprehenditur; ita *viginti duo*

is the TALMUD, which may be referred to much about the same period, and is to be viewed as furnishing the testimony of the Masorites or Jewish critics, who occupied themselves in the most minute manner with

*volumina* supputantur, quibus quasi litteris et exordiis in Dei doctrina, tenera adhuc et lactens viri justī eruditur infantia.

Primus apud eos liber vocatur *Beresith*, quem nos Genesin dicimus. Secundus *Veelle Semoth*. Tertius *Vajikra*, id est, Leviticus. Quartus *Vajedabber*, quem Numeros vocamus. Quintus *Elle haddebarim*, qui Deuteronomium prænотatur. Hi sunt quinque libri Mosis, quos proprie *Thora*, id est, Legem, appellant.

Secundum *Prophetarum* ordinem faciunt, et incipiunt ab Jesu filio Nave, qui apud eos *Josue Ben Nun* dicitur. Deinde subtexunt *Sophetim*, id est Judicum librum: et in eundem compingant *Ruth*, quia in diebus Judicum facta ejus narratur historia. Tertius sequitur *Samuel*, quem nos Regum primum et secundum dicimus. Quartus *Melachim*, id est Regum, qui tertio et quarto Regum volumine continetur. Meliusque multo est *Melachim*, id est Regum, quam *Melachoth*, id est Regnorum, dicere: Non enim multarum gentium describit regna, sed unius Israelitici populi, qui tribus duodecim continetur. Quintus est *Esaias*. Sextus *Jeremias*. Septimus *Ezekiel*. Octavus liber duodecim *Prophetarum*, qui apud illos vocatur *Thereasar*.

Tertius ordo *Hagiographa* possidet. Et primus liber incipit a *Job*. Secundus a David, quem quinque incisionibus et uno Psalmorum volumine comprehendunt. Tertius est *Salomon*, tres libros habens, Proverbia, quæ illi *Misle*, id est Parabolas, appellant. Quartus *Ecclesiasticus*, id est *Cokeleth*. Quintus Canticum Canticorum, quem titulo *Sir hassirim* prænотant. Sextus est *Daniel*. Septimus *Dibre hajammim*, id est Verba dierum, quod significantius Chronicon totius divinæ historiæ possumus appellare, qui liber apud nos Paraleipomenon primus et secundus inscribitur. Octavus *Esdras*: qui et ipse similiter apud Græcos et Latinos in duos libros divisus est. Nonus *Esther*.

Atque ita fiunt pariter *Veteris Legis libri viginti duo*, id est, *Mosis* quinque, et *Prophetarum* octo, *Hagiographorum* novem.

Quoniam nonnulli *Ruth* et *Cinoth* inter *Hagiographa* scriptitent, et hos libros in suo putent numero supputandos, ac per hoc esse priscæ Legis libros *viginti quatuor*.

Hic prologus scripturarum quasi galeatum principium omnibus libris, quos de Hebræo vertimus in Latinum, convenire potest: ut scire valeamus, quicquid extra hos est, inter apocrypha esse ponendum. Igitur *Sapientia* quæ vulgo Salomonis inscribitur, et *Jesu filii Sirach* liber, et *Judith* et *Tobias*, et *Pastor* non sunt in Canone. *Machabæorum primum* librum hebraicum reperi. *Secundus* græcus est, quod ex ipsa quoque phrasi probari potest. S. Hieronymi Opera, tom. iii. p. 682, ed. Mar. Vict. Reatini. Paris, 1624. Or, in Eichhorn's Einleitung, § 55.

every thing connected with the state of the Hebrew text. In the tract entitled Bava Bathra, the books of Scripture are first divided into the Law, the Prophets, and the Chethuvim, after which the name of each book of the latter divisions is given separately. They are twenty-four in number, and likewise agree with those now extant.<sup>1</sup>

It is only with regard to the canonicity of a few of the books comprised in the Hebrew Bible, that any serious doubts have been entertained; but these doubts will be found to have been originated, not by any deficiency of external or historical evidence, but by supposed grounds of rejection furnished by the books themselves. Thus objections have been taken against the inspired authority of the book of *Job*, on the ground of the incongruousness of supposing, that a person afflicted to desperation as Job is represented to have been, should have expressed himself in the measured language of poetry, and that any thing in the shape of a dramatic composition should form part of the inspired volume. To which is added, the extraordinary character of the prologue, in which Satan is introduced into the celestial council, and represented as obtaining formal permission to afflict the patriarch. Were this the place to go into a refutation of these and other kindred objections, it might easily be shewn that there is nothing whatever in the style of the language which is not in perfect keeping with the

חנו רבן סדרן של נביאים יהושע ושופטים שמואל ומלכים ירמיה ויהוואל (1)  
ישעיה ושנים עשר --- סדרן של כתובים רות וספר תהלים ואיוב ומשלי קהלת שיר  
:השירים וקנות דניאל ומגילת אסתר עזרא ודברי הימים :  
—Fol. 14. Ed. Amsterdam.

well-known improvisatorial habits of the Arabs, according to which it would even be more natural for one of that people under the influence of powerful excitement to express himself in the terse and energetic language of poetry, than to content himself with the cold tameness of prose. The other points are purely hypothetical; and as they have been met by other hypotheses, which remove the apparent difficulties, no value is to be attached to them. The book, which bears unequivocal marks of patriarchal antiquity, inculcates some of the most important lessons respecting Divine providence; and though much of it is occupied with statements which are at variance with sound views of the subject, but for which inspiration is in no degree responsible, it being absurd to ascribe these statements to it as their origin, the whole was highly worthy of forming part of the inspired volume. Though not mentioned by Philo or Josephus, it is quoted by the Apostle Paul in the same style in which he usually makes citations from the Old Testament—*γέγραπται γὰρ*, “for IT IS WRITTEN, He taketh the wise in their own craftiness.” (1 Cor. iii. 19; Job v. 13.) It is found in the catalogues of Melito, Origen, and other sources of the second and third centuries.

The objections which have been advanced against the book of *Esther*, on the ground of the follies, wickedness, and cruelties narrated in it, have been ably refuted by Jahn and other writers, who have shewn that these things are not recorded with approbation, but simply as facts of history, illustrative of the operations of the providence of God with a view to effect the deliverance of his people. Every feature exhibited



in it is in harmony with the scene of the transactions, and especially the character of the king whom it describes. No reasonable doubt can be excited by the absence of the Divine name, and of any direct reference to the Divine Being, since it is nothing more than an historical record, extracted, in all probability, from the royal chronicles, and inserted by direction of the Spirit of Inspiration in the sacred collection of Hebrew writings. With a singularly bad grace is this objection urged by De Wette, who is loud in his complaints against the other historical books on account of the decided theocratical spirit which they universally breathe.

The claim of the book of Esther to a place in the canon rests on the following facts. It is obviously admitted by Josephus to belong to the time of Artaxerxes Longimanus, with whose reign he closes the inspired canon. It is found in the catalogues of Origen, Cyril of Jerusalem, Epiphanius, Jerome, and others, and in that of the Talmud; and was translated as one of the canonical books of the Jews by the LXX., and by Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion in the second century.<sup>1</sup>

The peculiar argument of the book of *Ecclesiastes*, and the want of a clear perception of the manner in which it is conducted, have occasioned considerable dissatisfaction with it both in ancient and modern times. On the supposition that it contains self-contradictory propositions and statements, which seem to countenance Epicurism, some of the rabbins wished to keep it back from public view, and thus, in one sense, to render it apocryphal; but they were never able to

(1) Stuart ut sup. pp. 171, 357—360.



succeed in the attempt. Equally fruitless has been the opposition evinced by Grotius, and after him by Voltaire, Semler, and others, to its canonicity and consequent inspiration. No specific mention, indeed, is made of it by Josephus, but the same may be said of that of Proverbs, which is allowed on all hands to have been in the canon. There can be little doubt, however, that it formed one of the sacred books, which that historian describes as treating of moral subjects. It is found in the catalogues of Melito, Origen, Jerome, and other fathers; in the Talmud; and in the early Greek versions mentioned above.<sup>1</sup>

To the canonical claims of no book of the Old Testament has a greater degree of reluctance been felt than to those of *the Song of Solomon*. Instead, however, of these claims being brought to the test commonly applied to the adjudication of the title of any writings to a place in the list of sacred books, they have been opposed on the ground of certain modes of expression, or certain representations in the book itself, or the difficulties which have presented themselves in regard to its satisfactory interpretation. But the only question that in our judgment can legitimately be entertained on the subject, respects the external evidence. It is a question of history, not of dogmatics. Have we, or have we not sufficient reason to believe, that it formed part of the Jewish canon in the time of our Saviour and his apostles? If it did, then, as we have already proved, it must indisputably have received their sanction as a divine book, and is, on this high and sacred authority, to be received as such by us,

(1) Stuart ut sup. pp. 360—364.

irrespective of the internal difficulties which it may be thought to contain. If it occupied a place in that canon then, it cannot now be rejected with impunity. We are bound to receive it as the word of God, and apply ourselves to the study of it with the simplicity, humility, and prayer, which are indispensable to our attaining to a correct understanding of its import, and our deriving from it the instruction which it was intended to afford. What then, it may be asked, is the amount of testimony adducible in support of its canonicity? That it is in all the Hebrew manuscripts, which profess to contain the entire Scriptures of the Old Testament, is beyond dispute. That it existed in such manuscripts in the days of the Masorites, that is to say, some six or seven hundred years previous to the transcription of the oldest Hebrew manuscript now extant, is equally incontestible. That it ever was wanting, we have no authority for supposing. It is found in the catalogue exhibited in the Talmud, and in those of Jerome, Rufinus, Origen, and Melito, and was even commented upon by Hippolytus and Origen. It was translated into Greek by Symmachus before the end of the second century; by Theodotion during the first half of the same century; and by Aquila, according to Jahn and other Biblical critics, between the years 90 and 130. The testimony of the last-mentioned translator is of high importance on three grounds. First, because it was expressly his design in making the version, to furnish his brethren the Jews with an exact representation of the original text of their sacred books, to which he accordingly adheres with the most rigid verbatim. Secondly, because it supplies us with positive

evidence of the existence of the book in the canon, at a period almost, if not entirely coincident with the apostolic age. And, thirdly, because of the light which its ascertained existence at this early period throws upon the testimony of Josephus, who, within at most half a century before, declared that no Jew would on any consideration dare to add to the twenty-two books, which constituted the sacred canon of the nation. Can it now be reasonably doubted, that the Song of Solomon formed one of the four, which that historian describes as celebrating the Divine praises, and furnishing precepts for the regulation of human conduct? Is it likely, that between the period at which he wrote, and that at which the version of Aquila was executed, it could have been foisted into the Jewish Bible? On the contrary, is it not certain, that the increased attention which had been excited to that divine volume by our Lord and his apostles, and the necessary attitude of mutual jealousy with respect to the nature and interpretation of its contents, in which the Jews and Christians stood to each other, must have rendered it absolutely impossible for an interpolation to have taken place? Till such time as the New Testament canon was completed, the Old Testament was the only collection of sacred writings which, as a whole, had received the Divine sanction. It is therefore natural to suppose, that it would be much read by the Christians of the first, and part of the second century, and that not merely in the Greek version of the LXX., but also in the original Hebrew, with which great numbers of them must have been familiar, and quite competent to detect any attempted imposition.

It is only necessary to add, that we have no ground whatever for believing that this book did not form part of the Septuagint before the time of our Lord, though the exact period at which it was translated cannot be ascertained. That Theodotion found it in that version cannot be disputed.

When the claims of the Song of Solomon were first called in question in the fourth century by Theodorus of Mopsuestia, it appears that his objections were not taken from any matter of fact alleged in evidence against its canonicity, but simply arose out of his opposition to every thing in the shape of allegorical exposition, and his not finding it possible to reconcile what he conceived to be its historical import with the sacred attribute of Divine inspiration. On this account he was severely castigated by Leontius of Jerusalem, who declares, that the book was not only acknowledged as most sacred by all who were skilled in divine things, and by all the churches in the world, but admired even by the Jews themselves, the enemies of the Cross of Christ.

Into the subject of the interpretation of this book, it would be out of place to enter on the present occasion, further than to state our conviction, that, of all the modes which have been resorted to, there is none that commends itself as correct, or, in any degree, satisfactory, except that which recognises and illustrates the relation in which Jehovah stood to the church as his bride, who, by solemn covenant, pledged to him her undivided fidelity and affection ; that it applies to the church in her collective capacity ; and that the figures, so far from being designed to be taken up and explained

singly, are to be viewed as grouped together, in the gorgeous style of oriental costume, for the sake of ornament and effect. Due attention to these simple principles will not only tend to remove the prejudices which unhappily exist against the spiritual interpretation, but will banish entirely those luscious, sensual, and extravagant applications, which have so extensively disgraced our theological literature.<sup>1</sup>

Having disposed of the canon of the Old Testament so far as its integral parts are concerned, and adduced evidence to prove, that it consists of precisely the same books now, which it comprised in the time of our Lord,<sup>2</sup> we proceed briefly to review the Apocryphal question, or the claims of certain other books to a place in common with those in the volume of inspiration.

(1) See Professor Robinson's Calmet, Article *Canticles*: containing some valuable remarks, chiefly drawn from an Essay on the Song of Songs, by Professor Hengstenberg of Berlin, inserted in the *Evangelische Kirchenzeitung* for 1827; *Canticles* in Kitto's Biblical Cyclopædia; and Stuart on the Canon of the Old Testament, pp. 364—385.

(2) "From the accounts which we have hitherto collected, it appears to me "to be undeniable, that in the time of Christ and the apostles the canon of "the Jews corresponded in extent with our present editions of the Bible."—"So far back as we can carry its history, even at the time when the Apocrypha again unite the broken threads of Hebrew literature, a Sacred National Library is already spoken of, as if the separate parts of it were accurately defined,—so that it appears to have been formed soon after the Exile, or, "that a definite number of books, forming one whole, had been selected from "among those which differed greatly from each other as it regards their contents, their authors, and the period of their composition, on purpose that "no new writings should be added to them; though from the want of documents it is impossible for us to determine in what year, or why their augmentation ceased."

"In short, history shows, that after the Babylonish exile, and soon after "the re-establishment of the Jewish polity in Palestine, the canon was fixed, "and that, at that time, all the books were received into it, which we now find "in it."—Eichhorn, Einleit. § 57.

The terms *Apocrypha* and *Apocryphal*, like the word Canon, are also of Greek origin, though some difference of opinion has existed respecting their derivative signification. Some, with Epiphanius, suppose that they are to be referred to the κρύπτη, or ark in which the sacred books were kept, so that such writings as were not admitted into this depository, (βίβλοι ΑΠΟ ΤΗΣ ΚΡΥΠΤΗΣ,) were considered to be *separate* and profane. By others, they are derived from ἀπόκρυφος, that which is *hidden* or *obscure*, and are supposed to have been applied to certain books, in order to intimate, that they were *dark* and *difficult* of interpretation; that they were *kept back* from public use in religious assemblies, and from young and inexperienced readers; that they were the productions of *unknown* authors, or even forgeries; or that they were *merely of human origin*, and consequently could not claim to rank with books which had been divinely inspired. Owing to this diversity of signification, the same degree of obscurity often attaches to the use of the words in question, which attaches to the terms Canon and Canonical. Those who adopt the meaning, which is indicative of withholdment from public inspection, generally appeal to the parallel use of the term ספרים אפוקריפ among the rabbins; but, though it is incontestible, that ספרים אפוקריפ signify books which are laid aside, and not permitted to be publicly read, or put into the hands of all persons indiscriminately, it is equally certain, that such writings were nevertheless considered to be divinely inspired. The term is applied in rabbinical works to copies of the law, which happened to contain three or more errors of transcription on the same page,



and which, on this account, were prohibited from being read in the synagogue: but it is also applied to the first chapter of Genesis, the Song of Solomon, and the last eight chapters of Ezekiel, respecting the inspiration of which no doubts were entertained, but which, it was thought, might easily be abused by those whose age or inexperience disqualified them from putting a right interpretation upon them. It does not appear, that it was ever used in reference to books of human origin: and therefore is altogether inappropriate in application to the subject before us.

The books, or portions of books, which are strictly apocryphal, or destitute of all divine sanction, but have nevertheless been placed in the same category with the canonical books, are the following:—Two books of Esdras; four of Maccabees; those of Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus, Tobit, Judith, and Baruch; the Appendix to the Book of Job; the 151st Psalm; the additions to the Books of Esther and Daniel; the Prayer of Manasseh; the Song of the Three Children; the story of Bel and the Dragon; the History of Susannah; and the Epistle of Jeremiah appended to the book of Baruch. Add to which, the Epistle of the Corinthians to the Apostle Paul, and his Epistle in reply, which are found in the Armenian Bible. Of the former, the two books of Esdras, the third and fourth of Maccabees, the Prayer of Manasseh, the Appendix to Job, and the supernumerary Psalm, are admitted by the church of Rome to be apocryphal; but she will not allow the term to be applied to the rest, which, by the council of Trent, she has pronounced to be sacred and canonical, and scruples not to pronounce a solemn curse against any one, who

shall not so regard them.<sup>1</sup> The high and unbending character of the decision thus given has invested the subject with a degree of interest, which it never would have acquired, had it been left to every individual to form his own judgment according to the evidence within his reach. It has accordingly ever since formed, and, while the decree stands, must ever form one of the fundamental points of controversy between the Roman and Protestant churches. Many who, considering the subordinate uses to which the apocryphal books may be applied, would have been the last to condemn them *en masse*, were roused to keen and determined hostility by the presumption of a human tribunal arrogating to itself the right of infallibly declaring writings to be upon a par with the inspired dictates of the Holy Spirit, which it was impossible to trace to a higher than human origin, and which at best had always been considered of doubtful authority. This opposition was increased

(1) After having declared that the Council “doth receive and reverence, “with equal piety and veneration, all the books as well of the Old as of the “New Testament, *the same God being the author of both*,” the members proceeded to specify them: “Sunt verò infrà scripti: TESTAMENTI VETERIS, “quinque Moysis, id est Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numeri, Deuteronomium; Josue, Judicum, Ruth, quatuor Regum, duo Paraleipomenon, “Esdra primus et secundus, qui dicitur Nehemias, *Tobias, Judith*, Hester, “Job, Psalterium Davidicum centum quinquaginta psalmorum, Parabolæ, “Ecclesiastes, Canticum Canticorum, *Sapientia, Ecclesiasticus*, Isaias, Jeremias cum *Baruch*, Ezekiel, Daniel, duodecim Prophetæ minores, id est, “Osea, Joel, Amos, Abdias, Jonas, Micheas, Nahum, Habacuc, Sophonias, “Aggæus, Zacharias, Malachias; *duo Machabæorum*, primus et secundus.” [Then follow the books of the New Testament, after which the decree proceeds,] “Si quis autem *libros ipsos integros cum omnibus suis partibus*, prout “in Ecclesia Catholica legi consueverunt, et in *veteri vulgata Latina* editione “habentur, *pro sacris et canonicis* non suscepit; et traditiones prædictas “sciens et prudens contempserit: ANATHEMA SIT.” Though the other apocryphal matter specified above in the text is not mentioned in this decree, it is nevertheless included, being mixed up with, or appended to certain of the books here enumerated.

on the discovery, that, in certain of these books, doctrines are taught and practices sanctioned, which cannot be reconciled with what is inculcated in the genuine Scriptures. Owing, however, to the circumstance of their having, at the time of the Reformation, been translated, and bound up along with the canonical books in the vernacular languages of the different Protestant churches, they have continued to retain this position under a separate and cautionary heading in the authorized Bibles, with the exception of the Calvinistic versions, from most of the editions of which they have been entirely expunged. That this has not been the case universally both in the Lutheran and Reformed communions is cause of deep regret—especially as it is an undeniable fact, that, in the former of these two divisions of the professing church, some of the Apocrypha are held in higher estimation than the inspired books themselves, not only by the people generally, but also by many, who might be expected to draw a broad line of demarcation between them. Certain it is, that, if the question were to be taken up on the continent, and treated as a matter of purely historical research, with that iron diligence and critical acumen for which the German character is so distinguished, the result would be a complete restoration of the sacred books to their *pristine* state of incontamination and undisturbed authority.

That the Apocryphal books are spoken of by some of the fathers in language which almost elevates them to an equality with the divine oracles, is not denied, any more than the fact of their having been read in the churches; just as lessons from them are read at

this day in the church of England under the common rubric: "Tables of lessons of *Holy Scripture* to be "read at morning and evening prayer throughout the "year." But that they were regarded as inspired, or of the same authority with the canonical Scriptures, cannot be proved. Not only are they not recognised either in Philo, Josephus, or the New Testament, but they were never received into the Jewish canon. They are not found in the catalogues of Melito, Origen, Hilary, Amphilochius, Gregory Nazianzen, Epiphanius, Cyril of Jerusalem, nor in the Synopsis of Athanasius. On the contrary, such of these fathers as mention them, state explicitly, that they are not canonical, as do also Chrysostom, Eusebius, Rufinus, and many others, quoted by Bishop Cosin in his valuable work on the Canon. Neither Origen, Hesychius, nor Lucian, took the least notice of them in their critical revisions of the text of the Septuagint. Augustine is the only writer in the first four centuries, who, in his work *De Doctrinâ Christianâ*, included them among the canonical Scriptures; but the statement which he made in that work he afterwards abandoned, as may be seen in his *Retractions*. Many other witnesses might be cited from about the same period, and from each of the succeeding centuries down to that of the Reformation; but the most important testimony of all is that borne by Jerome, who, as we have already noticed, was decidedly the best skilled of all the fathers in matters connected with Biblical literature. Not only did this scholar reside successively at Rome, Constantinople, and Bethlehem, but he travelled through Italy, Gaul, Greece, Palestine, Egypt, and other countries, and corresponded with

many of the most eminent men of his day, from whom he enjoyed the most favourable opportunities of ascertaining the light in which the subject was viewed by the different churches of Christendom. In numerous passages of his works he refers to the Apocryphal books, which he expressly designates by this name on account of their not being in the canon. In his prologues and commentaries he more particularly states his opinion in reference to them, speaks of many of them as fables, and repeatedly appeals to the fact of their never having been received by the Jews. And that no doubt whatever might remain respecting the nullity of their claims to rank with those books which were recognised as divine, and that the latter might receive no injury from their being circulated along with them in the Latin version, he wrote his *Prologus Galeatus*, or *Helmeted Preface*, which he prefixed to his translation of the books of Samuel and Kings. In this Prologue, which he placed in the front of his translation, to perform the part of a sentinel in guarding the sacred enclosure, he enumerates and gives the names of the books in the Hebrew canon, which are perfectly identical with those now received by us. He then adds: "This Prologue to the Scriptures may properly serve as a guardian Introduction to all the books, which I have translated from the Hebrew into Latin, that we may know, that WHATEVER IS NOT INCLUDED IN THE ENUMERATION HERE MADE IS TO BE PLACED AMONG THE APOCRYPHA. Therefore Wisdom, which is commonly ascribed to Solomon, and the book of Jesus the Son of Sirach, and Judith, and Tobit and the Shepherd, ARE NOT IN THE



“CANON.”<sup>1</sup> So express, pointed, and specific is this testimony, that, if no other evidence were adducible, it must be regarded as sufficient of itself definitively to settle the dispute; and such, in fact, is the judgment given respecting it by Cardinal Cajetan, the celebrated Romanist: “Adopting,” he says, “the rule laid down by Jerome, we shall not err in our discrimination of the canonical books. We hold those to be canonical, which he declares to be canonical, and those which he separated from such as were canonical, we hold to be excluded.—Indeed the whole Latin church is greatly indebted to this blessed father for severing the canonical from the uncanonical books, and thus freeing us from the reproach of the Jews, who might charge us with forging books or parts of books, which never belonged to their ancient canon.” After such declarations, any appeals to the loose and doubtful decisions of councils are altogether nugatory.

With respect to *the New Testament Canon*, one very important feature presents itself at the very commencement of our inquiry, by which it is distinguished from that of the Old—its freedom from Apocryphal interpolations and additions. This immunity is absolute,<sup>2</sup> if we except two epistles in the Armenian Bible, one of which professes to be from the Corinthians to the Apostle Paul, and the other, an Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians. The antiquity of the latter document cannot be doubted, since it is expressly quoted by

(1) See above, p. 409.

(2) The above statement is not to be extended to various readings, but is meant to apply to whole books.



St. Gregory the Illuminator in one of his sermons in the third century; but neither of them is mentioned by any Greek or Latin writer, and they evidently belong to the numerous class of pseudo-epigraphical compositions which made their appearance in the early age of the Christian church. The spurious Gospels, Acts, Epistles, Preachings, and Revelations, which circulated to a considerable extent in the second and third centuries, bore such manifest marks of forgery, that though they had the names of the apostles and other disciples of Christ affixed to them, they were never able to compete with the canonical Scriptures, and very soon fell into universal disrepute.

The canon itself must have been gradual in its formation, and at first more or less complete according to circumstances. That a collection of certain epistles of Paul existed about thirty years before the close of the first century, appears from the appeal of Peter in his second Epistle, (ch. iii. 16,) "as also in all his epistles," ἐν πάσαις ταῖς ἐπιστολαῖς. The two epistles to the Corinthians, the two to the Thessalonians, and the two to Timothy, would naturally be joined to each other respectively, after the perusal of that, which, in each case, was of a more recent date; just as it must have been natural for Theophilus to join the Acts of the Apostles to the former narrative (τὸν πρῶτον λόγον), which had been transmitted to him by Luke. Of the Pauline epistles, those addressed to the churches in Asia Minor formed, in all probability, the first collection; a second was likely soon made of those addressed to the churches in Europe; and when to these were added his letters to Timothy, Titus, and Philemon, all

the writings which bore his signature would be combined together. The Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and John, and the Epistles of James and Jude, the first of Peter and the first of John, not being directed to any particular churches or individuals, but more or less generally to the Christians of Jewish or Greek extraction, or to all of them in common, were no doubt rapidly and extensively circulated; and copies being taken both for the use of private persons and of different Christian communities, they must, along with the other inspired writings already specified, have been formed into a general collection at a very early period. To these were added the writings of Luke, the Epistle to the Hebrews, the second of Peter, the second and third of John, and the Apocalypse, as soon as they became generally known, and it was ascertained, that they were inspired productions.

At what time, and by what means, the New Testament Canon was completed, it is impossible definitively to determine. That a diversity of opinion obtained for a time in reference to some of the books now comprised in it, appears from the statement of Eusebius, who, in his classification of the writings of the New Testament,<sup>1</sup> divides them into the *ὁμολογούμενα*, or such as had been universally received, and the *ἀντιλεγόμενα*, the genuineness of which had by some been called in question, but yet was acknowledged by most. It is further confirmed by the fact, that the Peshito Syriac version, which there is reason to believe was made very near, if not in the apostolical age, contains only three out of the seven Catholic Epistles, and omits the

(1) Hist. Eccles. lib. iii. cap. 25.

Apocalypse. The very circumstance, however, that the claims of some of the books were, in some quarters, disputed, proves the deep interest which was felt in settling what should and what should not be received as the genuine word of God ; and the speedy withdrawal of all opposition to the ἀντιλεγόμενα, in an age, when the subject not only engaged the attention, and kept alive the vigilance of the orthodox, but was not unobserved either by the heretics, or by the learned pagan writers who attacked Christianity, satisfactorily shews, that when they were universally admitted into the canon, it was in consequence of sufficient evidence having been produced in support of their divine sanction.

The division of the canonical books of the New Testament into two classes may be traced to a very early date. The former of the two was called τὸ εὐαγγέλιον, *The Gospel*, and contained the four Gospels ; and the latter ὁ ἀπόστολος, *The Apostle*, containing the Acts, the Apostolic Epistles, and the Apocalypse. The most ancient writer who adverts to any such division is Ignatius. The four Gospels are distinctly recognised as possessing divine authority by Irenæus, Clement of Alexandria, and Tertullian ; and towards the close of the second century, a Harmony of them was composed by Tatian, to which, in reference to their number, he gave the title of Δια τεσσαρων. A similar Harmony was written by Ammonius early in the third century ; which proves, that the gospels, which we now possess, and these only, existed at that time in the canon. That the Apostle John had the other three before him, when he composed his, is justly regarded as highly probable,

from the circumstances, that it omits what they have detailed, and appears designed to be supplementary to them: but the tradition, mentioned by Eusebius,<sup>1</sup> that this evangelist was requested before his death to give his sanction to the three first gospels, and that he actually affixed to them the seal of inspiration, is too vague (*φάσι*) to warrant our laying any stress upon it.

That not only the gospels, but also the epistles were collected so as, with the gospels, to form one body of sacred writings as early as the days of Tertullian, is evident from his calling it an Instrument, or rather he says, a Testament, which designations he gives to it and the Old Testament in common.<sup>2</sup> He further gives to it the name of the New Testament, and places it upon a level in point of authority with the Old. “If I do not,” he says, “relieve this point from the doubts which may attach to it in the ancient Scriptures, I will take the proof of our interpretation *de Novo Testamento*.”<sup>3</sup> The manner too in which he speaks of it, when adverting to the Pastor of Hermas, proves the same thing. “But I would concede the point to you if the writing of the Shepherd—deserved to be placed in the *Divine Instrument*, if it were not considered as apocryphal and spurious by every assembly of your own churches.”<sup>4</sup> If now we inquire, of what books did this New Testament consist, to which Tertullian appeals, which he ranks with the ancient records of inspiration, and which he expressly declares to be the word of God—the reply must naturally be: those books, which are quoted by him as such

(1) Hist. Eccles. lib. iii. cap. 24.

(3) Adv. Praxeam, cap. 10.

(2) Adv. Marcion. lib. iv. cap. 1.

(4) De Pudicitia, cap. 10.

in his writings, or by other credible witnesses in or before his time. Now though he no where professedly gives a catalogue of them, he has perhaps more numerous and larger quotations from them, than are to be found of all the works of Cicero in the writers of all characters for several ages.<sup>1</sup> The four gospels; the Acts of the Apostles; the thirteen Pauline Epistles; that of James, probably; the first of Peter; the first of John; that of Jude; and the book of Revelation; are all recognised by him as inspired writings. As his not quoting the second of Peter and the second and third of John may have been owing to his not having had any occasion to refer to them, it would be unreasonable to construe his silence into an argument against them. The only book mentioned by Tertullian, which he quotes as not apostolic, is the Epistle to the Hebrews, but which he nevertheless ascribes to Barnabas, the divinely-accredited fellow-labourer of Paul. Though not acknowledged as canonical by the Latin church in his time, (for what reason cannot be ascertained) this epistle was received by the Greek, the Syrian, and Alexandrian churches; and its existence in the ancient Latin version, as well as the use made of it by Clement of Rome, evinces that it had also been formerly received in the West.

The testimony of Tertullian, which is fully borne out by that of Origen, Eusebius, Athanasius, Epiphanius, Jerome, and other fathers, is the more important in consideration of his near proximity to the apostolic age, his extensive erudition, and his celebrity among the ancients. With what force must the appeal have

(1) Lardner's Credibility, vol. ii. p. 306, 8vo. 1829.

come at that early period from his pen : “ Well, if you  
 “ be willing to exercise your curiosity profitably in  
 “ the business of your salvation, visit the apostolical  
 “ churches, in which the very chairs of the apostles  
 “ still preside ; in which their genuine epistles<sup>1</sup> are  
 “ recited, sounding forth the voice and representing  
 “ the countenance of each one of them. Is Achaia  
 “ near you ? You have Corinth. If you are not far  
 “ from Macedonia, you have Philippi, you have Thes-  
 “ salonica. If you can go to Asia, you have Ephesus.  
 “ But if you are near to Italy, you have Rome, from  
 “ whence we also may be easily satisfied.”<sup>2</sup>

From the investigations which have been instituted respecting the completion of the New Testament Canon, it is certain, that it cannot be attributed to any legislative enactment, to any decrees of councils, or to any public authority whatever. It was the simple result of evidence elicited by a growing acquaintance with the channels through which the different books might be traced to an inspired source. It was entirely dependent on testimony ; so that afterwards, when a decree was issued by the council of Laodicea in the year 363, it was more a declaratory act, attesting the universal prevalence of such testimony, than an authoritative mandate, designed, as such, to be binding on

(1) *Ipsæ authenticæ literæ* : a much contested passage, but which seems to convey the idea expressed in the text, rather than that of the original documents, for which Rigaltius, Simon, Dodwell, Richardson, Michaëlis, and others have contended. The construction which we have adopted has the suffrages of Lardner, Schmidt, Hug, and Griesbach. Bertholdt is of opinion that letters in the Greek language are meant by *authenticæ*, though he does not think that Tertullian had the apostolical autographs in view. Einleit. l Theil. s. 416.

(2) De Prescript. cap. 36.



the whole Christian world. The ground of decision was the universal suffrage of the Christian church, which had been constituted a keeper and witness of the sacred oracles, just as the Jewish church had been in former times. To her care the deposit was committed; she was the pillar and ground of the truth; and upon each of her members, who became possessed of the invaluable treasure, devolved the responsibility of guarding and transmitting it unimpaired to others, according to his ability, and according to the peculiar circumstances in which he was placed.

It only remains, that we advert to the inspired authority of the writings of the Evangelists Mark and Luke. That this authority should ever have been called in question is principally to be ascribed to the circumstance, that these authors were not of the number of the apostles to whom specifically the promise of the Holy Spirit was given by our Lord. The authenticity and credibility of the books composed by them, have been most satisfactorily proved; but a book may possess all requisite evidence of this kind, and yet not be inspired. To possess this quality it must either have been the result of inspiring influence on the mind of the writer himself, or it must have received the sanction of one who was the subject of such influence, and who, by giving it his official sanction, authorized its publication as an accredited document, to be perused by the church for the purposes of divine instruction. Now it is at once conceded, that in none of the three books written by Mark and Luke is any claim to inspiration advanced. That its possession, however, by the latter evangelist,

is necessarily excluded by the statement made in his introduction, can only be consistently maintained by those whose idea of the nature of inspiration does not extend beyond that of direct and immediate communication. Even the phrase *ἔδοξε καὶ μοι*, "It seemed good to me also," which has been so frequently appealed to, cannot fairly be construed to favour such exclusion; since we find Luke employing similar phraseology, (Acts xv. 25,) in reference to the decree of the assembly at Jerusalem, though, as we learn from ver. 28, it was enacted by direction of the Holy Ghost. As the exercise of judgment and argumentation in the one case did not supersede the guidance of the promised Instructor, so the diligence of the evangelist in tracing, with the utmost accuracy, every thing connected with the history of our Lord, was in no way incompatible with his being the subject of supernatural influence.

With respect to Mark, we may observe, that he was, in all probability, the same who is more commonly called John Mark, who accompanied Paul and Barnabas, and was by the apostle authoritatively commended to the church at Colosse, and to Timothy. He even recognises him in the high character of a fellow-labourer. That he also laboured some time in conjunction with Peter, to whom he was doubtless introduced at his mother's house in Jerusalem, may be inferred from what that apostle says of him in his First Epistle, v. 13, and from the unanimous voice of antiquity, which connects them most intimately together. And, indeed, the same unanimity prevails in regard to its testimony, that Mark wrote his gospel not only with the privity, but with the inspired sanc-

tion of Peter. The Fathers differ as to the circumstances of its composition, but they perfectly agree respecting the fact itself. Nor is there wanting internal evidence to prove, that Peter was concerned in its publication. He is less frequently mentioned in this gospel than in the others. What is related of him renders him less conspicuous than the statements do, which are made by the other evangelists, except in the cases of his weaknesses and fall, which are more fully exposed to view, while the things which redound to his honour are either slightly touched or wholly concealed.

That Luke was the companion of Paul is beyond all dispute; that he resided with him upwards of two years at Jerusalem appears from Acts xxi. 17; xxiv. 27; and he must have been with him for a still longer period at Rome, (Coloss. iv. 14; Philem. 24; 2 Tim. iv. 11.) He clearly includes himself along with the apostle and Timothy in the supernatural intimation which was given to them to preach the gospel in Macedonia, (Acts xvi. 10;) from which we may warrantably conclude, that he was under the special direction of the Holy Spirit.<sup>1</sup> In 1 Tim. v. 18, Paul quotes a declaration made by our Lord, verbally as it stands in the Gospel of Luke, but differently from the wording of Matthew, in whose gospel it also occurs; and introduces the quotation in such a way as to shew, that he places the book from which it was taken upon a level with the Pentateuch. "For THE SCRIPTURE saith:

(1) Some would deduce a proof of the inspiration of Luke from the statement made by Paul, (2 Cor. viii. 18,) respecting "the brother whose praise in the gospel is throughout all the churches;" but the foundation is too precarious to admit of any solid argument being built upon it.

“Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn; AND [it also saith] the labourer is worthy of his hire, μισθός.”

From the intimate connection which subsisted between both these evangelists and the apostles of our Lord, and from the fact that the first teachers of Christianity, among whom they are unquestionably to be reckoned, were endowed with the miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit, it may reasonably be concluded that they were qualified to record every point of the history of our Lord, and the early planting of the Christian church, which Infinite Wisdom deemed essential to her edification at the time, and in all future ages.

Both of these gospels and the Acts were received by the first Christians, who had the best opportunities of ascertaining the persons by whom they were written; and as they acknowledged no books to be of divine authority which they could not satisfactorily trace to inspiration, but proved all, and retained only those which stood the test, it behoves us to abide by their decision, and likewise receive them as divine. That they did thus acknowledge them is proved by the universal consent of unexceptionable witnesses from Papias and Irenæus downward: no suspicion was ever raised respecting the sacredness of their character: no doubt was ever entertained of their claims being tantamount to those conceded to the writings of the apostles.

The total result of our inquiry into the Canon of inspiration is this: That it never consisted of more, or

other books than those which now compose our Bible ; that these books were inserted in the canon as they were written, or as it was indubitably proved that they were the product of inspiring influence ; that they were received as the oracles of God, or Divine Scriptures, by his church, which he had constituted the guardian of the truth ; and that they have been transmitted to us in the original languages, and in numerous versions, most of which are independent vouchers for the integrity of the sacred volume.

## CONCLUDING LECTURE.

### THE CESSATION OF INSPIRATION.

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1 COR. XIII. 8.

*“ Whether there be prophecies, they shall fail ; whether there be tongues, they shall cease ; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away.”*

HAVING reviewed the various methods, which God was pleased to employ in affording positive revelations of his will to mankind, and shewn, that the sacred Scriptures now in our possession consist of such portions of these revelations, and other matters connected with them, as he chose should be transmitted for the infallible instruction and guidance of future ages, it remains that we inquire into the withdrawal of inspiring influence ; and that we deduce a few practical inferences in improvement of the whole subject.

That inspiration should cease, when it had answered the purposes for which it was afforded, is a conclusion than which none can be more natural, because nothing is more in accordance with the dictates of wisdom in reference to any agencies that may be called into operation, or more in harmony with the whole tenor



of the Divine administration. That it actually did cease, is a fact which no one will deny who has consulted the annals of ecclesiastical history. It is reluctantly admitted, even by those who charge the church with guilt in having lost it, and who advocate not only the possibility but the certainty of its restoration in these latter days. That its cessation was anticipated, as an event that would take place, is clearly taught in the words we have just read. The object of the apostle, in the chapter from which they are taken, is to fix the attention of the Corinthian church on the intrinsic superiority of Christian love to all the miraculous gifts which he had enumerated, and even to the graces of faith and hope, though these are essential to salvation. While he would not repress the proper exercise of those extraordinary endowments, but, on the contrary, urges to the zealous improvement of them, he shews that there is a principle of incomparably greater value, (καθ' ὑπερβολὴν ὁδόν,) than the highest imaginable faculty of a purely miraculous character;—a principle, without the possession of which the most splendid gifts would be productive of no real personal benefit. “Though I speak with the  
 “tongues of men and of angels, and have not love,  
 “I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.  
 “And though I have the gift of prophecy, and under-  
 “stand all mysteries and all knowledge; and though  
 “I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains,  
 “and have not love, I am nothing.” (Ver. 1, 2.) He then describes, with inimitable beauty and effect, the nature and characteristics of this love; and dwells especially on the circumstance of its *perennity*, with

which he contrasts the *temporary* nature of the extraordinary supernatural endowments of prophecy, tongues, and knowledge.

That it is endowments of this description which the apostle has in view, and not ordinary teaching, the common use of language, or knowledge simply considered, is proved by the subject-matter of his discourse, and the object at which he aims. The terms are obviously to be taken in the same sense in which he employs them in the preceding context. The question, however, may be raised: To what period is the cessation of miraculous influence here anticipated to be referred? Was it first to take place at the second coming of Christ, as Billroth and the modern Millenarians maintain? Or, was it to happen when the church had reached a state of maturity—in other words, when the Christian religion had been fully established by the ministry of the apostles, and the apostolic men on whom it had been conferred?

In order to make good the former of these positions, it must be proved, that it was the definite purpose of Jehovah, that the extraordinary gifts of the Holy Spirit were to be permanent in the church, during the whole of the new dispensation. But no proof of any such purpose can be alleged either from the Old or the New Testament. In the prediction of the gift of tongues, Is. xxviii. 11, which the apostle quotes, 1 Cor. xiv. 21, no intimation is given respecting the period of its continuance. It may be said, indeed, that, as it is expressly stated in the latter passage to be for the conviction of unbelievers, it must be supposed to continue as long as there are any unbelievers to be convinced. But it is

only necessary to consider the circumstances under which the apostle wrote, in order to perceive, that the conviction to be effected by the gift, had respect to the divine commission of the speakers, in the absence of all other criteria. It was designed to prove, at the moment, the celestial origin of the Christian faith to those foreigners under whose notice it was brought. It was a supernatural attestation to a new religion, which was not required after the general diffusion of Christian truth, or the complete exhibition of its evidences, when men of all nations having become converts, were qualified, without miraculous aid, to preach in the different languages which were spoken in them. Nor can the perpetuity of the endowments in question be proved from the prophecy, Joel ii. 28, 29, in which some of them are specifically mentioned. That prophecy, we are assured, on inspired authority, received its fulfilment on the day of Pentecost, when the remarkable effusion of the extraordinary influences of the Holy Spirit was experienced by the assembled disciples, and they became instantaneously qualified to give intelligent utterance to the wonderful works of God, in the languages of the numerous foreigners then at Jerusalem. And we have indubitable evidence that it continued to be extensively fulfilled in the experience of the primitive church. But it contains no intimation that the gifts were to be permanent. The universal term *all* in the phrase "all flesh" must necessarily be taken in a restricted sense, whatever construction be put upon the passage; and, from the mention made immediately after of sons and daughters, old men and young, servants and handmaids, it clearly appears to

have been designed to express persons of both sexes, and of every age, rank, and condition of life. It has been maintained, that the duration of these gifts is distinctly implied in our Lord's promise, (Mark xvi. 17,) "And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues,"—but, that believing is, in this verse, to be taken in the sense of exercising the faith of miracles, is evident both from the nature of the subject to which it refers, and from the fact, that, even in the apostolic times, the endowments here promised were not extended to all who simply believed the gospel. In writing to the Corinthians, Paul asks: "Are ALL workers of miracles? Have ALL the gifts of healing? Do ALL speak with tongues?" (1 Cor. xii. 28.) And that they were not all miraculously endowed, is not charged to their want of faith, but to the sovereign appointment of God, who hath set in his church "first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healing, helps, governments, diversities of tongues." When it is said, that "the Spirit is given to *every man* to profit withal," and that he "divideth to *every man* severally as he will," the phrase is not to be understood as comprehending all the members of the body of Christ, but is to be restricted to the gifted persons, whose offices are specified in the immediate connection: just as the words, (ch. iii. 8,) "*Every man* shall receive his own reward according to his own labour," are restricted by the connection to every one who labours in preaching the gospel.

The theory of the perpetual continuance of miraculous

agency is directly opposed to the reasoning of the apostle in this thirteenth chapter. On no allowed principle of exegesis can it be maintained, that, when he declares, (ver. 8,) that prophecies are to fail and tongues to cease, his language is to be taken in an absolute sense; but that, when he adds, that knowledge is likewise to vanish away, the last proposition is to be taken limitedly, as only referring to the state, kind, or degree of our knowledge in the present world. The language is just as positive and absolute in this case as it is in the two preceding. According to the doctrine laid down by the apostle, *γνώσις*, the knowledge he speaks of, is as completely to pass away, or come to an end, as prophecy and tongues. But it would be the height of absurdity for a moment to imagine that any part of true saving knowledge will ever perish. What we possess now forms the basis of that which will be acquired, or it may be regarded as the outline, which will be filled up in the eternal world. It is just and accurate, so far as it extends, and must, like all truth, be imperishable.

The same view of the subject is powerfully supported by the contrast in which the apostle places the perpetuity of faith, hope, and charity, with the transitory character of these extraordinary gifts. The 8th and 13th verses are evidently most closely connected in the argumentation. All that intervenes is merely illustrative of the statements made in the former of these verses. "But now," *νυνὶ δὲ*, in the present state, "abideth faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love." There seems even to be a peculiarity of emphasis attaching to the terms "these three." The writer had mentioned *three* gifts, as a

specimen of a particular class, which were to cease : he here specifies *three*, which are to be permanent in the church ; and concludes with a further eulogium on Christian love, which, in the heavenly state, will attain to its highest exercise, when faith shall be exchanged for vision, and hope converted into eternal fruition. And what was thus anticipated by an inspired apostle has been undeniably realized. While these Christian graces have been permanently in exercise in all succeeding ages, and still continue to be exercised by all who have received the love of the truth, inspiration, with all its concomitant gifts, disappeared at a very early period, and has never, in any instance, been restored.

It is a question which has been much agitated, and one of the most difficult in the department of church history : At what time did these miraculous gifts cease in the church ? According to the Roman Catholics they never ceased, but have continued in a clear succession to the present day. They allege in proof, the testimonies of the numerous writers who have flourished in the several ages of the church since the times of the apostles, and the fact, that such testimonies were believed without contradiction down to the period of the Reformation : as also the miraculous powers which are still professedly possessed by that church, and which it is maintained she exercises on proper occasions, in justification of her apostolic claims, and to the confusion of heretics and unbelievers. Gibbon, on the other hand, argues from the silence of church history on the subject of their cessation, an event, he conceives, which, from its extraordinary character, must have excited



universal attention, that they never existed, and that all claims to them in any age are equally unfounded. Protestants, in general, maintain that they were continued through the three first centuries, and that they ceased about the time when Christianity came to be established by the civil power ; but this position, however plausible it may appear to some, is unsupported by other than merely hypothetical proof. We find precisely the same evidence of miracles having been wrought in the fourth and fifth, or any of the succeeding centuries, that we have of their having been performed in the third. Numerous references are made to them by the Fathers, and by ecclesiastical historians ; and so far are they from ceasing when we arrive at the beginning of the fourth age of the church, that they rather accumulate upon us, and continue still to increase in number as we proceed down the stream of time. In fact, if we once admit the reality of those miracles said to have been wrought in the time of Chrysostom, Basil, and others, we cannot, with any degree of consistency, reject the evidence by which the existence of similar miracles in after-ages is attested.

Strongly convinced of the spuriousness of these pretended miracles, Dr. Conyers Middleton wrote a volume<sup>1</sup> to prove, that there is no sufficient reason to believe that any such powers were continued in the church, subsequent to the days of the apostles. It must be admitted that this work contains unanswerable arguments against the testimonies adduced from the Fathers

(1) *A Free Inquiry into the Miraculous Powers, which are supposed to have subsisted in the Christian Church, from the earliest Ages through several successive Centuries.* London, 1749, 4to.

in support of miraculous interpositions: but still the author does not succeed in fixing the exact time when real miracles ceased, and false or pretended miracles assumed their place. The questions remain to be solved: Did they cease in each particular country, on the death of the apostle who laboured in that country? Or, did they continue to be universally exercised in the church till the death of John, who is generally supposed to have lived the longest of any of the apostles? It has already been noticed, that the gifts were conferred by the apostles upon others. Is there not reason to suppose, that such persons retained and exercised these supernatural gifts during their lifetime; and, that many of them, surviving the apostles at least half a century, perpetuated them in the church till the latter half of the second century, when the last individual, on whom any of the apostles had laid his hands, expired, and with him the power of working miracles became extinct? On this principle, they must gradually have ceased, just as the persons were gradually removed, who had been privileged to perform them; which at once obviates the objection of Gibbon, drawn from the absence of any excitement of wonder at the event.

By the period referred to, the great ends for which the gift had been conferred, had been attained. The authority of the apostles had been completely established; the different churches that had been planted by them, had been confirmed in the faith of the gospel; and the collection of the books of the New Testament into one whole, presented such a complete body of evidence in favour of Christianity as superseded the

necessity of any further visible interpositions, on the part of its Divine author, in attestation of its truth.

It has been remarked by Bishop Kaye,<sup>1</sup> that, in the language of the Fathers who lived in the middle and end of the second century, when speaking on this subject, there is something which betrays, if not a conviction, at least a suspicion, that the power of working miracles was withdrawn, combined with an anxiety to keep up a belief of its continuance in the church. They affirm, in general, that miracles were performed, but rarely venture to produce an instance of a particular miracle. Of all the miraculous gifts that were imparted in the primitive age, none was considered of greater importance, or more necessary for the propagation of the gospel, than the gift of tongues; and from such necessity, it has been inferred that this endowment certainly must have continued long after the days of the apostles: but it deserves particular notice, that the only reference made to it in all the documents of antiquity is in the work of Irenæus against the heretics, in which he asserts: “*We hear of many in the church imbued with prophetic gifts, speaking with all kinds of tongues,*”<sup>2</sup> &c. And, though that Father was called to labour for the spread of the gospel among the pagan Celts, and may be supposed to have required the gift as much as any, yet he expressly states, that “it was not the least part of his trouble, that he was forced to learn the language of the country, a rude and barbarous dialect, before he could effect any good among them.”<sup>3</sup> That this and other miraculous gifts had entirely ceased

(1) Ecclesiast. Hist. of the Second and Third Centuries, p. 101, 2d ed.

(2) Adver. Hæres. lib. v. cap. 4.

(3) Middleton, *ut sup.* p. 119.

in the days of Augustine and Chrysostom, is evident from many parts of their writings. The former on the Gospel of John expresses himself to this effect: "In the primitive times, the Holy Spirit fell upon believers, and they spoke in tongues which they had not learnt, as the Spirit gave them utterance. These were signs suitable to the time. For it was right, that the Holy Spirit should be thus borne witness of in all tongues, because the gospel of God was about to travel through all tongues throughout the whole world. *That testimony having been given, it passed away.*"<sup>1</sup> Again: "Let no one, therefore, brethren, say, that, because our Lord Jesus Christ *does not do these things* (i. e. miracles) *now*, therefore he prefers the former times of the church to the present. For there is a passage, in which the same Lord sets those who do not see, and yet believe, before those who believe, because they see."<sup>2</sup> Of the testimonies borne by Chrysostom, it is sufficient to allege the following simple but most explicit declaration: "Of miraculous powers *not so much as a single vestige remains.*"<sup>3</sup>

It is also a noticeable circumstance, that the church

(1) "Primis temporibus cadebat super credentes Spiritus Sanctus, et loquebantur linguas quas non dedicerant, quomodo Spiritus dabat eis pronuntiare. Signa erant temporis opportuna. Oportebat enim ita significari in omnibus linguis Spiritum Sanctum, quia evangelium Dei per omnes linguas cursurum erat toto orbe terrarum. Significatum est illud et transiit."—In *Evan. Johan.* c. 4. Tract. vi. § 10.

(2) "Nemo itaque, fratres, dicat non facere ista (miracula) modo Dominum nostrum Jesum Christum et propter hoc præsentibus Ecclesiæ temporibus priora præponere. Quodam quippe loco idem Dominus videntibus et ideo credentibus præponit eos qui non vidit et credunt."—*Serm. 88. de verb. Evan. Matt. xx. § 2.*

(3) Τῆς δυνάμεως ἐκείνης οὐδὲ ἕχνος ὑπολέλειπται.—De Sacerd. lib. iv.

of Rome, which boasts so much of the power of working miracles, and whose history abounds with accounts of the pretended exertion of this power, has never been able to produce a single instance, in which the gift of tongues has been exercised. If ever there was an occasion, in any respect upon a parallel with any in the primitive times, which called for the exercise of such a gift, or an individual worthy to have so distinguished an honour put upon him, the missions to the East Indies and China furnished that occasion; and Francis Xavier, than whom there never lived a more devoted missionary, was that individual. But what does that "apostle of the Indies" say respecting his case? Like Irenæus he confesses, that, through his ignorance of the languages of those nations, he found himself incapable of doing any service to the Christian cause, and was but little better than a mute statue among them, till he could acquire some competent knowledge of their tongues; for which purpose, he was obliged to act the boy again, and apply himself to the task of learning the rudiments.

The causes of the cessation of extraordinary inspiring influence are obvious. As it was imparted with a view to the establishment of Christianity, when that event took place it ceased. The apostles alone being endowed with the "word of wisdom," were employed during their lifetime, as the instruments of revealing to mankind the grand doctrines of the economy of grace, and ordaining those laws, which were to be of binding obligation in all future ages; and when they had executed their task by developing the whole counsel of God, they and the gift of inspiration, in this high

sense of the term, were at once withdrawn. The results of its impartation having been deposited in their writings, it was no longer required. Since some years, however, elapsed before these writings were collected, so as to furnish the church with one complete body of New Testament truth, and a standard of universal appeal on all points of New Testament doctrine and practice, it was necessary during the interim, that those, who were gifted with the word of knowledge, with tongues, and the power of working miracles, should continue to exercise these endowments in those regions in which an infallible announcement or interpretation of truths already revealed, had not been furnished. Soon after the middle of the second century, the inspired volume became, and has ever since been, the only infallible source of religious knowledge—the only adequate and unerring test of religious truth.<sup>1</sup>

That pretensions to inspiration should afterwards have been advanced, and that such pretensions should still be made, cannot be matter of surprise. Both in the days of the prophets under the Old Testament, and of the apostles under the New, men arose with “Thus saith the Lord” upon their lips, though the Lord had not spoken: but how specious soever their claims, and how extensive soever their success, they could present no credentials that would bear to be examined by the light of truth; and sooner or later their folly became manifest to all. The church had been sufficiently warned under both dispensations against false prophets and teachers; and she had only

(1) See Note U.



to try them by "the law and the testimony" to ascertain that they were deceivers."<sup>1</sup>

Having avowed the conviction, that we have sufficient ground in Scripture to induce the belief, that it was the design of God that all miraculous, or immediate supernatural influence should cease when the church became furnished with the complete revelation of his will; it may not be improper, in this place, to make a few remarks on the subject of that Divine influence which *is* continued in the church, and the exertion of which is indispensable to salvation.

That there is a supernatural saving influence distinct from that which was miraculous, must appear convincingly evident to all who read the Scriptures with any degree of discrimination. Besides the unequivocal recognition of the Holy Spirit as the author of those extraordinary gifts which had for their object the revelation, confirmation, and advancement of the truth, he has also ascribed to him a divine agency by which the work of grace is commenced, carried on, and consummated in the souls of men. He regenerates, renews, illuminates, purifies, comforts, and strengthens them. These are his saving operations. By mere natural efforts, men may acquire a theoretical knowledge of the Holy Scriptures; they may become adepts in theological science, and be able clearly to unfold its principles to others; but except they experience the *spiritual* power of these principles, they are necessarily

(1) For an historical sketch of the pretensions which have been made to inspiration subsequent to the apostolic age, see Note X.

excluded from the perception and enjoyment of true happiness. This doctrine our Lord taught Nicodemus in terms at once the most explicit and peremptory. "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again—of water and of the Spirit—he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." (John iii. 3, 5.) That kingdom consists not in word, but in power. There is a mighty power—an exceeding greatness of power, exerted on those who believe—a power, which is spoken of as the standard whereby we are to conceive of Omnipotence itself. Hence the change which it effects is called a new creation, a new birth, a resurrection from death. (Eph. i. 19, 20; iii. 20, 21; 2 Cor. v. 17; John iii. 3; v. 21; Eph. ii. 2.) From these, and parallel passages of Scripture, it is evident that a real, efficient Divine influence operates on the minds of all the saved—an influence which is rendered indispensable by the total depravity of human nature, and is vouchsafed solely in the way of mercy and favour through the mediation of our Redeemer. In no part of the divine word, however, is this influence represented as operating, or taking effect, except in connection with the employment of means. It is never spoken of as a universal power, emanating from the Deity, diffused over the whole human family, and dependent for its efficiency on the susceptibility or insusceptibility of its supposed recipients. It is nowhere described as a divine principle separately and universally, but, in most instances, unsuccessfully contending with the innate corruption of the human heart. On the contrary, it is uniformly represented as specially, definitely,

and successfully put forth, in connection with the instrumentality of divine truth, for the purpose of infallibly securing the salvation of those on whom the Lord willeth to have mercy. Are they regenerated? "Of his own will he begets them *with the word of truth*." (James i. 18.) Are they justified? It is by *faith* in the blood of his Son. (Rom. v. 1, 9.) Are they sanctified? It is through *the word of God*, which is truth. (John xvii. 17, 19.) Are they chosen to salvation? It is through sanctification of the Spirit and *belief of the truth*. (2 Thess. ii. 13.) Are they kept unto salvation? It is by the power of God through *faith*. (1 Pet. i. 5.) Now, with respect to this faith, which is indispensable to salvation, the inspired conclusion applies to it in all instances without exception: "So then faith cometh by *hearing*, and hearing by *the word of God*"—that word, which, according to the apostolic doctrine, requires to be preached, or outwardly announced, before it can be believed. (Rom. x. 14—17.)

So constantly do the Scriptures insist on the importance of truth, and the necessity of its external presentation to the mind—and so powerful are the effects ascribed to it, when received by faith, that many have been induced to merge the influence of the Holy Spirit entirely in moral suasion, or the operation of those cogent motives which the word of God abundantly supplies. But while we readily admit that the word does supply such motives, and that the arguments and inducements which it contains are, in themselves, calculated to persuade and impel to holy action, and leave those utterly inexcusable who resist them, we

contend, that, without a Divine operation upon the heart at the time the external proposal of the truth is made, no saving impressions will be produced. The native enmity of man against his Maker not only renders him indisposed to attend to spiritual things, but leads him, in the degree in which they are faithfully presented, positively to hate and reject them. Hence the necessity of a distinct, yet concurring and efficient influence—the exertion of supernatural power upon the mind, by which the barriers to the entrance of the truth are broken down, and the principle of resistance is destroyed, which naturally interposes between the mental faculties and the external instrumentality which God is pleased to employ in conversion. Such is undeniably the light in which the subject is presented to our view in the holy Scriptures. Thus, notwithstanding the deep conviction which David possessed of the inherent excellence and force of divine truth, he felt it necessary to pray: “*Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law.*” (Ps. cxix. 18.) He knew that it was only as the veil was removed, which naturally hung before his understanding, that the word of God could enter it in the way of true spiritual illumination. The case of Lydia is also fully in point: “*Whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended to the things which were spoken of Paul.*” The moral inducements were presented by the apostle; but her attention to them, so as to yield to their force, and give herself up to their influence, is expressly ascribed to a direct Divine operation. We are likewise taught by Peter, that the submission of believers to the

doctrine of Christ is not to be attributed to that doctrine otherwise than instrumentally: the efficient cause of such submission he unequivocally states to be the influence of the Holy Spirit: "Seeing ye have purified yourselves in obeying the truth, *through the Spirit*, unto unfeigned love of the brethren:" &c. (1 Pet. i. 22.) In short, while the Scriptures invariably insist on the use of external means, they as invariably insist on the necessity of Divine influence in order to give them effect.

It now remains that we close the present course of Lectures with a few practical observations, suggested by the whole subject which has come under our notice.

In the first place: If the Bible is indeed, what it has been proved to be, the Book of God, containing an express supernatural revelation of his will on subjects of the highest importance to mankind, then its Blessed Author must be entitled to adoring gratitude from all upon whom the boon is conferred. It is only necessary for us seriously to reflect on our natural condition as rational and accountable, yet fallen, guilty, and perishing creatures, in order to be convinced, that a source, which lets in upon our dreary circumstances a flood of Divine light, full, glorious, and satisfying—not only claims to be most highly appreciated, but to have its appreciation accompanied by feelings of the most lively thankfulness towards the God of all grace. How dark the prospects of those who are destitute of this "light of the Lord!" How unenviable the state of those who reject it, and walk in the light of their own fire, and

in the sparks of their own kindling! On the other hand, how blessed the people that know the joyful sound! They walk in the light of the Divine countenance. In the name of the Lord they rejoice all the day, and in his righteousness they are exalted. His word is a lamp unto their feet, and a light unto their path, amidst all the labyrinths and perplexities of the present world, and effectually dispels the gloom of the grave, by its full revelation of life and immortality in the world to come. Let the recollection, that, for all the guidance, consolation and support which it is made the instrument of conveying to us, we are indebted to HIM, who, on account of our apostasy, might justly have abandoned us to the blackness of darkness for ever, excite us to the exercise of unceasing gratitude and praise.

Secondly, Let us attentively consider the regard which is due to the volume of inspiration. If “all Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness”—it behoves us to receive and treat it “not as the word of men, but, as it is in truth, the word of God.” If we possess convincing evidence, that no part of Scripture was the simple result of human agency, but occupies a place in the sacred record in consequence of the all-wise and infallible influence of the Holy Spirit, the whole volume must demand the exercise of those dispositions and the application of those principles, which are strictly accordant with its paramount character and design. It claims our most profound reverence and submission.



A communication made in the way of miraculous interposition is not to be treated with levity. Every approach to such a temper of mind is highly censurable. No disposition can possibly be more at variance with the stamp of divinity which the Bible exhibits, or the thrilling interests which its truths involve. A spirit of genuine humility, child-like simplicity, and deep attention, must ever characterise the man who gives it a suitable reception. And that he alone has reason to expect the Divine regard is the solemn decree of Jehovah: "To this man will I look, even to him, that "is poor and of a contrite spirit, and TREMBLETH AT "MY WORD." Where such a spirit is found, unreserved submission, both of intellect and heart, will be its certain concomitant. Instead of proudly opposing the statements of Scripture, because they may not accord with preconceived notions, or favourite hypotheses, there will be a cheerful relinquishment of every thing that is inconsistent with the will of God.

Again: The Bible claims our sober, careful, sedulous, and comprehensive study. The conviction, that it contains a revelation of the mind of God, and embraces subjects superlatively important in regard to our present and eternal well-being, ought to excite to the diligent and unremitting perusal of its pages. To answer its purpose, it must be understood. It is written in the language of men, and must therefore be studied and interpreted agreeably to the general principles of language. Whatever there may be in the nature of its contents, or in certain peculiarities of its diction, which requires a modification of the ordinary

rules of interpretation, yet these rules are constantly to be kept in view, if we would attain to just and accurate ideas of the subjects which it reveals. The exact meaning of terms, phrases, and modes of expression is to be carefully ascertained; the subject-matter of entire portions is to be definitely marked; the dependence of one part upon another, and the coherence of each with all, are diligently to be traced; and in conducting the entire process of investigation the greatest care is to be taken never to indulge in speculation, never to give the reins to fancy, and never to lose sight of the practical appliances of the truths that are discovered. We should be particularly on our guard, lest we introduce conceptions or doctrines of our own into the Scriptures;—a practice awfully common, but to which no small degree of guilt must attach, since it is a substitution of mere human opinion for the dictates of the Blessed Spirit—a counterfeiting of his holy inspiration. Let us strive to obtain an extensive and solid acquaintance with the contents of the sacred volume. While we presume not to be wise above what is written, let us never rest satisfied with any degrees of knowledge which fall below the standard supplied by the inspired word. That word is a mine in which we may continually dig, and still find beds of the richest ore to reward our unwearied research.

The holy book likewise claims our steady and unalienable attachment. “How love I thy law!” is an exclamation which has been responded to by the hearts of the pious in every age. Its excellence is unrivalled. Its divine authority is fully substantiated. The light

which it supplies is sufficient for every holy and spiritual purpose. The certainty of the truths which it teaches has ever proved an immovable rock on which the minds of believers have rested with security and delight. Let us therefore hold fast the faithful word. Let us not be children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive, but, adhering to the truth in love, let us grow up into him in all things, who is the Head, even Christ. (Eph. iv. 14, 15.) Let us not be soon shaken in mind, or troubled by any pretended inspiration or utterance (*μήτε διὰ πνεύματος, μήτε διὰ λόγου*, 2 Thess. ii. 2.) A careful review of miraculous pretensions in different ages of the church will convince us, that they all more or less exhibit identical features of character; that they may originally be traced to a latent dissatisfaction with existing circumstances, an over-excitement of feeling, the influence of a luxuriant or heated imagination, or the pressure of a certain state of bodily temperament; and that they have been nourished and supported by a depreciation of the written word, crude or disproportionate notions respecting some of its prophetic announcements, the total absence of consistent interpretation with respect to the Scriptures generally, and no small portion of arrogance and pride. While it cannot be doubted, that many, perhaps most of those who have believed in them, have been really pious, it is no less certain, that they have suffered great injury in their souls from indulgence in the spiritual revellings produced by enthusiasm and hallucination of mind.

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When mercifully recovered out of the snare into which they had fallen, they have again bowed with becoming reverence to the authority of the divine testimony, to the exclusion of all human follies and vagaries ; and, as new-born babes, they have desired the sincere milk of the word, that they might grow thereby unto salvation.

Finally, it behoves us seriously to ponder the responsibilities which attach to us as the depositaries of Divine Revelation.

Having ourselves received the love of its sacred truths, and perseveringly applying them to the great purposes connected with our present and eternal happiness, our duty next regards its sacred preservation and unlimited extension. We ought at all times to watch over it with the most sedulous care. We should be jealous for its honour ; defend its character ; maintain its purity ; and transmit it to others in a state of unimpaired integrity. If our studies, opportunities, or means call for exertions in behalf of the critical investigation, or settlement of any point relating to the state of the original texts, let us take no step without the exercise of the greatest caution, much self-diffidence, a solemn sense of the importance of Divine truth, and a fixed determination to prosecute our researches, and draw our conclusions by the conscientious application of all the means which lie at our command, in the fear of God, and with a single view to his glory. Against conjectural emendation we ought to be specially on our guard. Nothing but positive evidence should ever lead us to make or propose an alteration in the reading of any text of Scripture.

If we are called to engage in the work of translation, it is indispensable that we perform the task in such a manner as shall faithfully convey the mind of the Spirit to those into whose language the version is made. We should diligently avail ourselves of the superior advantages which are now so abundantly supplied. Every means should be laid under contribution, that promises to elucidate the philology, geography, history, doctrines, and morality of the Bible. Especially should there predominate a spirit of nice discrimination with respect to the idiomatical and other differences existing between the original languages and modern tongues. Lightly as the science of Biblical translation has been estimated, and unthinkingly as many have embarked in the undertaking, it cannot admit of a doubt, that, of all engagements, it is the most solemnly responsible. For a weak, erring mortal to propose to himself to furnish in another language an exact representation of all that Jehovah hath revealed for the instruction of mankind—nothing adding, nothing abating, nothing discolouring, is a task of the most appalling magnitude. It requires a mind not only well stored with the requisite literary furniture, but a holy familiarity with sacred truth, and a spirit plentifully baptized with heavenly influence. Except the Bible be translated in the spirit of the Bible, the blessed truths which it contains cannot fail to be tarnished and profaned.

But it is not only our duty vigilantly to preserve and carefully to transmit the Scriptures in a state of incontaminate purity and integrity: we lie under an imperious obligation to give them the widest possible

circulation among our fellow-men. There exists not a human being, possessed of the powers of reason, for whose use they were not designed. There is not a truth which they reveal, nor a blessing of which they are the appointed medium of conveyance, which does not belong to him equally with ourselves. But, how few comparatively of the inhabitants of the globe are in possession of the inestimable boon! Hundreds of millions have never read, or heard read to them, a single word of all the inspired truth which the Father of mercies hath communicated to us! With respect to their actual condition, it is, in a spiritual point of view, the same as if no holy seer had ever spoken, as if no inspired apostle had ever committed to writing a single idea respecting God, the way of salvation, or the eternal world. Let us hasten to their relief. Let us extend to them the lamp and light of life. Let us rally round, and more vigorously and zealously than ever support that noblest of institutions, THE BRITISH AND FOREIGN BIBLE SOCIETY—a Society, the sole and exclusive object of which is to circulate THE VOLUME OF INSPIRATION to the utmost extent among the inhabitants of every nation under heaven. By carrying forward and extending its operations, while we lend efficient aid to other important institutions, whose labours in the field of Christian philanthropy have all a more or less direct bearing on the spread of divine truth, we shall, by the grace of God, discharge our duty as stewards of the trust committed to us, remain free from the blood of souls, and accelerate the approach of that period, when the way of the Lord shall be



known upon earth, and his saving health among all nations.

May HE of whom the Scriptures testify, and to glorify whom the Spirit, under whose inspiration they were written, continues his gracious and saving influences, be all our salvation and all our desire ! May we enjoy the perpetual tuition of that blessed Teacher ! And may we shine as lights in the world, holding forth the word of life, that it may be cause of mutual rejoicing in the day of Christ, that we have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain !

NOTES AND ILLUSTRATIONS.



## NOTES AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

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### NOTE A. Page 10.

IN the Korân itself, pretensions to inspiration are advanced in almost every page. The very formulas *نزل القرآن*, *نزل*, *الكتاب*, *امنوا بما انزل الله*, *ما انزل اليك*, “*The Korân descended; the Book descended; they believe in what God hath caused to descend; what he hath caused to descend to thee;*” and such like, which perpetually occur, claim for it a celestial origin, and ascribe its communication to Mohammed to celestial influence. In the viith Sura, after recognising the fact of former revelations having been made, the Divine Being is made to say, *وهذا كتاب انزلناه مبارك مصدق الذي بين يديه ولتنذر ام القرى ومن حولها والذين يؤمنون بالاخرة*. “*This Book, which we have sent down, is a blessed Book, confirming what was already given, and is sent that thou mayest publish it to the people of the city, and of the surrounding country; and those who believe in a future state, will believe in it; even those who observe the stated seasons of prayer.*” And in the ivth Sura, its inspiration is placed upon the same footing with that of the ancient prophets: *انا اوحينا اليك كما اوحينا الي نوح والنبيين من بعده واوحينا الي ابراهيم واسماعيل واسحق ويعقوب والاسباط وعيسي وايوب ويونس وهرون واسليمان واتينا داود زبوراً*. “*We have made a revelation to*

“thee, as we made revelations to Noah, and the prophets who succeeded him; and as we made revelations to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and the tribes, and to Jesus, and Job, and Jonah, and Aaron, and Solomon; and as we gave the Psalter to David.” On this ground the Korân, which by way of eminence is called *The Book*, or Bible, is expressly called a *celestial revelation*, تنزيل الكتاب من الله العزيز الحكيم. “*The Book is a revelation sent down from God the mighty, the wise.*” Beginning of Sura xxxixth, and several others.

The common Mohammedan belief on the point is thus expressed in a Turkish MS. in my possession, containing a Confession of the Orthodox faith. The chapter is entitled, كتاب الله تعالى, “The Books of God;” and begins thus: ودخي شهادت ايدرن الله تعالى نك كتابلري واردر جبريل ايله كوكدن اندر مشدر ير يوزنده كي پيغمبرلردن غيريه كتاب انمز وجبريل كلمز حضرت محمد عليه الصلوة والسلامة قران انمشدر از ازيكرمي اوج ييلده تمام اولمشدر و حضرت موسي عليه السلامة تورلة وعيسي عليه السلامة انجيل و داود عليه السلامة زبور وغيريسن دخي غيري پيغمبرلرينه اندر مشدر جمله كتابلري يوز يكرمي دورت در مجلسي حقدركن قران عظيم جملدن موخر انمشدر و حكمي قيامته دكن باقيدركن:

“I also declare my belief that there are *Divine Books*, sent down from heaven by Gabriel, to the prophets upon the earth, besides which there are no others, nor did he come to any besides. To Mohammed, on whom be peace and salvation, the *Korân* descended, piece by piece, during the space of twenty-three years, till it was completed;—to Moses, on

“whom be peace, the Law;—to Jesus, on whom be peace, the Gospel;—to David, on whom be peace, the Psalter;—and to the rest of the prophets the remainder descended. All the books are one hundred and twenty-four in number. They are all true; but the Korân is the greatest of all. It was given last, and its authority will continue till the last day.”

## NOTE B. Page 12.

The strict theological distinction between Revelation and Inspiration, is of comparatively modern date. No traces of it are to be found in the Fathers; nor was it at all used by the Reformers, how strenuously soever they contended for the divine authority of the Scriptures. It appears to have been first introduced in the seventeenth century by Calovius, in his *System. Theol. tom. i. p. 555*. It was improved upon by Quenstedt, and afterwards more scientifically treated by Baumgarten, Seiler, and other divines; but has since been abandoned as unnecessarily clogging the subject. Even Quenstedt himself was compelled to admit that it could not be absolutely maintained. He thus defines: “Distingue inter divinam revelationem, et inspirationem. *Revelatio* formaliter, et vi vocis, est manifestatio rerum ignotarum et occultarum; et potest fieri multis et diversis modis, scil. vel per *externum alloquium*, vel per *somnia et visiones*. (Nam *Revelare* Græcè ἀποκαλύπτειν, est id, quod occultum erat, retegere.) *Inspiratio* est actio Spiritûs S. quâ actualis rerum cognitio intellectui creato supernaturaliter infunditur; seu, est interna conceptuum suggestio, seu infusio, sive res conceptæ jam antè Scriptori fuerint cognitæ, sive occultæ. Illa (*Revelatio*) potuit tempore antecedere scriptionem, hæc cum scriptione semper fuit conjuncta, et in ipsam scriptionem influebat. Interim non nego ipsam *θεοπνευστίαν*, sive divinam inspirationem dici posse revelationem *secundum quid*, quatenus scil. est manifestatio certarum circumstantiarum, item ordinis et modi, quibus res consignandæ et scribendæ erant; quandoque etiam revelatio



“cum ipsâ inspiratione divinâ concurrît, atque coincidet, “quando scil. divina mysteria inspirando revelantur, et revelando inspirantur, in ipsâ scriptione.” *Theol. Didact. Polem.* Witteb. 1685, fol. p. 68. See also Baumgarten, *Dissert. de Discrimine Revelationis et Inspirationis*, Halæ, 1743, 4to. Seiler *Program. de Revelationis et Inspirationis rite Constituendo*. Erlangen, 1794, 4to.

#### NOTE C. Page 30.

The dogma of the ἐκπόρευσις, or procession of the Holy Ghost, was first fixed as an article of faith on occasion of the Macedonian heresy. At the second œcumenical council, held at Constantinople in the year 381, the original article on the Holy Spirit: πιστεύομεν εἰς τὸ ᾧον πνεῦμα, had appended to it the clause: τὸ κύριον, τὸ ζωοποιόν, τὸ ἐκ τοῦ πατρὸς ἐκπορευόμενον, κ.τ.λ. and ever since, notwithstanding the discussion of the *filioque* controversy, the doctrine of *essential procession* has continued to be regarded as the only orthodox view, both in the Eastern and Western churches. Chrysostom, however,<sup>1</sup> explains the term in such a way as to favour its economical acceptation, in which light it was viewed by Calvin, Beza, Bucer, Rollock, Martyr, and other reformers.<sup>2</sup> Beza's note is as follows: “Certum est autem hic non agi de ipsa “Spiritus essentia, sed de ipsius virtute et efficacia in nobis: “cujus virtutis autorem facit Patrem, non ut sese vel ipsum “Spiritus sanctum excludat, sed ut discipulorum oculos a “carnis infirmitate aversos ad Deitatis intuitum evehat, ut “norint videlicet qua virtute sint deinceps confirmandi. Itaque “hujusmodi testimonia nec à Græcis, nec contra Græcos, ad “personæ Spiritus sancti emanationem relativam sive originalem satis apposite sunt citata.”

The subject is ably handled by Lampe, *ut sup.* to whom, and to Titmann, in his *Meletemata*, p. 570, we refer the reader.

(1) Homil. de Spiritu Sancto.

(2) Lampe on John xv. 26, vol. iii. p. 276.

## NOTE D. Page 53.

CANON II.—In specie autem Hebraicus Veteris Testamenti Codex, quem ex Traditione Ecclesiæ Judaicæ, cui olim oracula Dei commissa sunt, accepimus, hodieque retinemus, tum quoad consonans, tum quod ad vocalia sive puncta ipsa, sive punctorum saltem potestatem, ita authenticus est, et tum quoad res, tum quoad verba Θεόπνευστος, ut Fidei et vitæ nostræ, unà cum Codice Novi Testamenti, sit unicus et illibatus Canon, ad cujus normam, ceu Lydium lapidem, universæ quæ extant Versiones Orientales, sive Occidentales exigendæ, et sicubi deflectunt, revocandæ sunt.—*Formula Consensus Eccles. Helvet. Reform.* 1678.

## NOTE E. Page 55.

Of the several writers who published on Inspiration in consequence of the circulation of Le Clerc's sentiments, the first in the field was Prebendary Lowth, in a little work entitled: *A Vindication of the Divine Authority and Inspiration of the Old and New Testaments. By the Rev. William Lowth, B.D.* It was first published in 1692, but appeared in a second edition, with amendments, and a new preface, wherein the antiquity of the Pentateuch is asserted, and vindicated from some late objections. A third edition was published, London, 1821.

The next who wrote was Lamothe: *The Inspiration of the New Testament asserted and explained in Answer to some Modern Writers. By C. G. Lamothe, Divine.* London: 1694. In this work the subject is treated with much greater discrimination than in that which preceded it; and the author has avoided several statements and forms of expression by which Mr. Lowth had laid himself open to objection.

The valuable observations of Dr. John Williams are contained in his Boyle's Lecture for 1695, especially the Sixth and Seventh Sermons on *The Divine Authority of the Scriptures, and the several Ways of Revelation.*

*The Divine Authority of the Holy Scriptures asserted, in Two Discourses; the former showing the Nature and Extent of the Inspiration vouchsafed by the Holy Ghost to the Penmen of the Scriptures, and the distinct Share of each therein, &c. By Samuel Clarke, M.A.* London: 1699. Contains many excellent suggestions.

Dr. Edmund Calamy's work, though likewise making common cause with those which have just been mentioned, against the innovations of Le Clerc, was more immediately occasioned by the pretended inspiration of the French prophets. Its title is: *The Inspiration of the Holy Writings of the Old and New Testament considered and improved. In Fourteen Sermons, preached at the Merchants' Lecture at Salters' Hall.* London: 1710. It is still one of the best books which we have on the subject.

Dr. Whitby's remarks on the doctrine, contained in the eight first sections of the *General Preface* to his *Commentary*, are very judicious and satisfactory.

*The Truth, Inspiration, and Usefulness of the Scripture asserted and proved. In several Discourses on 2 Tim. iii. 16. By the late Rev. and learned Mr. Benjamin Bennett. Published from his Manuscripts by L. Latham, M.D.* London: 1730. A plain, but solid and useful work.

*A Dissertation on the Inspiration of the New Testament, as proved from the Facts recorded in the Historical Books of it.* This important Dissertation of Dr. Doddridge is the second of two annexed to his *Expositor*, and continues to be a treatise of classical authority in reference to the subject.

*The Doctrine of Grace: or the Office and Operations of the Holy Spirit, &c. By William, Lord Bishop of Gloucester.* London: 1763. In this work, amidst much that is paradoxical and extravagant, Dr. Warburton advances many acute observations in regard to inspiration, both as it regards the extraordinary endowments of the apostles generally, and the particular influence under which they composed their writings.

*The Inspiration of the Holy Scriptures asserted and explained: in Three Dissertations, in which a plain and rational Solution is*

*attempted to be given to the following Inquiries: I. What SCRIPTURES are divinely inspired? II. In what SENSE the Holy Scriptures are so? And III. What PROOF we have of it? By John Kiddell, of Tiverton, Devon. London: 1779. This tract, which is of extreme rarity, contains much valuable matter directly bearing on the queries here specified; and is rendered the more remarkable by its having been translated into German by Semler, whose copious notes, appended to the text, evince that his object in publishing it was merely to give currency to his own freethinking opinions respecting both the inspiration and the canon of Scripture.*

*A Treatise on the Plenary Inspiration of the New Testament. By the Rev. J. L. Moore. London: 1793.*

#### NOTE F. Page 55.

By this time the principles of Socinianism began to come to some maturity in this country; and among other doctrines which were openly attacked by its abettors was that of inspiration. Dr. Priestley, in his *Theological Repository*, and his *Institutes of Natural and Revealed Religion*; Mr. Wakefield, in his *Essay on Inspiration*, which he significantly designates—"this *veracious* doctrine of inspiration;" and Dr. Geddes, in the preface to the second volume of his *Bible*, undisguisedly renounced the plenary inspiration of the sacred penmen, and indeed their inspiration in any sense deserving the name. The last-mentioned writer, than whom scarcely any of the continental neologians has gone farther in profane levity and daring assertion, roundly declares, that he would not believe the absolute inspiration of the Hebrew writings were an angel from heaven to teach it. To counteract the influence of their statements, and of others made by those who have since espoused their views, the following works have appeared:—

*An Essay on the Inspiration of the Holy Scriptures, &c. By William Nelson, Edinburgh. With Notes, by Alexander Bowyer, Author of the Life of Dr. Beattie. (No date.)*

*The Divine Inspiration of the Jewish Scriptures, or the Old Testament, asserted by St. Paul, 2 Tim. iii. 16; and Dr. Geddes's Reasons against this Sense of his Words examined. By Robert Findley, D.D. Professor of Theology in the University of Glasgow.* London: 1803. An admirable specimen of sacred criticism.

*An Essay on the Inspiration of the Holy Scriptures, by John Dick, A.M. Third Edition, with Corrections and Additions.* Glasgow: 1813. In this work the subject is very fully and ably gone into; but the view which it gives of verbal inspiration has been greatly modified in the ninth of the author's excellent Lectures on Theology, recently published.

*An Inquiry into the Nature and Extent of the Inspiration of the Apostles, and other Writers of the New Testament. Conducted with a view to some late Opinions on the Subject. By the late Rev. William Parry, Tutor of Wymondley Academy. Second Edition.* London: 1822.

We here subjoin a few works which have more lately appeared.

*The Books of the Old and New Testament proved to be Canonical, and their Verbal Inspiration maintained and established, &c. By Robert Haldane, Esq. Third Edition, much enlarged.* Edinburgh: 1830.

*The Theories of Inspiration of the Rev. Daniel Wilson, Rev. Dr. Pye Smith, and the Rev. Dr. Dick, proved to be erroneous; with Remarks on the Christian Observer, and Eclectic Review. By Alexander Carson, A.M. Minister of the Gospel.* Edinburgh. (No date.)

Both authors maintain verbal inspiration in its narrowest and most restricted sense, and, in the most unmeasured terms, reprobate all who are of a different opinion.

*Proofs of Inspiration, or the Grounds of Distinction between the New Testament and the Apocryphal Volume, &c. By the Rev. Thomas Rennell, B.D. F.R.S. Vicar of Kensington.* London: 1822.

*A View of Inspiration, comprehending the Nature and Distinctions of the Spiritual Gifts and Offices of the Apostolic Age.* By Alexander Macleod. Glasgow: 1827.

*Lectures on the Inspiration of the Scriptures*, by Leonard Woods, D.D., Abbot Professor of Christian Theology in the Theological Seminary, Andover. Andover: 1829. In this little work the subject is treated very judiciously, as it has since been by the same writer in a very able article under the head of Inspiration, in Kitto's Biblical Cyclopædia.

*An Inquiry into the Proofs, Nature, and Extent of Inspiration, and the Authority of Scripture.* By the Rev. Samuel Hinds, M.A. of Queen's College, and Vice-Principal of St. Alban's Hall, Oxford. London: 1831. This work is written with great sobriety and judgment, but without going critically into the examination of particular passages of Scripture.

*The Plenary Inspiration of the Scriptures asserted, and the Principles of their Composition investigated, with a view to the Refutation of all Objections to their Divinity, &c.* By the Rev. S. Noble. London: 1825. The title of this work is here inserted, merely in order to furnish an occasion of cautioning the reader not to expect from it what it does not contain. Its object is to palm upon the world the allegorical jargon of Swedenborgianism or the universally *hidden and spiritual sense*, under the imposing name of *plenary inspiration*.

*Refutation of Dr. Henderson's Doctrine in his late Work on Divine Inspiration: with a Critical Dissertation on 2 Tim. iii. 16.* By Alexander Carson, A.M. London: 1837. The virulent spirit, and scurrilous personalities which pervade this work, evince how keenly the author must have felt the force of the arguments employed in the Lecture on the subject of verbal inspiration, to which the professed Refutation is almost exclusively confined; and render it impossible to meet it with any thing in the shape of a dignified reply. The main points of the controversy are left entirely untouched.

*Theopneustia: the Plenary Inspiration of the Holy Scriptures.* From the French of L. Gaussen. London: 1841. This is an



eloquent defence of the doctrine generally, and has special reference to the question of verbal inspiration. It contains many able observations in answer to infidel objections, as well as to some loose assertions, which have been made by Prof. Twisten and others, who, in the main, take the orthodox view of the subject.

Several other authors have treated on the subject, though not in separate publications, as Dr. Frazer, referred to, p. 55; Dr. Wilson, in his work on the Evidences of Christianity; the Rev. Hartwell Horne, in his valuable Introduction to the Study of the Scriptures; Bishop Tomline, in his Elements of Theology; Professor Pusey, in the Second Part of his Historical Inquiry; Dr. Powell, in the Boyle Lectures; and my esteemed friend, Dr. John Pye Smith, in his justly celebrated work on the Scripture Testimony to the Messiah; vol. i. p. 35, second edition.

Before closing this note, it may be proper to adduce some of the leading foreign publications in which the doctrine of inspiration is professedly discussed, and which those who wish to pursue the study of it would do well to consult.

Klemm. (Joh. Chris.) Diss. *Θεοπνευστία* sacrarum literarum asserta. Tub. 1743.

Stosch (Fred.) Diss. Theol. de duplici Apostolorum *Θεοπνευστία*, tum generali, tum speciali. Guelpherbyti: 1754.

Teller (Guil. Abr.) Progr. Defensio Inspirationis divinæ Vatum sacrorum adversus enthusiasmum Poeticum. Helmst. 1762.

— Diss. de Inspirationis Script. Sac. judicio formando. Helmst. 1764.

Töllner (Joh. Gottl.) Die Göttliche Eingebung der heiligen Schrift untersucht. Mittau und Leipzig. 1772. A work of 487 pages, in which the subject of the inspiration of the Scriptures is more fully discussed than in any other that has appeared.

Hoffmann (Joh. Thom.) Exercit. Hist. Theol. communis vete-

rum Doctrinæ de Inspiratione divina a recentior. nonnull. Argutationibus vindicata. Dresdæ: 1782.

Hegelmaier (Job. Godof.) de *θεοπνευστία* ejusque Statu in Viris sanctis Librorum sacrorum Auctoribus. Tub. 1784.

Meyer (Laurent.) Comment. de Inspiratione Scripturæ sacræ, qua ejus indolem explanare conatus est. Ultraj. 1784.

Sontag (Gust. Frid. Nicol.) Doctrina Inspirationis ejusque Ratio, Historia et Usus popularis. Heidelb. 1810.

Dullo (H. F.) Ueber die Göttliche Eingebung des N. T. Jena. 1816.

Credner (Car. Aug.) de Librorum N. T. Inspiratione quid statuerint Christiani ante sæculum tertium medium.

Elwert (M.) Ueber die Lehre von der Inspiration, in Beziehung auf das Neue Testament, ein Versuch.—Studien der Evangelischen Geistlichkeit Wirtembergs. iii. B. 2. Heft. 1831.

That no unjust accusation is brought against Griesbach, p. 56, the following positions, extracted from his *Stricturar. in locum de Theopneustia Libr. Sacr.* (*Opuscula Academica*, vol. ii. pp. 288—357,) will be sufficient to prove.

“I. *Omnia* quæ in libris Novi Testamenti leguntur, e theopneustia (stricte sumta) scripta esse, probari nequit. Nam neque e scripturæ sacræ oraculis cogi hoc potest, neque res ipsa et librorum sacrorum destinatio necessario id postulat.

“II. In collectione librorum Novi Testamenti continentur fortasse scripta nonnulla apostolica, eaque genuina, quibus *nihil* inest theopneustia. Et nihilo tamen secius talia scripta suo jure et merito locum suum in canone obtinent.

“III. Liber Novi Testamenti constare potest partibus diversæ indolis; inspiratis admixtæ esse possunt non inspiratæ.

“IV. Non datur criterium certum, ejus ope id quod ex theopneustia profectum est, ab eo quod absque inspiratione dictum aut scriptum est, dignosci queat.”—P. 356.

## NOTE G. Page 80.

That the “goings forth” of the Messiah (מִצְאָתָיו) spoken of, Micah v. 2, refer to his previous manifestations in the times of Moses and the patriarchs, seems the most natural interpretation of the phrase, especially as what it designates is obviously put in contrast with his manifestation when he should actually assume human nature, and “come forth” (צֵא) among men. Grotius, Michaëlis, and Rosenmüller, interpret it of descent or family origin; but Mr. J. J. Gurney<sup>1</sup> has satisfactorily shown, that though the substantive is capable of signifying extraction or filiation, its meaning must be determined by that of the verb as used in the present passage. But whenever צֵא has any such signification, the preposition בְּ is placed before the name of the parent or family, and never before that of the place, which is the case here.

## NOTE H. ON DEUT. xxxiii. 2—5. Page 105.

V. 2. The rendering of לָמִי, “he rose up *to them*,” in our common version, clogs the passage. The dative of the pronoun is here, as frequently, redundant after an intransitive verb of motion. The Targum of Onkelos, the LXX., and the Syriac and Vulgate versions read לָנִי, the first person plural, but the reading is clearly to be attributed to conjecture. It is unsupported by manuscript authority.—וָאָתָה מְרִבְּבוֹת קֹדֶשׁ, “He came with holy myriads.” The LXX. mistaking קֹדֶשׁ, *Kodesh*, for קֶדֶשׁ, *Kadesh*, render the words thus: σὺν μυρίασι Κάδης, “with myriads at Kadesh;” but still, having an impression that reference was had to the angels, they add, ἐκ δεξιῶν αὐτοῦ ἄγγελοι μετ’ αὐτοῦ. Aquila, however, Symmachus, the Venet. Greek, and the Syriac agree with Onkelos in considering the term to be a substantive, signifying “holiness;” which, being governed by the preceding noun, has the force of an adjective, and is by Symmachus so expressed. That רַבְּבוֹת the fem. plur.

(1) Biblical Notes and Dissertations, pp. 80, 81.

should be employed of angels, can excite no surprise, since this numeral is only used in the feminine. See among other passages, Neh. vii. 71 : נְרָמְנוּיִם שְׁתֵּי רְבוּזִים. In fact, it is employed in the dual form of the fem. in the parallel passage, Psalm lxxviii. 17.

The words מִיְמֵינוּ אֲשֶׁר־לָנוּ have greatly perplexed interpreters. The principal difficulty has been occasioned by the unusual combination אֲשֶׁר־, which, as it is found in upwards of a hundred of Kennicott and De Rossi's MSS. and in twenty-five printed editions, has been supposed to come from אֲשֶׁר־, or even from the Arab. *أسد*, and interpretations agreeing with such derivations have been advanced; but they have all failed in affording satisfaction. Those who have most distinguished themselves for critical taste regard the word as compounded of אֲשֶׁ and -רָ—an opinion which is confirmed by the circumstances, that it is included by the Rabbins in the number of fifteen words, which though written as one are nevertheless to be read as two, and that in a great number of the best MSS. the Keri exhibits אֲשֶׁר־, which several editors, both Jewish and Christian, have adopted as the textual reading. With respect to רָ, the signification of *law* is now pretty generally acquiesced in; and Gesenius, in his Thesaurus, very ingeniously traces its etymology. The singularity of its occurrence in pure Hebrew is not greater than that which is exhibited in several other parallel instances. That the construction should be אֲשֶׁר־, and not אֲשֶׁר־, according to rule, seems at first sight to present an obstacle to the rendering: "law of fire," or *fiery law*; but the prominence which the writer intended to give to the igneous phenomenon is sufficient to account for the anomaly. Compare אֲשֶׁר־עָנִי, Isaiah liii. 11, and my Commentary on the words. Winer's observation in Simonis Lex. is: "In loco Deut. xxxiii. 2, אֲשֶׁר־רָ significare videtur *ignem legis*, h. e. *legem igneam*, media inter fulgura promulgatam." The לָנוּ at the end of the verse is the poetic singular, as in the preceding instance, only it is here used as the dative of possession.

V. 3. In יִשְׁתָּךְ there is an evident continuation of the third person from the foregoing participle, though the transition in the following word to the second person, renders it necessary in a translation to adopt the change earlier.—יִשְׁתָּךְ is quite idiomatic, and does not express more than the simple preposition עַל, or the particle אֵל. (See Gesen. in voc. י' aa).—The ἀπαξ λεγόμενον יִשְׁתָּךְ, like the Arab. لَوَّ, signifies, *to bend one's self, fall down, fall prostrate*, and is used here to express the deep reverence of the angelic hosts on the occasion to which reference is made.—שִׁׁי is taken partitively, as יִשְׁתָּךְ, Is. xlv. 24, “he,” i. e. *each*, “saith.” The verb has here all the pregnancy of its meaning—signifying not merely to take, take up, but to take up so as to bear away.

V. 5. That the King mentioned in this verse was Jehovah, and not Moses, as Abenezra interprets, seems past dispute.

#### NOTE I. Page 124.

The force of the evidence afforded by 1 Cor. x. 9, in support of the doctrine of our Lord's being the object of temptation on the part of the Israelites, has been attempted to be got rid of in two ways.

1. By adopting the reading Κύριον, or Θεόν, instead of Χριστόν. To this adoption, however, which is that of the “Improved Version,” it must be objected, that it is not critically supported, and neither of the readings has been received by any editor into the text of the Greek New Testament. The relative claims of the various readings are thus exhibited by Scholz:—κύριον B C 17, 31, 39, 46, 73, 80, 109, al. Syr. p. in m. Copt. MS. Arm. (sed in m. edd. Amst. et Constant. Χριστόν) Aeth. Epiph. (qui Marcionem κύριον in Χριστόν mutasse putavit.) Chrys. (alicubi) Theodoret. Damasc. Epist. synodi Antioch. ad Samosat. Sedul. Cassiod. Θεόν A 2. Slav. MS. Beda. Χριστόν testes reliqui fere omnes, etiam 165. Syr. Arr. Sahid. Vulg. It. Theodotus. Sen. (apud Ir. 27, 263) Chrys. Theoph. Ambr. Aug. Ambrosiast. Pelag. τῷ Χριστῷ 23\*\*.

2. By supplying Θεόν after ἐπείρασαν. But, it is an admitted principle of construction, that when the same verb is repeated, and no object is expressed in the second instance, we are to consider the same object to be referred to in both cases. One example in proof will be sufficient; but it is one so exactly parallel both in expression and sense, that it ought to set the question completely at rest. It is Deut. vi. 16. לֹא תִסּוּ אַחֲרֵיהֶּם אֱלֹהֵיכֶם בְּאִשֶּׁר נִסִּיתֶם בְּמִצְרָיִם, which the LXX. render: οὐκ ἐκπειράσεις κύριον τὸν Θεόν σου, ὃν τρόπον ἐξεπειράσατε ἐν τῷ πειρασμῷ. In our common version, the translators have very properly supplied the word *him*, and, to be consistent, they should have supplied the ellipsis in the same way, 1 Cor. x. 9. It is in fact supplied in almost all the versions (Belsham's itself not excepted)—it being felt to be absolutely necessary to the full expression of the sense.

## NOTE K. Page 137.

Es zeigt sich, dass auch die wahren Propheten sich in einem ausserordentlichen, von dem gewöhnlichen characteristisch verschiedenen Zustande, in einer ἔκστασις befanden, in der *das verständige Bewustseyn zurücktrat*, und das ganze Selbstleben durch eine gewaltsame Wirkung des göttlichen Geistes unterdrückt, und zu einem leidentlichen Verhalten gebracht wurde, so dass die Propheten, wie Philo sagt, Dollmetcher wären, deren Organe sich Gott zur Mittheilung seiner Offenbarung bediente.—Auch auf die wahren Propheten leidet demnach Anwendung, was Plato im Ion und Phädrus ausführt, dass mit der Weissagung nothwendig die Unterdrückung der menschlichen Thätigkeit und *des verständigen Bewusteyns* verbunden sey.—Mit *dem verständigen Bewustseyn* trat zugleich ihr niederes Seelenleben zurück. *Christologie des Alten Testaments*. I. Th. 1 Abtheil. pp. 294, 297.



## NOTE L. Page 202.

It seems altogether probable that the Apostle Jude quotes the passage of Enoch's prophecies from tradition, and not from the apocryphal book of Enoch, which is frequently quoted by the Fathers. This book, which was long supposed to be lost, was found by Bruce, in an Ethiopic translation, in Abyssinia, and has lately been published by Dr. Laurence (the present Archbishop of Cashel), who is of opinion that it is the production of some unknown Jew, under the assumed name of Enoch, who lived shortly before the time of our Lord. It has been shewn, however, by an able writer in the *Christian Observer*, vol. xxx. pp. 417—426, 496—503, that it could not have been written earlier than the middle of the second century of our era. See Horne's *Introd.* vol. ii. Part II. p. 139. Stuart on the *Apocalypse*, vol. i. pp. 50—74.

## NOTE M. Page 215.

Of the great value put upon the Pagan Oracles, and the importance that was attached to their decisions, no one can be ignorant who is at all acquainted with ancient history. They were resorted to on all state occasions of any consequence—on the commencement of war, or the conclusion of peace; the founding of cities and colonies; the establishment of religious ceremonies; the enactment of laws; the introduction of new forms of government; or the prevalence of any public calamity. They were also consulted by individuals of different ranks in society in reference to any subject in which they felt peculiarly interested. It is obviously to their influence we are to ascribe most of the sudden revolutions and other remarkable occurrences which happened in the states of antiquity, but which cannot be traced either to the councils of political wisdom, or to the power of arms. The response of a god frequently effected what the impulse of merely human motives never could have accomplished. Sometimes the oracular responses were

professedly given by the gods themselves; at other times they were imparted by priests and priestesses, who acted as interpreters. Those who consulted them were obliged previously to present valuable offerings and sacrifices. They were, as in the case of the Delphic oracle, minutely interrogated as to their private history and their expectations; they were then conducted into a dismal cavern, where they were exposed to a damp and noxious air; and were sometimes required to drink a potion, the effect of which on the imagination tended to complete their melancholy and stupefaction, and thus prepare them for becoming the dupes of an artful superstition. When no difficulty clogged the question which required an answer, the language of the oracle was clear and explicit; but in cases of a complicated and doubtful character, the response was proportionately equivocal. In cases of extreme difficulty, when the very existence of the oracle was at stake, no answer whatever could be obtained. Great management is apparent in all the measures connected with their consultation.

Of the different nations of antiquity, none were more famous for oracles than Egypt and Greece, where they existed in great numbers: among which, were those of Jupiter Ammon at Thebes and Ammonium, and those at Dodona and Delphi, the last of which became the most celebrated, and consequently the most frequented of all. With the exception of the Cumanæ Sibyl, the Sibylline books, and a few others, the Romans had no domestic oracles, but availed themselves, on particular occasions, of the Egyptian and Grecian.

The fact, that most of these oracles became silent about the time of the introduction of Christianity, has induced many to believe that there was really something supernatural in them; that they were the result of demoniacal inspiration; and that their cessation is to be ascribed to the victory gained by our Saviour over the powers of darkness. In this hypothesis there is much to commend itself to the Christian mind; and could the basis, on which it rests, be shown to be sufficiently solid, it might lay claim to universal adoption. On examining the

history of oracles, however, we meet with so many traces of manifest duplicity and fraud; such a disposition to philippize; such a combination of effective physical causes; such a degree of ignorance and superstition on the part of the credulous multitude; and such an interest to support on that of the priests and rulers; that it is impossible to suppress the conviction that the whole is resolvable into human wickedness, acted upon and disposed of, indeed, by the Spirit that worketh in the children of disobedience, but involving no agency of a strictly miraculous or extraordinary character. We accordingly find, that, before the coming of our Saviour, they had in a great measure fallen into discredit, owing partly to the detection of the artifices employed to deceive the applicants, partly to the failure of their predictions, partly to their mutual contradictions, and partly to the obscurity and ambiguity in which they were generally involved. Many of those who had been their votaries, now repudiated them, and philosophers of different schools hurled against them the shafts of their ridicule. Eusebius states, in his *Præparatio Evangelica*, that they had been attacked by not fewer than six hundred pagan writers; and to judge from the fragments which he has preserved of a work of CEnomaus on the subject, these attacks must have been conducted in the keenest and most unsparing manner.

That the rapid spread and signal triumphs of the gospel should have been mainly instrumental in effecting the eventual and complete overthrow of oracular authority, was the necessary result of its subversion of the reigning systems of idolatry, by which that authority was chiefly supported. In proportion as its light was diffused and its power felt, men were turned from dumb idols to serve the living God, and lying vanities were abandoned for the words of eternal life. Still it is evident, from the historical statements both of Christian and Pagan authors, that certain oracles continued to be consulted, and to give their pretended responses a considerable time after the Christian æra. Those at Delphos and Daphne existed even in the reign of the Emperor Constantius; and it was not

till the entire eradication of idolatry had been effected, that the superstition became extinct.

While these counterfeit inspirations were held in detestation by the early Christian writers, except when they could be interpreted so as to bear evidence in favour of the truth of Christianity, they regarded in a very different light the Sibylline oracles, or verses purporting to have been deposited at Rome, and containing distinct recognitions of the creation, the fall, the deluge, &c., together with striking prophecies respecting the birth, actions, sufferings, death, and resurrection of Christ, the succession of several of the Roman emperors, and the universal conflagration at the end of the world. These statements and prophecies accorded so completely with the representations of Scripture, that the Fathers appear to have conceived it impossible to employ a more convincing *argumentum ad hominem* than by appealing to their testimony. There can be no doubt, however, that the collection, to which these appeals were made, was, for the most part, a fabrication of the second century. The original oracles were delivered by pagan females, who were believed to be inspired by the gods, the most renowned of whom was the Sibyl of Cumæ in Campania, to which place the oracle and worship of Apollo had been conveyed from the Trojan Ida. What remained of the books, which she offered to Tarquin, was afterwards augmented by the addition of a number more; and though burnt with the Capitol, great efforts were made to collect them anew from various quarters; and of those which were collected, not fewer than one thousand verses were declared to be genuine, and preserved with the greatest care in the new temple of Jupiter Capitolinus. So great was their authority, that a vast number of spurious productions appeared under their name, many of which contained an amalgamation of heathen prophecies, with imitations of the LXX. and ultimately of the Christian Scriptures:—a circumstance which accounts in part for the extreme jealousy with which the Roman government regarded the existence of such oracles in private hands, and the high estimation

in which they were held by Clement of Alexandria, and other Christian authors in and before his time.

To one or other of these collections in its purer state, it is not impossible Virgil may have been indebted for his glowing description of the golden age, contained in his fourth Eclogue, in which he expressly refers to the Cumæan oracle; and thus, at second hand, he may have borrowed his imagery from the Jewish Scriptures. The eight books at present extant under the name of the Sibyls, contain most of what was used by the Fathers; but they have also been made up of additional matter—the result of well-meant but most unjustifiable attempts to gain over the pagans to a belief in Christianity. The same must be said respecting the books which passed under the names of Hydaspes, Trismegistus, and others, for which a high antiquity was claimed, and whose predictions were ascribed to inspiration. The best editions of the Sibylline oracles are those of Servatius Gallæus, Amst. 1689, in 4to., and Angelo Majo, Milan, 1817, in 8vo. Consult the work of Professor Thorlacius, published at Copenhagen, 1815, in 8vo., under the title *Libri Sibyllistarum veteris ecclesiæ*; and Bleek in the *Zeitschrift* of Schleiermacher, St. I. II.; Scott's IVth Lecture on the Existence and Agency of Evil Spirits; and Stuart on the Apocalypse, vol. i. pp. 87—107.

NOTE N. Page 267.

If the text, 2 Tim. iii. 16, had read *πᾶσα ἡ γραφή*, the interpretation, “*all* Scripture,” would not have been disputed. That no stress, however, is to be laid on the absence of the article, must be evident from the peculiarly appropriated and definite sense in which *γραφὴ* is here used. What the apostle designates by the term was so pre-eminent and notorious, that the article was no more required to give it a greater degree of weight than it was in such cases as *πᾶσα Ἱεροσόλυμα*, Matth. ii. 3; *πᾶς οἶκος Ἰσραὴλ*, Acts ii. 36; *πᾶς Ἰσραὴλ*, Rom. xi. 26; *πᾶσα πατριὰ*, Eph. iii. 15. In all these, and



similar cases, there is a grand, well-known whole, to which reference is made, which renders any further definiteness unnecessary. Compare *πάσα συναγωγή*, Exod. xvi. 2, Josh. xviii. 1; *πάσαν συναγωγήν*, Lev. viii. 3; *πάσης συναγωγῆς*, Numb. xxvii. 10; *πάσα ἐκκλησία*, 1 Kings viii. 14, 55; *μετὰ πάσης δυνάμεως*, Diod. Sic. 19, 23; *ἅπας λεώς*, Himer. 13, 3; Winer's Gram. § 17. 10. Note; *πάσα οἰκοδομή*, Eph. ii. 21, as exhibited in BDEGI 44, 48, 67 \*\*. 72, 73, 74, 80, 91, 106, 109, 219, 238, al. pl. Lect. 1, 8, 13, (his) edd. Clem. Bas. Chrys. (in Comment.) Theodoret. Œc. Though *καὶ* is not expressed in the Syriac, Vulgate, and Arabic versions, all of which are closely related to each other, it is not wanting in a single MS. of the Greek New Testament that has yet been collated. It is, therefore, perfectly unwarrantable to omit it in translation, as some have done. That the Greek Fathers understood an ellipsis of the substantive verb after *θεόπνευστος*, cannot be disputed. Thus Origen: *πάσα γραφή θεόπνευστος οὖσα, ὠφέλιμος ἔστι*.—The author of the Synopsis: *πάσα γραφή ἡμῶν χριστιανῶν θεόπνευστος ἐστίν. οὐκ ἀόριστα δὲ, ἀλλὰ μᾶλλον ὠρισμένα καὶ κεκανονισμένα ἔχει τὰ βιβλία· καὶ ἐστὶ τῆς μὲν παλαιᾶς διαθήκης, ταῦτα, κ.τ.λ.* S. Athanas. Opera. tom. ii. p. 55, ed. Colog.—Basil M. *πάσα γραφή θεόπνευστος καὶ ὠφέλιμος, διὰ τοῦτο συγγραφείσα παρὰ τοῦ πνεύματος, κ.τ.λ.* Proem. in Psalm.

## NOTE O. Page 270.

Various explications have been given of the words *πάσα προφητεία γραφῆς ἰδίας ἐπιλύσεως οὐ γίνεται*, (2 Pet. i. 20,) of which the following are the principal:—1. No prophecy is of *arbitrary* interpretation. 2. No prophecy is of *separate* or detached interpretation. 3. All prophecy is not to be *literally* interpreted. 4. No prophecy could be explained by *the prophets themselves*. 5. No prophecy can be interpreted by *the unassisted powers of the reader*. 6. No prophecy is of *self-solution*. 7. No prophecy can be rendered *invalid*. 8. No prophecy is



the result of *private* or *uninspired disclosure*. The sixth is that which Bishop Horsley has adopted, and which, in consequence of the ability with which he has defended it, has met with very general acceptance. Yet the same objection lies against it, which has been adduced against most of the others—its want of strict agreement with the statement made in the following verse. In fact, the last of these different constructions is the only one which at once suits the preceding and following context. The subject of discourse is the prophetic oracles contained in the Old Testament, which the apostle proceeds to show were equally to be depended on with the voice from the excellent glory, forasmuch as they did not originate with man, but with the Spirit of God. What confirms this view of the passage is the appropriation of the term *ἴδιος* in such connection, precisely as it is used by Philo, in the section quoted in the Introductory Lecture, p. 37. And, that it is the origination of the prophetic matter, and not the mere interpretation of it, after it has been delivered to the church, which is intended, may be argued from the verb *γίνεται*, and not *ἔστι*, being employed. The former, it is well known, does not denote simple existence, but the commencement of existence—the coming into being, the origination of any thing. The only difficulty connected with this interpretation is the sense in which it requires *ἐπιλύσις* to be taken—a sense which, it is freely admitted, is not found elsewhere to attach to the word. But though it is not used in the exact sense of *revelation* or *inspiration*, the instances in which it, or the cognate verb *ἐπιλύω*, are employed (Gen. xl. 8, LXX. & Aquila; Hos. iii. 4, Symmachus; Mark iv. 34), all convey the idea of information imparted respecting obscure or difficult matters, in consequence of supernatural or divine influence. It is, therefore, equivalent to *ἐρμηνεία*, in the sense of a communication made by a divine interpreter, and may have been employed in this sense by the apostle. See on the passage Wolfii Curæ Philol.

## NOTE P. Page 277.

Est enim *scripturæ* et *prædicationis* par ratio. Quæ enim voce prædicabatur doctrina, ea postea juvandæ memoriæ causa consignabatur literis, et quæ causa erat, cur prædicationem ex divina inspiratione oporteret peragi, ea militabat pro scriptionis eo magis, quod scriptura deberet esse medium doctrinæ ejusdem incorrupte ad finem mundi usque conservandæ et ad posteritatem propagandæ.—*Musæus in Spinosismo*, p. 69.

## NOTE Q. Page 279.

That *δοκεῖν* (1 Cor. vii. 40) is not designed to express doubt or uncertainty, is admitted by the best critics. “Verbum *δοκῶ* “non incertam quandam opinionem, sed convictionem et scientiam infert, ut Joh. v. 39, Acts xv. 28, et Matth. xvii. 25.” *Wolfius*. “Verbum *δοκῶ* non incertam opinionem, sed convictionem et exploratam notitiam infert: certum habeo, conscio “mihi.” *Heydenreich*. “In Nov. Test. verbum *δοκεῖν* non- “nunquam non de existimatione aut judicio super aliqua re “explicandum est, sed rem, de qua sermo est, affirmat, sive “potius *πλεονάζει*,” &c. *Glassii Phil. Sac.* ed. Dath. p. 229. “Mr. 10, 42, sind οἱ δοκοῦντες ἄρχειν τῶν ἐθνῶν die für die “*Beherrscher der Völker gelten, dafür anerkannt sind* (ähnl. “*Arrian Epict.* 1, 9, vgl. *Soph. Aj.* 1114. *Hist. Susan.* 5. “*Joseph. Antt.* 19, 6, 3; die Parallelstelle Mt. 20, 25, hat “blos οἱ ἄρχοντες; *Luc.* 22, 24, τὸς αὐτῶν δοκεῖ εἶναι μείζων “*quis videatur habere* (habiturus esse) *principatum*, von wem “man urtheilen müsse, dass er den Vorzug (vor den übrigen) “habe; die Sache ist noch zukünftig, und so nur Gegenstand “des muthmaasslichen Urtheils; 1 Cor. 11, 16, εἴ τις δοκεῖ “*φιλόνηκος εἶναι* si tibi placet litigare (*Stolz*; will Iem. hier- “über streiten) obschon in dieser Bed. gern der Dativ des Pron. “(ἐαυτῷ) wenigstens in Prosa dabei steht; *Luc.* 8, 18, “ὁ δοκεῖ ἔχειν was er glaubt (recht fest) zu besitzen. Ueber “1 Cor. 3, 18, 7, 40, 14, 37. *Heb.* 4, 1, (wo Böhme das *δοκεῖ*

“für elegantius hält!) bedarf es keiner Bemerkung.” *Winer’s Grammatik*, p. 494, 3d Ed. The note of Calvin is not undeserving of notice: “Non tamen videtur ironia carere quod dicit. *Existimo*. Nam quum pseudo-apostoli, Spiritum Dei inflatis buccis identidem jactarent ad auctoritatem sibi arrogandam, et interea Paulo detrahere studerent; dicit se quoque sibi videri compotem Spiritus non minus quam ipsos.” —*Comment. in loc.*

NOTE R. Page 292.

“*Digito Dei fuerunt scriptæ*, id est, opere Dei, ab ipso Deo, non ab homine, vel angelo. *Digitus* Dei significat Dei omnipotentiam, (Exod. viii. 19; Luc. xi. 20.) Sensus igitur est, quod operatione Dei immediata, sine angelorum ministerio, lex duabus tabulis fit impressa, Dei enim *dicere* est *facere*. Psalm cxv. 3; Psalm xxxiii. 9.”—*Gerhardi Loc. Theol.* tom. v. p. 236.

NOTE S. Page 311.

The position, that the phrase  $\delta \lambda\acute{o}\gamma\omicron\varsigma \tau\omicron\upsilon \Theta\epsilon\omicron\upsilon$ , is never used of the written word, or the revelation of the will of God contained in the Scriptures, must appear unwarranted to those who impartially and carefully examine the following passages: Ps. cxix.; Prov. xxx. 5; Mark vii. 13; John x. 35; Heb. iv. 12.

NOTE T. Page 322.

That the Book of Genesis was, in part at least, compiled from ancient accounts handed down by oral tradition in the church of God, is an opinion which was first advanced by Vitringa in his *Observationes Sacræ*, lib. i. c. iv. § 23. It was afterwards adopted and defended by Le Cene, Calmet, and Astruc. The refinements which have been made upon it by Eichhorn, Ilgen, Gramberg, and other German writers, have in no small degree brought it into discredit; but the discriminative use of the Divine names יהוה and אלהים, in the three first

chapters, can only be accounted for on some such principle. See the Introductions of Horne, Eichhorn, Jahn, and Bertholdt, Dr. J. Pye Smith's Congregational Lecture, p. 207, and Stuart on the O. T. Canon, p. 54.

## NOTE U. Page 449.

“ — The supposition, that miraculous powers were gradually withdrawn from the Church, appears in a great measure to account for the uncertainty which has prevailed respecting the period of their cessation. To adopt the language of undoubting confidence on such a subject, would be a mark no less of folly than presumption; but I may be allowed to state the conclusion to which I have myself been led, by a comparison of the statements in the Book of Acts with the writings of the Fathers of the second century. My conclusion then is, that the power of working miracles was not extended beyond the disciples upon whom the apostles conferred it by the imposition of their hands. As the number of those disciples gradually diminished, the instances of the exercise of miraculous powers became continually less frequent, and ceased entirely at the death of the last individual on whom the hands of the apostles had been laid. That event would, in the natural course of things, take place before the middle of the second century; at a time when, Christianity having obtained a footing in all the provinces of the Roman empire, the miraculous gifts conferred upon its first teachers had performed their appropriate office—that of proving to the world that a New Revelation had been given from heaven. What, then, would be the effect produced upon the minds of the great body of Christians by their gradual cessation? Many would not observe, none would be willing to observe it; for all must naturally feel a reluctance to believe that powers which had contributed so essentially to the rapid diffusion of Christianity, were withdrawn. They who remarked the cessation of miracles, would

“ probably succeed in persuading themselves that it was only  
 “ temporary, and designed by an all-wise Providence to be the  
 “ prelude to a more abundant effusion of supernatural gifts  
 “ upon the Church. Or if doubts and misgivings crossed their  
 “ minds, they would still be unwilling openly to state a fact,  
 “ which might shake the stedfastness of the friends, and would  
 “ certainly be urged by the enemies of the gospel, as an argu-  
 “ ment against its divine origin. They would pursue the  
 “ plan which has been pursued by Justin Martyr, Theophilus,  
 “ Irenæus, &c. ; they would have recourse to general assertions  
 “ of the existence of supernatural powers, without attempting  
 “ to produce a specific instance of their exercise. The silence  
 “ of ecclesiastical history, respecting the cessation of miraculous  
 “ gifts in the Church, is to be ascribed, not to the insensibility  
 “ of Christians to that event, but to the combined influence of  
 “ prejudice and policy—of prejudice which made them reluctant  
 “ to believe, of policy which made them anxious to conceal,  
 “ the truth.”—*Bp. Kay’s Eccles. Hist. of the Second and Third*  
*Centuries*, pp. 98—100, 2d ed. The same view of the subject  
 is substantially presented by the late Dr. Burton, in his *History*  
*of the Christian Church*, pp. 185—187, Christ. Know. edit. 1836;  
 and by Dr. Waddington, in his *History of the Church*, p. 19.

#### NOTE X. Page 450.

Scarcely had the miraculous gifts ceased, when the Cataphry-  
 gians sprang up, who laid claim to a greater plenitude of them  
 than had been enjoyed even in the apostolic age. They took  
 their name from the circumstances, that Montanus, to whom  
 they owed their origin, was born at the village of Ardaba in  
 the province of Mysia, bordering on Phrygia (ἐν τῇ κατὰ τὴν  
 Φρύγιαν Μυσίᾳ); that most of them, at first, were natives of  
 that province; and that Pepuza and Tymium were their great  
 resort, and, in their estimation, the predicted New Jerusalem  
 of the Revelation. They made their appearance soon after the  
 middle of the second century. Their founder appears to have

been a man of melancholy temperament, and an overheated imagination, given to ecstatic abstractions of mind, and subject to the most extravagant enthusiasms. Not content with maintaining the continuance of the miraculous gifts of the Spirit, he went so far in the arrogance of his pretensions as to assert, that he was the Paraclete promised by our Saviour—by which, however, it would be doing him injustice to suppose he meant the Holy Spirit personally. All he intended appears to have been, that, as the Divine dispensations were progressive in their character, and that of Christ and the apostles was more eminent than those which preceded it, so the dispensation, with which he was entrusted, was supplementary to the gospel, and distinguished by a more plentiful degree of supernatural influence. He was irreproachable in his moral character, a rigid disciplinarian, and, except on the point just mentioned, orthodox in his doctrinal principles. Attaching to himself Priscilla and Maximilla, two ladies of rank and fortune, who left their husbands, and assumed the character of prophetesses, he soon attracted attention—no less by his own frantic manifestations, than by the fanatical spirit, and bold, alarming predictions, to which these and others of his disciples gave utterance. They all represented themselves to be the mere passive organs of the Spirit, by whose power they were, during their ecstasies, bereft of all self-possession. If we may believe the statements of Epiphanius, many of their prophecies were couched in the most extravagant language. They foretold in particular the fall of the Roman empire; the coming of Antichrist; and the speedy commencement of the Millennium.

The sensation which was created by the appearance of Montanus and his prophetesses led to considerable opposition on the part of the neighbouring bishops; several works were written against them, and they were at length formally denounced: but the sect rapidly multiplied not only in Asia and Africa, but also in Europe, and continued to exist under various names so late as the sixth century. What principally contributed to its prosperity was the severity of its discipline,



which, contrasted with the lax and accommodating spirit which began to prevail, greatly recommended it to notice. It was beyond all doubt this feature of its character, which operated upon the mind of Tertullian, already strongly imbued with ascetic feelings, who, about the year 199, embraced its general principles, though it is thought he became less attached to them as he advanced in life. Whoever will carefully peruse what has been preserved to us of the sentiments and practices of the Montanists, will find in them the prototypes of almost all the extravagances broached by those who, in succeeding ages, have pretended to inspiration and prophecy.<sup>1</sup>

Not to enter into a detailed account of the imaginary visions and revelations of Leuthard in the tenth century; Elizabeth and Hildegardis in the twelfth; St. Francis in the thirteenth; St. Brigitta and the French Dancers in the fourteenth; Elizabeth Barton, or the Holy Maid of Kent, and Munzer, Storck, and others of the Anabaptists, in the sixteenth—who, laying claim to celestial communications, and, some of them, to a divine commission, gave utterance to prophecies and warnings by which they more or less seduced the credulous multitude—we pass on to notice the pretensions of some of those, who, from the seventeenth century downwards, have advanced unscriptural notions on the subject of supernatural influence.

In consequence of the circulation of the works of Paracelsus, Weigel, Boehme, Gichtel, and other Rosicrucians, a spirit of mysticism began to obtain on the continent, which resulted partly in assurances of a supposed inward light, which was elevated above the Scriptures, and partly in ecstatic abstractions, visions, and fancied inspirations, prophecies, and miracles.

(1) Eusebii Hist. Eccles. lib. v. c. 16; Mosheim's Church Hist. b. i. p. 2, ch. 5, §§ 23, 24; Weismanni Introd. in Memorab. Eccles. Secul. ii. § xviii.; M. Wernsdorf Commentatio, de Montanistis, &c. Dantzig. 1751, 4to.; Neander's Kirchengeschichte, 1 Band, 3 Abtheil, pp. 579—595; Bp. Kay's Eccles. Hist. p. 12—35. The History of Montanism, by a Layman (Dr. Lee, of St. John's College, Oxford), in Dr. Hickes's Spirit of Enthusiasm exorcised. London, 1709.

Most of those who laid claim to these privileges were persons of unimpeachable character, and, to all appearance, sincere in their piety. The first appearances of this description took place in connection with the Moravian Brethren, one of whose bishops, the learned Comenius, mixed himself up in some measure with them, and left an account of some of the more remarkable revelations. A number of imposing prophecies were delivered by Cotter, a native of Silesia, occasioned by the political aspect of the times, and were received as divine by some of the most pious then living; but as several of them related to things, that were soon to happen, their non-fulfilment proved their falsity; the pretended seer lost his credit, and was at last banished his country. It might have been supposed, that such failures would have opened the eyes of the good bishop; but he was again imposed upon by a female named Christina Poniatovsky, who, in the year 1627, began to experience ecstasies, and give forth extraordinary revelations; and was the subject of pretended miracles, such as a sudden recovery from lameness, and a resurrection from an alleged state of death. The disclosures which she made were both of a political and religious nature, and such were the impressions produced by them, that, after much prayer and deliberation, at a synod of the Brethren, held in 1629, it was decided, that the matter should be left in abeyance, lest, from the difference of opinion which existed, a rupture might take place in the church. Nor did the non-occurrence of the events which Christina foretold render Comenius and his fellow-believers in these claims incredulous respecting their character; for scarcely had Dabricius, one of the Moravian pastors, some years afterwards, propounded similar revelations, than they also were admitted to be divine.<sup>1</sup>

Visionary pretensions were revived in Germany, towards the close of the seventeenth century, in the persons of two ladies of rank, Rosamunde Juliana von Asseburg, and Johanna Eleonore von Merlan, both of whom professed to be favoured

(1) Goode's *Modern Claims*, pp. 162—164.

with extraordinary communications from heaven, and predicted with great confidence the immediate commencement of the thousand years' reign, and the restitution of all things;<sup>1</sup> and in Antoinette Bourignon, whose supernatural gifts were asserted with equal confidence; but all who had hitherto appeared were eclipsed by the Camisards, or the prophets of the Cevennes in France, who sprang up to the number of several thousands, amidst the persecutions which followed the revocation of the edict of Nantz in 1685. According to testimonies given by themselves, the gifts were liberally bestowed on persons of both sexes, and of different ages and conditions of life. Children between three and twelve years of age, and some only thirteen or fourteen months old, had the gift of exhortation; some pretended to that of tongues, some to the discerning of men's thoughts, and a knowledge of future events; and some to the power of working miracles. They were subject to the most violent agitations and convulsions of body; stretching out their arms and legs, and staggering several times before they dropped down; they then struck themselves with the hand, fell on their back, shut their eyes, heaved with the breast, and, after remaining some time in trances, came out of them with twitchings, and gave utterance to their inspirations, sometimes with great vehemence and incoherence—at others, more connectedly and calmly. They uniformly maintained, that they were compelled by an invisible, over-ruling power to deliver themselves as they did.<sup>2</sup>

Having been, for the most part, hunted down by the king's troops, those who survived took refuge in other countries, especially in our own, where they continued their pretensions. Their leaders, Marion, Cavalier, and Fage, were joined, in the year 1706, by Nicholas Facio, a learned mathematician, John Lacy, a gentleman of property, and Sir Richard Bulkeley, who assisted them in their attempts to introduce, what they impiously termed, "The New Dispensation," which was to begin in

(1) Guericke Handb. der Allgem. Kirchengesch. p. 880.

(2) Goode's Modern Claims, pp. 169—180.

England, and be manifest over the whole earth within the short term of three years. Their proceedings were marked by the same agitations, heavings of the breast, and humming noises, which had characterised the proceedings of the party in France. They gave vent to their feelings on all occasions, in private houses and in public assemblies—accompanying their announcements with violent gesticulations; beating marches, and showing other signs of military exercise; singing, laughing, and frequently whistling aloud. They not only indulged in Hebrew, Greek, Latin, and French utterances, with which languages, it was alleged, they were unacquainted when out of the ecstasy, but spoke in a tongue equally unknown to themselves, and to those who heard them. They delivered numerous warnings and predictions, which, on being disproved by the event, they endeavoured to construe in a different manner. They also professed to work miracles; but, unfortunately for their cause, they staked its credit on the resurrection of a Dr. Emms, which it was explicitly predicted was to happen on the 25th of May, 1708, about five months after his interment. By the complete failure which ensued, the eyes of many of the visionaries were opened to the delusion, the influence of which gradually diminished, especially in the metropolis, which had been the principal scene of action. The immoral conduct in which Mr. Lacy, one of the chief prophets, was afterwards known to indulge, also contributed to bring it to a close, as a matter of public notoriety in this country.<sup>1</sup>

Some of the fraternity continued, however, to meet at Boston and Manchester; from which latter place, under the name of Shakers, a number of them proceeded, in the year 1774, to America, headed by Ann Lee, a blacksmith's wife, who had been cruelly persecuted for her opinions, and who acquired such an ascendancy over her followers, that they acknowledged her as their spiritual mother in Christ, and gave her the title of *Mother Ann*. They first settled at Watersliet, in the State

(1) Goode, *ut sup.* pp. 181—196. Calamy's Life, vol. ii. pp. 71—78, 94—98, 103—105, 111, 112.

of New York, but afterwards formed a more permanent establishment at New Lebanon, which is still regarded as the common centre of union for all the societies which exist in different parts of the country. Their notions on subjects of doctrine are grossly erroneous. Their views of Deity are dualistic; they hold the sinful humanity of Christ, and sinless perfection in this life. They place their much-boasted mother on a par with our Saviour, and regard her as a second Eve, in whom, as the first-born daughter, to use their own language, "the image and likeness of the eternal Mother was formed, as really as the image and likeness of the eternal Father was formed in the Lord Jesus, the first-born Son."<sup>1</sup> Having received what she considered to be the fulness of the Divine Spirit, she had numerous visions and manifestations, to which her followers still pretend, as they also do to the gift of prophecy, speaking with tongues, discerning of spirits, and the power of working miracles. Benjamin Whitcher, one of the aged brethren, whose Testimonies, as approved by the church, were published in 1827,<sup>2</sup> declares, under date July 23, 1826, that "Mother Ann and the first elders were endowed with all those spiritual gifts, which were so abundantly poured out upon the apostles at the day of Pentecost; and many of the believers actually received the same spiritual gifts through their ministration, and these gifts have continued in the church to this day. However incredible or unaccountable these things may appear to those who are without Christ and without God in the world, I am fully established in this truth, and can confidently testify to all men, without the least doubt or hesitation, that Christ did commence his second appearance by his Spirit, in Mother Ann, to complete the work of salvation and redemption, according to his promise;—that she was a chosen vessel, anointed and commissioned of God

(1) Peculiarities of the Shakers, p. 79. New York, 1832.

(2) Testimonies concerning the Character and Ministry of Mother Ann Lee, and the first Witnesses of the Gospel of Christ's Second Appearing. Albany, 1827, p. 154.



“ to reveal to fallen man the seat of human depravity, and to  
“ preach the gospel of salvation to a lost world ;—and that she  
“ and the first witnesses did actually administer the only way  
“ of salvation to all who believed and obeyed her testimony.”  
Their present number exceeds five thousand, and is said to be rapidly increasing. More than two-thirds of the number have been added to the Society since the commencement of the present century ; a circumstance which is, no doubt, in a great measure, to be ascribed to those spurious excitements, which may be regarded as morbid fanatical excrescences of the remarkable revivals of religion which have taken place within that period in the state of Kentucky and other parts adjacent.

To return to Britain, whence this branch of Inspirationists emanated : if we except the pretended commissions of Richard Brothers and Joanna Southcote, whose fictitious revelations and prophecies attracted attention for a time, and those of the latter far beyond what might have been expected, considering the crass absurdities by which they were marked, nothing preferring claims to be a revival of the extraordinary gifts of the apostolic church appeared, till the year 1830, when they were advanced at Fernicarry on the Gareloch, and at Port Glasgow in the west of Scotland, from which places they were speedily transferred to one of the Scotch churches in London, where Mr. Irving had gradually been preparing for their admission, by a course of prophetic and spiritual interpretation of the most eccentric, yet highly fascinating description. Alarmed at the political movements of the day, every aspect of prophecy which seemed to bear on the coming of Christ in judgment upon his enemies, was laid under contribution, and made to tell on the circumstances of the times : with the announcement of the doom of Babylon was propounded a peculiar system of Millenarianism ; and in order that the church might be prepared for the return of her Lord, it was declared to be her duty to pray for the restoration of the miraculous gifts of the Spirit. What was taught with all the solemnity and assurance of an ambassador from heaven, met with a corresponding



reception from the great bulk of the hearers. A wide-spreading expectation was excited, and in many the firm belief was produced, that the Lord would immediately appear. At this juncture, utterances broke forth, partly of an unknown and inexplicable description, and partly in English, of which the latter were regarded as prophetic announcements, to be implicitly received and obeyed. At first, they were confined to private meetings, but in 1831 they made their appearance in the public congregation, and continued to convey warnings of divine judgments, and predictions of a complete restoration of the apostolic office, with all the accompanying supernatural endowments; a new church order, and the coming of Christ in glory, after testimony had been borne to the world for three years and a half, commencing from the 14th of January, 1832. The expulsion of Mr. Irving from the church in which he had officiated, and into which these novelties had been introduced, was the signal for the formation of a new constitution of things: ministries of apostles, angels, pillars, prophets, elders, and evangelists, have been successively established, and are now under the presidency of a leader, who unites in his own person the characters of "Pillar of the Apostles," "Pillar of the Angels," and "Angel of the church at Albury." They consider the antitypes of the ancient Jewish tabernacle and all its appurtenances to exist among them—each member answering, in some respect or other, to something belonging to that erection. The tithe system is strictly carried out in virtue of a mandate, that they shall all, without exception, pay one-tenth of their weekly expenditure into the treasury for supporting the different ministries; and submission as implicit is required to this and every other point ordained by the new apostles, as that which was demanded by Moses in the name of Jehovah.

The present position of this people is very peculiar. A high degree of excitement has been produced by what has taken place among them; and means are still employed for the purpose of keeping up this excitement, and extending it through the country; but the novelty of the manifestations

begins to wear away; several distinct and pointed predictions have completely failed; the unknown tongue still remains uninterpreted, while the English utterances, which are still more or less continued, have nothing in them indicative of a celestial origin; all attempts at the performance of miracles have proved abortive; impostures and other evils have been detected; some pious persons, who took a leading part in the scenes which were enacted, have become convinced of the delusion, and retain so deep a sense of its horrid nature, that they find it impossible to rid their minds of the idea, that it can only be resolved into diabolical influence—an immediate inspiration of Satan, wrought with a view to counteract the work of God, which is going forward on the earth. Much anxiety prevails with respect to the disclosures, which are to be made by the conclave of the twelve apostles now sitting at Albury, where they were commanded, by an utterance, to remain for a year in a state of separation from the church and the world; and all sorts of arguments are adopted in order to keep up a conviction, that God will reveal himself in the plenitude of his spiritual gifts, whatever may be the result of this or any other particular measure, and whatever may be the disappointments by which the faith of “the remnant” may be tried.<sup>1</sup>

In passing from a review of the pretensions put forth by the French prophets to that of those advanced by the Irvingites, we purposely omitted to notice the Swedenborgians, though they made their appearance in the interim—partly that we might avail ourselves of the intermediate link, which connects the two former parties, and partly that we might have an opportunity of examining separately the claims of the last-mentioned body of religionists.

(1) For a most satisfactory refutation of the claims advanced by this body, and others pretending to inspiration, the reader is referred to *The Modern Claims to the possession of the extraordinary Gifts of the Spirit*, stated and examined. By the Rev. William Goode, A. M. &c. London, 1834. 2d Edit. A work replete with learning, and sound scriptural reasoning. See also *Baxter's Irvingism*, and *Modern Fanaticism Unveiled*.

That we do them no injustice in placing them among those who believe in post-apostolic inspiration, must be obvious to all who are, in any measure, acquainted with the peculiar principles of their system, the seriously avowed supernatural intercourse of their founder with the invisible world, and their devoted attachment to his writings. They profess to regard Emmanuel Swedenborg as an extraordinary messenger of God to the world, speak of him as holding a divine commission, and scruple not to call him "the inspired Swedenborg."<sup>1</sup> According to his own statements, the Lord manifested himself to him, in a personal appearance, in the year 1743, by means of which "his interiors" were opened to a perception or sight of the spiritual world, and he was privileged to converse with angels and spirits, who imparted to him information on an immense number of points previously unknown to mankind. This privilege, he tells us, he continued to enjoy for the space of twenty-seven years. Most of his visions, he avers, he had in the body; but, on some particular occasions, his spirit was separated from the body, and had immediate commerce with the inhabitants of the spiritual world. Among other arcana which he professes to have had revealed to him, is that which continues to be the principal prop of Swedenborgianism—a spiritual sense of the words of Scripture. "Lest mankind," he says, "should remain any longer in doubt concerning the divinity and most adorable sanctity of the word, it hath pleased the Lord to reveal to me its internal sense, which, in its essence, is spiritual:—a sense, which hath never heretofore entered into the conception of any person on earth."<sup>2</sup> By the doctrine of correspondences, which the Baron's extensive acquaintance with natural science, and his almost boundless imagination, admirably qualified him to elucidate, he found no difficulty in bringing a mystical meaning out of every part of the literal narrative. If we receive his revelations, we must believe that Egypt signifies what is scientific; Asshur, what is rational; Edom, what is natural; Moab, the adulteration of

(1) True Christian Religion, p. 7.

(2) Ibid. pp. 222, 223.

good; Ammon, the adulteration of truth; the Philistines, faith without charity; Tyre and Sidon, the knowledge of goodness and truth; Gog, external worship without internal; Jacob, the church-natural; Israel, the church-spiritual; and Judah, the church-celestial.<sup>1</sup> In mystical interpretation, he far surpasses Philo, Origen, and the whole tribe of spiritualizers. The influence of the system on the doctrines of the Trinity, the Mediation of Christ, Justification through Faith, and indeed all the peculiar articles of the Christian faith, is radically subversive. Under the pretext of belief in the plenary inspiration of the Scriptures, he and his followers fill them with all imaginable fictions; turn the soberest realities into allegory; and, while they profess to find stores of hidden wisdom beneath the surface of the letter, supply their disciples with the rubbish of deception and error. They imagine, that, by their dexterity in the science of spiritual discovery, they can meet all the objections of infidels; but principles of exegesis, which are an outrage on the dictates of common sense, and which, if consistently followed out, would authorize our converting profane history itself into an allegory, are not likely to commend themselves to persons of that description. It may further be observed, that the Swedenborgians believe only certain books of the Bible to be strictly the Scriptures or the absolute word of God, viz. the Law, the Prophets, the Psalms, the Gospels, and the book of Revelation. To all the rest, they deny plenary inspiration, and regard them merely as the compositions of highly gifted men, who were under a general illumination from the Spirit of God.

The last class of professing Christians, to whose sentiments on the subject of continued inspiration it is necessary to advert, consists of the Friends, or the body originally and still generally known by the name of Quakers. To the miraculous endowments, which distinguished the apostolic age, they make no pretensions. From the visionary extravagances by which some other sects have rendered themselves ridiculous, they are also in the present day, for the most part, exempt. One of the

(1) True Christian Religion, p. 228.

fundamental points, however, in which they differ from the general body of Christians, is that of immediate revelation, or a direct, internal presentation of truth to the soul, a new objective revelation, which becomes the supreme rule or guide, and is altogether distinct from, and independent of, the external testimony of Scripture. They refuse to call the Scriptures "the word of God," and will not allow them to be the primary rule of faith and manners. They believe in the actual inspiration and divine authority of the Bible, and admit its great practical utility. They also concede to it the exclusive prerogative of being the only fit outward judge of controversies among Christians; but they will not admit, that it constitutes the ultimate standard, to which the inward light or testimony is to be subordinate.

The consequences of the adoption of this principle have been the concession of a greater degree of attention to the supposed internal light, perceptible guidance, or mental impressions, than to the light of divine truth as shining in the holy Scriptures; the assumption of a saving light, which, it is maintained, is imparted in a direct or immediate manner to all mankind; the palpable confounding of the two essentially distinct doctrines of justification and sanctification; and, to a lamentable extent, the reduction of the blessed and saving instruction of the Holy Spirit to the mere operations of natural reason.

By the salutary influence of the Bible Society, however, in the operations of which the Friends have happily been led to take a most active part, and by the contact into which they have been brought with genuine Christians of different denominations, as well as by the more general diffusion of the principles of evangelical truth among them, a very considerable change has been effected in their body on the subject of personal inspiration, and other topics connected with it. The Bible has risen in estimation; many of its texts, which had been seen through a distorted medium, are now viewed in their true light; its commanding power has been more sensibly felt; the excellence of its truths has induced to its more extensive



perusal, both privately and in the family circle; and there is reason to believe that many members of the Society would now cheerfully consent to the reading of it being introduced as a constituent part of their public worship. A comparison of the "sure testimonies" of God, contained in his word, with the variable standard of an imaginary inward revelation, has discovered the uncertain and consequently unsatisfactory character of the latter, and created a desire to remove from the former the degrading epithet of a secondary rule, and restore it to its proper place as THE REVELATION and THE RULE, which alone possess objective certitude.

What has in no small degree contributed to bring matters to an issue in the minds of some of the more enlightened and pious members of this community, and is likely to operate still more powerfully on the body, is the discovery, that the principle of universal inward light, if carried out to its whole length, naturally leads to Deism, or at least merges most easily in Rationalism, for which its advocacy is little else than a different name. Of this a mournful exemplification has recently been furnished by Elias Hickes and his numerous adherents in America, formerly belonging to the Society, who have been seduced into an undisguised denial of the fundamental doctrines of the Christian Religion.<sup>1</sup>

(1) Since the above was written, the Author has had the happiness to find his views respecting the Friends fully supported in a masterly work on the subject by the Rev. Dr. Wardlaw, entitled, "Friendly Letters to the Society of Friends, on some of their distinguishing principles." Glasgow, 1836. 12mo.

THE END.











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