

*Discussions of
Theological Questions*

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DISCUSSIONS

OF

Theological Questions.

BY

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EDITED BY

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UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE SYNODS OF SOUTH CAROLINA, GEORGIA,
ALABAMA AND FLORIDA.



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EDITOR'S PREFACE.

IN the Minutes of the Alumni Association of the Columbia Theological Seminary of 1881 the following record is found:

“Upon the reassembling of the Association, the Rev. Dr. Palmer presented, with some remarks in regard to it, the following paper, which was unanimously adopted by a rising vote: ‘The Alumni of the Seminary, associated to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of their *Alma Mater*, respectfully and earnestly suggest to their beloved brother, the Rev. J. L. Girardeau, whether he can render any service to the Southern Church more important than to take up and complete the system of theology begun by the late and lamented Dr. Thornwell, and arrested by his death; giving to the world a complete work issuing from this Seminary, and the lasting testimony borne by it to the immutable truth of God.’”

Dr. Girardeau answered this call by giving the church *The Will in its Theological Relations, Calvinism and Evangelical Arminianism, Discussions of Philosophical Questions*, and these *Discussions of Theological Questions*. This is probably not exactly what the Association desired. They doubtless had in mind a Columbia textbook on theology, similar to those prepared by Dr. Hodge, of Princeton, and by Dr. Dabney, of Union. Dr. Girardeau had the qualifications necessary to complete such a work, but instead of this, the course he marked out for himself was only to write on such sub-

jects as in his judgment had not been satisfactorily treated by any other author whose writings were accessible to the church. This gives his readers assurance that, however much they may have read upon the subjects treated, they will find in his discussions something fresh, something that no one else has said, and something that he thought worth saying.

This volume was not arranged for the press by the author; he probably would have inserted the discussion, "The Federal Theology: its Import and its Regulative Influence," found in the *Semi-Centennial of the Columbia Theological Seminary*, which is one of his finest discussions; and would probably have left out, as not logically belonging to this volume, the "Appendix to the Discussion of Romanism." The first of these is already in permanent form; the second, although it is a digression, is so interesting, from more than one point of view, that the reader will doubtless justify its insertion. His discussion of the Christo-centric principle of theology, published in the *Presbyterian Quarterly* of January, 1892, would have been included in this volume but for the fact that it would have added too much to its size.

If it shall please the Lord to open the way for the publication of another volume, it will consist of sermons and addresses.

GEORGE A. BLACKBURN.

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DISCUSSIONS
OF
THEOLOGICAL QUESTIONS.

THE DEFINITION OF THEOLOGY.

IT is proposed in these remarks to consider the question of the Definition of Theology.

I. I can see no sufficient reason to reject the opinion of those who define theology to be the Science of Religion. It must be confessed that there are difficulties which appear to oppose any attempt to define it, and that plausible objections have been rendered to this particular mode of defining it. It is, therefore, requisite to explain and vindicate the definition which has just been offered.

The generic concept, it is needless to observe, under which any science must be reduced is knowledge. All science is knowledge, but, at the same time, all knowledge is not science. Everything depends upon the mode in which knowledge has been acquired, and the form in which it is possessed by the mind. The modes in which it may have been attained will stamp it with the respective denominations of spontaneous or unreflective, voluntary or reflective, and didactically communicated, knowledge. The first sort is the necessary result

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of the contact of perception, internal and external, with the phenomena of experience; the second is the product of the faculties of comparison energizing upon the empirical materials furnished by consciousness — the complement of internal and external perception; the third is the effect of faith relying upon the communications of a witness or a teacher. If the subject of knowledge remains content with the first and third of the kinds which have been enumerated; if he simply retains in memory the facts acquired by the spontaneous activity of consciousness, or by a believing absorption of those delivered by testimony and teaching, he stops short of science. He may possess a great mass of truth, which becomes operative practically through the necessary procedure of the law of association acting upon the conserved stores of the memory by suggestion or reminiscence; and this may be all that is requisite to meet the ordinary demands of life and conduct. This body of information may also be gathered up into certain rules of action, which operate both in the material and moral sphere. But these practical standards of action have themselves been the result of a spontaneous, and not of a voluntary exercise of the faculties. One cannot, in the normal state of the mental powers, help reaching them. Some reflection may be involved, but it is such as the mind, in accordance with the necessary laws of its activity, is compelled to institute. There is no such reflection as is determined by a free election of the will, involving analysis into causes, generalization into laws, and a systematic collection of parts into one harmonious whole, controlled by pervading principles and contem-

plating common ends. There is in this no science. It is only when voluntary reflection takes place that science begins. It is the result of the discursive or reasoning faculty comparing concepts with concepts, in the quest of a unity which will reduce the crude mass of facts into the coherence of a system. The raw materials are conceived under the relations of thought. These materials are furnished by the perceiving and believing powers, either immediately or by good and necessary deduction from the data immediately given, but it is the thinking faculty which arranges them into order. It analyzes their contents when existing in combination with each other, discovers ultimate, because unresolvable, facts, detects qualities common to different individuals — qualities which ground their resemblance to each other — employs these ultimate facts and common qualities as bases of classification, seeks a principle which brings classes of facts into unity, and in this way strives to secure a systematic arrangement of the whole. This systematized knowledge is science, the perfection of which will depend upon the accuracy of the process by which it has been reached.

The question whether theology is a science will, then, be determined by the answer to the question whether it is properly entitled to the designation of systematized knowledge. In the broadest sense of the term, theology has for the object-matter about which it is concerned religious truths; that is to say, truths which are intrinsically, in their very nature, religious, or natural facts, either mental or material, which, contemplated in their relations, take on a religious type. That theology should

be viewed in this broad aspect would seem to be required by the usages of language, which it were idle to correct. We habitually speak of a Pagan, a Mohammedan, a Romanist and a Protestant theology. They all come under the generic denomination of theology. The question, in the first instance, is not whether this system or that be a true theology; not whether its determination and arrangement of religious truths be correct; but whether the attempt is made to reduce any religious truths to a system. If the definition of theology should be rigidly confined to the truth or falsity of its matter, no definition could be reached. Every special denomination, even of evangelical Protestantism, would have its own peculiar definition. It is obvious that we must start with a distinction between theology in the general and a true theology in particular. Wherever facts professedly religious constitute the object-matter about which the organ of reflection is employed, a professed theology may be the result: the possibility of a science claiming to be a science of religion cannot be refused. Now, unless it can be shown that there is something in the very nature of religious facts which renders them incapable of being marshalled by the reflective faculty into systematic form, it must be conceded that they may be reduced to scientific arrangement. As this cannot be shown, the possibility of a science of religion is granted.

But while this is so, while to the eye of philosophical reason, looking broadly upon the whole case, a theology may exist wherever facts of a religious complexion may be collected into systematic shape, still limitations upon

the universal scope of the definition under consideration are absolutely necessary. To a just rational conception there may be a Pagan and a Mohammedan theology; but what value can they have, other than one of a speculative or historical character, to a Christian? Did he admit the existence of a universal religion characterized by the possession of certain generic and fundamental principles, theoretically true, however falsely applied they may be in specific religious systems, and that of this universal scheme the Christian religion is, like Paganism and Mohammedanism, one of its subordinate elements, having more truth than they, but yet coördinate with them as species under a genus, the wide definition which has been given might be considered as having practical value. But, on the contrary, the Christian religion refuses to align itself in this column; it utterly rejects the hypothesis that it is merely a specific instance of a generic religion, and absolutely claims for itself the competency and the right to be the only religion of the race. The professions of nominal religions, besides itself, to be religions at all, in any true and proper sense, it pronounces to be false. It arrogates to itself the high and exclusive prerogative of being the only true *kind* of religion, both generically and specifically.

This claim is, of course, resisted by the maintainers of every other religion than the Christian. It is challenged as a mere assumption, the verification of which on rational grounds is demanded. The requirement cannot be dismissed with contempt. It must be admitted that reason has an office to discharge with reference to the great question whether a religion, professing to be

the only authoritative expression of God's will touching the highest interests and duties of mankind, bears the unimpeachable credentials of divine origination. This is clear from the fact that there are rival claimants of this high distinction. There has been in the past, and there is now, a battle of religions on the arena of the world. Each arrogates to itself the honor of being the supreme religion. This conflict must, in the first instance, from the very nature of the case, be decided at the bar of reason. In the first instance, I say, for when the question has been settled by reason, and one of the contending systems has been proved to be from God, the judicial posture of reason gives way to the attitude of the disciple and the servant. Whether God speaks is one question; whether we ought to obey when we know that he speaks is another.

The position that reason is competent to perform this preliminary function of deciding between the claims of conflicting religions must also be further qualified. There must be a confession of dependence upon God and prayer for his guidance, or the requisite conditions for settling the question are not fully met. He who pretends to an ability to reach a conclusion, without the aid of divine illumination, vitiates the procedure of reason itself and blocks its path to a successful determination of the solemn inquiry.

On the supposition that one is a Christian, not only by birth, or education, or by a supernatural influence effecting his conversion, but upon grounds of reason reflectively apprehended, it is presumed that this controversy between rival religions has been conclusively

settled. The question cannot in this place be handled at length. It belongs specially to Apologetics. Let it suffice that some of the prominent reasons be briefly indicated which justify the claim of the Christian religion to be the only competent religion of the race.

In the first place, it alone delivers any satisfactory doctrine in regard to the being and nature of God. The religions of Paganism are but travesties of his being. So far as they are polytheistic, they violate the demand of reason for the unity of a fundamental being as the first, efficient cause of all beings, whose relation to them brings them into the totality of one harmonious whole. So far as they tend to the assertion of one ultimate being, they contravene the requirements of reason by denying to him personality. They are all inferior, reason being the judge, to the Mohammedan religion. It confutes them to the extent of its affirming the unity and personality of God. That they are, contemplated from a rational point of view, far below the doctrine of the Christian religion in respect to the character of God, is so obvious that the point need not be pressed. The comparison remaining between the Mohammedan and the Christian religions, it may be safely affirmed that the former is, upon grounds of reason, the less satisfactory in regard to the vital subject of God's being. The vaunted monotheism, which is its cardinal principle, is an insufficient account of the true God. Both religions agree in asserting the unity of the divine essence. But is this all that is necessary? The Christian religion denies. It goes further and maintains a plurality of persons. The Mohammedan holds to one

person as well as one essence. The substance and the personality of God coincide. The Christian contends that there is one substance, but three persons. It may be asked, How can human reason come in as a factor in deciding this question? What can it say in regard to the transcendent idea of a trinity of persons in the Godhead? And it must be confessed that these questions are pertinent, as the inquiry here is in relation to the power of reason, unaided by supernatural, direct revelation. I reply that all the deductions of reason upon such a subject can only amount to presumptions; but the question about which we are engaged is one in which probability, however faint, exercises a determining influence.

There are two ways, entirely different from each other, in which the human reason is obliged to apprehend God. In the first it denies, in the second it affirms, an analogy as subsisting between him and ourselves. Proceeding in accordance with a constitutional faith—for faith is an element of reason—it apprehends God as infinite, and as, therefore, out of all analogy to the finite creature. But were this the whole of our knowledge of him, no practical value would attach to it. We are compelled also to hold that there is, in other respects, a real likeness between our make and his own blessed nature. We are entitled to infer, from our possession of intelligence, affections and will, for example, that these attributes belong to him, only in an infinitely higher degree. In like manner we are justified, from the fact that we are persons, in apprehending him as a person. Otherwise we could not love him, could not

obey him, could not worship him, could hold no communion with him—in a word, religion would be impossible. This the Mohammedan admits. But we are conscious of personality chiefly — I do not here raise the question whether also exclusively — by virtue of our relations to other persons than ourselves. This is the foundation of human fellowship and society. But if in this regard there is an analogy between God and ourselves, we must take one or other of two grounds: either that the personal fellowship of God is limited to finite creatures, or that it is not. If the former, we are confronted by two difficulties: first, there was, on the supposition a period in his eternal existence when, as creatures were not in existence, he had no personal communion with others, and underwent a process of becoming, of development, when their creation furnished the condition of that fellowship; and, secondly, his communion with finite beings would be, of necessity, infinitely inadequate to satisfy the demands of his nature. Both of these difficulties are insuperable, and we turn to the other alternative, namely, that the personal fellowship of God is not limited to finite beings. But if so, we are shut up to the belief that there is a personal communion in the Godhead itself. I do not deny the possibility of conceiving that, as *formally* we may become objects to ourselves, so God, were he simply unipersonal, might contemplate himself as an object infinitely adequate to his intelligence and regard. But in that case the analogy, now pre-supposed, between him and us would not be realized. We are constrained by our own constitution to believe that there is with God

as with us communion of person with person characterized, as persons, by otherness each to each. And this rational belief is attended with probability in consequence of the consideration, that in such a communion an infinite object would meet the requirements of an infinite subject, and there would be an infinite reciprocity of fellowship between them. Reason herself perceives the probable truth of the view intimated by Bacon and others, that had God remained in the solitude of his own being, without having brought any intelligent creature into existence, he would have enjoyed a perfect society in the personal relations of the Godhead; and that this ineffable communion was the archetype of all the social fellowship existing among the creatures.

In urging this view it is not intended to say that reason would conduct us, upon grounds even of probability, to the doctrine of the Trinity; all that it could intimate would be the fact of a diversity of persons, perhaps not more than a duality. But to that extent it goes farther than the monotheistic doctrine of unipersonality, and falls in with the revelation of a trine personality by the Christian religion. Nor is it designed to say that, previously to the revelation of a diversity of persons in the Godhead, supernaturally given, reason would have suggested the fact. Upon that question it may be best not to dogmatize. It is fair to raise the inquiry whether the antithesis, affirmed by consciousness, of subject and object, not formally merely, but also really, and the social relations among men grounded in a plurality of persons, would not avail

to furnish a rational suggestion of personal diversity in the Godhead. The question, however, is unsusceptible of definite settlement, because of the rational probability that man has never existed without some direct revelation of God's being and nature, and it would be almost impossible to determine how far the native processes of reason had been uninfluenced by the traditional remains of that revelation. But, the doctrine having been clearly republished in the Scriptures, reason decides that it falls in with her own profound intimations — profounder than the shallow ratiocinations of the Socinian and Unitarian ever perceived.

Further, the doctrine of a personal diversity in the Godhead in the specific form of a Trinity is admitted to be peculiar to the Christian religion. Now this fact has to be accounted for upon the principle of cause and effect, and reason is competent to employ a disjunctive argument in regard to its origin. Either, it is the product of the human intelligence, or it is a revelation from God. The former it could not be, for the reason that, while the intelligence of man might infer, from the consciousness of the duality of self and not-self, some distinction in the Godhead corresponding to it, there confessedly is no possible inference from that fact in favor of a divine tri-personality. It cannot be a mere vagary of the human fancy. The supposition is extravagant. It is inconceivable that a religion so eminently characterized by common sense should have as an integral element, regulative and controlling, a mere crotchet of the brain, or that the most exalted intelligences and the purest moralists should have been deceived in re-

garding an empty dream as lying at the foundation of their virtues and their hopes. It is the faith of philosophers and saints, not of madmen and fanatics.

In the second place, the Christian religion alone delivers any satisfactory doctrine in regard to the physical government of God, as the creator and providential preserver and governor of the world.

In the third place, it alone furnishes satisfactory teaching in relation to the moral government of God: it alone affords a complete statement of a moral law, as a formal, objective code, and a thorough-going exposition of that law in its application to human character and life. There is in no other religion any analogue to the Ten Commandments, or to the Sermon on the Mount, or to the comprehensive summary of moral law given by Christ in his grand and unique declaration, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength; and thy neighbor as thyself."

In the fourth place, it alone gives any competent account of the origin and of the revolutionary and disastrous effects of sin. All other religions, when they speak at all, do but babble on this awful and transcendently important subject.

In the fifth place, it alone pretends to utter any doctrine suitable to the exigencies of a sinner's case, touching redemption from the guilt, the stain and the dominion of sin. Mediation, incarnation, reconciliation between God and man, accomplished by the vicarious atonement of One who was God and man in one Person, are topics of immeasurable interest, with reference to

which it alone emits a single spark of rational explanation; while justification, adoption, sanctification, holiness, are terms peculiar to and distinctive of itself, which suggest the impassable gulf yawning between it and all other religions. Its soteriology, by itself, is sufficient to stamp it as the only religious scheme adapted to the universal wants of the race.

In the sixth place, it alone affirms the unity of the race, includes all its tribes in one great brotherhood, derived from a common relation to one personal God and Father, and provides for one society suited to embrace in tenderest communion, cemented by the bond of union to one Mediator and Saviour, all the divergent sections of the human family.

In the seventh place, it alone throws any satisfying light upon the future destiny of the body and of the soul. No other religion approaches any tolerable solution of the absorbing problems of death and immortality.

Although, then, the broad definition, Theology is the science of religion, is upon logical grounds justifiable in the general, it is for all practical purposes inoperative and nugatory. It is not a working definition. It possesses only a theoretical value. We are warranted in narrowing it. Since among the religions of mankind only one is entitled to be considered as true, we may define theology as the science of true religion—meaning the Christian religion. Proceeding by the rule, common to all sciences, of defining by the object-matter, theology would then be a systematic arrangement of the doctrinal statements, the historical events, the prophecies, pre-

cepts, promises, threatenings — in fine, the whole matter of the true, or Christian, religion.

But the process of limitation cannot stop here. It would be arrested at this point, did all the adherents of the Christian religion profess to hold a common theology. This, however, is very far from being the case. Nominal Christians are not at one in regard either to the source or the object-matter of theology, and they disagree also about its rule and its ultimate judge. This induces definitions in accordance with the respective views which are maintained upon these important points.

The Orthodox or Evangelical Protestant affirms the sacred Scriptures to be the only source, and their contents to be the object-matter, of theology. To him religion, objectively considered, is precisely the contents of the Bible, so far as they reveal a rule of faith and practice, and the final judge deciding all controversies in religion is the Holy Ghost speaking in the Scriptures. The Rationalistic Protestant holds that Reason is the ultimate source of theology, and while he acknowledges that the contents of the Bible enter partly into its object-matter, also contends that the deliverances of reason constitute another part; so that to him the rule of faith and practice is composite, consisting of the revealed facts of Scripture and the principles and deductions of the natural reason, the final judge of religious questions being the human reason itself. The Mystic, so far as he professes to be evangelical, does not discard the Bible as to some extent being a source, or furnishing the object-matter of theology, but it is his peculiarity that

he admits an extra-scriptural addition of truth derived, either from protracted meditation, by which the soul is more and more united with and absorbed into the divine being, or from supernatural revelations made immediately to the mind. However much the members of the school to which he belongs may differ from each other as to certain elements of the system common to them, they are all reducible to the unity of a class upon the principle that new, original religious truth is attainable apart from the Scriptures. The Bible is not the only source of theology, its contents are not its only object-matter, and the final judge in religion is not the Holy Ghost speaking *in the Scriptures*. The Mystic is, consequently, a rationalist; for, like him, rejecting the Bible as an ultimate authority in religion, he is compelled to rely upon reason both for the communication of much of the matter of his theology and for its reflective construction into a system. His claim to the contrary, founded upon the allegation of immediate revelations made by the Spirit, and the guidance of the Spirit in systematizing them, amounts to nothing, unless he can furnish in support of that claim a body of miraculous proof equivalent to that which sustains the Bible as a professed, supernatural revelation, and an objective promise, similar to that contained in the Scriptures, of the Spirit's direction in the quest of truth. The Romanist postulates the authority of the church — that is, the Roman Catholic Church — as the cause of theology. He admits, it is true, that the Scriptures are in part its source, but he adds to them Tradition, a body of communications professed to have been originally

made in oral form by the apostles, and handed down, under the custody of the church, from age to age. This composite rule of faith and practice, consisting of the Scriptures and Tradition, the Church of Rome claims infallibly to interpret, by virtue of the gift of inspiration continued to her. Consequently, the authoritative decisions of the church constitute the ultimate source and matter, the supreme rule and judge of theology. Unless the claim to continued inspiration can be substantiated by unquestionable miracles — and it never has been — the ultimate, authoritative decisions of the Church of Rome are decisions enforced by the human reason. The Romanist, therefore, is, in the last analysis, a rationalist.

Here, then, are two distinct kinds of theology; that, on the one hand, of the Evangelical Protestant, which is entirely scriptural, and those, on the other, of the Rationalist, the Mystic, and the Romanist, which are partly scriptural, but dominantly rational. The true Protestant, therefore, is entitled to define theology as the science of biblical religion. But since to him the Christian religion and the religion of the Bible are one and the same, the last two definitions coincide: the science of the Christian religion is the science of Bible religion.

Although the distinction holds between this narrower definition and the wider, inasmuch as every religious scheme cannot be expected to meet a full, systematic arrangement in any one theology; yet the narrowness of the Protestant definition is in a measure relieved by the consideration that as truth is not as powerfully and completely presented by mere didactic inculcation, as

by the combination with it of a treatment of the contrasted error, the doctrines of any religion that are opposed to those of the true may receive a polemical exhibition, which, if not thorough-going, will still be sufficient. It might appear that the limiting process should go farther, in view of the difference between the doctrinal systems adopted by the denominations which come under the common title of Protestant. No such necessity exists. All Protestants profess to derive their theology from the Bible alone. The Bible is its source, furnishes its object-matter, and constitutes its supreme and final rule. The differences which emerge between them are occasioned by their conflicting interpretations of its contents. They do not profess to be infallible interpreters of the Bible, for they lay no claim to the gift of inspiration. The inspiration is in the Scriptures, not in themselves. Hence differences arise; but, let it be observed, that each party vindicates its views by an appeal to the Bible itself. This settles the question. The theology of all Protestants claims the Scriptures as its norm. The Protestant, therefore, satisfies himself with no broader and no narrower definition of theology than this: *the science of true religion* — that is, of the Christian, or biblical, religion; or, to avoid any ambiguity which may arise from the use of the word *religion*, the science of *religious* truth contained in the Bible.

In this definition, the specific difference — true religion — is considered objectively. It is the body of religious truths embraced in the Scriptures, with the good and necessary consequences derivable from them.

It is God's external, verbal, authoritative delineation of the standard to which subjective religion, or the religious life, ought to be conformed, and by which it is to be judged. The Bible is not the evolved result of the religious consciousness developed by the culture which springs from connection with higher and higher forms of environment. The contrary is true. The religious consciousness is conditioned, in its development, by contact with the objective type of religion contained in the Bible, a body of truth which has been increased and developed towards its consummate form by supernatural accretions made by inspiration. In a word, the Bible is not evolved from man, but supernaturally given by God. It is not a digest of truth effected by the reason of pious men reflecting upon the facts of the religious consciousness, but the divinely originated norm to which the religious life behooves to be adjusted — the archetype of which experimental religion was intended to be the ectype. The opposite view makes the Bible itself a theology having for its object-matter the facts of religious experience. The conception is thoroughly un-Protestant and rationalistic.

Let it be distinctly noticed, then, that theology is not primarily and immediately concerned about the religious life, subjectively contemplated, as its object-matter, but about the objective contents of the Scriptures. Of course, also, it cannot find its source in the facts of religious experience. At the same time, however, it must, from the nature of the case, deal secondarily and mediately with internal religion and the conduct which expresses it. The very end of supernatural revelation

is holiness of life to the glory of God. There is an indestructible relation between the Bible as the standard of religious truth and the religious character which was designed to be formed in accordance with it, between the mould and the life which is to be adjusted to it.

Theology, consequently, is both the theory of true religion and the application of that theory to the concrete cases of religious experience. "It is," as Dr. Thornwell justly remarks, "the system of doctrine in its logical connection and dependence, which, when spiritually discerned, produces true piety." As a science, it is neither exclusively speculative nor exclusively practical. Like every other science, it may be speculatively apprehended, but it would be inconsistent with the purpose of God, in furnishing the data out of which it is constructed, did not this speculative knowledge issue in practical religion. It is not a science to be academically taught as a mere intellectual discipline, but with the end mainly in view of enabling the preacher to bring the truths of the Bible clearly, consistently and powerfully in contact with the mind and conscience and heart. It teaches both what men are to believe and what they are to do.

The knowledge, which, as a subjective habit, corresponds to theology as an objective science, may be considered as either natural or spiritual. The cognition of the statements of facts, the doctrinal propositions, the ethical precepts contained in the Scriptures, is, in some degree, competent to the understanding of the natural man, that is, one who is not the subject of regenerating grace. This kind of cognitive apprehension of the con-

tents of the Bible conditions their spiritual and saving cognition. There is no reason for denying that this natural knowledge may, in consequence of the exercise of the intellectual faculties which belong to men, as men, correspond to the scientific arrangement of the truth effected by theology. This sort of knowledge, however, would be but a cold orthodoxy, as barren of spiritual result as an iceberg is of fruit. There is another kind of knowledge which enters into the very essence of true piety. It is the product of the regeneration and illumination of the soul by the Holy Ghost. When by His act a man is born again, every one of his original powers participates in the change. Faith, as one of those powers, passes from its natural into a spiritual condition. The power to believe in order to speculative science becomes the power to believe in order to holiness of life. It is now a knowledge unto salvation. The Spirit who produces this organ of spiritual cognition brings it into spiritual relation to the truth, and so illuminates it as to engender a spiritual apprehension of that truth. It is, therefore, not to be supposed that theology possesses any inherent power to produce true internal religion. It is an instrument adapted with exquisite wisdom to all the needs of the soul, but it is only an instrument requiring, in order to accomplish the end designed by it, the quickening, illuminating and applying energy of the Holy Spirit. The agent who makes it efficacious is the Spirit, and the organ through which he exerts his grace is faith. The spiritual knowledge, thus resulting, transmutes the frozen system of speculative science into a living scheme of saving truth. It conditions every gracious habit that

adorns the soul, and begins a holy and glorious existence which the Scriptures denominate eternal life. "This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent."

II. To the definition of theology which has, in the foregoing remarks, been furnished, sundry objections have been offered, which now demand attention. Let us first consider the most prominent of those which have been directed against the proximate genus — science.

1. It is contended that the attempt to construct a science of theology is needless and arrogant; that if God had willed a scientific presentation of the truths embraced in the Scriptures he would himself have given it, and that to make the effort is at once to discharge a superfluous office, and to assert the wisdom of man above the wisdom of God. It is not difficult to answer this objection.

(1) The same thing may be said in relation to the natural works of God. They are not phenomenally presented to us in such a systematic arrangement as to render science unnecessary or presumptuous. They interpenetrate and overlap each other, and to the eye of casual observation seem, in part at least, to be confused and heterogeneous. To disentangle reflectively one department from another, to discover the laws peculiar to each, and to bring them all into harmony upon a fundamental principle of unity, is not only to employ the human faculties legitimately, but to elicit from the multifarious facts of the universe the most exalted tribute to him who is their Creator, Preserver and Governor. If this be true with reference to God's natural,

why not also in regard to his supernatural revelation? It can make no difference, worth speaking of, that one sort of revelation is made through the medium of material things, and the other through words. They both symbolize the thoughts of God, and neither is given in the form of a fully developed logical system.¹

This consideration is enhanced by the fact that our divine Maker has endowed us with intellectual faculties which were evidently intended to accomplish this office of systematizing the details of nature and revelation alike, faculties of metaphysical analysis and of logical synthesis. It may be that the education of these powers in the endeavor to attain systematic results is of more consequence to us, and brings a larger revenue of glory to God, than if he had in the exercise of his own infinite wisdom furnished to hand a natural and a theological science. But whether this be so or not, it is clear that, situated as we actually are, there is stamped upon our very constitution a divine call to the exercise and development of these powers which cannot be satisfied without those great generalizations of particular facts which put us on the path of reaching an ultimate unity. In other words, the human intelligence cries out for God, and in its quest for him is impelled to group phenomena upon causes until it arrives at him who is the cause of causes, the origin and the explanation of the complex facts of the universe. This process of education God

¹The sacraments teach supernaturally through material elements. The distinction between their teaching and that of preaching is that in the latter case instruction is given through *verbal* signs, in the former, through *inarticulate*.

seems to have designed, and we obey his will when we pursue it to its legitimate results — results which the *nisus* and sweat of the soul undergone to attain them may more ingrain into our being than if they had been at once imposed by authority and received by absorption. We cannot help employing these faculties which demand scientific knowledge. We follow our natural make and constitution when we give them scope for exercise. No thinker can suppress their prerogative and silence their call. Men must and will reduce to systematic shape, in a greater or less degree according to their abilities and circumstances, the facts with which their intelligence is concerned. Each man, each school, in the religious sphere, will have a theology of some sort. It is of the last importance that it should be a true theology. Some science there will be; it ought to be a true and not a false science.

It may be urged that the materials of the Scriptures are possessed of a sacredness, a supernatural and spiritual quality, which places them above the reach of the merely natural powers of analysis and classification. But, in the first place, some of the matter contained in the Bible is a re-publication of natural truth, a re-production of the contents of natural religion, and is therefore level to the apprehension of the natural faculties. The fact that there is a natural theology is proof of this position. In the second place, there is, as has already been shown, the possibility of a natural and merely speculative cognition of propositions conveying supernatural truth. Such a cognition may ground a speculative science of theology. In the third place, the

natural faculties are, under the saving operation of the Holy Ghost, endowed with supernatural ability; and the spiritual cognition which so results conditions the scientific arrangement of supernatural truth. The organs are adapted to the contents about which they are concerned. The renewed powers are suited to produce a true theology.

(2) The divine commands to search the Scriptures, and to bring every doctrine to the law and to the testimony, imply a knowledge of the Bible which embraces its whole catholic and harmonious teaching. The adoption of any other rule lands us in the necessity of making the Word of God inconsistent with itself. Its parts must be compared with each other, and interpreted by the genius and spirit which pervade them all, and impart to them the significance and consistency of a system. The insulation of particular statements inevitably conducts to the position that inconsistency obtains between them; and to this it must be added that an unconnected and disjointed interpretation of the Bible leads to fanaticism in belief and extravagance in life.

It deserves also to be remarked, that the organic relation of the different parts or sections of the Bible to each other makes it necessary that the relation be understood in order that their fullest and truest meaning may be apprehended. The Old Testament and New Testament histories, for example, are so interlaced with each other that neither can be understood apart from its connection with the other. Only in this way can the central idea, the unifying principle, of the Scriptures be brought out and clearly perceived. Upon any other

scheme of interpretation injustice is done to their divine Author. Can it be the intention of God that he should be misapprehended, or even inadequately apprehended, in the revelation of the plan which he has communicated in the inspired oracles? If there be such a leading and all-pervading idea, its influence must issue in a systematic conception of the details of Scripture, that will reduce to unity the separate elements which contribute in their place to give it expression.

(3) If the truth in the Bible is to be *taught*, system is necessary unless the teaching be confined to the recitation and hearing of the mere letter of the Scriptures. How else could they be vindicated from the charge of self-inconsistency and contradiction to which they are so commonly subjected? Logic, in the hands of a teacher, is a formidable foe to vagaries and crotchets, and it accomplishes its results by dealing with the varied statements of the Scriptures as capable of systematic adjustment, and reducing them to the unity of science. Competent teaching without such a scientific arrangement would be an impossibility.

(4) God himself has encouraged us to attempt the construction of a scientific theology by giving us specimens of it in his Word. Not only is the fundamental doctrine of justification by faith logically expounded in the Epistle to the Romans, but it is presented in its relation to other doctrines of redemption. The connection between it and adoption, sanctification and glorification are so clearly set forth that the office of the theologian in regard to those great truths as parts of a scheme of salvation is to a considerable extent anti-

pated. A system of theology is in great measure furnished to hand in that one epistle. What hinders the theologian from adding the inspired exposition of the priestly functions of Christ in the Epistle to the Hebrews, and from incorporating the less elaborate, but clear and instructive deliverances of doctrine in the other epistles, as, for instance, that in regard to election in Ephesians, that touching the resurrection of the dead in First Corinthians, and that concerning the immediate passage at death of the soul of the believer to heavenly glory? What hinders him from introducing the teaching of the epistles as to the second coming of Christ, and the nature, offices and functions of the church? And then what hinders him from linking these didactic expositions of doctrine with the great facts of the gospel histories and the discourses of Jesus, so as to form one coherent and harmonious system of divine truth? He must do it, unless he be untrue to his own intelligence and to the Word of God itself. God is one, and his Word, like him, is one. To seek the scientific reduction of the truths of the Bible, to seek it in an humble and reverent spirit in dependence upon the illumination of the Holy Ghost, is not to attempt a needless and arrogant task, but to follow God's example, and to render the honor which is due both to his Word and to himself.

2. The impossibility of constructing a science of theology is argued from the transcendent nature of the contents of divine revelation. It deals with the Infinite, and, from the necessity of the case, finite faculties cannot reduce its contents to a system. The infinite is indefinable. As this is the essence of revelation, how

can its matter be subjected to the defining processes of the logical understanding? This objection presents grave difficulties, and therefore merits careful consideration.

(1) All sciences, even the exact, begin with the indemonstrable. They accept their fundamental principles. The essence of the soul is indefinable. We cannot tell *how* it exists. Metaphysics begins with this transcendent datum. Is a science of metaphysics, therefore, impossible? So with Law. Its postulate is personality. Hence personal rights and wrongs. But personality is an original belief which is indefinable. Is, then, a science of law impossible? So also with Medicine. It begins with the assumption of life; and yet no secret behind the veil of Isis was more impenetrable than the nature of life. Is a science of medicine, therefore, impossible? So with the physical sciences, proceeding as they do upon the assumption of material substance. It does not destroy the force of this analogical argument to say that the infinite is an element peculiar to theology, and that there is no measure of communication between it and the finite. The infinite is no more incomprehensible, no more indemonstrable, than the essence of the soul, than life, than the substance of matter. It is, in itself, immeasurably different from them conceived as finite, but it is not different from them in relation to our thought-knowledge. We no more comprehend them than we do the essence of God.

(2) The infinite is not only apprehensible by natural faith elicited by the conditions of experience; it is also a datum of supernatural revelation. It is furnished to

our faith. If the Scriptures have been proved, upon competent grounds, to be a revelation from God, we are bound to accept their statements. Theology begins, therefore, with an element indemonstrable by the discursive faculty, but an element which cannot be refused. It has as much right to consider it fundamental, as have other sciences to regard in the same light the *principia* which they accept.

Let it be observed, that this supernatural revelation of the infinite falls in with, and, at the same time, confirms, the presupposition of the infinite existing as a faith-judgment developed out of a fundamental law of belief by the conditions of a thought-experience. The apprehension of the infinite is not created by the Scriptures. That apprehension is the result of the legitimate progress of our natural faculties. But were there any doubt concerning the validity of this natural procedure, it is removed by the direct corroboration of Scripture.

(3) The only way by which we arrive at the apprehension of an infinite God and his infinite perfections is not alone the operation of the thinking faculty. There has been too common an acquiescence on the part of theologians in the judgment of the Pseudo-Dionysius, that we attain to that knowledge by the three-fold way of causation, of negation, and of eminence. By the first we reach God as the cause of all things; by the second we think away all limitation from his perfections and from himself; by the third we strive in thought to exalt "the concept" of God and his attributes to the very highest possible degree.

But, in the first place, we begin this process, confessedly, by appealing to a law which is not furnished by the thinking faculty: thought borrows, or rather steals, it from faith. The fundamental law of causality is one of belief; and, when developed upon empirical conditions, it is not a concept, but a faith-judgment.

In the second place, the attributes of God are not given by the thinking faculty. Take that of power, for example, and it is selected because it is primarily that attribute about which the inferences enforced by the law of causality are concerned. We cannot think power; it is not, strictly speaking, a concept. Conception takes percepts — the data of perception, and representations, whether pictorial images or not — the data of the imagination, and elaborate them under the relations of thought; that is to say, they are analyzed, compared and classified. The representative faculty, the basis of thinking, cannot transcend the original materials furnished in consciousness; and consciousness is here used as convertible with immediate knowledge, the complement of internal and external perception. The representative faculty creates no new intuitions. There are two respects in which it discharges functions not competent to consciousness (or perception). First, the imagination can combine into new wholes the original data of perception; secondly, it can imagine objects, not actually perceived, which are like those which are, or have been, perceived. For instance, we can perceive only a part, vast though it be, of the sidereal systems. But we can imagine other parts, like that perceived, which lie beyond the reach of the telescope. In this

imagining of unperceived objects, however, we are regulated by the materials already given by perception. We can create no new single object wholly unlike those which we previously perceived. We may image new combinations, but not new objects to be combined. Now the thinking faculty deals with the stuff thus furnished by the presentative and the representative. It can originate no new element — no element which did not previously originate in the action of those powers. It will scarcely be denied that we have no consciousness of power; that is, that we do not perceive it. We are conscious of the volition to exercise it, and of its effects when exercised; but we believe in its existence. If we perceived it, in itself, we could describe it as itself phenomenally known. It would be phenomenal. But manifestly it is not phenomenal. It does not itself appear. We cannot, therefore, describe it. It is not a direct datum of consciousness. The second way indicated by the Pseudo-Areopagite — that of thinking away limitations from divine attributes — is, consequently, not one belonging exclusively to thought. We do not perceive, or imagine, or conceive the divine attributes themselves. We believe that they exist. There are thought-processes, springing from consciousness, (which condition the special exercise of faith, but they are not faith-judgments.

In the third place, the endeavor, by way of eminence, to heighten the concepts of finite perfections — if there even were, strictly speaking, such concepts — to the utmost possible degree could not conduct us to the infinite. Pile Pelion upon Ossa, and we cannot reach

heaven; pile finite upon finite, and we cannot reach the infinite.

If, therefore, the way of attaining to the knowledge of God as infinite be one in which the thinking faculty alone is supposed to operate, the process is defectively represented, and the result impossible.

But while this is true of the sort of knowledge competent to thought, it is not true of all our knowledge. The most significant and valuable knowledge we possess is due to faith. The knowledge of our souls, of the substance of matter, of occult forces, of immortality, of God, is furnished by faith. We cannot think them; consequently, we can have no thought-knowledge of them; but we can believe them, and therefore can have a faith-knowledge of them. Faith is as really a function of intelligence as is thought. Now, when the original laws of belief which precede experience are elicited from latency beneath consciousness by experience, they express themselves in special judgments as to those things which transcend perception and imagination, and consequently transcend thought. It is in this way, be it reverently spoken, the knowledge of the infinite God is attained. We think his finite manifestations, and that thought-knowledge conditions and occasions the eliciting into formal expression of the original law of belief adapting us to apprehend him as infinite, and gives rise to the special faith-judgment that he exists as infinite. This is very different from a negative concept. It is not that thought, in the endeavor to frame a concept of God, projects its attempt towards such a concept as far as it possibly can, and then denies all

limitation upon it. It is common to say this, but the language, it strikes me, is delusive. Thought can go no further than the highest concept of the finite which it has reached. Thus far it is entitled to make a positive affirmation. To say that it is able to go further, and, by what is called a negative protest, deny all limitation, is the same as to say that it may positively affirm the absence of all limitation, which would, again, be tantamount to the assertion that it is competent positively to affirm the infinite. To do that would be to comprehend the infinite; for what we can think, what we can conceive, we can comprehend. This is out of the question. God is confessed by all but extreme Absolutists to be incomprehensible. All theology worth the name utters the confession. Who by searching can find him out? The thinking faculty, then, in its most exalted concept stops at the finite. It is reserved to faith to furnish a positive affirmation of the Infinite One.

The question may here be raised, How do we become possessed of the knowledge of our fundamental beliefs? They are at first implicitly involved in laws, tendencies, aptitudes, which, as before observed, lie beneath consciousness, until they are brought out and developed by experience — that is, by the actual consciousness of phenomenal facts in the concrete. When thus elicited they appear in consciousness in the form of beliefs. These beliefs may be properly characterized as special faith-judgments. They are not *inferred* from the data of consciousness: they are themselves data of consciousness. Whether we are conscious of the laws in which they originate and by which they are enforced, or

whether these laws are immediately inferred from the beliefs of which we certainly are conscious, is a question which will not now be discussed; but what is emphasized is, that these beliefs must not be confounded with their contents — with the occult things believed. For example, we must not confound our belief in cause with cause itself, our belief in substance with substance itself, our belief in the infinite with the infinite itself; just as we must not confound our belief in space with space itself, or our belief in duration with duration itself. The former — the beliefs — we are conscious of; of the latter — the things believed — we are not. The former are immediately, the latter, mediately, known. The former are phenomenally present, now and here; the latter are not. We are conscious of the beliefs; we immediately infer cause, substance, etc. This important distinction might be abundantly illustrated.

It may be said that as, in being conscious of the perceiving act, we are conscious of the thing perceived, it would follow that, in being conscious of the believing act, we are conscious of the thing believed, and hence would be conscious of cause, substance, space, duration and God. This is a profound mistake. The statement of the first member of the comparison is erroneous. We are not conscious of the perceiving act *and* the thing perceived. The perceiving act is itself consciousness; the thing perceived is the percept directly apprehended by consciousness. The reason is plain. The object perceived is now and here present. We immediately know it — that is, we are conscious of it; for consciousness and immediate knowledge are coincident, indeed,

as I conceive, one and the same. But in being conscious of a belief, we are not conscious of the thing believed, because it is not now and here present: it is not immediately known. We immediately know the belief; we mediate know the thing believed.

Just as soon as experience begins we begin to form faith-judgments in regard to transcendent realities. As soon as we are conscious of our mental phenomena, we begin to be conscious of a conviction or belief that it is we ourselves, that it is our personal spirits, that are thus phenomenally manifested. So, also, we begin to be conscious of a conviction of, or belief in, cause, the substance of matter, and occult force, as soon as we are conscious of external phenomena.

Now, it is the province of the thinking faculty to deal not only with external percepts, but with internal also; and let it be remembered that these internal percepts — that is, the perceived phenomena of our own subjective being — include beliefs in transcendent realities, such as cause, substance, space, duration, and God. Hence our beliefs as well as our thoughts, feelings and volitions, become the objects of reflection. They may be analyzed, compared, generalized, and inferences may be derived from them. They become the objects, in a word, both of metaphysical analysis and logical elaboration. They may, therefore, be arranged into systematic form; in other words, they are liable to scientific treatment.

The ground has been taken in these remarks, that conception cannot overpass the limits of the materials furnished by the presentative and representative facul-

ties. How does this position consist with the assertion that our beliefs in occult and transcendent realities, such as substance and God, become proper subjects for treatment by the thinking faculty? What has already been said serves to relieve this difficulty, but a further solution lies here: our beliefs as facts are objects perceived by consciousness, and consequently we can think them; although it be true that the contents of these beliefs — the things believed — are not objects perceived by consciousness, and hence we cannot think them. But of what avail are the concepts of the beliefs as mere facts, without concepts of the facts which are believed? How can the unconceived facts believed enter into a logical process? These questions reach downwards to the ultimate difficulty, and in answer the following considerations are in all humility submitted:

In the first place, the thinking faculty is competent to deal with the finite manifestations of the transcendent realities believed. So far its procedure is confessedly legitimate, because consistent with the limits peculiarly belonging to it.

In the second place, the transcendent objects of mediate knowledge constitute valid elements of scientific arrangement, because faith as one rational power communicates them to thought as another rational power. It may be objected that the limited capacity of thought would disqualify it for being receptive of the knowledge imparted by faith. But thought may employ the knowledge without being able to comprehend its whole measure, somewhat as a man, upon information received

from others, profitably uses diamonds in trade, although himself ignorant of, and it may be incapable of understanding, the secret of their great value.

In the third place, thought and faith, by a wonderful synergism, act conjointly in the employment of this transcendent knowledge, which is unattainable by the thinking faculty alone. Thought in dealing with the *matter* — that is, the materials — of knowledge has a two-fold office to discharge. It may be concerned either with its *form*, or with its *truth*. Acting metaphysically, or, to speak more broadly, extra-logically, it furnishes the matter which is competent to it, and investigates its truth or falsity. Acting logically, it gives to this matter the form required by the laws in conformity with which logic proceeds. In the performance of this latter function — the logical — it might designate the materials with which it deals by arbitrary symbols. A syllogism would be *formally* valid, even though the premises and the conclusion were *materially* false, provided the conclusion is legitimated by the premises. Now, some of the matter with which logic has to do is furnished by thought. With this matter logic deals formally. But faith furnishes other matter which transcends the capacity of thought. With this matter also logic is competent to deal, and does in fact deal, formally. Not being concerned with the questions concerning the materials thus communicated, it proceeds to impose upon them its forms. The infinite, delivered by faith, it might represent by an arbitrary symbol, just as it might the finite. What, then, hinders an infinite element from being embraced in a logical system ?

This, however, is not all. It is of immense importance that the matter with which logic formally deals should be true. Thought by no means exhausts its office by securing the formal correctness required by logic, but is bound in obedience to its fundamental laws to furnish true matter. It presides over the logical processes, with a distinct regard to material truth. So is it with faith, in respect to the transcendent matter which it delivers. It also presides over the logical processes, with a distinct regard to the transcendent matter which it alone communicates.

In addition to this it deserves to be remarked, that he who thinks and believes and reasons is one and the same man. He who cannot think the infinite is he who believes it. It is his faith which delivers to the thinking faculty, as logical, the knowledge of the infinite, and logic can include it in its process because it is his logic. The man who believes is the man who logically reasons. The faith-knowledge is as much his knowledge as the thought-knowledge. And as thought employs the materials which are not originated by itself, but by the presentative and representative faculties, so it operates upon the knowledge which springs not from itself, but from faith. It is the same man who perceives, imagines, conceives, believes, and logically reasons. All these functions are reduced to unity upon his indivisible intelligence.

To conclude this inquiry: there is a sense in which, obviously, the infinite God cannot be a subject for logical classification. He is the ultimate and all-comprehending Being, the *ὄντως ὄν*. There is no being higher than

he under which as a genus he can be reduced; and there is no species under him in which his essence is included. But there is a sense in which he must be distinguished from all other beings. In that sense, we imply that the genus being or existence includes under it two specific kinds of being — infinite and finite. There are other beings than God. He is not they, and they are not he. Otherwise the doctrine of the Pantheist is admitted. Now it is competent to logic to signalize this difference. That this is true is proved in many practical instances. We pursue this method against the Pantheist, and every theologian and preacher employs it in regard to sin and redemption. We prove the pardonableness of infinite guilt by appealing to infinite mercy exercised through the infinite merit of the Saviour, and the new creation of the spiritually dead sinner by referring to the infinite power of the Holy Ghost.

While, then, there is a sense in which the infinite is indefinable, there is another sense in which it may be logically defined, may be employed in logical processes, and may, consequently, enter into the logical construction of a system of theology. This is practically illustrated by those writers who, although in a certain and an obvious sense they deny that God is a subject of definition, and that a science of the infinite is possible, yet proceed to furnish a definition of God, and to vindicate the claims of theology, dealing as it does with the infinite, to be considered a science. Thus Dr. Thornwell, a distinguished example of that class, commends the “definition” of God given in the Westminster Shorter Catechism, and goes on to say: “Here the genus

to which the substance of God is referred is spirit, in strict accordance with the Scriptures and the manifestations of his nature which are made by his works; the difference, those qualities which belong to spirit in its full and normal development, heightened beyond all bounds of conception by terms which are borrowed from God as an object of faith."

Having considered the objections urged against the proximate genus in the definition of theology which has been given, let us attend to those directed against the specific difference — religion.

1. That great theologian, Dr. Charles Hodge, objects to it on two grounds; in the first place, because of the ambiguity of the term *religion*, and, in the second place, because this definition makes theology independent of the Bible.

(1) So far as the objection turns upon the doubtful etymology of the word *religion*, it cannot be allowed much weight. Whatever the derivation of the word may be, it expresses notions which are with sufficient definiteness entertained by all men. It is universally understood to mean, either a creed, having for its contents the doctrine of God's existence, nature and relations to his creatures, of the reciprocal relations of his creatures to him, and of the worship and service due to him from them, as far as they are intelligent; or, a character and life of intelligent creatures corresponding with that creed. It is, therefore, at the same time clear and definite enough to prevent misconception, and broad enough to answer all the purposes of a required definition. There is no other term, so far as appears, which

can be substituted for it in an attempt to signify in language all the professed efforts of men to realize in some systematic form the notions which have been mentioned as universally entertained. One cannot employ the antithesis of true and false religion, without using the term *religion* as common to both members of it. This is conclusive.

If the ambiguity of the term *religion* be said to lie in its equivocal signification either of an objective creed or of a subjective life, it may be sufficient to refer to the explanation which has been furnished in the preceding remarks. But if, with somewhat of technical captiousness, it be still urged that the terms of a definition should not need to be explained, the difficulty may be easily removed by the insertion of the word *objective* into the specific difference. The definition, broadly, would then be: Theology is the science of objective religion, and, more narrowly, the science of true, objective religion.

(2) In considering the objection that the definition makes theology independent of the Bible, a distinction must be taken. If the definition be regarded in its broadest sense, the remark is true; it makes theology independent of the Bible; that is to say, it does not confine it to the Bible. There may be some theology which is not biblical. There is a theology of the Koran as well as a theology of the Bible. The objection proceeds upon the denial of a distinction between a false and a true theology. It is, therefore, too narrowly grounded. If the definition be considered in a narrower sense — that is, as one of Christian theology or the theology of the Christian religion, it must be admitted

that there is some theology which is, in a measure at least, independent of the Bible. We must concede this, or deny the application of the term *theologian* to the Rationalist, the Mystic and the Romanist; and that would involve a technical censure of universal usage, a censure which could only be employed by the orthodox Protestant upon the supposition that there is no theology but his own. But if the definition be taken in its narrowest sense — that is, the sense in which it is used by the orthodox Protestant, who makes true religion and biblical religion one and the same — the objection is not relevant. For he expressly contends that theology is not a scientific arrangement of the facts of the religious consciousness, but of the facts, or data, objectively contemplated, of the Bible — the external standard with which religious experience ought to conform, and by which it is to be tested.

(3) Dr. Hodge's own conception of the scope of theology evinces alike the propriety of employing religion as the differentia, and the necessity of a broader and a narrower definition. He first gives the following definition, "Theology, therefore, is the exhibition of the facts of Scripture in their proper order and relation, with the principles or general truths involved in the facts themselves, and which pervade and harmonize the whole."¹ Subsequently he says, "We have, therefore, to restrict theology to its true sphere, as the science of the facts of divine revelation so far as these facts concern the nature of God and our relation to him, as his creatures, as sinners, and as the subjects of redemption. All

¹ *Syst. Theol.*, Vol. I., p. 19.

these facts, as just remarked, are in the Bible. But as some of them are revealed by the works of God, and by the nature of man, there is so far a distinction between natural theology and theology considered distinctively as a Christian science.”¹ In both these statements there is needed a principle of unity which will relate to a common end the diversified and often in themselves heterogeneous “facts of Scripture,” and of course the same is true in regard to the “facts of divine revelation,” which are in part naturally revealed in the works, and in part supernaturally revealed in the Word of God. It is true that Dr. Hodge’s definition requires the facts in either case to be taken in their connection and harmony; but it does not furnish the nexus. That is religion. It ought, therefore, to have an articulate place in the definition. The works of God and the works of the Devil, for example, are, in themselves considered, diametrically opposed to each other, but the record of those works has a common religious end. Religion is the compend of the record, and theology the science of that religion. We may go further, and inquire for the principle of unity in religion, and we shall find it to be God, as its supreme object — as its efficient and its final cause. But as, to avoid misconception, and for other obvious reasons, it is inexpedient to define theology as the science of God, the next best thing to do in the attempt to express unity is to define it as the science of religion.

The statements cited, it has been remarked, also evince the necessity of a wider and a narrower definition of theology. The distinguished author admits that there

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 21.

is a distinction permissible "between natural theology and theology considered distinctively as a Christian science." Here, evidently, theology is regarded as generic, and as falling into two species, natural and Christian. But as religious truth is professedly the object-matter about which each of these specific sciences is concerned it constitutes the bond of unity between them. In a word, a broad as well as a narrower definition is necessitated. But whether broad or narrow, the specific difference in the definition is religion.

There is a sense, however, in which the distinction, as here used by Dr. Hodge, is hardly susceptible of justification; for, while a false natural theology — that is, one judged to be false from a biblical point of view — is to be distinguished from theology as the science of biblical religion, and yet is loosely entitled to the designation of theology, it must be observed that a true natural theology is included in biblical theology; so that, in the narrow definition adopted by the orthodox Protestant, natural theology is embraced. The principles and conclusions of natural theology are enounced in the Scriptures. That theology is a department of philosophy: it is a religious philosophy. It has for its object-matter the truths of natural religion, so far as those truths were naturally, and not supernaturally revealed. To be plain, it is concerned about those truths of natural religion with which reason and conscience, in their relation to the external universe, were originally competent to deal. But it is not occupied about the supernaturally revealed elements of natural religion: the covenant of works, for example, with all its related

truths. Now philosophy, so far as it has been divorced, in consequence of man's sin, from religion, may be conceived as occupying different territory from theology, but so far as it is a religious philosophy, in other words, natural theology, it covers the same ground with biblical theology considered not as to its evangelical or redemptive, but its natural, contents. The Bible republishes natural theology. It gives it in a clearer form than mere reason can attain, inasmuch as it is God himself who furnishes it. So that the man, who, apart from the Bible, would now undertake to construct a natural theology, would be like one who would set out to explore the ocean without a compass or a chart. The narrow definition of the orthodox Protestant, therefore, which makes theology the science of Bible-religion covers the field of natural theology. They are not different species of theology; they are one and the same species. He who chooses to call the deductions of his mere reason a theology may follow the sparks of his own mind, but he will pursue an *ignis fatuus*, and his pretended science will be but a tangled morass. From the strict Protestant point of view, there is no true theology but that which is derived from the Scriptures. This Dr. Hodge properly enounces when he concedes that all the facts of natural theology "are in the Bible."

THE DISTRIBUTION OR DIVISION OF THEOLOGY.

[The methods of distributing theology have been, from its standard or measure, from the condition of its possessors, from its source, from its truth, from its matter, from its manner of treatment, from the style of discussion, and from its historical development. Even in the United States widely divergent methods have been employed.—EDITOR.]

LET us proceed, then, to notice the most prominent of those divisions which have been adopted by writers on Systematic Theology in this country.

1. Dr. Dabney distributes theology, according to an old method, into Natural and Revealed. This division, although even now frequently employed in theological discussions, is liable to serious objections.

(1) As it is determined by the sources from which the knowledge is derived, "natural theology," remarks Dr. Thornwell, "is that knowledge of God and of human duty which is acquired from the light of nature, or from the principles of human reason, unassisted by a supernatural revelation. Revealed theology, on the other hand, is that which rests on divine revelation. This distinction is real, but it is useless. There are truths which reason is competent to discover, as there are other truths which can only be known by a special communication from God. But the religion of man has never been conditioned exclusively by natural truth. In his

unfallen condition he was placed under a dispensation which involved a supernatural revelation. He has never been left to the sole guidance of his reason, and therefore a mere natural theology, in the sense indicated, has never been the sufficient explanation of his state."

This criticism would seem to be just, but it is difficult to perceive why it is not to a certain extent applicable to Dr. Thornwell's own division into Moral Government simple, Moral Government modified by the Covenant of Works, and Moral Government modified by the Covenant of Grace. A simple moral government — that is, one the essential principles of which as a dispensation of naked law unmodified by covenant arrangements — was never historically realized in the condition of man. He was from the first placed under a federal economy. It is, of course, possible to contemplate both a natural theology and a moral government logically, to abstract their doctrines, principles and facts, and view them apart from an actual exhibition in the concrete. But Dr. Thornwell's objection would appear to hold alike against Dr. Dabney's distribution and his own. It is better to adopt a division at once simple and comprehensive — one which would cover both the essential principles logically regarded and the historical case as actually developed. Such a distribution will be suggested in the sequel.

(2) The discrimination between natural theology and revealed proceeds upon the supposition that the former was not and is not now revealed. This, however, is a mistake. There are three ways in which we may conceive a natural theology as revealed. In the first place,

those fundamental religious principles and potential truths which were inlaid in man's constitution at first in the form of laws of thought and belief in the reason, of rectitude in the conscience, and of æsthetics in the affections, may properly be regarded as a natural revelation. In the second place, it is probable — at least, we do not know the contrary to a presumption created by the record in Genesis — that, in the intercourse with man in the garden to which his heavenly Maker condescended, much of the material, out of which a natural theology may have been constructed, was immediately and orally revealed. In the third place, whatever of natural theology deserves the name has been supernaturally revealed in the Scriptures. It is true that Adam, had he not fallen, would have been able to frame a logically digested system of natural religious truth — that is, a natural theology; but he did not, for he fell. We are the only subjects of such a theology, and to us it is revealed in the Bible. The great presuppositions of nature, in themselves valid, but obscured by sin, are taken up into, and confirmed by, the Scriptures as a divine, supernatural revelation to man. The antithesis, therefore, between natural and revealed theology is erroneous. The appropriate antithesis would be between natural and supernatural — that is, naturally revealed and supernaturally revealed theology. But the insuperable difficulty in the way of that distinction is that the naturally revealed is now the supernaturally revealed. To us who have the Scriptures the antithesis, in point of fact, vanishes. We must go to the Bible for a true natural theology. It is not intended to deny that even

the heathen may know enough of natural theology to render them inexcusable for their sins; but it is plain that such a natural theology is not one which a Christian theologian would impart.

(3) Were natural theology incapable of being viewed as revealed, the distribution into natural and revealed theology would render the divisions disproportionate to each other, so far as the bulk of their contents would be concerned. The whole doctrine of both the covenant of works and the covenant of grace would be embraced in one of the members of the division. This difficulty may not be of much moment, but it would be better if it could be avoided by the adoption of another division, which would answer the end contemplated, and at the same time be more evenly balanced and symmetrical.

(4) As nearly all sciences are defined, not from their source, but from the object-matter about which they are concerned, it would be desirable that theology, which is defined as the science of religion, should be distributed in accordance with that definition — that is, that the divisive principle should be not its source, but the object-matter with which it deals. The kinds of religion about which it is concerned should furnish the basis of its division. This would render the distribution at once simple and perspicuous.

2. Dr. Breckinridge divides theology into Objective, Subjective and Relative or Polemic; or, to use his precise language, “the knowledge of God considered Objectively, considered Subjectively, and considered Relatively.” Lest he be misunderstood, let us hear his own statement of the case: “In the first place, the whole

of that knowledge [of God] may be considered and treated as *mere knowledge* — like any other complete and positive knowledge; that is, it is not only capable of a purely *objective* treatment, but to be understood clearly it must be treated in that manner. In the second place, that knowledge of God, in its intimate and transforming effects upon man, in his inner life, his nature, his condition, his destiny, is not only capable of a complete *subjective* treatment, but is fully comprehensible in its effects, only so far as it is considered in that manner. This distinction, moreover, accords with the fundamental distinction of philosophy, as applied to man; and, what is better, with the primeval effort of our intelligence, in taking account of itself, to distinguish the internal from the external. But the knowledge of God, objectively considered, and the knowledge of God, subjectively considered — each takes in the whole sum and result of Exegetic and Didactic Theology, and presents that whole sum and result, once as pure, systematic truth unto salvation, and once as pure, systematic truth actually saving man. As to Polemic Theology, it is very obvious that it is simply the systematic confutation of all untruth, militating against the salvation of man; and that the only absolute way of doing this is to confront it with divine truth, whether objective or subjective, unto salvation.”

It will be perceived that Dr. Breckinridge undertakes to treat these several aspects of theology apart from and independently of each other. The method may have certain advantages to speculation, but for purposes of teaching it is opposed by formidable objections.

(1) These divisions cannot, from the very nature of the case, be kept from overlapping each other. They cannot be completely disentangled, and the result must be unnecessary repetition; unnecessary, not upon the supposition that this method is pursued, for then repetition becomes necessary, but unnecessary, because another method may be adopted upon which it would not occur.

(2) It is not the method, so far as method may be said to be observed in them, which is pursued in the Scriptures. In them "the truth unto salvation," the "truth actually saving men," and the truth in its opposition to error — all these aspects of divine truth are presented not separately, but concomitantly. It may be said that the Bible contains no systematic presentation of truth. But Dr. Breckinridge himself remarks that "the nature of God and his relations to all truth are such that it very illy becomes us to say, that with reference to himself his statements are not equally systematic in every order, and to whatever extent he might make them. Absolutely considered, what we should say is that divine truth is necessarily revealed after a divine method. . . . It is demonstrably certain on the face of the sacred record, that all revelation has been given in a perfectly systematic manner, with reference to human intelligence — that it all professes expressly to be one glorious whole, and demands of us in terms that to which our very nature obliges us, namely, the interpretation of it all according to its own proportion, and as an outbirth of the eternal counsel of God."

(3) Truth and error are, each of them, most clearly

and effectively expounded when brought into the relation of contrast. It is a well-known fact that things of any sort which bear any analogy to each other are most clearly distinguished by a comparison of one with the other. The more closely they resemble one another, the more necessary is such a comparison. A counterfeit coin is most easily and surely detected by laying it by the side of the true. At the same time, the true is verified by comparison with the false. The comparison illuminates both. Dr. Breckinridge himself tells us that he purposed to pursue this method in his contemplated volume on the Relative Knowledge of God — to confute error by bringing it into contrast with the truth. It would have been well if he had throughout his work also illustrated the truth by evincing its contrast to error. This method holds equally good in both respects, on the principle that “the science of contraries is one.”

It is in this way that the church has elaborated her theology. It was wrought out in the fierce heat of controversy; not that conflict created the truth, for it was from the beginning supplied by the Word of God. But even revealed truth was but imperfectly grasped until collision with heresy compelled its clear apprehension and its unmistakable enunciation. It is in this way that the creeds of the church have received their formulation, and have discharged the invaluable office of standards in the midst of revolt, defection and battle. The doctrine of the Trinity has been cast into its distinct and permanent form in consequence of the Arian, Sabellian and Unitarian heresies; that of the Person of Christ, because of the Nestorian, Apollinarian, Monophysite and

Monothelite, and that of Original Sin, because of the Pelagian. God's sovereignty, unconditional election, particular atonement, total depravity and inability, legal representation, efficacious grace, and the perseverance of the saints have been brought into clear light and fortified by comparison with the doctrines of Arminianism; and within the circle of professed Calvinism the Federal Theology, especially the doctrine of imputation, by contrast with the errors of Placæus and the school of Saumur. Experience is a safe guide, and that of the church places it beyond question that the clearest apprehensions of truth have been acquired through its conflict with error, and that the most thorough-going method of teaching truth is by contrasting it with error, as the best way of expounding error is by contrasting it with truth. Dogmatics and Polemics should go hand in hand.

3. The Doctors Hodge, father and son, adopt a prevalent German method and distribute theology into Theology Proper, Anthropology, Soteriology, Eschatology, and Ecclesiology. Dr. A. A. Hodge inserts Christian Ethics between Soteriology and Eschatology. This distribution, lacking as it does a comprehensive and generic character, is yet not without usefulness if regarded as specific and subordinate. The titles of some of the divisions are apposite and convenient, a fact which is evinced by their frequent employment in theological literature. The distribution, however, is characterized by grave, if not fatal, defects.

(1) The greatest objection to it is that it possesses no principle upon which the members of the division may be collected into unity. This is a serious difficulty to a

branch of knowledge which professes to be a science, and especially to a department of theology which emphatically claims to be systematic. Each of the parts of this division may have its own ultimate quality upon which it is reduced to unity, but there is no such quality which brings into unity all the parts. This is vital to classification, without it no science can be said to exist. Here the species are found, but there is no genus. If there be, it is merely implied; it is not expressed, as it ought to be, in the very terms of the distribution.

(2) Some of the divisions interpenetrate one another. They cannot be kept logically separate. The attempt is made, by an arbitrary employment of language, to disjoin elements which are inseparable. For example, the doctrine of God must enter into the consideration of the doctrine of man. How could sin be treated of except as an infraction by man of the law of God? How could the creation of man be discussed without taking into view God as Creator? The truth is that theology involves the knowledge of God and the knowledge of man as related to each other. Neither can be satisfactorily developed apart from the other. Again, there cannot be a competent doctrine of man, if he be regarded simply as innocent, or condemned on account of sin. He must be considered also as the subject of redemption; otherwise there is no exhaustive account of his condition. It is evident that the distribution is in some respects arbitrary and illogical. Some of the titles are too broad for the members of the division to which they are attached. They really embrace more than the contents which they professedly cover. The doctrine concerning

God must include more than is actually contained in theology proper, that concerning man more than is treated of in anthropology. God is a Saviour as well as a Creator and Providential Ruler; and man is a subject of redemption as well as of condemnation. The divisions, of necessity, run into each other. They are not, and cannot be, specifically discriminated.

4. Dr. Thornwell furnishes a three-fold division of theology — the doctrine of Moral Government Essential or Unmodified, of Moral Government Modified by the Covenant of Works, of Moral Government Modified by the Covenant of Grace. He thus explains himself: “A complete Treatise of Theology, according to these statements, must fall into three parts: (1) The development of those essential relations betwixt God and man out of which arises a moral government, together with an exposition of the fundamental principles of such a government. This part, embracing the being and character of God, the original state of man, and his natural duties and obligations, might be called Preliminary, or Introductory. (2) The development of the modification of moral government in its principle and application, as realized in the Covenant of Works. This part might be called Natural Religion, as it treats of the form in which man became related to God immediately upon his creation. (3) The development of the Covenant of Grace or the scheme of Redemption. This part may be called Supernatural Religion, or the Religion of Grace, and embraces all that is peculiar to Christianity. To state the same thing in another form: the first part treats of God, and of moral government in its essential principles;

the second part treats of moral government as modified by the Covenant of Works; the third part treats of moral government as modified by the Covenant of Grace. The point of unity between the two covenants is their concurrence in a common end; the point of divergence, the different states in which man is contemplated. Both are answers to the question, How shall man be adopted into the family of God? But the Covenant of Works answers it with reference to man as a moral creature, in a state of integrity; the Covenant of Grace answers it with reference to man as a sinner, under the condemnation of the law. These three divisions seem to me to exhaust the whole subject of Theology."

One cannot be sure that this would have been the final form in which Dr. Thornwell would have given his conception of the manner in which theology should be divided, as death arrested his hand before he had completed his system. But it stands among the latest products of his thinking which he has left on record. The distribution has the merit of being free from the defect which marks that last-mentioned: it collects the members of the division into unity upon the principle of moral government. The doctrine of God's moral government is made generic, including under it the three species of moral government, as simple, as modified by the covenant of works, and as modified by the covenant of grace. The division is, to my mind, the best that has been furnished, but it is attended with a few defects which expose it to criticism.

(1) The principle of division is hardly comprehensive enough. The *moral* government of God is not, strictly

speaking, sufficiently broad to cover the whole of that divine government about which theology is legitimately concerned. The physical government of God, as related to the facts, forces, laws of the material world, enters, at least to some extent, into its object-matter, but that aspect of the divine government is, by the terms of the division, left out of account. Theism largely deals with the physical government of God, and theism, in some degree, falls under the scope of systematic theology. Dr. Thornwell himself, for instance, discusses, and very ably discusses, the doctrine of creation, and presents very clearly the cosmological argument for the being of God. These topics, however, relate in the main to God's physical government. Had he used the unqualified term *government*, instead of government limited by the word *moral*, his distribution would not have been liable to this criticism.

There are two conceivable ways, in either or both of which the point of this objection may be blunted. Dr. Thornwell was accustomed to urge the view that the material system is of no further value than as contributing to the ends of the moral, and he might have said that the physical government of God in relation to the former is a presupposition to his moral government which would of necessity come under consideration, but which it was not worth his while to signalize by a technical accuracy of expression. Or, he might have purposely omitted to mention it specially, as belonging for treatment, not to Systematic Theology, but to Apologetics. But while such a supposition is conceivable, as explanatory of the omission adverted to, the

difficulty would not by that means be entirely relieved. Dr. Thornwell's own discussions of the relation of God to the physical system of the universe, the consideration that some treatment of that relation cannot be excluded from systematic theology, and the fact that much of the conflict of theology at the present day is with a physical science which tends to materialism and atheism, serve to show that it would have been better had the principle of this division been expressed in language broad enough to include explicitly the physical as well as the moral government of God.

(2) The terms *natural religion* are used in too narrow a sense. Taking them to designate the religion of man in innocence, as Dr. Thornwell elsewhere does, it would seem clear that they embrace more than the religion of the covenant of works. There would have been a natural religion had God not freely instituted that covenant with man, but left him under a naked dispensation of law, with reason and conscience as his guides in connection with the lessons conveyed by the external universe. True, when the covenant was instituted it entered as a constituent element into natural religion, but it cannot justly be regarded as exhausting its contents. To this it may be added that the terms *natural religion* or the *religion of nature* are employed by general custom to signify those essential principles of moral government which Dr. Thornwell himself logically distinguishes from the principles of that government as modified by the covenant of works. The usage may be too narrow, but it is correct as far as it goes. Natural religion is broader than the religion of the covenant of works.

(3) The terms *supernatural religion* as antithetical to *natural religion* are attended with some obscurity. The reason is that the covenant of works was a supernatural element of natural religion. It was as the product of a free determination of the divine will supernaturally added to the mere religion of nature — that is, the religion which would have sprung from conscience and reason in their relation to the external universe, and would have embraced the essential principles of moral government. It is true that natural religion did actually include this supernaturally added element, but to avoid the ambiguity which might possibly arise from the use of the term *supernatural*, it would be well to substitute for it *redemptive* or *evangelical*. The antithesis would then be between natural and redemptive religion, or more simply, natural religion and redemption or the gospel. That would be clear and unambiguous.

The terms *religion of grace* as contradistinguished to the terms *natural religion* are open to the same exception. The covenant of works, as Dr. Thornwell often shows, was a fruit of grace, and had Adam maintained his integrity during his specified time of trial his posterity would have been justified by grace operating in their case, as that of conscious agents, through imputed righteousness. Grace, therefore, needs to be qualified by the word *redeeming* or *recovering*, as characterizing the religion of sinners under the gospel scheme. This may seem captious, but in a formal distribution of theology a technical accuracy is proper, which would in ordinary discourse be deemed unnecessary.

5. The division which I venture to propose is, into the

Theology of Natural Religion and the Theology of Evangelical¹ Religion (or briefly, Redemption, or the Gospel).

It is with some hesitation that this distribution is offered, in view of the fact that it does not materially differ from that furnished by Dr. Thornwell — a hesitation which is, however, relieved by the consideration that the division has been suggested by the writings of Dr. Thornwell himself. To prevent possible misconception a word of caution is necessary. The theology of Natural Religion is not to be understood as the same with Natural Theology. They differ in an important respect. The object-matter of Natural Theology is not co-extensive with Natural Religion. The former excludes, the latter includes, the important topic of the covenant of works. The contents of the former may be said to be naturally revealed, those of the latter, in addition to this naturally revealed element, embrace also the supernaturally revealed element of the covenant of works. The Theology of Natural Religion, therefore, is more extensive than Natural Theology, even as republished in the Scriptures, by the whole matter of the covenant of works.

Let it be also noticed that the title, Theology of Supernatural Religion which is obviously antithetical to the Theology of Natural Religion, is purposely avoided in

¹ Were the word *redemptive* in classical use by the older divines it might be here employed. As it is, however, more and more coming into current use it may properly be employed as convertible with *evangelical*. It would perhaps have the advantage of being more specific and designative.

order that ambiguity may be escaped. The covenant of works was a supernatural element of natural religion. To that extent natural religion might, although not in strict propriety, be regarded as a supernatural religion. The covenant, though incorporated into natural religion — that is, the whole religion of man unfallen — was supernaturally revealed. It was not a suggestion of nature. It never could have been evolved from mere nature. To avoid a confusion which might result from this fact, it was deemed best to use a term which precisely and completely expresses the specific difference by which the religion of man as a sinner subject to redemption is distinguished from the religion of man in innocence. The distinction is clearly and unmistakably indicated between the theology of Adam and the theology of a redeemed sinner — a distinction which it is of vital consequence to observe.

This division of theology is supported by reasons which are not destitute of force:

(1) It has the advantage — and it is not an inconsiderable one — of making the distribution of theology turn upon its definition. If, as is generally conceded, and as the previous discussion has shown, theology may be properly defined as the Science of Religion, nothing would be more easy and natural than to make the kinds of theology correspond with the kinds of religion about which they are concerned. Now the religion of nature and the religion of redemption are the two generic sorts of religion which God has been pleased to communicate. It would seem obvious, then, that there are two corresponding sorts of theology — that of natural religion and

that of redemption. The division is as appropriate as it is natural.

(2) It makes as near an approach as is possible to simplicity. An unnecessary multiplication of members in the division of theology, as of every other science, is to be deprecated. Every division must, of course, consist of at least two members, but it is desirable that, if possible, it should embrace but two. Breckinridge's and Thornwell's have each three, Charles Hodge's five, and A. A. Hodge's six. This has only two, and if they are sufficient, the distribution possesses the merit of being simple.

(3) It is exhaustive. There is no aspect of theology, no relation which it can possibly sustain, which is not included. As it embraces the essential principles of God's government, viewed as a whole, there is no order of creatures which falls outside of its scope. The doctrine of angels, as well as that of man, is covered by it. The physical government of God, in relation to the material system of the universe is not, even by implication, excluded. His relation as Creator and Providential Ruler to the material heavens and the material earth is involved. The scientific reduction of the naturally revealed facts of natural religion, which is natural theology, the scientific reduction of the supernaturally revealed facts connected with the covenant of works and of those belonging to the covenant of grace are all explicitly comprehended. It is more exhaustive than the division into the theologies of the two covenants, for it extends to all possible relations of creatures to God, even independent of a federal constitution, or a

representative economy. It is, for example, ordinarily supposed that the fallen angels did not, in their estate of innocence, exist under a federal or representative dispensation — at least, were not dealt with as a class under federal headship. But if so, their case would fall under the category of natural religion. There is no reason why that religion should be conceived as peculiarly restricted to man. It comprised principles which are capable of universal application.

(4) This division is recommended by the fact that the principle upon which theology is distributed is a principle upon which it may be collected into unity. That principle is religion. Natural religion and redemption are specifically distinguished from each other by peculiar and characteristic features, but each is a religion. Both, as species, are possessed of the essence of the genus — religion — under which they are included. Differ they do, as widely as the law and the gospel, as innocence and guilt, as works and faith; still they are reducible to unity upon the idea of religion. What, then, is religion? Calvin, in the opening words of his immortal treatise, says. "Our wisdom, in so far as it ought to be deemed true and solid wisdom, consists almost entirely of two parts: the knowledge of God and of ourselves." He further remarks that "the knowledge of God and the knowledge of ourselves are bound together by a mutual tie." By wisdom he evidently meant religion, and by true wisdom true religion. Now the knowledge of God and the knowledge of ourselves, as correlated, may be regarded either as didactic, and therefore objective, or experimental, and therefore subjective.

In the one aspect it is a creed, and is expressed in the Scriptures; in the other it is a life, and is produced by the grace of the Spirit. Both these sorts of knowledge are brought together upon the principle of religion. Neither was designed to exist without the other. They are complementary to each other. The objective was not intended to be merely abstract, but to be subjectively realized in the concrete. So far we are on the path to the attainment of unity. But it may be urged, that in the knowledge of God, and the knowledge of ourselves, we have the terms of a disjunction. We are confronted by duality. In reply, it may be fairly said that it is sufficient to describe religion as the knowledge of God in his relations: not simply the knowledge of God considered absolutely, but also considered relatively. Now the knowledge of relatives is one. In knowing God as related, we must know the objects to which he is related. Here then we reach the unity of which we are in search. Religion is the principle of unity in theology, because it is the knowledge of God in his relations. There is no higher unity which can be attained. God is to theology what he is to philosophy, the ultimate principle of unity. He is its efficient cause, he is the supreme object of its teachings, and his glory is its ultimate end. The knowledge of him, therefore, in himself and in his relations to ourselves, is the sum and substance of our religion. The diversified and apparently heterogeneous facts of the physical universe are collected into one great totality and reduced to unity by virtue of their relation to God as alike their first and their final cause. So is it with the facts of religion.

This fundamental principle of theology which Calvin applied to man is susceptible of extension to all the intelligent subjects of the moral government of God. The statement of it may be so broadened as to include them all. Religion, in its most comprehensive sense, is the knowledge of God and of the *creature*, in their reciprocal relations. As theology deals not only with man, who for obvious reasons is its principal subject, but also with other orders of moral beings, both unfallen and fallen, it is requisite that it should be defined and distributed upon a principle wide enough to embrace them all. Such a principle is religion — the knowledge of God in all the relations he sustains. It is comprehensive enough to cover all conceivable cases in which creatures can stand related to the moral government of God. How far the federal, or the representative, principle has been employed, in the whole of the divine government, we cannot with absolute certainty decide. To my mind, it seems probable that the elect angels were collected into unity, through the principle of similarity of nature, upon the headship of Christ. We have some reason from the statements of Scripture to hold that view. But there is no positive ground for believing that the non-elect angels were dealt with through a covenant arrangement, either simple — that is, made with each of them separately from the others — or involving legal representation. If both, or either, of these angelic classes stood related to God's government, not through covenant stipulations, but through the naked law operating upon each individual standing upon his own foot, some principle of unity connecting their religion with

that of human beings would be necessitated, which would not be peculiar to a federal economy. Dr. Thornwell has suggested *justification* as the central principle of theology. Supposing this to be true, it could hold good only of a religion involving the federal principle; for, as Dr. Thornwell has himself conclusively shown, no justification is possible where that principle does not obtain. It is not inconceivable that God might have left man at first under a scheme of moral government in which only the essential principles of that government would have been exhibited, a scheme unmodified by covenant arrangements. In that case justification would have been excluded. Such might have been the case with the non-elect angels, before they fell from their estate of innocence. Now, unless it can be shown that theology is restricted to the case of man, it would be clear that a principle of religion, which would be entitled to the distinction of being a bond of unity between all the truths of theology, must be one which would enter as a constituent and all-pervading element into every scheme with which the Scriptures make us acquainted. If theology has a wider scope than the covenants under which the religion of man has been actually developed, a principle of unity is demanded which is not confined in its operation to a federal dispensation. To be "the central principle of all theology" it must be as broad as theology itself. If by "all theology" and by "every divine system of religion," in which justification is claimed by Dr. Thornwell to be the principle of unity, he meant to embrace the cases of the angels, elect and non-elect, he must, to have been consistent, have main-

tained that each of those angelic classes existed under a federal dispensation. If he did not design to include them, and contemplated man alone, the conception of theology which he employed in this particular argument was narrower than its scriptural contents. And, further, if he limited the view to man, he would have been obliged to deny the possibility of the actual, historical realization of the first member of his division of theology — namely, moral government in its essential principles, unmodified by covenant arrangements; for under such a scheme, if actualized, no justification would be possible.

The importance of the doctrine of justification, especially when contemplated in all its sweep as both virtual and actual, cannot be exaggerated. It well deserves the high encomium of Luther of being *articulus stantis vel cadentis ecclesiæ*, and that of Calvin, commended by Thornwell, of being *præcipuus sustinendæ religionis cardo*. But transcendently important as it confessedly is, it may be doubted whether it can bear the strain put upon it, whether it can discharge the high office invoked for it, by Dr. Thornwell, of a principle upon which either the theology which deals with the case of man, or that which embraces the religious universe, can be reduced to unity. A doctrinal truth which is capable of sustaining such a comprehensive relation cannot, from the nature of the case, be one which is simply specific and coördinate with other doctrinal truths; it must be one which is generic and all-inclusive, the essence of which, so to speak, as all-qualifying, enters into and regulates every specific truth. It must, to

employ the technical language of logic, furnish the generic attribute with which every connotation of marks begins, that serves to characterize a species. Now, limiting the view to man's religion as revealed in the Scriptures, can the doctrine of justification sustain this generic relation to the doctrine of creation, of predestination in its wide sense, of reprobation,¹ of the moral law, of the Trinity, of providence in its whole extent? One fails to see how it can. If it does not, it cannot be the principle which collects them, with all other doctrines, into unity upon its all-pervading essence. If religion, and theology, which is its scientific reduction, be pushed out as it ought to be, and in accordance with the total contents of the Bible must be, beyond the confines of man's history, and include in its universal sweep all orders of intelligent, moral beings, it becomes still more evident that, however important and regulative the doctrine of justification may be and beyond controversy is, it can hardly by the utmost ingenuity be construed as the all-embracing principle of unity. Even if it be supposed that "the innumerable company" of unfallen angels, that the whole countless host of non-human beings, that the possible populations of the incomputable systems of worlds that throng the amplitudes of boundless space, may be, and I think it not improbable that they are, justified and confirmed in holiness and happiness beyond the contingency of a fall, through the application of that exhaustive merit which necessarily belongs to the legal obedience of an Incarnate God, consummated

¹ It might be said of election that it is God's purpose to justify.

in the shame, the anguish, the blood of Gethsemane and Calvary — even if this be supposed, there would still remain the appalling case of the Devils which refuses to align itself with the glorious array. It cannot be reduced upon the principle of justification. It may be an actual, historical instance of moral government proceeding simply upon its essential principles, without the modification of covenant arrangements, and therefore without the possibility of justification. The only way of avoiding this difficulty, which, to my mind, is conceivable, is to reduce such a case upon the principle of justification *negatively*; the result would not have occurred had that principle been applied. But, aside from the case of Adam, in which it was applied with a similar result, although not equally irremediable, it may safely be said, in general, that a principle which professes to be one of unity should be *positively* applicable to every historic, and, I am disposed to think, every fairly conceivable case.

It would seem, then, that a principle, which would be central, which would collect into unity all the doctrines of theology, must be one which is generic and universally comprehensive. Such a principle, I humbly suggest, is Religion, which, as has already been explained, is the knowledge of God, in himself, and in his relations; a knowledge not merely notional and abstract, but also experimental and concrete — a knowledge which, in the case of unfallen beings, conditioned immortal holiness and happiness, and which, modified by the saving knowledge of Christ in the case of redeemed sinners, the Incarnate Saviour himself pronounced to be life eternal.

“This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.”

[This perhaps is sufficient; but were I required to speak more definitely, and signalize some one great truth or fact of religion as its central principle, I would, with hesitation, for the question is difficult, venture to specify *Union with God*; for, in the first place, it implicates in itself alike that intellectual and experimental knowledge of God in himself, and in his relations, which has been characterized as true religion; and, in the second place, it covers every possible case of religious life in every possible scheme of religion. It must, of necessity, be the religion of any order of moral beings which, as innocent or redeemed, can possibly exist. It has been, is, or will be the religion of every class of moral beings of which we have any knowledge from the Scriptures. All religion must begin with it, no religion can continue without it, and its confirmation marks the highest and eternal result of a religion, whether angelic or human, in which justification has been secured. Its confirmation is precisely justification, but it must have existed in the unfallen angels previously, and in order, to justification; it existed in the angels who fell, who, in their innocence, were either incapable of justification, or, if they were capable of it through a federal arrangement not revealed to us, never attained to it; restored, after being lost, to human sinners by regeneration, it precedes *actual* justification, is confirmed by it, developed in adoption and sanctification, and consummated in glorification. Either as contingent and temporary, or as confirmed and eternal, it has been or is the funda-

mental form of all religion, and is therefore entitled to the distinction of a principle upon which theology may be reduced to unity.]

This comprehensive answer to the question, What is the principle of unity in theology? would appear to be necessitated upon the suppositions, first, that theology is regarded in its most extensive signification, and, secondly, that by a principle of unity is intended one which is generic and inclusive of everything contained in theology, one the essence of which pervades every element which specifically contributes to its integrity. Theology, considered as a scientific reduction of all the facts of religion, cannot be satisfied in its inevitable quest of unity with any less ultimate principle than that which philosophy determinately seeks. That principle is God. Any enunciation, consequently, which professes to embody the ultimate principle of unity is bound to make God its chief term, and to do so expressly and articulately. His Name must be the controlling element in the proposition.

But while this is true, it is possible that one, contemplating the case from his own particular point of view, may choose to employ the terms *principle of unity*, *central principle*, in a more restricted and definite sense. If, for example, he pleases to limit his view to the moral government of God as actually administered in relation to man, he may select as a central principle an element peculiar to that mode of moral government, and that special form of religion which it implies. This, it is apparent, was what Dr. Thornwell did. Holding that God has administered his moral government in

relation to man through the two covenants of works and of grace, he sought a principle which is common to both covenants, and one which, as central and regulative, would be of the highest *polemic* value. He was, in some respects, unquestionably right. It is common, for instance, to say that atonement is the central principle of Christianity. He would have said that as atonement, however indispensable and glorious an element of the Christian scheme it is, is a means to justification as its end, and that therefore the latter must be regarded as the central element. Moreover, as atonement had no place in natural religion, it could not be a principle upon which natural religion and the gospel, or the covenants of works and of grace could be collected into unity. As justification is common to both it is competent to raise the question of its being the principle of unity, the central principle, in both. Now, if we concur with him that it is, we must also concede to him that it is a polemic principle of the utmost value. "It has the advantage," as he remarks, "of cutting up by the roots false systems of divinity. They cannot be reduced upon it. It throws off Arminianism, Pelagianism, and every theology which leaves life contingent, and resolves acceptance into mere pardon. It throws off all such schemes as foreign to its own spirit."

But, taking this restricted view of the scope of theology, I confess that my mind leans to the adoption of the principle of Federal Representation rather than Justification, and to the designation of it as regulative rather than central. It is broader, less specific, inclusive of the means to justification, of justification itself and

its results, of at least equal value with it as polemic, and embraces adoption, which seems to me incapable of reduction directly upon justification, but coördinate with it as a consequence of federal representation, which in securing the confirmation of the servant as such, at the same time secures the confirmation of the son as such; the two benefits being concurrently acquired, but not being identical. Dr. Thornwell regards adoption as the direct result of justification, the servant being, *ipso facto*, elevated to the condition of the son. The discussion of that question must be relegated to another place, where it will, as a separate topic, fall to be considered. Meanwhile, it is a joy to me to be able to follow so illustrious and evangelical a thinker in the exaltation of the Federal Theology, and the great, cardinal doctrine of Justification.

THE ULTIMATE SOURCE, RULE AND JUDGE OF THEOLOGY.

INTRODUCTION.

THIS subject has usually been discussed by theologians under the head of the *Principium Theologiæ* — the Source of Theology. The treatment of the topic, however, broadens out so as to include the Rule and the Judge of theological truth. The question, then, before us is in regard to the Ultimate Source, Rule, and Judge of Theology. The different parties who answer this question have been distributed as follows: The Rationalist, the Mystic, the Romanist, and the Orthodox Protestant. The answer of the Rationalist is, The source and judge of theology is Reason; that of the Mystic is, The source of theology is the Bible and Immediate Revelation to the individual; that of the Romanist is, The source and rule of theology is, The Bible and Tradition, and the judge is the Church; that of the Orthodox or Evangelical Protestant is, The source and rule of theology is the Bible, and the judge is the Holy Ghost speaking in the Bible.

In the last analysis these parties may be reduced to two — the Rationalist and the Orthodox Protestant. So far forth as the Mystic departs from the Scriptures, he must be classed with the Rationalist, for, unless he can support his immediate revelations by miraculous

evidence equal to that by which the Scriptures are sustained, they must be regarded as the creatures of his own mind. Every authoritative revelation of new truth must be proved by miracles. A professed revelation which is destitute of such proof is on that account lacking in authority. The Mystic, therefore, cannot show that he is resting on anything but reason, so far as the supposed revelations which give him his denomination are concerned, and must consequently be assigned to the class of Rationalists. His ultimate view of the meaning of the Scriptures is determined by the communications of truth which he professes to receive directly from God, and if they are in reality the products of his own intelligence, he is a Rationalist.

The Romanist holds that the Scriptures and Tradition constitute the composite Source and Rule of Theology, but the authoritative Judge is the Pope as the official representative of the church. Now, first, if tradition does not exactly reproduce the deliverances of the apostles, it is to the extent of its divergence from their instructions the uninspired product of the human mind, and to that extent differs in no material respect from the Rationalist's source of theology. This must be the case, for it is simply absurd to suppose that tradition exactly accords with the utterances of the apostles. Secondly, unless the pope, as the final judge in all controversies concerning religion, is infallible because inspired, his decisions are the conclusions of his own reason, or of his own and that of his advisers combined. His claim to inspiration must needs be authenticated by unimpeachable miracles, and as that has never

been done, it remains that the ultimate judge is nothing but the reason. The Romanist must, therefore, in the last analysis, be ranked in the same class with the Rationalist. Further, the Mystic and the Romanist unite in denying the completeness of the Scriptures as the source of theology and the rule of faith and duty, and in this regard both are rationalistic. Error brings strange bed-fellows together. The Mystic and the Romanist lie in the same bed with the Rationalist, and are wrapped in the same quilt. As this logical reduction cannot be successfully gainsaid, these parties will be contemplated as holding the same generic position as to the source, rule and judge of theology. The real issue is between Rationalism on the one hand, and Orthodox Protestantism on the other — between Reason and the Bible.

The fundamental principle of Rationalism is, that the Natural Reason is the ultimate Source, Rule and Judge of religion. All who theoretically or practically maintain that principle, in whole or in part, may be reduced to the unity of a general class upon it, however they may be specifically distinguished from each other.

Rationalists, considered in this wide sense, may be divided accordingly as they deny of a Supernatural Revelation contained in the Scriptures:

- I. Its Possibility — Pantheists and Intuitionists.
- II. Its Necessity — Deists.
- III. Its Authority — Rationalists, technically so called.
- IV. Its Completeness — Mystics and Romanists.
- V. Its Actuality — Infidels of all sorts.

Although atheists would come into the class of those who deny the possibility of a supernatural revelation, they are here left out of account, because they deny, as the others do not, the possibility of religion, and because the arguments against them are usually elaborated under the topic of the Being of God. Those who deny the actuality, or fact, of a supernatural revelation are also omitted in the discussion, for the reason that the contest with them is waged in the department of Apologetics, and in the treatises on the Evidences. The field in both these controversies is too wide to be embraced in a discussion as compendious as the present.

PANTHEISM.

I. Let us consider the position of those who deny the *possibility* of a supernatural revelation.

1. That of the *Pantheist*. As he rejects the personality of God, he is logically bound to deny the possibility of a supernatural revelation of his will. If, on the contrary, the personality of God be admitted, such a possibility must be conceded. As the point at issue is evidently the divine personality, arguments in its support will be briefly presented.¹

(1) The personality of God may be inferred, by analogy, from the evidence furnished by our own nature that we are personal. Between us, as finite, and God, as infinite, it is admitted that there can be no analogy. But there must be some analogy in other respects, or it would be impossible for us to attain to

¹ The subject is also treated in *The Discussions of Philosophical Questions*.

any intelligent apprehension of the nature and character of God. It is, for example, legitimate for us to infer from the fact that we are intelligent, voluntary and moral, the fact of God's intelligence, will and moral nature. Equally valid is it for us, upon the same ground to predicate personality of God.

First, where the conditions of a thing exists, the thing conditioned exists. We are conscious of effects which necessarily infer our possession of individuality, intelligence, affections, will and moral qualities. These are essential attributes of our nature which condition the exercise of personality. For, in the first place, these attributes are, as energized, passing incessantly through change, and the conviction of our identity as continuing steadfast, through all these transitions and fluctuations supposes the continuity, the persistent existence of one and the same personal self. This grounds the authoritative truth of memory, and the processes of human law. It is not satisfactory to say that this identity is in the essence of the soul, for —

Secondly, the spontaneous activities of the intellect, the feelings, the will and the conscience, cannot be confounded with that reflective activity which is conditioned upon these powers that belong to the essence of the soul. The spontaneous and the reflective elements in our nature cannot be reduced to the same category. If, then, the question be, What is it that reflects? the answer must be, The person. In no other way can we understand or justify the terms employed in the language of every civilized people — *personal responsibility*.

If, now, we are warranted, by analogy, in believing that the divine Being is possessed of intelligence, affections, will and moral character, we are also entitled to hold that there is in him a personality which deliberately energizes through these spontaneous perfections of his essence. In no other way can we ascribe freedom of action to God. The choice between two acts to either of which — creating or not creating, for example — his holy spontaneity may be directed can only be regarded as determined upon by his personal will.

(2) We have the conscious conviction of our personality. This is trustworthy, or our nature deceives us. If our nature deceives us, God, according to the pantheistic hypothesis, is deceptive, since, upon that hypothesis, we are manifestations of God. And, further, if, according to the pantheist, God comes to consciousness in man, his consciousness would deceive himself.

But if it be admitted that we are personal, two suppositions emerge: Either we were created as personal, or we are evolved from the substance of God as personal. The former supposition is denied by the pantheist. He is, therefore, shut up to the latter. The formidable question then arises, How could personality be evolved from an impersonal substance? The thing evolved must be potentially contained in the thing evolving. A contradiction emerges, for personality and impersonality are contradictories. If the ground be taken, that such a conclusion might be warranted upon the supposition of a strict process of evolution, but not upon that of progression, it is held that, in some way, God as impersonal *becomes personal* in man. But here again a contradic-

tion is confronted, for it is maintained that God is personal and impersonal at one and the same time; unless it be allowed that in becoming personal, he ceases to be an impersonal substance. But that cannot possibly relieve the difficulty, since he would, upon the supposition, change his fundamental nature. He would die as the impersonal God in order to become the personal man. The thing is absurd. If it be alleged that the substance only changes its manifestations, the answer is two-fold: first, the change is from a manifestation to one which is contradictory to it; secondly, that an infinite manifestation is sacrificed and a finite supervenes upon its loss. What progression there would be in such a process of becoming, it may safely be left to the astuteness of the pantheist to show. Granted that we are persons, and it follows from the premises of the pantheist himself that God must be personal.

(3) If we are personal and God is not, it follows that, to the extent of his possession of personality, man is greater than God — the finite human manifestation of the infinite substance greater than the infinite substance itself. God, according to the pantheist, comes to consciousness in man. Man, then, is the crown of the divine development. An infinite and eternal Being reaches the climax of its progression in a finite and ephemeral manifestation, a little, fleeting, but, wonderful to say, conscious, personal, shadow, which to-day is and to-morrow vanishes away. Were anything necessary to aggravate this stupendous contradiction, it would consist in man's consciousness of his pollution. The soul sickens at the thought that anything called by the name of Deity

should come to such a consciousness as that — a consciousness of shame in the presence of his fellow-manifestations, were he manifested to them!

(4) When men die, there is, according to the pantheist, a re-absorption of their souls into the universal substance. Now, either they are re-absorbed as personal or not. If as personal, God involves the aggregate of re-absorbed personalities, and, of course, to that extent, is personal; he is partly personal and partly impersonal, which is a contradiction. Or, he becomes personal, although not originally personal. He changes, then, the intrinsic mode of his infinite and eternal being. The infinite changes in consequence of finite, the eternal in consequence of temporal, additions. This is both contradictory and absurd.

If souls are re-absorbed as impersonal, it follows, first, that the attribute of personality, once possessed, is either destroyed or not. If destroyed, a part of the manifestation of the infinite substance is destroyed, and that in which it becomes conscious — its climax of development. And then it falls back to an unconscious condition, which is lower than a previous conscious one; whence it follows that the infinite substance not only changes continually, but changes for the worse. It undergoes perpetual degradation. Second, that the human soul loses the grand attribute of personality, and thus in being re-absorbed into the divine substance deteriorates, instead of advancing in dignity. The closer its union with God, the meaner it becomes. It loses by the intimacy. It was nobler in being a mere manifestation of the divine substance than in being involved in it.

If, on the other hand, personality is not destroyed in the re-absorption of the soul as impersonal, then, first, an attribute is separated from its substance, and continues to exist apart from it, which is incredible, since it contradicts the fundamental law of belief in the relation of property to substance; secondly, myriads upon myriads of personalities thus exist independently of the souls to which they belonged. They roam through the immense void of space crying for their lost substances, widowed wanderers mourning their desolate and shelterless estate, and lamenting that they are *qualified* to do duty to substances, but can find no substances to qualify.

(5) On the supposition that God is a cause, then, first, a blind, impersonal cause he must be, according to the fundamental assumption of the pantheist. How such a cause can originate personal causes it is hard to imagine. How a blind cause can see to produce seeing causes, when he himself cannot see, this is a great marvel. Secondly, when our souls, as fleeting phenomena, are re-absorbed into God, they lose their attribute of intelligent causality. From seeing they become blind, and lose their free intelligence in being admitted to nearness with God. Further, as the human causes were but divine causes, God puts out his own eyes in putting out the eyes of the human causes which manifest him.

(6) We are conscious of the sense of duty, the conviction of moral obligation. This necessarily infers a personal law-giver, ruler and judge, by whose will we are obliged, by whose law we are bound, and to the

sanctions of whose government we are amenable. To say that we are responsible to an impersonal substance is nonsense. And if we are but the manifestations of such a substance the measures of right and wrong are confounded, the distinction between duty and crime obliterated. The paradox is intolerable. Our moral nature thunders from its lowest depths a witness for a personal God.

(7) The same kind of argument is furnished by our religious nature. The sense of dependence, the conscious need of help, and the æsthetical perception of the beautiful, the lovely, the glorious conduct by a necessary inference to a personal being who is the recipient of worship. To talk of worshipping any other kind of being is absurd; to cry, O beautiful, glorious Impersonal Substance, we adore and love it! O kind Impersonal Substance, we thank it for all its goodness! O merciful Impersonal Substance, we confess to it our sins and implore its forgiveness! O almighty and pitiful Impersonal Substance, we beseech it to succor us amidst the stormy vicissitudes of life, and in the dreadful crisis of death! As well worship gravitation or a thunder-bolt.

(8) The universal employment in human language of the personal pronouns, *I, thou, he* proves the universal conviction of our personality. Now, either God is held to continue impersonal, or to become personal in man. If the former, as we are phenomenal manifestations of God, his manifestations say, *I, thou, he*, while the impersonal substance is incapable of such language. If the latter, as we are manifestations of God, he says, *I*,

thou, he, to himself. The pantheist can elect either horn, and be welcome to it.

This and the immediately succeeding argument directly rebut the pantheistic position, and at the same time reënforce the proofs derived from consciousness of the personality of God.

(9) It will scarcely be denied that human law is a fact. That is founded upon the idea of personal rights. Again the dilemma is invoked: either God continues impersonal, or he comes to conscious personality in man. If the former, as we are manifestations of God, his manifestations are vested with personal rights while as the impersonal substance he is unsusceptible of them. If the latter, as we are manifestations of God, he has personal conflicts with himself at law, and in innumerable cases is hanged. And to say the truth, such a God as the pantheist babbles about would deserve to be hanged.

(10) The fact of creation proves the personality of God. The argument deserves an expansion which cannot here be given. Creation is postulated by the necessary progress of our reason proceeding in accordance with the law of causality. An extra-mundane, personal Creator is demanded. Add to this the special faith-judgment elicited, by the conditions of experience furnished in consciousness, from the fundamental law of belief in an infinite and perfect being, and the case is complete.

If these considerations have availed to prove the personality of God, they establish the possibility of a supernatural revelation of his will. As personal he can afford

to other persons than himself a revelation of his will, and as infinite he can make that revelation supernatural.

INTUITIONALISM.

2. The position of the intuitionist, of the school of Schleiermacher and Morell. It denies the possibility of a supernatural revelation *a parte hominis*: man is not receptive of such a revelation.

It is assumed in this theory that revelation is necessarily subjective; from the nature of the case it is internal to the mind. It is a mode of the human intelligence, a subjective faculty, the very office of which is to apprehend religious truth. It is a part of man's natural constitution. Once given, as inlaid in the nature of the soul, it is absurd to say that it can be again given. Religious truth is apprehended by this intuitional faculty, just as outward phenomena are apprehended by external perception. It gazes upon religious truth, as brought directly into contact with it, and standing face to face with it. To furnish, therefore, an objective, logical system of such truth, an external, authoritative theology, for reception by the mind is to adopt a procedure utterly foreign to the constitution of the mind itself. It would be like describing colors, or giving instruction in the science of optics to a blind man.

It must not be supposed that the abettors of this theory employ the term *intuition* in the sense in which it is often, but somewhat inaccurately used, of an original principle, a fundamental *a priori* law of thought or belief, such as the law of space, of time, of causality, and the like. In this sense it is employed by Dr. McCosh in

his work on *The Intuitions of the Mind*. It is used in the strict sense of immediate, presentative knowledge, that in which Dr. Mansel contends that it ought to be taken. The intuition of the advocates of this theory is the consciousness — the immediate, presentative knowledge, of original principles of the soul, of fundamental, abstract realities and truths, æsthetic, moral and religious.

Revelation, accordingly, is the faculty of intuition having specific relation to religious “verities.” They are presented to it, are now and here present to it, and it is its office to take immediate knowledge of them. It is consciousness considered as specially related to the truths and facts of religion. Both the faculty, and the objects about which it is concerned, are subjective.

This intuitive faculty is moved to exercise by the religious feelings, and when those feelings are intensified to an extraordinary degree of energy, they are inspiration. This elevated state of the religious feelings stimulates the faculty of revelation to its highest exercise. The eye of intuition is wide open, and looks with clear and undimmed gaze upon the verities of religion.

The objective facts of the gospel history are not to be classed, indeed, *ex hypothesi*, cannot be classed, among the truths which are the objects of the revealing faculty. They neither are such truths nor convey them. What, then, are they? They are circumstantial conditions upon which this inspiration is kindled into extraordinary fervor, conditions upon which, in other words, the pious feelings are developed into a high degree of intensity.

Theology, accordingly, is simply the result of the employment of the organ of reflection upon the truths and facts given by the intuitional faculty. It is a digest of truth by the "reflective consciousness" acting upon the data of the "intuitional consciousness." From this it follows that it must be merely a natural human product. It can be constructed by man alone. God cannot produce it for him, either immediately, or through the medium of human teachers commissioned to discharge that office. There can be, from the nature of the case, no "book-revelation." The Bible, as an external, authoritative revelation of God's will, or of religious truth, is an impossibility. Revelation is natural, and, consequently, a supernatural revelation is to be dismissed as lying beyond the range of possibility. A divine theology, contradistinguished to a human, is out of the question. Such is a succinct account of this intuitionist theory, which denies, upon grounds of its own, the possibility of supernatural revelation; and in regard to it I proceed briefly to remark:

(1) The theory is a part of the semi-pantheistic system of Schleiermacher, and, imported from Germany, the home of erratic speculation in philosophy and theology, it has been naturalized in our language by such attractive, though mischievous, writers as Morell. It is both infidel and arrogant: infidel, because it essays to sweep away the Bible as an authoritative revelation, and, of course, along with it the scheme of Christianity as the only ground of a sinner's hopes; arrogant, because it declares it impossible for an omnipotent God to make known his will to man, the creature of his power, except

through the subjective activity of the human faculties — a position which was not assumed by the English deists themselves. It is, moreover, unscientific and unphilosophical: unscientific, because it takes no account, worth mentioning, of the palpable fact of sin, and thus begins by contradicting consciousness; unphilosophical, because it declines to derive from that obtrusive and gigantic fact the necessary inferences which spring from its existence. It neither notes the presence of sin as a cause, nor the effects which, upon the supposition of its existence, it must be expected to produce upon the religious nature, and upon the reflective attempt to reduce the spontaneous elements of that nature into the form of a theological system.

The theory affirms that the “intuitional consciousness” puts us into cognitive possession of the moral, the æsthetical, and the religious feelings. It must, therefore, be granted that it informs us of the moral feeling of guilt, as none but a madman would deny the fact of personal sin. It also gives us the knowledge of God as a ruler and judge. Now the question being, how we may escape the punishment due to guilt, what possible light could the intuitional consciousness afford us in regard to that profoundly interesting inquiry? It is too plain to require argument that a purely subjective revelation confined to the contents of consciousness is one which could give us no relief in our moral extremity. It would be dumb concerning the awfully important questions that arise in relation to our future destiny. And if this be so, it is obvious that no subjective revelation would render impossible an objective revelation

from God touching a way of deliverance from guilt and punishment.

(2) This theory is extravagant in the account which it gives of the scope of the intuitional faculty, and ascribes to it powers which it does not possess. It has been remarked already that the intuition of this theory is consciousness, or immediate knowledge. That this construction is correct is shown by the fact that Morell distributes the cognitive powers into the sensational consciousness, the perceptive consciousness, the logical consciousness, and the intuitional consciousness. Consciousness is generic, and under it is included intuition as one of its species. Of course, then, the essence of consciousness is included in intuition. It is consciousness in special relation to certain truths and feelings. The truths of religion are objects of this consciousness. Now it is admitted that the religious feelings are objects of consciousness, but the question would occur, whether the *laws* of morality and of æsthetics are directly gazed upon in consciousness, and it would be difficult, if not impossible, to show that they are. If they are not, some of the mental facts which lie at the very root of religion would, strictly speaking, lie beyond the scope of the religious consciousness. But apart from that question, let us direct our attention to a truth which must be confessed as fundamental to all religion — namely, the existence of God. Is God an object of the intuitional consciousness? Have we immediate knowledge of him? Do we gaze upon the Infinite One presentatively given, as face to face with us? If so, we can, without drawing our information from the Bible, describe him, as we can

every object of which we are conscious. To take that ground would be preposterous. In this signal, vital particular, therefore, the theory breaks down which represents the truths of religion as all immediately and presentatively revealed to the faculty of intuition.

It may be said that this is quibbling; that it makes no practical difference whether we immediately know God in consciousness, or mediately know him by a necessary inference from the data of consciousness, on the ground that a logical inference is of equal validity with the data from which it is derived. The result is the same. This vital truth of religion is furnished by our own subjective constitution, and renders an external revelation impossible. To this the answer is two-fold: First, the concession would be fatal to the consistency of a theory which refers all the truths of religion to the apprehensions of intuition. Intuition never infers anything. It sees its objects, and needs no inference that they exist. To admit, consequently, that the existence of God is a matter of inference, would be to sacrifice the intuitional theory of religion. Secondly, while consciousness makes no mistakes, the inferences which are actually derived from its data are often deceptive. Might it not happen that an inference from them to the existence of God, as a being so and so qualified, would be false? In order to answer that question, it is necessary to remove altogether the influence of the Bible, whether wittingly or unwittingly experienced, and refer to a condition of religious thought absolutely unaffected by it. Let us take the case of the best Greek philosophers. They had the intuitional and the logical faculties

in as great perfection as perhaps was ever attained. What kind of God did they infer from the facts of consciousness? If inspiration, as held by the church, be denied, and it is denied in this theory, what placed the apostles on a higher vantage-ground than these powerful thinkers? Would the advocates of this theory be satisfied with the deity of the Greek philosophers? If not, they give up the question. If they would be, they deserve to be ranked as of equal authority with Plato and Aristotle in religion. With Hume they would place Paganism and Christianity upon the same foot, and might be safely left to enjoy the company they elect. These men impose upon themselves and upon those who are fascinated by their speculations. They use the light they get from the Scriptures at the same time that they endeavor to destroy their authority. It is evident that, without a supernatural revelation, no just apprehension of God can be reached, and, therefore, no competent account of religion can be given. It is not intended to deny that true inferences *ought* to be drawn from the facts of consciousness in regard to the nature of God. That is admitted. What is denied is that, apart from a supernatural revelation, such inferences ever *are* drawn.

But to return to the theory itself. It does not profess to deal with inferences, however correct, from the facts given in the intuitional consciousness, but solely with the facts themselves; and to say that we have direct intuitions of God, of infinity, of the essence of our own souls, of the essence of anything, is infinitely absurd. This intuition, to which powers so marvellous are at-

tributed, like the frog in the fable, bursts from its self-inflation.

(3) A construction of a theology of the religious intuitions and feelings must be accomplished by the thinking faculty according to logical method. It were absurd to suppose that the intuitions or the feelings could perform such an office. One does not reflect by intuition or by feeling. But if man can do this, why may not God? It may be replied that God cannot have man's intuitions or feelings. Very true; but he has a perfect intuition of man's intuitions and feelings. Is he not omniscient? But if he know them, why cannot he deliver a theology which involves an account of the religious truths and the facts of our nature? He is not dependent upon reasoning to know, but he who made us to reason can reason himself. He is not indebted to logic like ours in order to form a systematized statement of truth, but what hinders his employment of logic, so as to teach us truth in a systematic form? Admit his perfect knowledge of our consciousness, and all its contents, the experience of sin excluded, and there is no difficulty in the supposition of his furnishing a theology containing an exposition of the facts of our religious nature.

Moreover, why cannot God give descriptions of unperceived realities, realities which are out of our consciousness, which can be apprehended by faith? If this may be done by the orator, the poet, the painter, why not by him who creates the gifts of oratory, poetry and painting? And if from the facts given by consciousness we are capable of deriving good and necessary infer-

ences to other truths, why cannot God give us the inferences in the shape of direct statements? A denial could only be grounded in pantheism or atheism. The deist would never dream of making it.

Testimony, it must be admitted, adds to the materials of our knowledge. Otherwise we would be restricted to our own individual perception, internal and external. History would be fable. Is a personal God confessed by the intuitionist, and will he deny that God may become a witness to us? If he deny the personality of God, he is *pro tanto* a pantheist. If he admit it, he must concede the possibility of a personal God bearing witness to us as persons. This is what God actually does in the Scriptures. The facts of creation, and others belonging to the scheme of natural religion, and the contents of the gospel, are made known to us by his testimony — the first class as re-published from nature, the second as supernatural and redemptive. If to this it be objected that the facts of the gospel history are testified to by the evangelists as human witnesses, the answer is sufficient, that the relation of those facts to the salvation of men lay entirely beyond the competency of man's testimony, and, from the nature of the case, must be referred to God's. If the bearing of the testimony upon the salvation of men be refused, the objector places himself in the ranks of naked infidelity.

(4) Not only does God by his testimony add to the materials of our knowledge, but, so far as the matter furnished is transcendent, the Holy Spirit, in the act of regeneration, also gives the organ by which we apprehend it. He imparts the spiritual eye to see spiritual

realities. It is cheerfully conceded that revelation gives no ultimate laws of thought or belief, no new original powers. It brings new truth into relation to these original elements of the human soul. Faith, love and hope, for example, are not created by it, or by the supernatural agency which accompanies and enforces it. But by the regenerating grace of the Holy Ghost these original powers are renewed, are born again, and vitalized by a principle of spiritual life which was lost by the fall of man into sin, and is restored by redemption. The new truths revealed are matched by new receptivities. Spiritual as they are, and lying beyond the grasp of the merely natural powers, they are capable of being apprehended by those powers into which a spiritual life has been introduced, and upon which, consequently, spiritual capacities have been superinduced. Faith, thus regenerated, becomes the intuition of the spiritual, supernatural, transcendent facts of redemption. The truths revealed, the light in which they are seen, and the eye which sees them are all adapted to each other, and they all, so far as they are redemptive, lie beyond the range of the natural intuitions. To say that this cannot be is to deny the truth of the Scriptures, admitted by the intuitionist to have been the product of exalted piety, and to tie the hands of an Almighty God.

(5) The intuitionist allows the possibility of truth being communicated by teaching. Now, either by teaching he means the re-production of the intuitions experienced by the teacher and the actual presentation of them to the learner, or the employment of the logical faculty and the representation of truth by means of

verbal signs which are symbolic of thought. If he mean the former, he contends for a sheer impossibility. No teacher can create the objects of intuition and bring them into contact with the consciousness of the disciple; nor can he impart the organ of intuition in case of its absence or quicken it into sensibility in case it is obtuse. If he mean the latter — and if he does he is inconsistent with himself — one may well crave to know why the supreme intelligence cannot discharge an office which is competent to the limited powers of man. As the latter supposition is clearly not that which is made by this intuitional theory, it is impossible to see how the admission of any teaching at all in a proper sense can be justified by it. It may be conceivable that an individual may in some way construe to himself his own intuitions and feelings, but it passes comprehension how he could communicate the results of his reflections to others without a logical process, and the representative signs of language. The command given in the Scriptures to teach all nations, to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature, might in some extraordinary way be intelligible to the elevated piety and illumination of the intuitionalist, but it would certainly be unmeaning jargon to the common sense of ordinary mortals.

(6) The denial that an objective, supernatural revelation, embodying a divine theology, is possible involves the assumption that the subjective revelation contended for in this theory is perfect, and cannot be even supplemented. That implies that a conscious sinner is possessed of a religion sufficient for all his wants, a religion

which he derives from his own sinful heart, as a spider spins his web out of his own bowels. Denying, as the theory does, any supernatural change in the soul effected by regeneration, it provides only for an illumination which is supposed to clarify the intuitions of natural truth, and stimulate the feelings springing from a natural religiousness. As water cannot rise higher than its source, the piety which is assumed to be engendered by this illumination could not transcend the radical corruption of the soul. There must be a degree of imperfection existing in the state of the religious feelings, which will necessarily impart a corresponding imperfection to the theology which is thought out by the "reflective consciousness." Two fatal consequences flow from the theory: First, there can be no ideal standard of religious truth, no perfect theological norm, conformity to which the soul might put forth a *nisus* to attain; secondly, there could be no principles of holiness out of which a pure and undefiled religion might be developed. The sinner could no more rise above sin than an eagle could soar above the atmosphere. The vicarious atonement of Christ and the renewing grace of the Holy Ghost being alike rejected, the fancied illumination of the intuitionist could never avail to the removal of guilt, the stain of pollution, or the power of depravity. The light issuing from law which has been broken, like that which glares upon the criminal doomed to be burnt from the fagots surrounding the stake, serves only to reveal the certain condemnation of the transgressor. In short, the theory, although paying a feigned obeisance to Christianity and abusively em-

employing its terms, takes no account of the judicial consequences of sin, and, therefore, makes no provision for redemption. It descants in pompous phraseology upon the insertion, through the incarnation, of a Christic principle into humanity, corresponding to the infusion through creation of a divine principle into the world, and prates of an organic development of the life of the church as proceeding from this evolutionary germ, but sinks out of view the personal offices of Christ, tramples under foot the blood of expiation, and treats with contempt the saving functions of the Holy Ghost. It is a misrepresentation of the present condition of man, and a mockery of his eternal hopes. It gives him a stone for bread, and a scorpion for an egg.

(7) The last consideration — and it is decisive — which will be urged against this theory is, that it reduces to naught the miraculous evidence by which the plenary inspiration of the Scriptures, as an objective, supernatural revelation, is supported. Nothing will now be said upon this point, as it comes to be noticed in another place.

DEISM.

II. Let us next contemplate briefly the position of those who deny the *necessity* of a supernatural revelation. This was maintained especially by the English deists.

1. The State of the Question. In the controversy which occurred between the English deists and the apologists for a supernatural revelation, the former took two grounds: First, that a new revelation is not necessary, because men already have adequate light in regard

to the sheme of natural religion; and, secondly, that natural religion is sufficient for all the moral and religious ends of man's being. The question, accordingly, which was mainly debated was the necessity of a new, supernatural revelation to republish and reënforce the articles of natural religion. Able as were the discussions of the apologists for revelation, and valuable as is the body of apologetical literature which was created by the great controversy, a mistake was made. The real, the all-important question to which attention should have been, although not exclusively, yet principally, directed, was the Necessity of the Gospel. It need hardly be said that revelation is wider in its scope than the gospel. The scheme of natural religion, revealed to man at first, and manifestly obscured by sin, might have been revealed afresh, without the announcement of a remedial system by which the subjects of that first religion might be recovered from the disastrous results of disobedience. Evidently, therefore, the pressing inquiry was, not whether a new revelation of natural religion was necessary, but whether the communication of a scheme of redemption was needed. Much of valuable truth was elicited by the debate, but that which was of the greatest importance was too much overlooked.

"The controversy," well observes Dr. Thornwell, "has been, in many instances, so conducted with the deists as to convey the impression that the doctrines of nature were sufficient to constitute the complete religion of a sinner; the sole point in dispute being the competency of reason to discover those doctrines without supernatural aid. We are represented as creatures destined

for another life, and needing information in reference to its character and its connection with the present, which cannot be derived from the light of nature. In this view Christianity is no new religion; it is only a new publication of that which subsisted from the beginning of our race. It is a *revelation*, strictly and properly so called, and nothing more; and its whole relation to us is exhausted when we receive and submit to it as a divine teacher. We are ignorant, for example, of a future life; or if we have, from the operations of conscience or the spontaneous desires of the soul, vague convictions or indistinct impressions of continued existence in another state or among other scenes, the evidence is too feeble and shadowy to furnish the grounds of a steady belief. Christianity, accordingly, relieves our blindness and brings life and immortality to light. The apprehensions of nature it reduces to realities, its vague impressions to the certainty of facts. So, again, without revelation we are represented as uncertain whether our conduct here shall affect our destinies hereafter, or what is the nature of the connection which subsists between the present and the future. Christianity comes to our assistance and teaches us that this present world is a school for eternity; and that according to our characters and conduct here will be our destiny hereafter. This is the method in which the apologists for Christianity too often conducted the argument with the deists.”¹

There are two great offices which a supernatural revelation is needed to accomplish: First, to re-publish, correct and interpret natural religion; secondly and

¹ *Coll. Writings*, Vol. II., pp. 61, 62.

chiefly, to create the truths of evangelical or redemptive religion, and to make known to a fallen, corrupt, ruined race a method of recovery and salvation. Is such a revelation necessary? The deist denies, the Christian affirms.

2. Proofs of the necessity of a supernatural revelation.

(1) Natural religion needs to be re-published, and cleared of misconceptions; its original office to be expounded and its present relations distinctly interpreted.

The argument upon this point has been so fully presented by the opponents of deism that only a few considerations will be here submitted.

First. The fact of sin enforces this necessity. Individual consciousness and a world-wide observation prove the universal prevalence of sin. He who denies this puts himself outside the pale of the discussion. He rejects the most patent facts. But if the existence of sin is admitted, it needs no argument to prove what all observation establishes — that the transgressor of law is not prepared to judge impartially concerning the principles and measures of the scheme of government under which he is an offender. His views of that government will necessarily be partial and unfair. The administration of no law, human or divine, could be entrusted to criminals. Neither could its exposition be left to them. Self-interest would, of course, vitiate and warp the judgment. If men are offenders against the moral government of God as naturally revealed — and the deist concedes the existence of such a government — it follows that any just conceptions of it must proceed from a revelation

afforded by God himself. The transgressor must have such a revelation, or remain in the ignorance accruing from sin, an ignorance elected by a will guided by the prejudiced views of the understanding, and influenced by the corrupt passions of the heart. It is folly to talk of a sinner's possession of a competent knowledge of natural religion, or even of any serious effort on his part to attain it. Speculation in regard to it is one thing, the adoption of it as a practical guide of life is another; and even the philosophical speculations of a Socrates were inadequate. Yet he suffered death because his doctrine made some theoretical approach to monotheism.

This suggests the obvious consideration that the appeal upon this question must be taken to those who did not possess a professed supernatural revelation. The creed, for example, of Lord Herbert of Cherbury cannot be assumed as a criterion. It affords no proper gauge of the ability of mere unassisted reason to reach a competent knowledge of the articles of natural religion. It was impossible for him to place himself in the position of a pagan philosopher. It was as impossible for him to have refused to inhale the atmosphere as to have resisted the absorption of scriptural ideas. By no mental effort could he have vacated his mind of the conceptions imparted by the Bible. If he never read it, his cook or his gardener would in conversation have communicated to him some of its doctrines. But if the deist allow the appeal to either the ancient pagan or the modern heathen world, he must acknowledge that he has clearer notions of God, of moral government and

of the immortality of the soul than were ever attained by Socrates or Cicero, or are now enjoyed by the followers of Buddha or Confucius. He will scarcely refer the difference to his superior intelligence. What can cause it but the insensible influence of the Scriptures? The Bible must be thought away, or there is no possibility of settling the question. Think away the Bible, and the question is settled: there is no competent knowledge attainable of natural religion without a supernatural revelation. Hence the necessity of such a revelation, so far as that religion is concerned.

Secondly. In consequence of the disordered moral condition of the race, there could not be any fixed and certain standard of natural religion. There is no common authority by which its articles could be determined. If it be replied that reason, in its fundamental principles, supplies such a norm, the plea is rebutted by at least two considerations: that reason itself has suffered from the influence of sin, and that no common agreement has ever been arrived at in regard to the question, What is natural religion? Facts verify the antecedent presumption that no authoritative and common standard can be secured.

Thirdly. These considerations are enhanced by the intimations of nature itself that the original scheme of natural religion has been mutilated, that some of the elements which at first composed it have been lost to reason. If there be any ground, although only slight, for this supposition, it would certainly be desirable that a new and trustworthy publication of the scheme in its integrity should be furnished to mankind. It can hardly

be disputed, on anything like valid grounds, that men are born with a disordered moral constitution. The Pelagian hypothesis cannot relieve itself of the fatal objection that the universal determination of men in the direction of sin, so absolutely universal that there never has been a single exception to the rule, is sufficient to prove that a positive proclivity to a wrong moral development is congenital. Now, if this were the first natural condition of man, if this fact could not be assigned to a cause preceding birth, reason would seem to be entitled to conclude that the present moral status of the race is regular and constitutional. Man is only obeying his nature. What is denominated sin could not be moral disorder; it would be the fruit of man's connate principles. How there could be a question in regard to any religion whatsoever, it is difficult to conceive.

Reason, however, itself suggests, upon the principles of the deist, that this could not, under the administration of a just and benevolent Creator, have been the original condition of man. It suggests that he began his existence in rectitude; and then the presumption is a powerful one, that as a fall from that pristine estate must have occurred, and man's moral condition must have been deranged by a revolutionary force, he lost, in some degree at least, his grasp of the elements of that original scheme of religion with which he was acquainted in innocence. This presumption of reason is too strong to be treated with contempt. It is sufficient to create a necessity for a new publication of natural religion. What guarantee is there that, in his present condition

in which he is densely ignorant of his first estate and of the lapse from it which he has palpably undergone, his attempts reflectively to construct a religion which will correspond with that he possessed at creation will meet with even tolerable success? Does not reason itself intimate the need of a supernatural revelation that will clear up the thick darkness of the problem, and pour light upon that prehistoric condition of the race back to which not even fragmentary annals or straggling traditions conduct?

Fourthly. If what has thus far been advanced have any foundation in truth, it would follow that a republication of natural religion, enforcing it and interpreting its relations, is necessary as a preparative for a remedial scheme: a scheme proposing deliverance from the consequences which an infraction of the requirements of natural religion as one of law entails. It must be admitted that the more clearly that religion is made known the more certainly are its retributive sanctions disclosed. In this view of the matter it is hard to see why any attempt should be instituted by the deist to recover it, or to formulate its provisions again. The effort is suicidal. He kindles the fire that consumes him. But the republication and reënfacement of that religion of law by God himself ought to be regarded as an act of mercy. Convicted of guilt for past transgressions of its commands, and despairing of success in complying with its exactions in the future, men are prepared to welcome a scheme which promises deliverance from condemnation and the conferment of everlasting happiness. Natural religion supernaturally revealed becomes propædentic

to redemption. Its republication is necessary in order to prepare the way for the gospel.

(2) A supernatural revelation is necessary to create the truths of evangelical and redemptive religion — to make known to a fallen, corrupt, ruined race of sinners a method of recovery and salvation.

First. This is proved by the insufficiency of natural religion, or of any other known religion except Christianity, to meet the facts, or relieve the wants, of the human race.

What are the facts?

In the first place, every individual is *conscious* of sin and guilt, and needs deliverance from them.

In the second place, the fact is evident to *observation* that the moral condition of the race is one of sin and ruin. To deny these facts is not to reason, but to rave.

In the third place, self-culture is utterly powerless to deliver men from the pressure of these facts and their consequent needs. The history of asceticism proves that the most earnest efforts to evolve a religion from within leads only to a wretched servitude to legalism, which macerates the body and tortures the soul. Instead of relieving, they only deepen, the anguish of the earnest spirit.

In the fourth place, the infraction of physical law is inevitably attended with suffering. The providential ruler is the moral. By parity of reason, disobedience to moral law must also be followed by suffering.

In the fifth place, human law inflicts punishment upon the transgressor. It is not necessary now to enter into the question, What is the end sought by human law

in the infliction of its sentences? It is enough to know that the sentences are inflicted and that suffering, sometimes death itself, is the result. The inference to the divine law is so obvious that it need not be pressed.

In the sixth place, every religion, except Christianity, is one purely of law. The sacrifices they may involve constitute them no exception to this remark; for those sacrifices, even when human beings are offered up, are merely legal duties performed for the purpose of obeying the divine law or satisfying the divine justice. There certainly can be nothing saving in one sinner religiously killing another sinner. No religion but Christianity provides redemption from the guilt, or salvation from the stain and power, of sin. The beautiful ethics which other religions may enforce, the moral precepts they enjoin, are but the imposition of law upon the conscience of the worshipper, without a hint of any adequate relief from the disastrous consequences of his failure to comply with them. They simply wield the lash of law. Christianity is the only redemptive religion under heaven. It is not a species coördinate with other species under the genus, religion: it is the sole generic religion of the race, excluding all others from the denomination of religion, and standing out in uncompromising and perpetual protest against them. They are all legal institutes, bedecked with a few soiled and crumpled feathers borrowed from the mutilated traditions of an original revelation of the gospel.

Such are the facts. How does the deist propose to meet them?

In the first place, he admits the existence of God as

an infinitely perfect moral governor of the world. He must also confess that he is a transgressor of his law. How does he propose to escape punishment? How to secure the divine favor?

In the second place, let us look at the suppositions he may make.

Does he suppose that he can furnish acceptable obedience to the law imposed by natural religion? Apart from guilt and its resultant condemnation, which must be accounted for, the history of every hour of attempted obedience would convict him of failure. The supposition is preposterous.

Does he suppose that repentance will issue in pardon, and commend him to the divine approval? Repentance, without a thorough-going reformation of principles and conduct alike, would be worthless; and a repentance involving that result is to him impossible. Besides, even were it possible, it could furnish no reparation to the violated law, no satisfaction to the outraged justice, of God.

Does he suppose that the divine Governor may dispense with the claims of his justice and law, and, by an exercise of sovereign prerogative, simply pardon him and admit him to his favor? The only plausible ground for this supposition is that the infinite benevolence of God may take precedence, and check the exercise, of his justice. This is impossible. The justice of God is the infinite and eternal norm of rectitude in his character. Contemplating this standard of righteousness in his own being he loves it with an infinite love. This is his holiness — the very life of the ever-blessed God. When,

therefore, his love for the happiness of a sinful creature comes into conflict with his love for his own infinite and glorious righteousness, the former must give way to the latter. Simple pardon of the sinner would involve the sacrifice not only of his justice, but of his benevolence in the form of love to his own infinite rectitude. Love for himself must take precedence of love for the sinner. The glory of his own perfections is paramount to the happiness of a sinful creature.

Such being the state of the case, unless natural religion admits the element of substitution, and actually provides a competent substitute for the sinner, on the ground of whose vicarious obedience he may be pardoned and received to the divine favor, he must lie down in hopeless despair. But natural religion embodies in itself no such element, and is, therefore, utterly insufficient to meet the facts or relieve the wants of the race.

Secondly. It follows that there is a supreme necessity for a supernatural revelation making known to mankind a remedial scheme, involving the element of substitution, and providing a competent substitute for the sinner. The gospel is precisely such a revelation. Not only was it absolutely necessary to the salvation of sinners, but God has in infinite mercy met the necessity, and by its actual communication has brought life and immortality to light, and opened the kingdom of heaven to all who believe in his incarnate and crucified Son. There is but one conceivable reason why deists or any other skeptics reject a scheme of such matchless philanthropy; it is that, in addition to proclaiming salvation, it de-

nounces eternal punishment against wilful persistence in sin.

TECHNICAL RATIONALISM.

III. The position must next be considered of those who deny the *supreme authority* of a supernatural revelation. This is the ground taken by some who are technically styled Rationalists.

The rationalists (proper) are divisible into two general classes, those who deny and those who admit the *fact* of a supernatural revelation. The position of those who deny — infidel rationalists — will not here be considered. It must be remitted to the discussion of the Evidences of the Divine Origin of Revelation in opposition to infidelity. Those who admit the fact of a supernatural revelation are distributable into two special classes, the pure rationalists and the modified or dogmatic rationalists. Of each in the order stated.

1. The Pure Rationalists. They admit a supernatural revelation, but contend that its office is simply to republish and clarify the truths of natural theology. It originates nothing. It is not strictly a revelation, but an exposition; and of this the natural reason is the supreme judge.

The fundamental fallacy in this scheme is in the assumption that a lower authority can act as final judge of a higher. The natural reason is a lower authority than a supernatural revelation of God's will.

First. Reason is not what it originally was, nor are the relations in which it stands, and the circumstances of its environment, precisely what they were at first.

No issue is joined with the rationalist upon the question whether reason constituted a part of the natural revelation which was imparted to man in his original condition of innocence: a part, I say, for on the assumption that conscience is included by the rationalist under the generic denomination of reason, and no stand being now made on a distinction between them, it must not be overlooked that God partly revealed his perfections to man in the glorious fabric of the heavens and the earth. It is cheerfully conceded that in the intellectual and moral constitution of man God furnished a natural revelation of himself, which in connection with the lessons of the phenomenal universe was designed to be a directory of faith and duty. And had man not sinned it would probably have been the only revelation which he would have received; illuminated and, it may have happened, augmented, it must be allowed, by any oral communications it may have pleased his heavenly Maker to extend to him. This was *ratio recta* — right reason; and so long as it continued to be so may have been an infallible guide.

But man sinned. A moral catastrophe occurred, a moral revolution took place, and it would be a fair presumption, antecedent to any divine declaration of the fact, that reason must have been affected by the shock, that it must have been, to some extent, impaired by the damage resulting from the fall. We are not, however, left to probable reasoning upon the point. The rationalist, with whom this argument deals, admits a supernatural revelation, and that revelation expressly asserts that the understanding is darkened by sin. This ought

to be sufficient to settle the question in favor of the superior authority of supernatural revelation.

But, further, it is pertinent to the concessions of the rationalist to ask, Where was the necessity of a supernatural revelation, unless reason had lost its infallibility as a guide of faith and duty? Its office would be superfluous, and would be excluded by the law of parcimony. Must not the rationalist grant the superior authority of the new revelation of truth, since he concedes that it is designed to afford clearer light than reason actually possesses in regard to the scheme of natural religion? That this opinion is certainly true—namely, that reason stands in need of assistance in its attempts to construe the doctrines of natural religion—is evinced by the undeniable fact that reason has been jangled in regard to some of the plainest and most fundamental truths of that scheme. How, otherwise, could we account for discussions concerning the questions of God's existence, of creation, of the divine government of the world and of the immortality of the soul?—doctrines which are essential to the very existence of any religion. The best natural theologians of pagan antiquity were sadly confused upon some of these cardinal doctrines, and they are vigorously contested upon the field of modern speculation. These facts show that reason is no longer the noble and exalted faculty, the right reason it once was—*το ἡγεμονικόν*, directing all the judgments of the soul in respect to religion. It has fallen from the lofty seat of judge; its darkness needs to be enlightened, its aberrations to be corrected and its judgments to be validated by an unerring authority.

Were anything more required to strengthen these sufficiently conclusive arguments derived from the present condition of reason, it would lie in the consideration that the decisions of a supreme authority ought to be unfluctuating and consistent with themselves. But it must be admitted that reason is a variable, while, from the nature of the case, a *written* revelation, is an invariable, quantity. It is, upon these grounds, evident that reason cannot be the final judge of a supernatural revelation, even though its office is conceived as limited to the republication and exposition of natural religion.

Secondly. Supernatural revelation makes known truths belonging to natural religion of which reason has now no adequate knowledge, if indeed it has any knowledge at all. The doctrine of the Trinity is one of these. It is not intended to say that reason presents no intimations of a diversity of persons in the Godhead. On the contrary, the conviction of our own individual personality and of the personality of others different from ourselves, together with the actual experience of fellowship with other persons, and the fundamental distinction between subject and object which is native to the human mind, would lead us, reasoning by analogy, to at least a powerful presumption against the supposition of the unipersonality of God. But, for aught that appears, reason can suggest no more than this. There would seem to be no natural grounds upon which it could even presumptively conclude to a *trinity* of persons. Now it cannot well be denied that the doctrine of the Trinity was an article of natural religion. One consideration is sufficient to prove this. It is certain that the Trinity,

is revealed in the supernatural revelation admitted by the rationalist; and it cannot for an instant be supposed that God could have at first revealed himself to man as simply one person — that is, that natural religion could have contained a doctrine as to the mode of the divine existence, which is contradicted by a supernatural revelation conceded to be a republication of natural religion. The two revelations, the natural and the supernatural, must, in this regard, be consistent with each other.

Another doctrine of natural religion which is now unknown to mere reason is that of the federal relation of the race to Adam. That this doctrine is republished by supernatural revelation is manifest from such considerations as these:¹ The account given in Genesis of the transactions between God and Adam in paradise; the argument of Paul in the fifth chapter of Romans in which he expounds the analogy between Christ and Adam, from which it follows that if Christ is a federal head so must Adam have been; the declaration of the same apostle in the fifteenth chapter of First Corinthians, "As in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive," which taken in connection with the argument of which it forms a part must mean: as all who were in Adam die, so all who are in Christ shall be made alive; the discussion in the second chapter of Hebrews touching the necessity of the Incarnation, in which the writer shows that Christ, as the representative of his brethren must have conformed to the law of community of nature between Adam and his posterity, the inference

¹ For a fuller discussion of this point the reader is referred to the writer's work on *Calvinism and Evangelical Arminianism*.

being necessitated that Adam was also a representative of his seed; the fact that without a covenant, limiting the time of the required obedience, justification would be impossible, since in the absence of such limitation upon the obedience naturally demanded by naked law, it must necessarily be unfinished, perpetual, contingent — a supposition incompatible with that of justification; and the catholic teaching of Scripture that an indefectible life was originally attainable through obedience to the law — a doctrine inconsistent with the hypothesis that there was no covenant between God and man.

It thus appears that reason is indebted to the Scriptures for some of the matter of man's original religion which had been lost through the blinding and corrupting influence of sin. If it would be absurd to say that an ignorant pupil is superior in authority to the teacher who communicates to him the materials of his knowledge, equally so would it be to affirm that reason is the final judge of that supernatural revelation from which alone it derives information in regard to the very existence of some of the articles even of natural religion. The disciple becomes the master, the servant the lord. But this is not all, for —

Thirdly. Some of the truths of supernatural revelation transcend reason: it is unable to originate them, and it is unwilling to receive them when delivered. The question not now being raised, how far the truths of natural religion were revealed to the reason to be received by it as delivered by God, but it being assumed, for the sake of argument, that reason itself, according to the hypothesis of the rationalist, was the revelation

of the truths of natural religion, the inquiry in relation to the judicial function of reason would be non-existent, except in the sense of a revelation sitting in judgment upon itself, of reason acting as a judge of reason. When, however, it is conceded that a supernatural revelation has been communicated, the very terms imply that it is addressed to reason, that reason is the recipient of something that is delivered to it. God makes a report of his will and the ear of reason is supposed to be open to receive it; and reason, it ought here to be remarked for the sake of clearness, is taken as embracing both the power of thought and that of faith, as generically the thinking and the believing faculty. Now it is cheerfully granted that with reference to a supernatural revelation reason has a preliminary function to discharge. It is entitled, up to the measure of its competency, to examine the claim of a revelation professing to come from God. It cannot be denied the right, under proper limitations, such as freedom from prejudice and passion, a desire to know the truth, and a recognition of the dependence of the human faculties upon God for guidance, to sift the evidence upon which the claim is based. This is its legitimate office.¹ But when this office has been discharged — whether faithfully or unfaithfully is not now inquired — one or another of two opposite conclusions may be reached. The evidence may be pronounced unsatisfactory and the claim of the professed revelation rejected. This is the position of the infidel rationalist. On the other hand, the evidence

¹ This subject may be treated more in detail as the discussion advances.

may be adjudged to be sufficient, and the professed revelation will, accordingly, be accepted as real. This is the position of the rationalist whose theory is now under examination.

Now, to him the proof that the admitted supernatural revelation contains matter which was not discoverable by reason must, upon his own principles, upset his hypothesis that it is a mere republication and exposition of natural religion. According to him, reason is the measure of natural religion, for reason was originally the revelation of that religion, and a new revelation simply restoring the old religion cannot, from the nature of the case, overpass the limits of reason. But if the supernatural revelation also contains new and transcendent matter, a novel issue is made. It is whether reason is competent finally to judge concerning truths, which transcend both natural religion and the faculty which was its revealing organ. The question is, whether reason can act as supreme judge in a sphere which lies outside of its legitimate powers and functions.

It is difficult to see how any candid mind can fail to recognize the fact that the Scriptures as a supernatural revelation involve truths which lie infinitely beyond the genius and the scope of natural religion, truths which were originated by them, which never could have been discovered, and never can be comprehended by the human reason. Natural religion, as historically developed in its actual results, is one of law, and law confessedly makes no provision of relief for the violators of its commands. It utters no syllable of mercy to the transgressor. It convicts and sentences him. The

scheme of redemption from the effects of sin and from sin itself must, therefore, have been a free determination of the divine will which reason could never have anticipated, a product of the divine mercy which was as unexpected as it was glorious; and every step in its execution was a surprising manifestation of the unmerited favor of God to those who, as they had incurred his condemnation by their own fault, could have looked for nothing but punishment at his hands. Into this category fall the doctrines of the Incarnation; the person of Christ; the Atonement — the life, death and resurrection of Jesus; his ascension, intercession and mediatorial reign; the *saving* offices of the Holy Ghost; the whole process by which redemption is experimentally applied to the sinner, regeneration, justification, adoption and sanctification; and the general resurrection of the bodies of the dead at the last day. These are doctrines of supernatural revelation; and it were worse than idle to say that they involve simply the republication, or reënfacement, or exposition of the truths of natural religion. That they transcend the natural reason is susceptible of proof from facts:

In the first place, philosophy never dreamed of them; and philosophy measured the capacities of thought and plumbed the depths of speculation. It has often been truly remarked that it pleased God to introduce Christianity into the world after the highest results of human wisdom had been reached, and yet “the world by wisdom knew not God.” The genius of the Greek philosophers attained to the climax of subtle, analytical, abstract speculation, and, unlike that of their modern analogues,

the Titanic Absolutists of Germany, had to deal with the great problems of natural theology, almost wholly unmodified by the influence of supernatural revelation. What was the result? So far as even natural religion was concerned, Greek philosophy was ignorant of some of its truths, and bungled about those that were partially known. It could not get quit of the eternity of matter and the consequent limitation of the Infinite Being, and the Socratic argument for the immortality of the soul, wonderfully acute and profoundly interesting as it is, proceeded upon the assumption of the soul's existence previously to its connection with the body. So far as the doctrines of redemption are concerned, that philosophy was an absolute blank. The fact is a striking proof that those doctrines were incapable of origination or discovery by the natural reason.

In the second place, the reason of the Jew, trained as he had been in the school of the Mosaic institute, which was evangelical and redemptive in relation to the great ends it was designed to inculcate, and possessed, as he was in part, of supernatural revelation foreshadowing a redemption to be fully accomplished — the reason of the Jew rejected the doctrines of Christianity (as such) when they were proposed for his acceptance, and the facts of Christianity when they were achieved before his very eyes. His reason stumbled at them as a stumbling-block and rock of offence, and refused the cornerstone of the fabric of salvation. He demanded in proof a sign from heaven, conveniently sinking out of view the fact that such a sign had been furnished. To this demand Jesus replied, "An evil and adulterous genera-

tion seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas: for as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly, so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth." By this answer he plainly intimated that he would fulfil the type of the prophet Jonah, the historical validity of which they admitted, and, by dying and being buried, and rising among them, would accomplish the facts themselves of redemption in their presence and before their eyes; so that they would have the evidence of intuition itself for their achievement. The implication was as plain as it was tremendously impressive: If ocular demonstration of the very facts themselves of redemption in the process of its accomplishment does not convince you, no symbols of those facts, no phenomenal signs attesting them, would induce you to admit them. Notwithstanding the actual presentation of this conclusive evidence, the body of the Jews rejected the doctrines of Christianity. What could more forcibly show that the truths of redemption, supernaturally revealed, transcend the power of the natural reason to originate, discover or comprehend them?

In the third place, when these truths, which transcend the ability of the natural reason to originate, discover or comprehend them, are actually delivered to it by supernatural revelation, they are inapprehensible and inadmissible by it. It is unable to apprehend them, and unwilling to admit them. A distinction, it may be observed, is here drawn between comprehension and apprehension. It is both legitimate and necessary.

What is comprehended is understood; not all is understood which is apprehended. Some of the truths of natural religion transcended the ability of the thinking faculty, short in its tether, either to comprehend or to apprehend — they are absolutely inconceivable, unthinkable. In this category are the existence of the infinite God, creation out of nothing, the spiritual essence of the soul, and its influence upon matter. But faith, the ability of which to know reaches immeasurably beyond that of thought, while even it fails to comprehend them, distinctly apprehends these great truths and positively affirms them. What conception cannot touch, much less grasp, faith lays hold of and asserts. This is spoken in regard to natural thought and natural faith as specific and coördinate elements of natural reason, as the generic faculty of cognition. Did, therefore, supernatural revelation merely republish the truths of natural religion, transcendent as some of them were — that is, surpassing the ability of the thinking faculty either to comprehend or apprehend them — faith, as a power of the natural reason, would be able to apprehend them, and might be willing to admit them.

But the supernaturally revealed truths of *redemption*, while, of course, they lie beyond the compass of thought, are not spiritually apprehensible by faith itself, considered as natural. There is a want of adaptation between the natural powers and the spiritual truths to be apprehended, an absence of ability to perceive supernatural realities, just as in the defect of the bodily senses there could be no perception of the phenomena of the external world. The Scriptures as confessedly a super-

natural revelation settle this point when they say, "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." There is a natural cognition of the propositions in which the supernatural truths are stated, and with the illuminating aid of the Holy Ghost, some intelligent apprehension of the testimony of God through which those truths are conveyed and of their bearing, to some extent, upon the spiritual condition of men; else the gospel could not be brought into contact with their minds and the condition of "hearing," through which faith comes, would not exist. But, without the supernatural regeneration of the soul, infusing into it and all its powers a new principle of spiritual life, there can be no spiritual cognition of those transcendent truths, no supernaturally engendered ability to apprehend supernatural realities. "Except a man," said Christ, "be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Now faith is spiritual cognition, the supernaturally imparted power of perception which relates the soul to the supernatural facts of redemption. It is natural faith transmuted into supernatural by the regenerating energy of the Holy Spirit. Even the transcendent truths of natural religion, which had been apprehended by natural faith, are then spiritually apprehended by supernatural faith. So says the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews when discoursing of this latter kind of faith — "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. . . . Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are

seen were not made of things which do appear. He that cometh to God must believe that he is." Faith supernaturally and spiritually apprehends what natural faith naturally apprehends; but in addition to this, as other Scriptures teach, it cognizes truths which are unknown by natural reason.

It is true, as a great theological thinker has intimated, that Christianity has introduced no new original principle into the moral government of God. It has not changed its essential features so as to revolutionize it. In its fundamental elements it abides, like its Author, stable and unchangeable. But Christianity has placed the old principles of God's moral government in entirely new relations, imposed upon them altogether new modifications, and directed them to utterly new ends. These novel applications of ancient and venerable principles are so prodigious, so startling, so glorious as to impart to them the appearance of new, original principles of moral government. Now these new and transcendent provisions, deriving their type and denomination from the genius of Redemption, when announced by revelation to the natural reason are rejected by it. Some of them it declares to be contradictory to its fundamental laws, and, therefore, contradictory to that primal revelation which God himself imbedded in the rational constitution of man. Confessedly, then, reason did not originate them. They are not its products; for, if anything be clear, it is that whatever reason has produced, it is both able to apprehend and willing to admit; else she would be an unnatural mother refusing to recognize her own children, or like Medea destroying them.

These distinctive truths of redemption, these characteristic elements of Christianity, manifestly transcending the powers of the natural reason, cannot be frittered away except by a rationalizing criticism which would do violence at once to the laws of language, and the canons of historical evidence. Admit that they lie beyond the province of natural religion, and are undiscoverable, and when announced inapprehensible, by the natural reason, and the conclusion is inevitable that they cannot be reduced under its judicial authority. Having decided that the professed revelation which communicates them is really from God, reason thenceforth is bound to abdicate the seat of the judge and descend to that of the learner. It must be either a subject or a rebel.

Fourthly. The latest expression of the will of a supreme authority must take precedence of the earlier: it must be ultimately decisive. It is true that the supreme authority, being the same in both cases, cannot, as to authority simply, be superior to itself. All, however, that the rationalist, whose position is under consideration, could get from this admission is an equipoise of authority between reason, the first expression of God's will, and supernatural revelation, the latest; and to take that ground would destroy his own doctrine of the superiority of reason, as judge, to the Scriptures. The admission cannot affect the Christian position.

In the first place, a supreme authority may utter itself a second time in relation to a subject upon which it has spoken, in order to correct misapprehensions to which the first expression of its will may have been exposed, or

to counteract abuses to which it may have been subjected. This cannot be denied; and then it must be conceded that the last utterance is, in regard to authority, superior to the first. Precisely so has it been, as has already been shown, with God's first revelation to man. It has been grievously misapprehended and abused, and it has pleased God to furnish a new revelation in which he confirms the truths embraced in the old, and at the same time corrects the errors which an imperfect reason and a corrupt heart have superinduced. It is clear that the latest revelation of natural religion is of superior authority to reason, whether reason be considered as the original revelation of that religion, or the faculty to which it was addressed. Not that it is implied that reason was in fact the original revelation. The supposition is made in accordance with whatever view the rationalist may elect. I am satisfied that reason itself would never have been able, without some objective communication of truth by God to have excogitated the scheme of natural religion.

In the second place, the rationalist concedes that supernatural revelation has to some extent expounded natural religion. Now an exposition of a code by competent authority is acknowledged on all hands to possess final decisiveness.

In the third place, did supernatural revelation supplement the scheme of natural religion it would, to the extent of the added articles, or the new light thrown on the old articles, be superior to a former revelation. It has in the foregoing remarks been shown that reason is not now qualified to sit in judgment even upon the

original contents of natural religion. Much less, therefore, would it be competent to act as final judge of a revelation by which the scope of that first scheme would be enlarged. But the argument becomes overwhelming when the fact is weighed that, in the latest revealed expression of his will, God has absolutely created a new religion. The gospel scheme is not natural religion republished and expounded anew. It is a different species of religion. It takes its peculiar designation from its relation to sinners, whom it proposes not merely to instruct but to save. "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." Natural religion and the gospel is each religion. They are generically alike. But the specific difference of the latter — and it is a tremendous one — is redemption. Such is the prodigious import of God's latest expression of his will to man. Why pursue the question farther? To say that the reason of a sinner, condemned by the original religion of law — and most certainly one condemned is inferior in authority to the law which condemns him — is the final judge of a supernatural revelation announcing a religion of redemption, is to treat with contempt all the facts of the case, and to break with common sense itself.

2. The Modified Rationalists, or Dogmatists. They belong to the school of the celebrated Christian Wolff, who systematized the philosophy of Leibnitz, and applied the method of mathematical demonstration to the doctrine of theology. They admit a supernatural revelation, and also the supernatural origin and nature of

some of its contents. They deny that its authority is *complete* until its contents have been demonstrated by reason.

The fundamental fallacy of this scheme is that a higher authority *needs to be confirmed* by a lower.

The authority which confirms must be ultimate and supreme. As that authority is held to be reason, this scheme is in principle the same with that of the pure rationalists, which has just been examined. It is, therefore, not deemed necessary to consider it in detail. The arguments already employed are applicable to it.

MYSTICISM.

IV. Next occurs for examination the position of those who deny the *completeness* of a supernatural revelation.

The preliminary remark must be made that both the Mystic and the Romanist, who have been assigned to the same subordinate class under the generic designation of Rationalists, agree in denying the *supreme* authority of the Bible. Some authority they alike ascribe to it, but it is not sole and ultimate as a revealed rule of faith and duty. They reach this result in different ways, it is true, but still it is one which is common to both. So far, therefore, as this consideration is concerned, they are to be regarded as, in some degree, making common cause with the Technical Rationalist. With him they concur in refusing to make the supernatural revelation contained in the Scriptures the *supreme* authority in matters of religion. As that position has already been in

the general considered under the preceding head, only what is, in this relation, peculiar to the Mystic and the Romanist will be subjected to examination.

In the classification which has been given, the Mystic and the Romanist have been assigned to the same specific class, for the reason that a common differentiating characteristic belongs to them — they both deny the *completeness* of a supernatural revelation. They differ, however, as to the manner in which they respectively propose to complete it. The mystic, so far as he is attached to a religious school, supplements it by immediate revelations made to individuals by the Holy Spirit. The Romanist supplements it by tradition and the infallible decisions of councils and popes.

1. Let us, then, first attend to the position held in common by mystics — at least the sounder class of mystics — and Romanists, namely, the denial of the completeness of supernatural revelation — that is, of the sacred Scriptures. This enforces the necessity of proving the completeness of the Scriptures; and by their completeness is meant the perfect sufficiency of their teachings in relation to religion, both theoretical and practical. They are a perfect rule of faith and duty. The argument needs not to be prosecuted at great length or in minute detail. It may be restricted to but two steps.

(1) It is *ad hominem*. The soberer class of mystics and the Romanists concede the inspiration of the Scriptures. "The religious Society of Friends," says Thomas Evans, a prominent representative of the Society, "has always believed that the holy Scriptures were written by

divine inspiration.”¹ Perrone, the late professor of Theology in the Jesuit College at Rome, in his *Prælectiones Theologicæ*, published in 1840, says, “*Doctrina porro Catholica est, omnes prorsus sive Veteris sive Novi Testamenti canonicos libros esse divinitus inspiratos.*”² He states the doctrine of Trent.

Now, if the Scriptures are inspired, God is their inspirer. They are, therefore, so far as they go, admitted to be invested with the authority and stamped with the truth of God. Consequently, they are, within the province covered by them, and in regard to the matters concerning which they utter themselves, confessed by the best mystics and by the Romanists to be a rule of faith and duty. They may not be held as the only rule, as a matter of fact it is contended that they need to be supplemented; it is maintained that there are things belonging to religion about which they do not speak — but as far as they do speak, the mystic and the Romanist explicitly admit that they speak with God’s authority.

(2) The Scriptures affirm their own completeness. This is one of the things touching which they speak, and, therefore, as to this thing the decision is ultimate and indisputable. Let it be observed that the question is not now about the inspiration of the Scriptures. Were that the question, to cite their own declaration that they are inspired might be to reason in a circle. In that case,

¹ *Hist. Relig. Denominations in the United States*, p. 286. A Yearly Meeting of the Friends in London, in 1829, declared their full belief in the inspiration of the Scriptures: Milner’s *Relig. Denom.*, etc., p. 242.

² Vol. II., Pars. II., Cap. II.

the appeal must be to the credibility of the Scriptures. They are a credible witness. Consequently their testimony to their own inspiration is trustworthy. But in the question before us, the appeal is not to the credibility of the Scriptures, but to their inspired authority, as conceded by all the parties. If they testify to their own completeness, the question ought to be closed. The declaration of their own completeness is given in two forms:

First, positively. Other passages being omitted, reference is made to 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." The rendering of the Vulgate is, "*Omnis scriptura divinitus inspirata utilis est ad docendum, ad arguendum, ad corripiendum, ad erudiendum in justitia: ut perfectus sit homo Dei, ad omne opus bonum instructus.*"

So far as I know the canonical authority of the second Epistle to Timothy, in which this passage occurs, has never been questioned by any respectable section of the Quakers, and it is certainly admitted by Romanists. It is in the catalogue of their canonical books. To both of these parties, then, it speaks with the authority of God.

By some expositors the meaning of the passage is said to be, not that all Scripture as a whole is declared to be inspired, but only every part. But what is predicable of every part of a whole is predicable of the whole. By others the meaning is taken to be, that every Scripture

which is inspired is profitable for doctrine, etc. This would amount to the astonishing position that every particular inspired book is a perfect rule of faith and duty. Does every inspired book answer all the predications of this passage? Nothing is gained, unless it be absurdity, by deviating from the old, accepted sense of this great passage. But to the Quakers and the Romanists the questions raised by these exceptional renderings of the passage do not exist. They adopt the meaning that the Scriptures are inspired and are profitable for the ends which are specified. Now does the inspired apostle here affirm their completeness? He says that they teach doctrine, that they refute error and rebuke wrong-doing, that they correct irregularity, that they instruct in the elements of a righteous character and the duties that pertain to it; and that they do all this that the man of God, whether he be teacher or taught, may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works, or, as the Revised English Version has it, "Complete, furnished completely unto every good work." Is this not asserting the completeness of the Scriptures? Is it not affirming that they are a complete rule of faith and practice? Is there any need, is there any room, for anything supplementary to perfect that which is perfect, to complete that which is complete? Until, therefore, this passage is overthrown, the completeness of the Scriptures is grounded in the authoritative testimony of God, according to the concessions of mystics and Romanists themselves.

Secondly. The same principle of the completeness of the Scriptures as a revelation of God's will is also

taught by them negatively. We are forbidden to add anything to the inspired words of God. Let us hear the divine testimony. Deut. iv. 2, "Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish aught from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the Lord your God which I command you." Deut. xii. 32, "Whatsoever I command you, observe to do it: thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it." Matt. xv. 6, "Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition." Matt. xxviii. 19, 20, "Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." The necessary implication is that they were unwarranted to teach anything else. They not only had no authority to add, but were forbidden to add, anything to the things which Christ commanded. Rev. xxii. 18, 19, "For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book." Lest it should be said that these commands and warnings have reference not to the Scriptures as a whole, but to the particular books in which they are found, God gives a general testimony which has a sweep commensurate with all the words of inspiration — Prov. xxx. 5, 6, "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."

This great principle, that men cannot transcend the commandments of God without incurring guilt and

bringing down upon themselves divine judgments, is enforced by many concrete instances, accounts of which are furnished in the Scriptures. Such are the instances of Cain and his bloodless offering; of Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron; of Korah, Dathan and Abiram; of Moses smiting the rock at Kadesh; of Saul offering a burnt offering at Gilgal; of Uzza's unlawful touching of the ark of the covenant; of King Uzziah officiating as a priest; of King Ahaz offending both as to function and place; and, in the New Testament, of Stephen's rebuke of the Jewish council, for which he suffered martyrdom, but received the most extraordinary evidence of the divine approval — a rebuke, the contemptuous disregard of which was not long afterwards followed by a stroke of retribution which shattered the Jewish church-state and polity.

The scriptures thus, both positively and negatively, bear unmistakable witness to their own completeness; and as the books in which this testimony is borne are acknowledged by the parties to this controversy to be canonical, these parties are inconsistent with themselves in any attempt they may make to supplement them. "Forever, O Lord," exclaims the Psalmist, "thy word is settled in heaven." What is thus by God himself eternally settled in heaven no mortal worms can, without impiety and folly, presume to settle on earth by any matter which they may profess to add to it, or by any authority by which they may affect to confirm it.

The conclusion which has now been reached is clear, so far forth as the question of adding to or supplementing the Scriptures by human agency or human authority

is concerned. But we here confront the question, whether it may not be God's will to supplement the Scriptures, through human instruments acting by his authority and under his influence, or by the immediate communication of truth by his Spirit to the individual mind. That question, however, will fall to be considered when mysticism and Romanism shall be separately examined. For the present, therefore, it is postponed.

2. Let us now pass on to consider the peculiar and distinctive position of the mystic.

(1) Contenting ourselves at this point with the assumption that the discussion has reference to the school of mystics as it has existed and developed itself within the bounds of the nominal Christian church; and with a rough characterization of them as those who do not simply depend upon the objective contents of the Scriptures as affording the basis of religious knowledge and life, but also and principally upon direct communion with God, upon the feelings, and upon immediate revelations from God to the soul as furnishing the foundation of that knowledge and life; we may, without undertaking the endless task of differentiating specific types of mystical thinkers from each other, seek to group them into certain general classes. Different writers have presented different classifications. Those who desire to investigate the subject minutely must consult church histories, histories of doctrine, encyclopædias,¹ and special treatises on mysticism. All that can be

¹ There is a valuable article on Mysticism, by Prof. Seth, in the *Encyc. Britannica*.

attempted in a discussion like this, which professes to deal with certain radical principles that reduce the system to some sort of unity, is to give a succinct historical statement.

First. The ancient mystics, or those who flourished in the early church. Of these the first who rose into notoriety was Montanus, from whom the theory of Montanism received its designation. His peculiar tenet was that Christ predicted the coming of the Paraclete, who would, over and beyond the teachings of himself as the Messiah, make new revelations to his people. Tertullian endeavored to systematize the distinctive elements of Montanism. Dionysius, the Pseudo-Areopagite, labored to incorporate the principles of Neoplatonism into the Christian system. His writings exerted a considerable and protracted influence upon the Greek Church, and were not without effect in creating the mysticism of the Western Church during the middle ages.

Secondly. The Mystics of the Middle Ages. Prominent among these was John Scotus Erigena, who insisted upon the exaltation of reason above authority. He introduced into the Western Church the writings of the Pseudo-Dionysius, which gave rise to the Gallo-Romanic Mysticism. "Its principal seat was the monastery of St. Victor in Paris, and its principal representatives were Hugh, Richard, and Walter, of St. Victor." Prominent also were Eckart, a man reputedly of powerful speculative intellect; Tauler, a great preacher; Suso, a poet, and Ruysbrock, the *doctor ecstaticus*. Another extensive class of mystics during

this period maintained that faith, in religious matters, precedes science.

Thirdly. Modern Mystics. In Germany mysticism, after Reformation, received the name of Pietism; in France, Italy and Spain, that of Quietism; and in Great Britain and America it has been generally designated as Quakerism. In Germany its chief representatives were Schwenkfeld, Paracelsus, Weigel and Jacob Boehme; in other parts of the Continent, Michael Molinos, Madame Guyon and Archbishop Fénelon; and in Great Britain and America, Fox, Barclay, and Penn.

Those who have been usually assigned to the school of mysticism, on account of a general similarity of sentiment have differed from each other in important respects. The school may be distributed into two classes, accordingly as one or another of two great types of view has been the controlling one — philosophical and religious mystics. Not that it is meant to say that they did not both profess to be Christian, or to be governed by the principles of the Christian religion, as they conceived them. But one of these classes was predominantly philosophical, and the other was either predominantly or exclusively religious.

(2) Let us consider the position of the philosophical mystics. The fundamental and controlling principle upon which they may be reduced to unity as a class is, *The possibility of reaching a state of the soul in which it becomes consciously identified with God.* Those who are influenced by this principle, whatever may be their religious tendencies or aims, may properly be assigned to the category of philosophical mystics.

The means to be adopted with the end in view of conscious identity with God are: Abstraction of the soul from the world with all its phenomena and relations, and from the flesh with all its propensities and solicitations; the renunciation and mortification of self; the suppression of all activity; continuous meditation upon the Deity and intuitive gazing upon him; and a passive posture of the soul which conditions the reception of God or absorption into him.

The result is either a delicious passivity — a religious *dolce far niente* — or an entrancing ecstasy.

Those who may be referred to this class are further distinguishable as some of them are mainly speculative and others mainly practical.

First. Those who are speculative develop a tendency towards pantheism. Any philosophical thought which discovers a trend towards the identity of man with God is, of course, pantheistic. It must be observed that the union with God affirmed by mystics is not the mystical union with God maintained by evangelical theologians. The Scriptures do indeed speak of believers in Christ as made partakers of the divine nature. But this does not mean that they are partakers of the divine essence, but of the moral character of God. Between the essence of God and that of man, although redeemed and sanctified, is the breadth of infinity. Nor does the union of saints with God signify a personal identity. God and man do not become one person. God ever says to the redeemed man, thou, and he employs the same form of address to God. The believer's union with God is through Christ — he is united with God because united

with Christ; and his union with Christ is of a three-fold character — federal, because he was represented by Christ in the covenant of redemption; natural, because Christ partook of human nature; and spiritual, because he is spiritually united with Christ by the vital bond of the Holy Spirit, who dwells both in Christ and in him, and by the exercise on his part of saving faith in Christ. This is the union of God and believing men of which the Scriptures speak, not their identity. The Scriptures never speak blasphemously; and to say that a man in a state of extreme laziness, or that a woman in a convent with religious hysterics, is identified with God is blasphemous.

Were there no other consideration opposed to this hypothesis, this alone would be fatal to its claims, that as those who profess to attain to this *infinitely* exalted condition of identity with the Deity are still in the body, God would become incarnate in as many instances as there are human beings who are one with him! Another obvious argument is, that the mystic, if successful, in becoming identified with God loses his own personality. This must follow from his hypothesis, whether he semi-panteistically attributes personality to God, or panteistically denies it to him. But if his personality is swallowed up in God, he has lost his ability to hold communion with God, since communion supposes intercourse between different persons; and he has become incapable of worship, since that is rendered by a person to another person who is divine; in short he has “lost his religion”! To this extraordinary consummation must the disciplinary process of the mystic come, that in reaching the end

he seeks, he reaches the end of his religion! But as pantheism has been treated of in a previous discussion, nothing more will be said in regard to this aspect of mysticism.¹

Secondly. Those who are mainly practical develop a tendency towards monastic asceticism; in fact, they adopt its methods. The arguments, therefore, which hold against that system may be employed against mysticism in this form. Some of them will be concisely presented.

In the first place, it is out of accord with the Scriptures. It discards their authority as the supreme rule of faith and duty. It throws out of account their most vital doctrines, such as the mediatorship and the mediatorial offices of Christ, vicarious atonement, and the office and work of the Holy Ghost. It dispenses with the ministry, the preaching of the gospel and the sacraments. It contradicts the spirit and disobeys the precepts of the Bible. The Bible enjoins love to all men, and commands us to discharge the duties which spring from all the relations of life. This system concentrates regard upon the individual and makes nothing of social obligations. It therefore mutilates and dismembers the religion which the Scriptures inculcate, and sets up a mere fragment of it in its place. It enforces another kind of religion, one born of the speculative fancy of the human brain.

In the second place, it obliterates the distinction between a legitimate self-love and a criminal selfishness. In aiming to destroy the latter, it kills the former. It

¹ Pantheism is also considered in the writer's *Discussions of Philosophical Questions*.

confounds them, and therefore decrees the mortification of both.

In the third place, it rejects the example of Christ. "He went about doing good," but it goes nowhere and seeks to do no good. This mysticism has no use for the philanthropy of Jesus. He gave to others, it absorbs into itself; he ministered to others, it ministers to self; he acted for others, it does not work even for self. It is one long dream while it lasts, and ends in "the dream of a dream." It is better than Christ and worse than nothing.

In the fourth place, it destroys the principle of the communion of saints. True religion rejoices in the fellowship of love and worship. The more who believe in Christ and together praise God and the Lamb the happier it is; it secludes itself, closets itself with God, and seeks to confine him to its own little, narrow stall. So long as it is being absorbed into God, the rest of the world may, for aught it cares, be absorbed into the pit. What it makes of the heavenly communion it is hard to perceive. Itself ultimately identified with God, the only communion it can enjoy will be with its fellow divine identities. But, no, since they are all identified with God, communion becomes impossible unless one and the same thing can commune with itself. Is it that the aspiration is to enjoy God's communion with himself?

In the fifth place, it dwarfs individual development, especially in respect to the grace of charity, or love to man, which an inspired apostle represents as the greatest of the permanent Christian virtues. While it discounts this consummate grace, vain are its pretensions, however

extraordinary, to love for God. They are complementary to each other, and can no more be disjoined than can the two tables of the moral law. Indeed it professes to sink individual development in the perfect abnegation of self; and yet —

In the sixth place, it contradicts its own principle of self-renunciation; for it concentrates attention, interest, regard, hope, everything upon self. While it professes to abjure self, it seeks to exalt it to identity with God. No greater prize, no more glorious crown, can be coveted for one's self than that he should get to be God. It was a towering ambition which led its possessor to sigh for other worlds to conquer, but it is overtopped by that of one —

“Whose trust was with the Eternal to be deemed
Equal in strength.”

Strange humility this, which seeks to be nothing in order to be everything, which descends below the finite in order to become the infinite!

In the seventh place, it removes from the individual the influence of public sentiment, even when it exerts a legitimate and salutary force. It is true that the opinions of our fellow-men in regard to our views and our conduct constitute no ultimate standard of judgment, nor even an unerring temporary standard. The infallible and supreme norm is the favor or disfavor of God. But the righteous censure of our fellows is the shadow of his frown, their just approval the reflection of his smile. The one is a divinely appointed check to evil-doing, the other a stimulus to virtue. We are so weak that we stand in need of these extrinsic guards and

inducements to prop our tottering resolutions, and steady our fluctuating feelings. Of one's own motion, therefore, without the compulsion of circumstances lying beyond his control, to cut himself off from these external helps which divine goodness provides, and to throw himself solely upon his own unaided resources, the stability of his own character, the unsupported energy of his own will, is a mark not of wisdom, but of unutterable folly. This folly the ascetic discipline of mysticism enforces.

In the eighth place, had this ascetic doctrine been in the past universally prevalent among the professedly pious the scheme of human evangelization would never have been initiated; and were it now universally adopted — and it ought to be if true — the whole system of missions, home and foreign, the chief glory of this modern age, would be doomed to absolute suppression. This was intimated in the indictment already made of the mystic's position as sinking the development of love to men, but it deserves a separate and special emphasis. God, by his law, has bound us to bring forth the fruits of charity to our fellow-men, and Jesus Christ has commanded his followers to go into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature, but this mystic discipline, which tramples under foot God's law while aspiring to identity with him, and soars on wings of ecstatic love beyond the low level of Christ's benevolence, buries the hope of human evangelization in the dark cellars of its conventual retreats. It is not extravagant to say that, in this respect, its genius is the prophecy of the despair, its recesses the types of the caverns, of hell.

In the ninth place, the results it aims at are hopeless

of attainment, and those it actually produces furnish its historical refutation. It needs no argument to show, it is transparently evident from the very nature of the case, that no discipline, no sort of means adopted in folly, to lift the finite to identity with the infinite, to raise any creature, much less a sinful creature, to equality in any sense, qualified or unqualified, with God, can possibly be attended with success. Were there not a devil to whose craft and cunning the monstrous delusion can be attributed, it would have to be imputed to an insane derangement of the human brain. The result is equally hopeless when contemplated from the point of view of the Scriptures. According to them, the spiritual union — and that is by no means identity — of a sinner with God can be effected only in those definitely revealed ways which are integral elements of the gospel scheme — the regeneration of the soul by the almighty power of the Holy Ghost; its free justification by faith in Christ, involving the pardon of guilt and the acceptance of the person as righteous in God's sight; repentance for sin and the cultivation and exercise of all the graces implanted and sustained in the soul by sanctifying grace; and the use of all the means which God has appointed in his inspired Word.

The ascetic mystic elects another road to holiness and happiness than that which the wisdom and mercy of God have provided for sinners, and he is consequently inevitably doomed to failure. Jesus Christ, the one mediator between God and men, is able to save unto the uttermost all those that come unto God by him. All others, who in their carnal wisdom devise some self-

chosen way of approach, instead of rising to union with God — not to speak of identity with him — are destined to descend to companionship with devils, to sink to shame and everlasting contempt. Every road to God, except that which leads through Christ, his incarnate and crucified Son, is patrolled by ministers of vengeance and scoured by storms of wrath. The cross of Jesus is the only sign-board which points the way to heaven.

The cloistered mystic, moreover, forgets that in his vain attempt to retire from the world and to bar it out, he bolts and locks in sin with himself. It twines itself about the roots of his soul; it sinks its claws like those of a ferocious beast into the very vitals of his being. It is not his essence, indeed, but it is the skin in which his essence is clothed. It is as close to it as is the skin of the body to its muscles. It is not enough, then, that he should mortify and even flagellate his body in order to subdue the power of sin, he must flay his very soul itself. In order to expel sin from himself, he must expel himself; to get rid of it, he must get rid of himself. The pictures which a sinful imagination paints of forbidden objects inflame the passions just as though those objects themselves were presented to the eye of sense; and the fires of lust blaze up from an inward volcano, the flames of which no sedatives of passive meditation can assuage, no virtuous resolutions can restrain, no aspirations to identity with God can quench. This, as is related in ecclesiastical history, was the actual experience of the great Latin Father and scholar, Jerome. "Finally," says Neander, speaking of the case of Heron, "he felt within himself such a fire, such a restless fever, that he

could no longer endure to remain in his cell. He fled from the desert to Alexandria, and there plunged into a directly opposite course of life. He was a frequent visitor at the theatre, the circus, and the houses of entertainment." "This, too," he says in a note, "was no infrequent an occurrence, that the monks, to escape their inward temptations, forsook their cells, and ran about from one place to another."¹ Even when the temptations to grosser sins may be resisted, the direct result is to the self-inflation of spiritual pride. Simeon Stylites was rebuked on this very account by Nilus, another distinguished pillar-saint; and he, no doubt, drew upon his own experience.

The argument might easily be prosecuted farther, but enough has been said to evince the unscripturalness and worthlessness of monastic mysticism.

(3) Let us, lastly, examine the position of the religious mystic. In entering upon this aspect of the subject, let us disembarass it, at the outset, of a difficulty which tends to obscure it. We must distinguish between those who are really mystics, and those evangelical or orthodox Protestants to whom that name has often been applied by their opponents as one of reproach. It has always been the custom of rationalists and moderates to stigmatize evangelical believers as mystics and pietists and fanatics. Especially is cautious discrimination to be used in judging of what was called mysticism in Germany. In many cases it was the legitimate reaction of a spiritual piety against the dominant rationalism which was destroying the vitals of genuine

¹ Ch. Hist., Vol. II., pp. 239, 240. Torrey's Trans.

religion. We have a graphic portraiture of the rise and influence of rationalism in Germany in the eloquent preface of Dr. Leonard Woods, the younger, to his Translation of Knapp's Theology :

"Theologians, it is said, have no choice left them, and must adopt the splendid results which are every day disclosed in all departments of knowledge; and if they would not suffer theology to fall into contempt, must admit some compromise between its antiquated doctrines and the rapid progress of light. To effect this compromise is the office assigned to modern rationalism by one of its ablest apologists.¹ . . . As to the advantages of this compromise — what has really been accomplished by this far-famed rationalism, after all its promises? It professed friendship for Christianity, but has proved its deadly foe; standing within the pale of the church, it has been in league with the enemy without, and has readily adopted everything which infidelity could engender, and as studiously rejected everything which true philosophy has done to confirm the truths of revelation. It promised to save theology from contempt; and how has this promise been performed? In the days of Spener, theology was the Queen of Sciences, so acknowledged by the mouth of Bacon, Leibnitz, Haller and others — their chosen oracles. She wore the insignia of divinity, and 'filled her odorous lamp' at the very original fountain of light. But in an evil hour, she took this flattering rationalism to her bosom. Now, stript of every mark of divinity, cut off from her native sources of light, and thrust out into the dark, this Foolish Virgin is compelled to say to her sister sciences, 'Give me of your oil: for my lamp is gone out.'"

He then goes on to depict the results which followed the ascendancy of this rationalizing spirit. As rationalism professed to be a recoil from what it termed a traditional and lifeless orthodoxy, so it produced a counter movement against its excesses — a protest of the godly element in the church against its naturalistic and

¹ Bretschneider.

revolutionary method of interpreting Scripture, its exaltation of reason above the Word of God as the only and supreme rule of faith and duty, and its compromise of supernatural truth with the hypotheses of philosophy and the conclusions of science. Those who thus endeavored to save the ark of revealed truth from the hand of human speculation, and to cleave to the authoritative standard of the Scriptures, were, in turn, regarded by the rationalists with contempt, and ridiculed by them as bigoted enthusiasts to whom the opprobrious epithet of pietists was applied. It cannot be doubted that in the early resiliency from the reign of rationalism the real spirituality of the Lutheran Church was to be found in the ranks of those who were reproached as mystics. But so far as the opponents of the rationalistic system were evangelical or orthodox Protestants, it was impossible that they could with truth have been characterized as mystics, for the obvious reason that whereas it is the specific difference of the mystic to deny the completeness of the Scriptures, it is that of the orthodox Protestant to affirm it. No true Protestant can consistently belong to the school of mysticism.

One extreme, however, is almost sure to breed another. There were those who in the rebound from rationalism were not content to stop on the safe, middle ground of the true Protestant. Chafing against the restraints of scriptural doctrine, and the rules of the church, and not satisfied with the warm emotions and exercises of a regulated piety, they leaned upon what they claimed to be new revelations of the Spirit, rejoiced in an inner light, gave themselves up to excited and ecstatic feelings,

and became not only enthusiasts, but bigoted, and, in some cases, wild and dangerous, enthusiasts. These were the mystics proper. Again came reaction. The pendulum vibrated to the opposite extreme. Many, disgusted with the excesses of mysticism, abandoned it, and, passing by the conservative position of orthodox Protestantism, threw themselves into the frigid embrace of rationalism. Extremes meet. And one in passing from this painful picture of antagonistic parties can hardly fail to note how, marching by different roads and from opposite directions, they meet at a common rendezvous, and join hands in a united opposition to the great Protestant canon of the infallibility and supremacy of the sacred Scriptures. The cold and calculating rationalist and the emotional and visionary mystic are at one. They join forces in attacking God's truth, Let them fight on. Hurlled back, as they certainly will be, from this impregnable citadel, every man's hand will be turned against his fellow in the unnatural combination.

Mysticism, as has already been remarked, is capable of being reduced to rationalism, the essence of which is that reason is the source of theology; for, if the Protestant position can be proved, that there is no other source of a true theology than the Scriptures, as the mystic professes to discard them as complete and ultimate, he must find that source either in the authority of the church, or in reason. He rejects the church; therefore, he must logically appeal to reason. This is rendered clear by the consideration that his attempts to formulate his theology, however professedly derived, must be made

by the logical reason. So was it with Schleiermacher and his theology of the feelings; and so is it with the mystics who pretend to new supernatural revelations made by the Spirit, apart from the Scriptures.

The distinctive position of the religious mystic coming now to be directly considered, the question which first meets us is, What is that position? In answer to that question, we must principally appeal to the doctrine of the Quakers, if for no other reason, for these: that they are a living sect, and that they are at the farthest remove from the philosophical tendencies of the school of mysticism.

It must be observed, too, in order to clear our way, that the question is not now as to the coördinacy of faith with the Scriptures in furnishing the rule of religion. That position, according to the statement of Prof. Seth, in his article on mysticism in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, was held by some of the German mystics. But in this they were not peculiar. Many of the professedly orthodox Lutheran theologians have held, and still hold, that view. Let it now suffice only to say that there are two insuperable difficulties in that doctrine. The first is, that faith presupposes the Scriptures, upon which it relies. It cannot, therefore, be of coördinate authority with them. The second is, that the witness of the Spirit in the believer's consciousness is a testimony borne to the truth in the Scriptures, and, therefore, it also presupposes them. But this question will not here be pursued farther, as it properly belongs to the consideration of the Protestant position touching the source of theology — the rule of faith and duty.

The question then returns, What is the distinctive position of the religious mystics — the Quakers especially — with which we now have to do? The answer it is somewhat difficult fairly to give, inasmuch as they have no acknowledged symbolical standards to which appeal can be made. But, if we may rely upon the accounts given by representative writers, and the general opinion of those best acquainted with their beliefs and practices, their distinctive position is: that there is an “inner light,” to be discriminated from the dictates of natural conscience, consisting in new and supernatural revelations made by the Holy Spirit to individuals, which are complementary to the Scriptures as a rule of faith and duty. The Scriptures are confessed to be a revelation from God; but they are not a complete rule of faith and directory of duty. The defect is supplied by the Spirit, who, apart from the Scriptures, communicates new views of faith and duty.

The nice question arises, Do they hold that the Spirit, apart from the Scriptures, reveals new *original truth* — that is, truth not revealed in the Scriptures? Let us admit, what Barclay asserts, that anything *contrary* to the Scriptures is rejected by them. But that proves nothing upon the question whether new, additional truth may be communicated which, in the judgment of the recipient, does not contradict the Scriptures. The Church of England holds that the church may decree rites and ceremonies, not prescribed in the Scriptures, provided that they are not contrary to their teaching. This is asserting for the church what the Quakers claim for the Spirit as to truth and duty. Both are, *pro tanto*,

un-Protestant, but of the two the Quaker has the advantage.

The question is, whether the Quakers hold that the Spirit reveals truth, which while not contrary to the Scriptures, is new, is additional to the teaching of the Scriptures, is, in a word, original — something more than an exposition, an illumination, an enforcement, of the old truth, the very truth, revealed in the Scriptures. That they do, may be argued from their catholic views and their general practice, notwithstanding some particular assertions of certain writers.

In the first place, do they, or not, admit with orthodox Protestants, the completeness, the perfection, the supremacy, the ultimate authority of the inspired Scriptures as a rule of faith and duty? If they do, their position has always and on all hands been grievously misconceived and misrepresented. If they do not, what completes the rule of faith and duty? They themselves reply, New and immediate revelations of the Spirit. How can these revelations complete the rule except by the addition of what the rule itself does not embrace? What does that imply, if not the communication of original matter? Their rule is, therefore, not a simple one — that of the Scriptures alone, but a composite one, namely, the Scriptures and the immediate revelations of the Spirit. The case is like that of the Romanists, *mutatis mutandis*. The latter hold a composite rule, namely, the Scriptures and tradition — tradition adding to the Scriptures what the Scriptures do not contain. What, if Newman's theory of historical development, proceeding by substantive additions to the Scriptures,

was coldly received by the authorities of Rome, it told the truth as to what had actually been done. And what, if some Quakers say that they receive nothing contrary to "the old doctrines and the old gospel," if they actually make additions to them?

In the second place, they obliterate the distinction insisted upon by orthodox Protestants between the inspiration of the prophets, the apostles and the evangelists on the one hand, and that of pious Christians now, on the other. Confessedly, then, the authority to communicate truth is, in both cases, the same. What is the office, what the use of this later and common inspiration, if the communication of new, original matter is denied to it? It sinks to the level of the Spirit's *illumination*, which every Protestant both allows and maintains; but that reduction of its dignity and force is not admitted.

The inquiry, moreover, occurs whether this claim of inspiration does not *actually* involve the claim to teach new truth? When one, claiming this inspiration of the Spirit teaches his fellow-worshippers that there is no need of a regular ministry, and of observing the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's supper, he teaches a totally new, exceptional, extraordinary construction of the Scriptures. Not only so, he teaches doctrine which the Scriptures do not deliver. Whatever may be plausibly pleaded in favor of the restriction of the command to baptize to the apostles, the same plea cannot possibly be urged in regard to the Lord's supper; for Paul, in the eleventh chapter of First Corinthians, delivers the Saviour's command, "This do in remembrance of me," to the Corinthian church; and if it bound that church it

binds the whole church. There is a claim to new truth here. The new revelation communicates new matter. The assertion of inspiration, it may be said in passing, is negatived by the contradiction of the old truth contained in the Scriptures, and is also invalidated by the absence of those miraculous credentials which invariably accompany the gift of inspiration. The Quakers blow hot and cold with the same breath. Barclay denies the addition of new truth to the Scriptures; the teaching and practice of the Quakers affirm it. It may be said that the denial of addition holds only of the system of doctrines, of the great outlines of the gospel; but one who denies a stated ministry and the sacraments appointed by Christ both takes away Scripture doctrine, and, by substitution, adds another in its place.

But whether these modern mystics do or do not hold to the communication of new, original truth by the Spirit apart from the Scriptures, one thing is clear, that they do not maintain the fundamental Protestant doctrine that the Bible is the sole, sufficient and perfect rule of faith and duty. There is also another rule by which their feet are guided. The old genius of mysticism is infused into them. They get into God, or God gets into them, by another way than through the Scriptures. The inner light is not that Word which is a lamp to the feet and a light to the path. The Spirit performs his revealing office "objectively" and "independently."

A few remarks are submitted in regard to this position of the religious mystic:

First. The new, immediate revelations of the Spirit are asserted to be inspiring and to possess the authority

of inspiration. We demand, must demand, the miraculous credentials of inspiration. They are not presented. It is said that they were necessary for prophets and apostles, but they are not needed by the Quakers! All is changed now. Who authorized the change? Certainly not God in his Word. His Spirit would not contradict him, would not contradict *himself*, speaking in the Scriptures. Who, then, authorizes the change? The only answer is, The mystic, through his reason. The alternative is, miracles or no inspiration. Miracles, there are none; therefore, no inspiration.

Secondly. These inspired revelations are excluded by the miraculous proof that the Scriptures are a complete revelation from God. In the first place, they themselves assert the fact, as has already been proved. In the second place, they exclude other revelations. "To the law and the testimony; if they speak not according to them, it is because there is no light in them." If they speak according to them, they are not new revelations.

Thirdly. There could be no harmony, much less unity, in these professedly new, extra-scriptural revelations. Every man would have his doctrine. The possibility of a standard to the church would be barred. There being no one, homogeneous, self-consistent court of judgment, individual license of opinion and action must obtain, and the floodgates of fanaticism would be thrown open.

It is usually the case that error is associated with some truth. This is true in the instance of religious mysticism. What is the truth which is, to a greater or a

less extent, incorporated into that system? It is the doctrine of the supernatural illumination of the Holy Spirit. This is distinguishable from what the old divines denominated the "physical influence" of the Spirit, that by which he immediately and efficiently regenerates the soul, and causally operates in the production of faith and the other graces of the renewed nature. Were the illumination and guidance of the Spirit what the Quaker contends for, unencumbered with the peculiarities of mysticism, no Protestant would quarrel with him. It is a question of importance, how far we are entitled to implore and to expect the illuminating influence of the Holy Spirit. Some leading principles must be noted.

First. The written Word of God is the only, the complete, the supreme *rule* of faith and practice.

Secondly. The supreme *judge* of religious controversies is the Holy Ghost speaking in the Scriptures.

Thirdly. The Word is never to be dissociated from the Spirit, nor the Spirit from the Word. This is perhaps the greatest canon of Protestantism: not the Word only, not the Spirit only, but the Word *and* the Spirit.

Fourthly. Each individual has the right, and is in duty bound to search the Scriptures in dependence upon the Holy Spirit; and, in the last resort, he is responsible only to God, as final judge, for the conclusions which he conscientiously adopts. This is the great right of private judgment — thus stated and restrained.

Fifthly. Believers, recognizing these principles, and acting upon these conditions, are entitled to derive good

and necessary inferences from the express statements of the Word, which inferences are not explicitly enunciated, but implicitly contained, in those statements; and such inferences possess the validity and authority of the Word itself.

All this, to a true Protestant, is sufficiently clear; but there are special questions of duty in regard to which the Scriptures only furnish general principles, laws, commands, directions. The inquiry then arises, May we legitimately ask and look for the illumination of the Spirit when we are perplexed with reference to the solution of such questions? Or, is the illumination of the Spirit always mediated through some truth or truths of the Word, so that where the Word furnishes no directions as to specific duties, we are debarred from expecting that illumination?

There are certain questions which, it is true, are of a special character, but which ought not to be referred to this category; the question, for example, Am I entitled to believe myself a child of God? Here the Spirit may be expected to teach duty through the express truths of the Scriptures, whether he applies the marks of conversion and sanctification indicated in the Word, or bears his testimony immediately to the soul.

There is another class of special questions of duty, which may be decided in the exercise of an enlightened conscience and judgment directed by the indications of providence; as, for instance, whether one who is a preacher should labor in this or that field. The election is between two courses, neither of which would involve sin. And, while it is always right to implore divine

guidance, the Quaker is extravagant in maintaining that in such cases one may expect to be assured of the infallible guidance of the Spirit.

But it must be confessed that there is still another class of special questions which are not to be settled in this way; the question, for example, whether or not one is called to preach the gospel. The Scriptures give a general command enforcing the preaching of the gospel. But the call to preach is not addressed to all believers, nor to all who, to the eye of natural judgment, may seem to be qualified for the office. The Word does not nominate the individual, does not say to A B, It is your duty to preach.

Now, in regard to such questions these principles may be laid down: In the first place, the illumination of the Spirit is always *in concurrence with* the truth in the Word. In the second place, it is not in such cases as that above-mentioned *mediately given through* some specific declaration of Scripture; nevertheless, we are entitled to ask and expect that it be immediately imparted. *Never without* the Scriptures; *but sometimes not through some special declaration of the Scriptures* — such is the formula which seems to me legitimate. In the third place, sincerity is absolutely required to condition prayer for the Spirit's illumination.

The case deserves to be considered in which one is impressed with the conviction that God has, in some extraordinary and preternatural way, seemed to indicate his will.

If these impressions lead to results inconsistent with the Scriptures, or with a clear moral sentiment of a

fundamental character, they are to be rejected as certainly not from the Holy Spirit.

We must, in such cases, be sure that the impressions could not have been produced by natural causes, or by the action of our own minds, as, for instance, by such an excited or exalted state of the imagination as leads it to objectify its images.

In dealing with the ignorant, especially those who cannot read the Scriptures, let us endeavor to beat them off from trusting in any impressions, suggestions, dreams, visions, supposed apparitions, and the like, which, in the judgment of godly teachers, contradict the divine Word. Let us urge them to consult competent, educated, spiritual guides.

But, on the other hand, we should be careful not to limit the sovereign will, or the merciful interpositions of the Holy Spirit, who, in defect of scriptural knowledge on the part of some persons, may be pleased to vouchsafe extraordinary manifestations of his grace, and providence. Nor should we so roughly deal with such persons as to drive them from confidence in our ministrations, and shut them up to dependence upon themselves or incompetent spiritual guides.

We should insist that as a rule we are guided by the Spirit speaking through the Word, but refrain from dogmatically affirming that God *never* does immediately deal with the individual. There have been mysterious facts of experience which are sufficient to deter us from rash dogmatism upon the subject. Still, let us hold that even in these extraordinary cases the Spirit teaches in concurrence with the Word, and that no individual is constituted by them an inspired or an infallible person.

ROMANISM.

V. In proceeding farther to examine the position of those who deny the *completeness* of a supernatural revelation, Romanism comes to be considered. It denies the completeness of the Scriptures as a supernatural revelation, for it supplements them by tradition. It also denies that the supreme judge of religious controversies is the Holy Ghost speaking in the Scriptures, and, on the contrary, affirms that the church, meaning the Roman Catholic Church, now speaking authoritatively through its popes, is that supreme judge. If, therefore, it cannot be proved that tradition is an inspired and consequently inerrant part of the rule of faith and duty; and if it cannot be proved that the popes are inspired, and for that reason infallible, the assignment of Romanism to the category of rationalism is justified. Tradition, so far as it is un-inspired, must be the product of the human reason, and the *ex cathedra* decisions of popes, as un-inspired, can be nothing but the judgments of their own minds.

It is hardly necessary at this day to enter elaborately and minutely into the discussion of the question in relation to Romanism. The controversy has been so long, so learnedly, so exhaustively conducted that nothing new can be substantially added. The case is, as a theoretical one, closed. The book is sealed, until providential developments shall shed practical and convincing light upon its contents. The battle is henceforth to be fought upon the fields of politics and of blood.

This discussion will consist of two parts: *First*, a

presentation of the argument against Romanism, with reference to the particular question about which we are engaged — namely, the principle of theology; and, *secondly*, a consideration of the bearing of prophecy upon the career of Romanism as an actual, historic system.

I. Let us examine the claims of Romanism in regard to the rule of faith and duty, and to the supreme judge in all religious controversies. It is requisite to determine its position in relation to these points; and their consideration will comprehensively embrace the whole question.

1. What, then, is the position of the Romanist touching the rule of faith and duty?

It will be seen by a direct appeal to the authorities of Romanism that its rule of faith and duty is a composite one, consisting of the Scriptures and tradition, and that these parts of the rule are coördinate with each other, and to be regarded with equal veneration. The following is the decree of the Council of Trent at its fourth session:

“Sacrosancta, œcumenica, et generalis tridentina synodus, in Spiritu Sancto legitimo congregata, præsentibus in ea eisdem tribus apostolicæ sedis legatis, hoc sibi perpetuo ante oculos proponens, ut, sublatis erroribus, puritas ipsa evangelii in ecclesia conservetur; quod promissum ante per prophetas in Scripturis Sanctis, Dominus noster Iesus Christus Dei Filius, proprio ore primum promulgavit, deinde per suos apostolos, tanquam fontem omnis et salutaris veritatis et morum disciplinæ, omni creature predicari iussit; perspicuensque hanc veritatem et disciplinam contineri in libris scriptis et sine scripto traditionibus, quæ ab ipsius Christi ore ab apostolis acceptæ, aut ab ipsis apostolis, Spiritu Sancto dictante, quasi per manus traditæ, ad nos usque

pervenerunt: orthodoxorum patrum exempla secuta, omnes libros tam Veteris quam Novi Testamenti, cum utriusque unus Deus sit auctor, necnon traditiones ipsas, tum ad fidem, tum ad mores pertinentes, tanquam vel ore tenus a Christo vel a Spiritu Sancto dictatas, et continua successione in ecclesia catholica conservatas, pari pietatis affectu ac reverentia suscipit et veneratur.”¹

The *Professio Fidei Tridentinæ* speaks expressly on the subject in the following articles:

“II. Apostolicas et ecclesiasticas traditiones, reliquasque ejusdem Ecclesiæ observationes et constitutiones firmissime admitto et amplector.

“III. Item sacram Scripturam juxta eum sensum, quem tenuit et tenet sancta mater Ecclesia, cujus est judicare de vero sensu et interpretatione sacrarum Scripturarum, admitto,” etc.²

¹“The sacred and holy, œcumenical, and general Synod of Trent — lawfully assembled in the Holy Ghost, the same three legates of the Apostolic See presiding therein — keeping this always in view, that, errors being removed, the purity itself of the gospel be preserved in the church; which (gospel) before promised through the prophets in the holy Scriptures, our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, first promulgated with his own mouth, and then commanded to be preached by his apostles to every creature, as the fountain of all, both saving truth and moral discipline; and seeing clearly that this truth and discipline are contained in the written books, and the unwritten traditions which, received by the apostles from the mouth of Christ himself, or from the apostles themselves, the Holy Ghost dictating, have come down even unto us, transmitted as it were from hand to hand: [the Synod] following the example of the orthodox fathers, receives and venerates with an equal affection of piety and reverence, all the books both of the Old and the New Testament — seeing that one God is the author of both — as also the said traditions, as well those appertaining to faith as to morals, as having been dictated, either by Christ’s own word of mouth, or by the Holy Ghost, and preserved in the Catholic Church by a continuous succession.”

²“II. I most steadfastly admit and embrace apostolic and

The same position is definitely maintained in Chapter II. *Of Revelation*, in the dogmatic decrees of the Vatican Council, held in 1870:

“Hæc porro supernaturalis revelatio, secundum universalis Ecclesiæ fidem, a sancta Tridentina Synodo declaratam, continetur in libris scriptis et sine scripto traditionibus, quæ ipsius Christi ore ab apostolis acceptæ, aut ab ipsis Apostolis Spiritu Sancto dictante quasi per manus traditæ, ad nos usque pervenerunt.”¹

The Roman Catholic theologians have, of course, taught the same doctrine with that contained in these authoritative symbols of their church. It would be superfluous to cite them. Let it suffice to quote the remarkable words of Perrone, one of the ablest and most recent of them, “Hinc duplex illa regula et ecclesiæ magisterio subordinata credendorum et agendorum, Scriptura et Traditio, quæ ad nos usque dimanavit.”² This statement is noteworthy on two accounts: First, it maintains the unity of the composite rule of faith and duty — it is a *two-fold rule*; and it *co-ordinates* the two

ecclesiastic traditions, and all other observances and constitutions of the same church.

“III. I also admit the holy Scriptures, according to that sense which our holy mother church has held and does hold, to which it belongs to judge of the true sense and interpretation of the Scriptures,” etc.

¹ “Further, this supernatural revelation, according to the universal belief of the church, declared by the sacred Synod of Trent, is contained in the written books and unwritten traditions which have come down to us, having been received by the apostles from the mouth of Christ himself, or from the apostles themselves, by the dictation of the Holy Spirit, have been transmitted, as it were, from hand to hand.”

² *Prælec. Theol.*, Vol. II., Pars. II., p. 6.

elements, Scripture and tradition, of which that one rule consists; and, secondly, it *subordinates* the whole rule to the authoritative teaching of the church.

That the coördination and equality of the two component parts of the rule of faith and duty is the doctrine of Romanism will be made still more distinctly to appear from the following words of Perrone, “Par Scripturæ ac traditionis auctoritas sit, et ex aequo possit theologus tanquam ex fonte scientiæ hujus nostræ proprio argumenta promere sive ad dogmata constabilienda, sive ad aliena placita refutanda.”¹

Another question which it behooves to settle by a citation of authority is that in regard to the *office* of tradition. The answer is given by Perrone in one comprehensive sentence, “Præter Scripturas necessario admitti traditiones divinæ ac dogmaticæ debent ab illis plane distinctæ, si absque ejusmodi traditionibus nobis constare nequeat fide divina tum de numero, tum de canonicitate divinaque sacrorum librorum inspiratione, aut de dogmatico legitimoque eorundem sensu, tum de pluribus aliis articulis fidei quos nobiscum protestantes profitentur.”² He then goes on, under the head of the Necessity of Tradition, to vindicate articulately the three grounds of its necessity which he has mentioned. The office of tradition, accordingly, is: To settle the canon of Scripture; to clear up the obscurity of Scripture and determine its sense; and to supplement the contents of Scripture, to supply matter which it does not furnish — articles in regard to things concerning which it is silent.

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 8.

² *Ibid.*, p. 248.

The way is now open to collect, in the light of his own testimony, the position of the Romanist in relation to the rule of faith and duty. It is: That there is one two-fold rule, consisting of two coördinate and equal parts, Scripture and tradition; that Scripture is written, tradition unwritten; and that the office of tradition is to settle the canon of Scripture, to determine its sense, and to supplement its doctrines.

First, then, the question before us is in regard to *tradition*.

1. The arguments for tradition are —

(1) Tradition is necessary to supplement the Scriptures. The answer is, first, that the Scriptures are complete, and, therefore, need no supplement; secondly, that the Scriptures themselves forbid their being supplemented. The argument with reference to the completeness of the Scriptures as a rule of faith and duty was prosecuted in the preceding discussion of mysticism. There it was shown that the mystic and the Romanist make common cause in their denial of the completeness of the Scriptures. The answer, therefore, to the one in that matter is the answer to the other.

(2) Tradition is necessary to interpret the Scriptures.

First. The Scriptures make no mention of tradition as an interpreter of themselves. If then we repair to it for direction, we presumptuously elect a guide whom God has not appointed, and we may expect that both it and we will fall into the ditch. This in fact has been the fate of the Roman Catholic Church.

Secondly. Tradition, from the nature of the case, is more obscure than the Scriptures. It is non-existent at

one time, existent at another, flexible, fluctuating, indeterminate, and it requires the *ex cathedra* interpretation of its own meaning by the infallible representative of the church's authority. To expound the Scriptures by tradition is to interpret the less obscure by the more obscure. This is absurd.

Thirdly. It vacates *pro tanto* the self-interpreting function of the Scriptures. We are commanded to search the Scriptures, and in the light of that study to determine whether any doctrine professing to be scriptural is really so or not. Rome bids us search the traditions to ascertain even the meaning of Scripture; and *that* notwithstanding the undeniable fact that tradition is greatly less accessible than the Scriptures. If it be replied that we are to consult tradition only when the Scriptures fail to explicate their own meaning, this is manifestly to make tradition superior in authority to Scripture. But we have seen that Rome makes Scripture and tradition coördinate elements of the same rule. How one can be coördinate with the other, and at the same time subordinate to it, it is difficult to perceive. Further, it has been shown that Trent decrees that Scripture and tradition are to be received with equal love and reverence — *pari pietatis affectu ac reverentia*. How this is possible, when tradition is constituted an authoritative interpreter of Scripture, it is also hard to see. Perhaps an infallible resolution of these difficulties might assist our dull perception.

Fourthly. The interpretative function assigned to tradition, to the extent to which it is invoked, supplants the interpretative office of the Holy Ghost. Our divine

Master, when he was about to consummate his work on earth, promised to his disciples the Holy Spirit to guide them into *all* truth. "I will pray the Father," said he, "and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever; even the Spirit of truth." "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things." Lest it be said that this promise was peculiarly made to the apostles, hear the Apostle John, in his first epistle, applying the same consolation to all believers, "But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things." "But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him." Who can doubt that this heavenly unction, proceeding from the ascended Prophet of the church, is the Holy Ghost? Jesus points us to the Holy Spirit as the interpreter of Scripture; Rome to tradition. But, says the Romanist, the Spirit is the interpreter of both Scripture and tradition. Is this so? We had supposed that the Pope is the authoritative interpreter of them both. Yes (he rejoins) but the pope is inspired by the Spirit, so as to be an infallible interpreter of Scripture. Were that so, how many of the myriads of perplexed believers and convicted sinners could go to his throne of grace, that they might obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need? Only a fortunate few could be able to repair to the eternal hills whence cometh *their* help. That is not necessary, it will be said; the guiding influence of the

pope circulates everywhere through priests, as the blood flows from the head to the whole body. Yes, but although unhappily priests dwell *near* us everywhere, they do not abide *in* us; and our Master promises to us an interpreter of his Word who is to be in us, and abide with us. Neither tradition, nor pope, nor priests can be a substitute for him in his direct communion with the soul. The charge is a heavy one, heavy because true, that Rome by her traditions supplants the Holy Ghost, and, so far as she can, robs the church and the world of his interpreting office. Whether the inspiration of the pope, the hinge of this matter, can be proved will be considered when we come to infallibility.

Fifthly. In our ignorance we may imagine that it would be very profitable to the church to have with her the apostles in person to furnish inspired interpretations of their writings. God in his wisdom has seen otherwise. Instead of being satisfied with this ordination of his providence, the Roman Catholic Church seeks to supply the defect of personal apostolic oral instruction by tradition. It is claimed that the traditions of the oral teachings of the apostles are faithful exponents of those teachings. But here a troublesome dilemma confronts the Romanist. He holds that there are personal successors of the apostles. Of course, these men must be possessed of apostolic gifts, or the claim is a sham. If so, they are qualified, just as the apostles would be if personally present, to interpret the Scriptures by their *viva voce* instructions. Where, then, is the use of tradition as an interpreter of Scripture? The law of parsimony would exclude it. Why traditions of past oral

instructions of apostles, when we have present apostolic teaching? But the Romanist zealously contends for tradition. Where, then, is the use of personal successors of the apostles? The Romanist ought to elect one of the alternatives. They are mutually exclusive, but he elects both. "He sees the contradictories with equal clearness, and contends for both with equal zeal." The truth is, that it is alike vain to talk of personal successors of the apostles without apostolic credentials, and of tradition which faithfully represents oral deliverances made ages ago. The law of excluded middle does not operate in relation to these contradictories. There is a third alternative which may be elected. It is, that we have the apostles in their writings, and we have the promise of the Holy Spirit to guide us in the interpretation of those writings.

Sixthly. The office of tradition in interpreting the Scriptures has failed to avert serious differences in the bosom of the Roman Catholic Church by which its boasted unity has been notoriously rent. Why, if tradition interprets Scripture, have not all parties been harmonized by it? It has pretended to do what the Holy Spirit alone can accomplish, and, as a matter of course, it has signally failed. Like the Spartan boy, who under his cloak hid a fox gnawing at his vitals, Rome conceals the genius of internal discord within the folds of her scarlet robes.

(3) Tradition is necessary to determine the canon of Scripture.

First. Without pausing to criticise the unwarrantable way in which Rome employs the terms *canon of*

Scripture, let us notice that the question how the canon was settled is not now properly before us. The question is, What is the rule of faith and duty? The Protestant answers by saying, The Scriptures alone; the Romanist by saying, The Scriptures and tradition. He uses tradition to determine the canonicity of Scripture in order to instate Scripture as an integral element of his one composite rule of faith and duty.

Secondly. He makes one part of the rule prove another part of itself — he makes tradition prove Scripture. But if this is done, why may not Scripture be invoked to prove tradition? And if so, the Romanist would travel in a circle. He would prove Scripture by tradition, and tradition by Scripture. Hardly would so acute a logician fall into so transparent a fallacy. But—

Thirdly. The Romanist, as we shall see under the next head, does that very thing. He does prove Scripture by tradition, and then turns round, and coolly proves tradition, at least partly, by Scripture. He is fond of travelling in circles, as will be made apparent as the discussion advances. One would infer that his argument is not progressive.

Fourthly. The Romanist contends that the canon of Scripture is determined by tradition; the Protestant, that the canon was determined, in accordance with miraculous evidence, by the Jewish, and the early Christian church. Having been so determined, Scripture was itself the *traditum*, the thing handed down from the apostles, a deposit committed to the church to be transmitted from generation to generation. It was not to be proved by traditions of the oral teachings of the apostles.

It was the written teachings of prophets and apostles — itself handed down from age to age.

Fifthly. That the question of the canonical authority of the Scriptures, as one of fact, was settled by the early church is proved, not by traditions of the oral teachings of the apostles, but by *history* ecclesiastical and secular.

(4) Tradition is proved by Scripture.

The chief proof-texts on which reliance is placed to sustain this position are, 2 Thess. ii. 15 and iii. 6, "Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle." "Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us."

First. The criticism is repeated that the Romanist reasons in a circle. He proves the authority of Scripture by tradition, and he proves the authority of tradition by Scripture.

Secondly. "Tradition, as intended by Paul in the passages cited (2 Thess. ii. 15 and iii. 6), signifies all his instructions, oral and written, communicated *to those very people themselves*, not handed down."¹ No doubt, the oral instructions of the apostles, intrinsically considered as they fell from their lips upon those who actually heard them, were of equal authority with their writings. And if we had those very oral instructions as originally delivered, they would be of the same authority with us. But it makes all the difference in the world

¹ A. A. Hodge, *Outl. Theol.*, p. 83.

when those oral teachings are transmitted from mouth to mouth by those who did not personally listen to them. What guarantee is there, that after they have run the hazards of such a transmission they remain precisely what they were at first? None whatever. But on the contrary, the laws of human nature and the facts of universal experience give the assurance that the original deliverances are changed and corrupted in the long process of transmission. This consideration would be checked had God assured us of their miraculous preservation from change. Where is such assurance given? Certainly not in the Scriptures. And where else could we expect to find it? How then can the Romanist appeal to the Scriptures as authorizing his traditions? They give absolutely no guarantee of their stability. We are shut up to the conclusion that the memorabilia of the oral instructions of the apostles are utterly untrustworthy, that those instructions, even when the fact of their delivery was patent to the contemporaries of the apostles, must have suffered serious mutilation through *viva voce* transmission. Such a Lesbian rule of doctrine and practice as oral tradition is out of the question. We demand an inflexible rule which will not accommodate itself to the fluctuations of views, times and circumstances. Such a rule of faith and duty is the written Word of God. That is a fixed and invariable quantity. It is stamped with the immutability of its Author. It deserves to be emphasized that the Scriptures never point us to tradition as a rule of faith and duty, or even as a part of that rule. They claim that office for themselves. The meagre references which Romanists make

to them as appearing to teach the contrary avail them nothing.

Thirdly. Whatever may be thought theoretically of the possible descent of some pure traditions from the apostles, it is monstrous to suppose that the Scriptures justify the actual traditions which swarm in the Roman Catholic system. It is monstrous to impute such a progeny to apostolic parentage. As well might the Acheron flow from the same springs with the River of Life. Speaking of the use made by Romanists of Paul's injunction to the Thessalonians, Calvin says, "They act a still more ridiculous part in making it their aim to pass off, under this, the abominable sink of their own superstitions, as though they were the traditions of Paul. But farewell to these trifles, when we are in possession of Paul's true meaning. And we may judge in part from this epistle what traditions he here recommends, for he says, whether *by word*, that is, discourse, or *by epistle*. Now, what do these epistles contain but pure doctrine, which overturns to the very foundation the whole of the papacy, and every invention that is at variance with the simplicity of the gospel?"¹

Fourthly. It ought not to escape observation that the passage in Thessalonians from which Romanists chiefly derive their sanction for tradition follows upon the very heels of the apostle's fearful description by prophetic anticipation of the development of their own corrupt and apostate system. Let those who doubt so amazing a fact read for themselves. Is it possible to conceive that the apostle who had just painted so graphically the rise

¹ *Comm. on Thess. in loco.*

and progress of the Roman defection should in the same passage have lent his apostolic authority to one of its worst elements? Did he not design to guard the church against its insidious approaches when he cautioned the Thessalonian Christians to hold the traditions which they had been taught, whether by word, or his epistle? The Romanists attempt the extraordinary feat of turning the apostle's guns upon himself; to get from the battery which demolishes them the weapons of their defence. How blind are they whom God smites with judicial blindness! How infatuated they are — to quote the very context of the passage under consideration — upon whom he sends strong delusion that they may believe a lie! A part of that blindness and delusion consists in their denial of the applicability of the apostle's dreadful portraiture to their own case.

Fifthly. Instead of the Scriptures approving tradition, they actually condemn it. At least they explicitly condemn it in one particular instance, and by necessary implication in all similar instances. The Pharisees and scribes approached Christ with the question, "Why walk not thy disciples according to the tradition of the elders?" His answer, in part, was, "Laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men"; "full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your tradition"; "making the word of God of none effect through your tradition, which ye have delivered." (Mark vii.) Our Saviour, it is true, addressed his reproof specially to the Pharisees and scribes, but he enunciated a great principle of general application. It is that in religion and morals man has no right

to command what God has not commanded. He has no right to make laws binding the conscience. That is the sole prerogative of God. On the other hand, human authority is incompetent to discharge the conscience from the obligation to keep God's laws. No doctrine or precept, institution or practice, of a religious nature, is authoritative except it springs from God's revealed will, and every one of them originating in that source is obligatory. The conclusion is, as bearing on the question in hand, that no oral or traditional law, no unwritten religious code, is tolerated by divine authority. The principle operates as well in regard to the unwritten traditions of the Romanist, as to those of the Pharisee. The only authority binding the conscience of the church — that is, the only rule of faith and duty — is the written Word of God. It is noteworthy that the Lord Jesus uses convertibly the terms *commandment of God* and *Word of God*. The Scriptures, therefore, instead of sanctioning, condemn the unwritten traditions of Rome.

To this it may be replied that the argument confounds two cases which are not susceptible of common predication; that the apostles, not like "the elders," were inspired, and were consequently empowered to deliver authoritative oral instructions, which might be handed down by tradition, and collected into an unwritten code. But, in the first place, the supposition is not to be endured that the apostles orally communicated instructions which were separate from, or independent of, the Scriptures. Their oral teachings, when reduced to writing, *were* precisely the Scriptures, and when not

reduced to writing were expository of the Scriptures. That they delivered an oral code different from the Scriptures is preposterous. In the second place, if they had, it is perfectly certain that we could not know it in its integrity; and not to know it in its integrity would be equivalent to not knowing it at all, if it would not be vastly worse.

Sixthly. The Scriptures cannot sanction anything that is contradictory to them. But many of the traditions of Rome are contradictory to them. Some of these are signalized, as they occur to memory, without regard to logical order. Scripture teaches that none but Christ could offer himself in sacrifice; tradition, that he may be offered in sacrifice by human priests. Scripture teaches that Christ needs not daily to be offered in sacrifice; tradition, that he needs to be daily offered in sacrifice. Scripture says to the believing people touching the wine in the supper, All of you drink of it; tradition, None of you drink of it. Scripture says, Marriage is honorable in all; tradition, Marriage is not honorable in all. Scripture teaches that there is but one Lord of the church; tradition, that there are two Lords, Christ and the pope. Scripture teaches that there is but one head of the church; tradition, that there are two, Christ and the pope. Scripture teaches that no human officer of the church should be a lord over God's heritage; tradition, that the pope is of right lord over God's heritage; and so, on and on. Is it necessary to press the argument that Scripture cannot sanction or authorize these flat contradictions to itself?

(5) The oral teachings of Christ and the apostles,

when clearly ascertained, are of equal authority with the Scriptures. Certainly. We have nothing to object to that proposition. *If* the oral teachings of Christ and the apostles were clearly ascertained to us, of course, they would be clothed with the highest authority. But we deny that, without miraculous interposition, and that absolutely indisputable, the oral instructions of Christ and the apostles which are not embodied in the Scriptures can be clearly ascertained. Enough has already been said to render it needless to dwell upon this point here. The miraculous evidence which Rome pretends to furnish will be noticed in another part of the discussion.

(6) The authority of the early fathers is appealed to in support of tradition.

It must be kept in view what the question is which is under discussion. It is in regard to the claim of Romanists that tradition is a part of the rule of faith and duty, coördinate with the Scriptures. An appeal to the early fathers as merely citing tradition in their controversies is not sufficient. It must be shown that they referred to its authority as an integral element of the rule of faith and duty. Otherwise the appeal to them, so far as this question is concerned, is utterly irrelevant and vain. Now, as a matter of fact, can this be done? Can the early fathers be quoted as placing tradition upon an equal footing with the Scriptures? This cannot be done. Whatever, therefore, is the value of their authority, it cannot be pleaded in favor of the Romanist doctrine touching tradition. Had this not been the state of the case, had the vaunting appeal of

Romanists to patristic support in favor of their doctrine been colored by some tincture of truth, it would have been necessary to consider the question, How much value is to be attached to that sort of evidence to emphasize the obvious and necessary distinction between the authority and the testimony of the fathers so happily indicated by Waterland, and to estimate the degree of importance to be assigned to their testimony? All this is rendered superfluous by the fact that there is no patristic testimony which can be adduced in favor of the Romanist's position with reference to tradition, as coördinate with the Scriptures in constituting the rule of faith and practice.

This is not rashly spoken. It is the deliberate conclusion of writers who have thoroughly examined the evidence. After referring to "the fact of essential importance," upon the question of the sufficiency of Scripture, "that a process of declension or deterioration, both in respect of soundness of doctrine and purity of character, commencing even in the apostles' days, continued gradually to advance," and that "this fact is fatal to the authority, properly so-called, of the fathers," Principal William Cunningham goes on to say, "There is, however, a remarkable exception to this constant tendency to deterioration observable during the second and third centuries, to which, before proceeding further, I think it right to direct attention: I mean the constant maintenance, during the first three centuries, of the supremacy and sufficiency of the sacred Scriptures, and the right and duty of all men to read and study them. There is no trace of evidence in the first three centuries that

these scriptural principles were denied or doubted, and there is satisfactory evidence that they were steadily and purely maintained. The fathers of that period were all in the habit of referring to the sacred Scriptures as the only real standard of faith and practice. They assert, both directly and by implication, their exclusive authority, and their perfect sufficiency to guide men to the knowledge of God's revealed will. They have all more or less explicitly asserted this, and they have asserted nothing inconsistent with it." Without entering into "the detailed evidence of this position," he refers, with high commendation, to Goode's *Divine Rule of Faith and Practice*, in which "it is adduced at length, cleared from every cavil and established beyond all fair controversy."¹

It is granted that the early fathers used tradition as an argument. Chillingworth admits this, but shows that the tradition appealed to was nothing but the *consensus* of the apostolic churches, which was employed against heretics who declined the authority of the Scriptures as ultimate; and that the fathers urged that consent, "not as a demonstration, but only as a very probable argument, far greater than any their adversaries could oppose against it." I cannot forbear appending the words of that great man to his Romish opponent in which he treats his appeal to the early fathers in support of tradition with merited scorn, "If you will come one thousand five hundred years after the apostles, a fair time for the purest church to gather much dross and corruption, and for the mystery of iniquity to bring its work

¹ *Hist. Theology*, Vol. I., pp. 184, 185.

to some perfection, which in the apostles' times began to work; if (I say) you will come thus long after, and urge us with the single tradition of one of these churches, being now catholic to itself alone, and heretical to all the rest; nay, not only with her ancient and original traditions, but also with her post-nate introduced definitions, and these, as we pretend, repugnant to Scripture and ancient tradition, and all this to decline an indifferent trial by Scripture, under pretence (wherein also you agree with the calumny of the old heretics) that all necessary truth cannot be found in them without recourse to tradition; if, I say, notwithstanding all these differences, you will still be urging us with this argument as the very same, and of the same force with that wherewith the forementioned fathers urged the old heretics; certainly this must needs proceed from a confidence you have, not only that we have no school divinity, nor metaphysics, but no logic, or common sense; that we are but pictures of men, and have the definition of rational creatures given us in vain." ¹

It is insisted upon that the pith of the matter lies here: the Romanist's position is that tradition is a part of the rule of faith and duty, of equal authority with Scripture. In support of *this* position, he appeals to the respect with which the early fathers treated tradition. But whatever use they made of it, they never treated it as of equal authority with Scripture. The Romanist's appeal to them, therefore, is a vain pretence. The truth is that the early fathers never countenanced the sophistical evasions of the authority of the Scrip-

¹ *Works*, Vol. II., p. 422.

tures of which Rome is guilty. "All the fathers," says Calvin, in the eloquent address to Francis I., with which he prefaces his Institutes, "all the fathers with one heart execrated, and with one mouth protested against, contaminating the Word of God with the subtleties of sophists, and involving it in the brawls of dialecticians."¹

(7) Tradition is sustained by the analogy of unwritten law recognized by the State.

The question will not just at this point be raised, whether there is any real validity in the Romanist's distinction between the written and the unwritten law — *Libri Scripti* and *sine scripto traditiones* — that is, whether there are in fact unwritten traditions. But holding that question in abeyance for a while, I remark:

First. The analogy which is pleaded breaks down in an obvious respect. The State frames written law by its own authority. The church has no authority to construct its own written law. In this particular, the analogy fails.

Secondly. The written law of the church was framed by God alone. Here is another difference. And the written law thus grounded solely and immediately in God's authority is, as has been already shown, perfect. It needs neither to be supplemented nor interpreted by unwritten law.

To this it is objected that the written law of the Scriptures is marked by brevity and compactness, that these characteristics render it obscure, narrow and liable to inconsistency; and enforce the necessity of divine

¹ *Inst.*, Vol. I., p. 16.

expositions of a fuller and more specific nature. But it deserves to be considered that the more numerous and detailed are the specifications of statutory law, the greater is the danger of obscurity and inconsistency, unless the enumeration of specific applications is absolutely exhaustive, and holds all the particulars in harmony with each other. This perfection has never been, perhaps cannot be, realized in any human code. Codifiers of statutory enactments are, therefore, laboring to sum up the law in short, comprehensive, definitive propositions, which implicitly include all specific cases. There is less danger, on this plan, of ambiguity. "These discussions," observes Bouvier, "have called attention to a subject formerly little considered, but which is of fundamental importance to the successful preparation of a code — the matter of statutory expression. There is no species of composition which demands more care and precision than that of drafting a statute. The writer needs not only to make his language intelligible, he must make it incapable of misconstruction. When it has passed to a law, it is no longer his intent that is to be considered, but the intent of the words which he has used; and that intent is to be ascertained under the strong pressure of an attempt of the advocate to win whatever possible construction may be most favorable to his cause. The true safeguard is found not in the old method of accumulating synonyms and by an enumeration of particulars, but rather — as is shown by those American codes of which the Revised Statutes of New York and the revision of Massachusetts are admirable specimens — by concise and complete statement of the

full principle in the fewest possible words, and the elimination of description and paraphrase by the separate statement of necessary definitions.”¹

These observations are judicious and weighty, in regard to human written law. One fails to see that the views expressed with reference to the codification of human statutes do not also hold of the divine code. The fundamental principles, whether of redemption or morals are plainly and definitely enunciated in the written law of God, and a sufficient number of their applications to concrete instances are given to throw light upon all cases. More than this was not necessary in a directory of faith and duty. It would, of course, have been possible to omniscience to have furnished not only the general principles, but also an absolutely exhaustive enumeration of all the conceivable cases to which they might be applied. This infinite wisdom did not see fit to do; and if it had seen otherwise the Bible, instead of being what it is, a complete but at the same time a convenient, compact, portable manual of religious faith and duty, would have been too voluminous and bulky for even the Vatican library to contain. The conception is, from the point of view of human need, impracticable and absurd. Now what God did not deem it best to do, why should the Church of Rome seek to accomplish? Her enormous system of moral theology and casuistry, for example, instead of throwing light upon the Scriptures, beclouds them, and plunges the sincere inquirer into their meaning into deeper darkness than ever. It blunts the incisive edge of the conscience

¹ Law Dictionary, Art. *Code*.

when, under the guidance of a few simple, regulative principles, and loads it down beneath a colossal pile of special obligations, which torture rather than help it. A sincere desire to do what is right, accompanied with a sense of dependence upon the Holy Ghost as interpreting the Scriptures, is worth more than it all.

Furthermore, unwritten law is an *uncodified* number of legal principles of a fundamental character. It would be an interesting question from what source these principles are derived, and there can be little doubt that most of them, at least, were drawn from the Mosaic code, although not preserved in the formal systematized shape in which they are expressed in that code. That question cannot, however, be here discussed. The fundamental principles of the common law, in contradistinction to statute law, the least careful analysis will discover to be imbedded in the natural constitution of man. Like the fundamental laws of intellectual belief, they are evolved from latency and elicited into formal expression by actual cases occurring in experience. They thus become the bases of specific decisions by courts, in which determinate applications to cases are given; and these reported decisions, embraced in the records of different courts, constitute a body of precedents to which reference is constantly made in the processes of law.

But there is no such analogy as is pleaded by Romanists for the existence of unwritten, traditional law in the ecclesiastical sphere. The reasons are obvious. In the first place, the fundamental principles implicitly given in man's natural constitution, so far as they are needed for purposes of law in the ecclesiastical and

spiritual sphere, are actually taken up and explicitly incorporated into God's written law — the holy Scriptures. The Bible does not, like human written law, merely presuppose these unwritten natural principles; it formally embodies them, gives them express enunciation in its written provisions. In the second place, the same is done by the Scriptures as the divine written law in regard to the oral instructions of Christ and the apostles. It seems to be assumed that tradition sustains to these early oral decisions the same relation that records and reports sustain to the oral decisions of human courts. This is a vital mistake. The instructions which flowed from the mouth of Christ and the apostles, so far as God saw them requisite for the instruction and government of the church, were *ab initio* taken up into and explicitly enunciated by the sacred Scriptures as his written law.

It is the remark of an able legal writer that there is a constant tendency on the part of codifiers of statutory enactments to embrace in them the unformulated principles of the common law, and so to crystallize those principles in the sharply defined forms of statutory law. But this is a process which cannot be completed. On the other hand, all the fundamental principles which were necessary were from the beginning by the infinite wisdom of God introduced into the Scriptures as his written law, and there forever stamped with the definiteness of statutory enactment.

There is no ground for the Romanist's craftily urged analogy between the state and the church, between the laws of man and the law of God. The foundation for

his traditional law by which he makes void the commandments of God is swept away.

Thirdly. It was remarked, at the outset of this special argument as to analogy, that the question whether there are in fact any unwritten traditions of the Church of Rome would be held in abeyance. That question now comes up for consideration.

In the first place, it is more than doubtful whether the phraseology is accurate which draws a sharp distinction between the written and the unwritten law of the state — the *lex scripta* and the *lex non scripta*. Is the position tenable, if accuracy is observed, that the common law is unwritten, and that in this respect it is distinguished from the constitution of a state and its statutes? In a case of criminal procedure under the provisions of the common law, it is said that the judge decides what is the law and the jury what are the facts in the case. Is it meant that the judge draws the law from his own mind? that he enounces the fundamental principle or principles bearing upon the case as they exist in his own nature, or as he remembers to have heard them orally delivered by some other judge or court? Does he not refer to previous decisions which are on record? But if on record, how? As unwritten? Impossible. The distinctive characteristic of the common law, therefore, cannot be that it is unwritten law. Begging pardon for the apparent presumption of a layman, one must suggest that the discrimination of the common law from constitutional and statutory law must lie in something else. They are both written, but the one is not formulated and digested, and so is distin-

guishable from constitutions and statutes, and further, when statutes are codified, distinguishable from them as being uncodified. This is not captiously said, but is believed to rest upon facts, and is here urged because of its bearing upon the position of the Romanist. What is that position?

In the second place, the Romanist may say that what he means by unwritten law is law not written in the Scriptures. This plea will not avail him. It is, of course, not only conceded by the Protestant, but strenuously contended by him, that the traditional law of Rome is not in the Scriptures. But the question is whether it is an unwritten or a written law. To say that it is not written in the Scriptures no more proves that it is unwritten than to say that because the common law of the land is not written in state constitutions and statutes, therefore it is in no sense written. One would suppose from the language of Romanists that the traditional law has been simply communicated by word of mouth from generation to generation. Now this is altogether out of the question, not only because of the natural impossibility in the supposition, but because it is point blank opposed to facts. Can it be supposed that a tradition professing to have emanated from Christ or the apostles could have passed down through two generations, without ever being recorded in writing? But what are the facts? Are the reputed traditions of Rome unrecorded in writing? Are they not "for the most part now to be found written in the works of the fathers, decisions of councils, ecclesiastical constitutions" and bulls "and rescripts of the popes"? We have, then, a

body of traditional law, not codified or digested into a system it may be, but all the same a body of written law. The documents are known in which it is recorded. The English constitution may not exist in any one instrument, but it is written in Magna Charta and other great documents.

The point that is now emphasized is, that the Church of Rome possesses a written traditional law which it not only coördinates with the written Word of God, but lifts to a position of superiority to it in that it makes it a supplement to and an interpreter of that Word. Look at it! A body of written law, composed by uninspired men, exalted to an authority paramount to that of the Scriptures, the product, according to Rome's own confession, of divine inspiration!

(8) It is contended that tradition is supported by historical testimony and catholic consent.

It is usual to treat historical testimony and catholic consent as the alleged criteria of tradition. But one fails to see any substantial difference between criteria and proofs of tradition. A tradition which can stand the tests of historical testimony and catholic consent is, it is claimed, proved by them. No importance, therefore, is here attached to a distinction which is more imaginary than real. The contention of the Romanist is, that the traditions now maintained by his church may be traced back through the centuries to the time of the apostles, and that from that time there has been the catholic consent of the church in their adoption and transmission. Whether that contention can be made good, is the question immediately before us.

First. Historical testimony does not sustain this claim of Romanists. "For more than three hundred years after the apostles," remarks Dr. A. A. Hodge, "they have very little, and that contradictory, evidence for any one of their traditions. They are thus forced to the absurd assumption that what was taught in the fourth century was therefore taught in the third, and therefore in the first."¹ This is an extraordinary assertion, and, if it be not rebutted, annihilates the claim of the Romanist. He is somewhat in the condition of the evolutionist who has proceeded at an even pace until suddenly his undisturbed progress is halted on the brink of a great chasm between the inorganic and the organic — the dead and the living. What shall he do? The missing links of facts will not come at his call. The gulf is too wide for any suspension bridge to span it. He poises himself on his haunches, and by a miraculous effort he leaps to the other side, and presto! he is at once transferred from the realm of death to a paradise teeming with the evidences of life. So the Romanist finds the process of traditionary dimaration interrupted by a chasm between the fourth century and the first. What shall *he* do? If, like the man of Macedonia, he calls across the gulf to the apostles to come over and help him, they will not respond to his shouts. He must then get over to them. But how? His pontoon bridge of tradition has shared the fate of the first that Xerxes threw across the Hellespont. Like the evolutionist, he adopts the expedient of saltation. He jumps. And, lo! he is listening to the oral instructions of the apostles.

¹ *Outl. Theol.*, p. 83.

“Admitting,” says Dr. Charles Hodge, “that the Church of Rome is the whole church, and admitting that church to be unanimous in holding certain doctrines, that is no proof that that church has always held them. The rule¹ requires that a doctrine must be held not only *ab omnibus*, but *semper*. It is, however, a historical fact that all the peculiar doctrines of Romanism were not received in the early church as matters of faith. Such doctrines as the supremacy of the Bishop of Rome; the perpetuity of the apostleship; the grace of orders; transubstantiation; the propitiatory sacrifice of the mass; the power of the priests to forgive sins; the seven sacraments; purgatory; the immaculate conception of the Virgin Mary, etc., etc., can all be historically traced in their origin, gradual development, and final adoption.”²

The writers already cited have made only general statements, which they knew could be verified by facts, and had often been so verified. It is well, however, that the facts, to a sufficient extent at least, should be adduced, and that the general charge should be supported by specifications in detail. For this purpose extracts will be subjoined from the works of Chillingworth, whose ability, learning and minute investigation of the matter cannot well be questioned.

Speaking to the question of the infallibility of the Church of Rome he remarks, “Universal tradition (you say, and so do I, too) is of itself credible; and that hath in all ages taught the church’s infallibility with full consent. If it have, I am ready to believe it; but that

¹ Of Vincentius Lirinensis.

² *Syst. Theol.*, Vol. I., p. 123.

it hath, I hope you would not have me take upon your word; for that were to build myself upon the church, and the church upon you. Let, then, the tradition appear; for a secret tradition is somewhat like a silent thunder. You will perhaps produce, for the confirmation of it, some sayings of some fathers, who in every age taught this doctrine (as Gualterius in his Chronology undertakes to do; but with so ill success that I heard an able man of your religion profess that in the first three centuries there was not one authority pertinent): but how will you warrant that none of them teach the contrary? Again, how shall I be assured that the places have indeed this sense in them, seeing that there is not one father for five hundred years after Christ that does say, in plain terms, the Church of Rome is infallible? What, shall we believe your church, that this is their meaning? But this will be again to go into the circle, which made us giddy before: to prove this church infallible, because tradition says so; tradition to say so, because the fathers say so; the fathers to say so, because the church says so, which is infallible.”¹

“Stephen, bishop of Rome, held it as a matter of faith and apostolic tradition that heretics gave true baptism; others there were, and they as good Catholics as he, that held that this was neither matter of faith, nor matter of truth. Justin Martyr and Irenæus held the doctrine of the millenaries as a matter of faith; and though Justin Martyr deny it, yet you, I hope, will affirm that some good Christians held the contrary. St. Augustine, I am sure, held the communicating of infants as much apos-

¹ *Works*, Vol. I., pp. 289, 290.

tolie tradition as the baptizing of them; whether the bishop of the Church of Rome of his time held so too, or held otherwise, I desire you to determine. But sure I am, the Church of Rome at this present holds the contrary. The same St. Augustine held it no matter of faith that the bishops of Rome were judges of appeals from all parts of the church catholic; no, not in major causes and major persons: whether the bishop or Church of Rome did then hold the contrary, do you resolve; but now I am resolved that they do so.”¹

“If, therefore, you intend to prove want of a perpetual succession of professors a certain note of heresy, you must not content yourself to show that having it is one sign of truth; but you must show it to be the only sign of it, and inseparable from it. But this, if you be well advised, you will never undertake; first, because it is an impossible attempt; and then because if you do it, you will mar all: for by proving this an inseparable sign of catholic doctrine, you will prove your own, which apparently wants it in many points, not to be catholic. For whereas you say, This succession requires two things, agreement with the apostles’ doctrine, and an uninterrupted conveyance of it down to them that challenge it; it will be proved against you, that you fail in both points; and that some things wherein you agree with the apostles have not been held always; as your condemning the doctrine of the Chiliasts, and holding the eucharist not necessary for infants; and that in many other things you agree not with them, nor with the church for many ages [centuries] after; for example, in

¹ *Ibid.*, Vol. I., p. 100.

mutilation of the communion, in having your service in such a language as the assistants generally understand not, your offering to saints, your picturing of God, your worshipping of pictures.”¹

In an answer to some passages in Rushworth’s Dialogues about traditions, in which a Romanist is represented as instructing his nephew as to the grounds upon which the traditional beliefs of Rome should be received, Chillingworth, personating the catechumen, says that he would have reminded the interrogator (among others) of the following things:

That “had I lived before the Lateran Council, which condemned Berengarius, possibly I might have known, that the belief of the real presence of Christ in the sacrament was part of the public doctrine of my country; but whether the real absence of the bread and wine after consecration, and their transubstantiation into Christ’s body, were likewise catholic doctrines at that time, that I could not have known, seeing that all men were at liberty to hold it was so, or it was not so.

“That living now, I know it is catholic doctrine that the souls of the blessed enjoy the vision of God; but if I had lived in the reign of Pope John XXII., I should not have known that then it was so, considering that many good Catholics before that time had believed, and that even the pope himself did believe, the contrary; and he is warranted by Bellarmine for so doing, because the church had not then defined it.

“That either Catholics of the present time do so differ in their belief, that what some hold lawful and pious,

¹ *Ibid.*, Vol. II., p. 424.

others condemn as unlawful and impious; or else, that all now consent, and consequently make it Catholic doctrine, that it is not unlawful to make the usual pictures of the Trinity, and to set them in churches to be adored. But had I lived in St. Augustine's time, I should then have been taught another lesson, to-wit, that this doctrine and practice was impious, and the contrary doctrine catholic.

"That now I was taught that the doctrine of indulgences was an apostolic tradition; but had I lived six hundred years since, and found that in all antiquity there was no use of them, I should either have thought the primitive church no faithful steward in defrauding men's souls of this treasure intended by God to them, and so necessary for them, or rather that the doctrine of indulgences, now practiced in the Church of Rome, was not then catholic.

"That the general practice of Roman Catholics now taught me that it was a pious thing to offer incense and tapers to the saints and to their pictures; but had I lived in the primitive church, I should, with the church, have condemned it in the Collyridians as heretical."

It might be tedious and unnecessary to multiply these quotations. The learned writer goes on to show that the same thing is true in regard to the doctrine of purgatory, of the invocation of saints, of auricular confession, of the denial of the sacramental cup to the laity, of the conduct of public service in a tongue unknown to the people, and he is at special pains to prove it true with reference to the doctrine of the immaculate conception of the Virgin Mary, by numerous and convincing argu-

ments of some of the most celebrated writers of the Church of Rome. Each of these doctrines and practices is, to use the words of Vincent of Lerins, *res inducta non tradita, inventa non accepta*. The following words, which have a prophetic sound to us of the present day, were not prophetic; they simply expressed an inference from the past to the future course of Rome in distinguishing itself as a factory of what she labels traditions: "There are divers doctrines in the Roman Church which have not yet arrived to the honor to be *donatæ civitate*, to be received into the number of articles of faith, which yet press very hard for it, and through the importunity and multitude of their attorneys that plead for them, in process of time may very probably be admitted. Of this rank are the blessed Virgin's immaculate conception, the pope's infallibility in determining controversies, his superiority to councils, his indirect power over princes in temporalities, etc. Now as these are not yet matters of faith and apostolic traditions, yet in after ages, in the days of our great-grandchildren, may very probably become so; why should we not fear and suspect that many things now pass currently, as points of faith, which *ecclesia ab apostolis, apostoli a Christo, Christus a Deo, recepit*, which perhaps in the days of our great-grandfathers had no such reputation?"

I conclude these citations from Chillingworth with this definite and comprehensive utterance, "The *πρῶτον ψεῦδος*, the fountain of error in this matter is this, that the whole religion of the Roman Church, and every point of it, is conceived or pretended to have issued originally out of the fountain of apostolic tradition,

either in themselves or in the principles from which they are evidently deducible; whereas, it is evident that many of their doctrines may be originally derived from the decrees of councils, many from papal definitions, many from the authority of some great man; to which purpose it is very remarkable what Gregory Nazianzen says of Athanasius, 'What pleased him was a law to men; what did not please him was a thing prohibited by law: his decrees were to them like Moses' tables, and he had a greater veneration paid him than seems to be due from men to saints.' " ¹

The conclusion from this special line of argument is, that the Romanist's appeal, in behalf of tradition, to historical testimony and catholic consent is futile. His traditions violate the rule of one of his own theologians that they should be *traditæ non inductæ, acceptæ non inventæ*. In point of fact, they are introduced, not handed down; invented, not accepted.

Secondly. The Romanist, in arguing for tradition from common consent is chargeable with the logical vice of reasoning in a circle.

If he be asked in regard to tradition, In what do you ground the faith of the church? he answers, In common consent. If asked, In what do you ground common consent? he replies, In the faith of the church. It is not necessary to substantiate the first of these assertions. The whole preceding contention under this head presupposes the fact that the Romanist in part grounds the church's faith in tradition in common consent. That the second assertion is true let the following statement of

¹ *Works*, Vol. III., p. 435, ff.

Petrus à Soto, quoted by Dr. Charles Hodge from Chemnitz,¹ testify, "Quæcunque credit, tenet, et servat Romana ecclesia, et in Scripturis non habentur, illa ab apostolis esse tradita." This, then, is the circle with reference to tradition: The faith of the church is grounded in common consent; common consent is grounded in the faith of the church.

2. The arguments against the Romanist doctrine of tradition have for the most part been presented in answering those urged in its favor; but there are some other opposing considerations which it is proper to add.

(1) There are traditions, which were acknowledged by some of the fathers to have been observed in their day, that have either been lost, or rejected by the Church of Rome, notwithstanding that she claims to be the safe depository, and the infallible keeper, of all the early tradition of the church.

Chillingworth, commenting on Tertullian's *De Corona Militis*, c. iii., says, "Where having recounted sundry unwritten traditions then observed by Christians, many whereof, by the way (notwithstanding the Council of Trent's profession to 'receive them and the written word with like affection of piety') are now rejected and neglected by the Church of Rome; for example, immersion in baptism, tasting a mixture of milk and honey presently after, abstaining from baths for a week after, accounting it an impiety to pray kneeling on the Lord's day, or between Easter and Pentecost; I say, having

¹ *Examen Concilii Tridentini*, p. 85, edit. Frankfort, 1574.

reckoned up these and other traditions in Chap. III., he adds another in the fourth, of the veiling of women.”¹

Now, how will the Romanist dispose of these facts? If he denies the facts, he discredits the testimony of Tertullian which he is accustomed to respect. If he say that these traditions have been lost, he sacrifices the claim of his church to be the watchful, faithful, infallible custodian of tradition. And further it is craved of him to show how these traditions have been lost, and Tertullian’s account of them has been preserved. Has the Church of Rome lost Tertullian’s works? If he say that they have not been lost, but deliberately rejected by his church, he gives up her claim to be the receiver and keeper of traditions, and makes her their judge and determiner. He assigns to her the extraordinary prerogative of a manufacturer of history. And, upon this supposition, he is desired to show how the immutable church complies with the immutable doctrine of Trent, that unwritten traditions are to be received with an affection of piety and a veneration equal to that which is accorded to the Scriptures.

(2) There were some traditions the existence of which in their time was acknowledged by fathers (not, however, in proximity to the apostles), which were either admitted by those fathers themselves to have originated in private sources, or were denounced by them as invalid and deserving of rejection.

“Since,” says Tertullian, “I find no law for this [the veiling of women], it follows that tradition must have

¹ *Works*, Vol. I., p. 412.

given this observation to custom, which shall gain in time apostolical authority by the interpretation of the reason of it. By these examples, therefore, it is declared that the observing of unwritten tradition, being confirmed by custom, may be defended; the perseverance of the observation being a good testimony of the goodness of the tradition. Now custom, even in civil affairs, where a law is wanting, passeth for a law. Neither is it material whether it be grounded in Scripture or reason, seeing reason is commendation enough for a law. Moreover, if law be grounded on reason, all that must be law which is so grounded — *a quocunque productum* — whosoever is the producer of it. Do ye think it is not lawful, *omni fidei*, for every faithful man to conceive and constitute, provided he constitute only what is not repugnant to God's will, what is conducive for discipline, and available to salvation? seeing the Lord says, 'Why even of yourselves judge not what is right?' . . . This reason now demands saving the respect of the tradition — *a quocunque traditore censetur, nec authorem respiciens sed auctoritatem*; from whatever tradition [traditor] it comes, neither regarding the author, but the authority."¹

We see that there were fathers who not only confessed that there were traditional usages prevailing in their day, which sprung from individual, private sources, but justified them on the score of prescriptive authority. What guarantee have we that the current traditions of Rome did not originate in the same way? What proof is there that they descended in unbroken flow from the

¹ *De Corona Militis*, c. III., cited by Chillingworth.

apostles, especially as we have seen that there is a gap between the fourth and the first century which authentic history fails to span with any series of apostolic traditions?

There were also traditional customs the existence of which was acknowledged by some of the fathers, but which they disapproved as invalid and as taking precedence of the precepts of Scripture. Of this allegation Augustine is an instance in proof. "This," says he, "I do infinitely grieve at, that many most wholesome precepts of the divine Scripture are little regarded; and in the meantime all is so full of so many presumptions, that he is more grievously found fault with who during his octaves toucheth the earth with his naked foot, than he that shall bury his soul in drunkenness." "They were," he goes on to say, "neither contained in Scripture, decreed by councils, nor corroborated by the custom of the universal church: and though not against faith yet unprofitable burdens of Christian liberty, which made the condition of the Jews more tolerable than that of Christians." "And, therefore," remarks Chillingworth,¹ from whom again I quote, "he professeth of them, *Approbare non possum*, I cannot approve them; and, *ubi facultas tribuitur, resecauda existimo*; I think they are to be cut off wheresoever we have power. Yet so deeply were they rooted, and spread so far, through the indiscreet devotion of the people, always more prone to superstition than true piety, and through the connivance of the governors who should have strangled them at their birth, that himself, though he grieved at them and could

¹ *Works*, Vol. I., pp. 417, 418.

not allow them, yet for fear of offence he durst not speak against them.”

The Romanist may say in reply, that, according to the distinction drawn by Bellarmin¹ between divine traditions, received by the apostles from Christ, apostolical, derived from the apostles, and ecclesiastical, namely customs begun by the prelates and the people, which gradually through the consent of the people obtained the force of law, the usages complained of must be assigned to the last-named class — a class of traditional usages which have not the same high authority as the doctrinal traditions which came down from Christ or the apostles. I rejoin: in the first place, the distinction appealed to is a merely formal and artificial one, which, to serve her purposes, has been turned out of the manufactory of Rome; in the second place, the Church of Rome herself attaches the same importance to her ecclesiastical traditions as to her doctrinal; and in the third place, the two sorts of tradition are, in point of fact, so intertwined with each other that to separate them would be to tear the fabric of Rome to pieces.

(3) The Romanist position in regard to tradition involves a vicious doctrine as to the authority of common consent.

The Romanist thus argues: Whatsoever is delivered to us by the common consent of the whole church ought to be received as an article of faith; but such and such doctrines are delivered to us by the common consent of the whole Roman Catholic Church; therefore, they are to be received as articles of faith. Here we have a uni-

¹ *De Verbo Dei*, IV., 1.

versal affirmative in the major premise and a particular affirmative in the minor. It is quietly assumed that the Roman Catholic Church is the whole church. In the first place, the so-called Catholic Church existed long before the Roman Church pretended to be the Catholic Church. In the second place, large sections of the universal church now are not connected with the Roman Church, but protest against its usurpation of the title Catholic Church. In the third place, if we follow the Scriptures we will dispute the claim of the Roman Church to be a part of the church catholic, and will regard it as an anti-Christian apostasy from the principles of the true universal church. But even if the Roman Catholic Church could make good her preposterous claim to be the same as the church catholic of the early centuries, we have seen that her traditions cannot historically be proved to have been sustained by the common consent of that church. She is confronted by this dilemma: if she cannot make good that claim, her traditions confessedly have not the support of common consent; if she could make it good, they would not have the support of her own common consent.

While on this subject we may as well go farther, and advert to the position of some leading Protestants in relation to common consent. Utterly repudiating the position of Rome, they argue thus: Whatever doctrines are delivered to us by the common consent of the *true* church are to be received as articles of faith. In the first place, if by the true church is meant the invisible church — the body of the elect — it is no doubt correct to say that the common consent of the church, so con-

sidered, was always to the truth. But how could that common consent be ascertained? How could it be signified to us? Has the invisible church a mouth to speak, or a pen to write? It is idle to talk of the common consent of the invisible church. We had as well speak of the common consent of angels or of the glorified saints as determining points of doctrine for us. But, in the second place, if the visible church is meant, as meant it must be, the question arises, Which is the true church? And if we could determine which, among rival claimants, is the true church, what guarantee have we that the majority of such a church has always maintained the truth, or even been consistent in adhering to any doctrine? In the time of the Arian controversy, it is admitted that for a season the great majority of the church went after Arius, so much so that Athanasius felt the necessity of refuting the notion that truth was to be determined by numbers. But granting that a section of the church has always adhered to the truth, it is obvious to answer that that is begging the question, which is, What is the truth, and how may we ascertain it from the consent of the church? and, further, that it does not follow from the fact that either a minority or a majority professes a certain doctrine, that therefore it is true. In the third place, it is but child's play, a mere retortion of worldly assertions, for Romanists to say to Protestants, We are the successors of the true church, and you of the false; and for Protestants to retort, No, we are the successors of the true church, and you of the false.

The Protestant condemns the Romanist for making

tradition a part of the rule of faith and duty. Is not the Protestant liable to a similar censure when he makes common consent a criterion of truth? Does he not represent it as a part of that rule? It would seem evident that when the question is, Which is the true church, and what claimant is entitled to that high designation? there can be but one arbiter that can decide, and that that arbiter is the Scriptures alone. They, and they alone, can and do determine alike which is the true church, and what is the value of common consent to any doctrine.

(4) The Romanist doctrine of tradition involves, if it does not necessitate, his pernicious principle of development.

There are two sorts of development which the Protestant regards as legitimate. The first is the development of the truths of Scripture by logical — and logical is necessary — inference. But it must ever be kept in mind that the development of any enunciation by logical inference makes no substantive addition to the original enunciation. It is, to use Kant's language, simply ampliative, never synthetical. It is the explicit evolution of the implicit contents of the enunciation developed. The second kind of development allowed by the Protestant is the development of the church's *knowledge* of the truths of Scripture. From the nature of the case — that is, from the limitations of the human faculties — there must be such development, on the supposition that the Scriptures are studied at all; and it is the testimony of history that such development has always been a fact. But while this subjective change takes place in the mind

of the student of Scripture, and ought to proceed by increment of knowledge, objectively the truths of the Bible are unchanged and unchangeable. They are fixed stars in the firmament of revelation.

Vastly different from this is the development contended for by the Romanist. I am not prepared to impute to the Church of Rome, whatever may have been the views of certain theologians, the mystic and semi-panteistic doctrine, that in consequence of the incarnation Christ has entered into the church as an organic principle of life, which, by a natural process, is developed in her growth and her final maturity — a detestable doctrine, which disparages the objective facts of the priestly work of Christ, and positively insults the Holy Spirit by either depreciating or denying his supernatural offices.

Nor am I prepared to attribute to the Church of Rome the theory of development as elaborately expounded by Cardinal Newman, for the reason that I do not know that his theory has ever been formally sanctioned by the authorities of that church. But I confess my inability to concur altogether with the view of Principal Cunningham, in his discussion of the "Romanist Theory of Development,"¹ that the theory of development propounded by De Maistre and Möhler, and expanded by Newman, was suggested by the fact that profound investigations into the history of doctrine were sufficient to beat off the Romanist from the maintenance of his old doctrine of apostolic tradition. Against this supposition is the violent improbability that a church professing to

¹ *Discussions of Church Principles.*

be immutable would ever abandon her old, accepted, formally stated doctrine of tradition. What there was novel in the position of these theologians was their implication, prompted perhaps by their vanity, that they had discovered "a more excellent way" to account for the development of the system of Rome than the ancient method of tradition. And what more natural than that such an implication should be resented? Were three speculators to upset the venerable doctrine of the church, and substitute another in its place? Was the influence of Trent, of Pius IV., of Bellarmin and Perrone to wane in the presence of theirs?

Moreover, I cannot perceive why, if their theory of development were accepted, stripped of the offensive implication adverted to, it could not be adjusted to the long-standing doctrine of Rome as to tradition. For if that theory is that the system of Christianity was at first but inchoate and rudimentary, and like every intelligent system, would depend upon the progress of the human faculties for the expansion and formal development of its germinal principles, what would hinder the Romanist from saying: Very well, Christianity, as a system of truth, embraced the two elements of Scripture and tradition? Why, then, if development were necessary, should it not be regarded as equally applicable to both these departments of truths, to tradition as well as to the Scriptures? Now this supposition, I am disposed to think, was acutally realized in the development of the system of Rome. She has always developed Scripture and tradition alike, indeed *pari passu*. History bears out this view. More than this, it may well be doubted

whether, had not the belief in tradition existed, and there had been no development of tradition, there could ever have originated in early times the idea of the development of Scripture by substantive additions. I am, therefore, inclined to hold that the theory of tradition anteceded and gave rise to the theory of development, and consequently that the two theories, instead of being in conflict, are in perfect harmony with each other. De Maistre, Möhler and Newman, in rashly advocating the opposite view, have probably made a great mistake. At least, were I a Romanist, I would think so.

The Church of Rome, by virtue of her doctrine of tradition, which empowers her not only to interpret, but to supplement the Scriptures, in connection with the twin and complementary doctrine of her infallibility, has, as a matter of fact, always developed the Scriptures, not by the way of a logical evolution of its contents, but by the way of the creation of new, substantive additions. This is one of the main counts in the indictment of her principle of tradition, that she has dared to tamper with the written Word of God, and to quadrate its teachings with her needs. "Thus," as Dr. Charles Hodge remarks, "the Lord's Supper has been expanded into the doctrine of transubstantiation and the sacrifice of the mass; anointing the sick, into the sacrament of extreme unction; rules of discipline, into the sacrament of penance, of satisfactions, of indulgences, of purgatory, and masses and prayers for the dead; the prominence of Peter, into the supremacy of the pope." ¹

(5) The Romanist doctrine of tradition is the prolific

¹ *Syst. Theol.*, Vol. I., p. 120.

mother of incalculable moral evils. Reasoning from the necessity of things, we should be obliged to conclude that this must be so. We are forced *a priori* to the conviction that the celibacy of the clergy, auricular confession, the sale or the dispensation of indulgences, the pardon of sin by priests, masses in which propitiatory sacrifices are offered for the living and the dead, must issue in corruptions the most enormous. We would be, antecedently to experience, shut up to the belief that, human nature being what it is, this result must follow from these sources with the certainty of effects from their causes. It is useless for Romanists to argue against this indubitable conclusion. They cannot prove that human nature is not what consciousness says it is. They cannot prove that certain causes put into operation will not tend to produce their appropriate effects. As well might they endeavor to prove that a stone let fall from a height will not gravitate towards the centre of the earth. This conclusion from the nature of the case would hardly be affected were there no historical proof to corroborate it, were the arcana of Rome locked up in her own bosom and veiled in impenetrable secrecy.

But there is a plenty of historical evidence to substantiate it. The appeal need not be taken to extra-Romanist authorities. The testimony of Romanists themselves is amply sufficient. One, however, is little disposed to insist upon the particulars of the fearful indictment — to stand at the mouth of hell in order to pry into its awful secrets. Our Saviour tells us that a tree is known by its fruits. Judged by this rule, the Romanist doctrine of tradition must be pronounced a

corrupt tree, inasmuch as it is laden with corrupt and poisonous fruit.

The doctrine of tradition as held by the Church of Rome has been thus dwelt upon under the conviction that, as an element in her rule of faith and duty, its importance in her system cannot well be exaggerated. It affords the condition upon which free scope is given to the operation of what is generally regarded as the most prominent feature of her constitution, the principle of infallibility. To the consideration of that principle, which has been called the corner-stone of the Roman fabric, let us now turn.

3. The next question which comes for consideration is that concerning the Romanist doctrine of *infallibility*.

Some introductory observations will first be made, and then the question will be discussed.

First. The question of the possession of infallibility and that of its seat are, to all intents and purposes, one and the same; for, as has been contended, if there were a supreme judge, and it was not known where he could be found, it would be little, if at all, better than if there were no judge. The question here, then, will be especially in regard to the organ in which infallibility is claimed to reside.

Without going back farther, we know that at the time when the Vatican Council was summoned to meet, there were two great theories in the Church of Rome in regard to the seat of infallibility, which struggled with each other for ascendancy — the one asserting that infallibility had its seat in councils, the other affirming that it resided in the pope; the one known as the Gallican

theory, the other as the Ultramontane. The French church, in maintaining what was known as the "Gallican Liberties," had resisted the doctrine of papal supremacy and the related doctrine of papal infallibility, and there were outside of France powerful adherents of the same view. In the council the Cisalpine or Conciliar doctrine was ably advocated by such men as Dupanloup and Durboy, Strossmayer, Hefele, Schwarzenberg and Rauscher, Maret, Ketteler, Haynald and Kenrick. After a warm and protracted struggle between the opposing parties the council, on the 18th of July, 1870, decided in favor of the papal theory. It decreed "that the Roman Pontiff, when he speaks *ex cathedra*, that is, when in discharge of the office of pastor and doctor of all Christians, by virtue of his supreme apostolic authority, he defines a doctrine regarding faith or morals to be held by the universal church, by the divine assistance promised to him in blessed Peter, is possessed of that infallibility with which the divine Redeemer willed that his church should be endowed for defining doctrine regarding faith or morals; and that therefore such definitions of the Roman Pontiff are irreformable of themselves, and not from the consent of the church."¹

¹ Docemus et divinitus revelatum dogma esse definimus: Romanum Pontificem, cum ex cathedra loquitur, id est, cum omnium Christianorum pastoris et doctoris munere fungens pro suprema sua Apostolica auctoritate doctrinam de fide vel moribus ab universa Ecclesia tenendam definit, per assistentiam divinam, ipsi in beato Petro promissam, ea infallibilitate pollere, quo divinus Redemptor Ecclesiam suam in definienda doctrina de fide vel moribus instructam esse voluit; ideo que ejusmodi Romani Pontificis definitiones ex sese, non autem ex consensu Ecclesiæ, irreformabiles esse."

And now behold the curious and wonderful result! The very men who had stoutly and — shall it be said? — conscientiously resisted the pronouncement of the dogma of papal infallibility were caught in their own trap. All councils, they had contended, are infallible; therefore, this council is infallible; and this infallible council had decreed the infallibility of the pope. What was left them but to submit or to secede? With the exception of Döllinger and his followers, they gave in their adhesion. One would imagine that, in swallowing the bitter dose administered by the hands of Jesuits, they must in the region of their pride of opinion have suffered the throes and gripings of a mental cholera. It must have been a sore strait. If they yielded, they would eat their own words. If they resisted, they would recede from their own doctrine as to the infallibility of councils, and — lose their offices to boot. Lo! they changed their views with the facility with which they doffed their shirts, and, forgetting the difficulties of conscience, worked complacently in the harness of papal supremacy and infallibility! What a comment on the folly, the absurdity, the diabolical delusion of a doctrine ascribing infallibility to men! The denial of infallibility to any but a collection of men had logically enforced the affirmation of the infallibility of a single man!

Secondly. The ground has sometimes been taken by Protestant writers that the two theories of collective and individual infallibility were closely associated with each other, and that the doctrine of the infallibility of councils led on, by a logical development, to the doctrine of

the infallibility of the pope. From this opinion I am constrained to dissent for several reasons.

In the first place, the two theories were treated by Romanist theologians themselves as irreconcilable with each other. The difference between them occasioned a long and bitter struggle, which culminated in the Vatican Council. Romanists themselves being judges, there was no bond of affinity between them; one was not the logical development of the other.

In the second place, it is obvious to reason that the doctrine of episcopal infallibility — of bishops in conclave — was in its very nature opposed to papal infallibility, the infallibility of a single supreme bishop. If a collection of bishops were alone infallible, it is perfectly clear that one bishop could not be alone infallible; and, on the other hand, if one alone was infallible, many could not be. The formal adoption, therefore, of the doctrine of the pope's infallibility was the abandonment of the doctrine of the infallibility of councils. The former did not spring out of the latter, as a child from its mother; it killed the latter by a deliberate judicial act.

In the third place, these doctrines are professedly based upon different scriptural grounds; that of collective infallibility upon the general promise of infallibility alleged to have been made by Christ to the church, that of individual infallibility upon the special promise of infallibility asserted to have been given by Christ to Peter, and in him to his successor in the primacy of the church — in the language of the Vatican Council, *ipsi in beato Petro promissam*. Now at the time of the Vati-

can Council, the general promise to the church was held by the Cisalpines to have been made to the episcopate — the body of bishops. That council defined the applicability of the promise of infallibility to be alone to the supreme pontiff.

Holding for these reasons that the two theories were incompatible, that the later was not logically developed out of the earlier, and that the adoption of the later was the displacement and sacrifice of the earlier, I do not feel called upon to discuss the doctrine of the infallibility of the church or of councils. Those who wish to see with what ability and irresistible force that now effete issue was met will have ample satisfaction in the works of the numerous divines who considered it, among whom I would make special reference to Chillingworth and Thornwell, and also to Dr. Schaff, in the first volume of his *Creeeds of Christendom*. The argument here will, in the main, be directed to the question of the infallibility of the pope, the exclusive doctrine now maintained by the Church of Rome.

Thirdly. The Church of Rome, in deliberately relinquishing her older doctrine of the infallibility of the church, as such, and substituting for it another doctrine exclusive of it, has despoiled herself of the most plausible and ingenious arguments by which the claim of infallibility was wont to be supported. She has, for example, deprived herself of the ability, in the effort to sustain that pretension, of appealing to the promise of the Spirit to guide the church into all truth, a promise not only given by Christ, but didactically inculcated by John in his first epistle. That promise, so general in its

character, cannot possibly be pleaded as given to one man. She has narrowed the question to the infallibility of the pope. The decree of the Vatican Council is in proof. It declared that the official definitions of the Roman pontiff are irreformable *in themselves*, and not because of the consent of the church — *ex sese, non autem ex consensu ecclesiæ*. It would seem that she was given up to blindness in regard to her policy, and to have been left to the fatuity of inviting her enemies to an easy overthrow of her most characteristic and fundamental principle. The road to the conquest of Rome now presented to her foes is like the dry bed of the Euphrates through which the troops of Cyrus marched unresisted into the heart of Babylon and to the seizure of her palace. The difference between the two cases is that the modern Babylon has herself opened the road which conducts her invaders to St. Peter's and the Vatican.

So much has been written in relation to the dogma of papal infallibility that it is not necessary in this discussion to go into details. The argument will be brief; and I will take advantage of the liberty accorded to every writer, of treating a case according to his own conception of it, and in the manner elected by himself.

(1) In his argument for infallibility, the Romanist displays his usual taste for circulating syllogisms. If before the Vatican Council the advocate for the church's infallibility had been asked, How are you assured of the infallible decisions of the church? he would have answered, By the authority of Scripture. Had he been asked, How are you assured of the authority of Scrip-

ture? his answer would have been, By the infallible decision of the church. Now that, by the infallible decision of the church, infallibility is centred in the pope, if asked, How are you assured of the infallible decisions of the pope? he answers, By the authority of Scripture. If asked, How are you assured of the authority of Scripture? he must reply, By the infallible decision of the pope. This of itself is sufficient to explode the argument for papal infallibility into smoke.

(2) The claim of papal infallibility has not the least support from the Scriptures; but on the contrary the attempt to make good the claim involves a fearful twisting and perversion of their meaning.

What, briefly, is the argument? Christ constituted Peter the primate of the apostolic college and the human head of the church. This necessarily carried with it the possession of infallibility. The pope is the ecclesiastical successor of Peter, and is therefore the bishop of bishops, and the supreme human head of the church, and consequently possessed of infallibility. To Peter were committed the keys of the kingdom of heaven. They were not buried with Peter; the pope wears them at his girdle. Now if in this chain one link is wanting, the chain is worthless. Let us examine the links. Granted that Christ assigned to Peter some superiority of *personal honor* among the apostles, how does that prove the conferment upon him of the *official primacy* of the apostolic college, and the headship of the church? What are the facts? They are thus tersely presented by another:¹ "The New Testament is its own best inter-

¹ Schaff, *Creeds of Christendom*, Vol. I., p. 185.

preter. It shows no single example of an exercise of jurisdiction of Peter over the other apostles, but the very reverse. He himself, in his epistles, disowns and prophetically warns his fellow-presbyters against the hierarchical spirit, exhorting them, instead of being lords over God's heritage, to be ensamples to his flock (1 Peter v. 1-4). Paul and John were perfectly independent of him, as the Acts and epistles prove. Paul even openly administered to him a rebuke at Antioch. At the council of Jerusalem, James seems to have presided; at all events he proposed the compromise which was adopted by the apostles, elders, and brethren; Peter was indeed one of the leading speakers, but he significantly advocated the truly evangelical principle of salvation by faith alone, and protested against human bondage." There is not a shadow of proof from the Scriptures of the first link in the argument.

But even if Peter had been made primate of the apostles and head of the church, what proof is there that his extraordinary powers descended to personal successors after his death?

In the first place, there is absolutely no proof from Scripture to show that Christ appointed an official successor of Peter, who should inherit his prerogatives, and it is certain that without such an appointment none had the least right to exist.

In the second place, there is as little proof that Christ appointed any official successors of the apostles generally — that is, men who should be invested with the apostolic office. The marks of an apostle are well known. What claimant to be an official successor of the apostles

ever possessed them? Which of them ever saw Christ in the flesh? Which of them ever wrought genuine miracles? When was there ever known one of them who bore the unmistakable credentials of the apostolic office? Echo answers, When? But suppose, for the sake of argument, that God designed that there should be, in some modified form, official successors of the apostles, what spark of evidence is there that one of them was intended to be primate of his contemporaries in the high office, and head of the whole church?

In the third place, were the last supposition possible, what ghost of a proof can be adduced that this person designed to be clothed with this extraordinary and singular power over his fellow-successors of the apostles was to be the pope of Rome?

In the fourth place, how, if that were so, did it come to pass that Christ, in making the appointment, instituted no providential arrangement for carrying it into effect for centuries after the apostles fell asleep? How happened it that infinite wisdom and power and love for the church provided no papal successor to Peter for at least six centuries after Peter's death? The gap has to be filled in by the Romanist, but alas! the hopelessness of the task is evinced by the fact that *he* has never undertaken it. Some Jesuit would have tried it, if fictions could have had any weight against the undeniable testimony of history.

In the fifth place, Scripture nowhere makes mention of any head of the church save One — our adorable Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; and any creation of another head is a blasphemous usurpation of his pre-

rogative. No wonder that when Pope Pius IX. arose to read the dogma which deified him, the darkness was so thick that he was obliged to invoke the light of a candle — fit symbol of his own evanescent glory — and that his recital of his apotheosis was accompanied by frightful blazes of lightning and terrific crashes of thunder. This was interpreted by his deluded adherents to signify the emphatic sanction which heaven had lent to the act of piety they had performed!

This link of the argument, which was hitched on to the empty space from which the first was removed, shares the same fate — it dissolves into nothingness. As really there are only two links, the whole argument vanishes into air.

(3) History utterly overthrows the doctrine of papal infallibility.

How could there have been an infallible pope at a time when there was no pope to be either fallible or infallible? It is the testimony of history that up to the beginning of the seventh century there was not only no such infallible pope as the Vatican Council affected to proclaim, but no pope who was the primate of the successors of the apostles, bishop of bishops, and supreme head of the church. “According to Jerome,” says Thornwell, “every bishop, whether of Rome, Eugubium, Constantinople, Rhegium, Alexandria or Tanis, possessed the same merit and the same priesthood.¹ ‘There is but one bishopric in the church,’ says Cyprian,² ‘and every bishop has an undivided portion in it.’ . . . In his letter to Pope Stephen this doctrine is still more dis-

¹ Epist. ci., ad Evang.

² De Unitat. Ecclesiæ, § V.

tinctly announced, but it is fully brought out in the speech which he delivered at the opening of the great council of Carthage. 'For no one of us,' says he, 'makes himself bishop of bishops, and compels his colleagues by tyrannical power to a necessity of complying; for as much as every bishop, according to the liberty and power that is granted him, is free to act as he sees fit, and can no more be judged by others than he can judge them. But let us expect the judgment of our Lord Jesus Christ, who only hath power both to invest us with the government of his church, and to pass sentence upon our actions.' " 1

But why cite the ante-Nicene fathers, when we have the decisive testimony of Gregory the Great, called the last of the Latin fathers, the bishop of Rome (590-604), who uses these emphatic words, "Ego fidenter dico, quod quisquis se universalem sacerdotem vocat vel vocari desiderat, in elatione sua, Antichristum præcurrit." 2 "I affirm with confidence that whoever calls himself or wishes to be called universal bishop (priest), in this lifting up of himself is the forerunner of Antichrist." This settles the point that there was no supreme head of the church, no infallible pope, at the time when Gregory the Great himself bore the unscriptural title of *the* Bishop of Rome.

Now in the interval between the apostles and the first *bona fide* pope, where was the infallibility? Was it in Linus, in whose ecclesiastical loins the popes claimed to have been — potentially, though not actually a pope? Alas! for their cause, he was, if there is any truth in

¹ *Coll. Writ.*, Vol. III., pp. 481, 482. ² *Epist.*, Lib. VI., Epist. 30.

Scripture, merely an humble presbyter, coördinate with his fellow-presbyters, and, according to their own principle, absurd enough, it is true, but still their own principle, that one cannot communicate a power he does not possess — for every ecclesiastical gift is conferred alone by Christ — how could he have entailed an infallibility which he did not have? Where was the infallibility? Was it in general councils, and capable of being conferred by them? That will not answer; there was no general council until the first quarter of the fourth century. Was it in the pastors of the church? Then in some, or in all. If in some, who were they? and why did they not infallibly determine the religious controversies of their day? If in all, how was it that they wrangled and fought about fundamental doctrines? Their only chance is to bridge the chasm between the first infallible pope and Peter; and that could as easily be accomplished as to build a railway from the earth to the moon.

But let us hear history further in regard to the infallibility of the popes. “The sixth œcumenical council (held in Constantinople 680) condemned and excommunicated Pope Honorius I. (625–638) ‘as a heretic (Monothelite), who, with the help of the old serpent, had scattered deadly error.’ This anathema was solemnly repeated by the seventh and by the eighth œcumenical councils (787 and 869), and even by the popes themselves, who, down to the eleventh century, in a solemn oath at their accession, indorsed the sixth œcumenical council, and pronounced ‘an eternal anathema’ on the authors of the Monothelite heresy, together with Pope

Honorius, 'because he had given aid and comfort to the perverse doctrines of the heretics.' This papal oath was probably prescribed by Gregory II. at the beginning of the eighth century, and was found in the *Liber Diurnus* and *Liber Pontificalis* down to the eleventh century. Even the editions of the Roman Breviary, before the sixteenth century, reiterated the charge of heresy against Honorius. Pope Leo II. strongly confirmed the decree of the council against his predecessor Honorius, and denounced him as one who 'endeavored by profane treason to overthrow the immaculate faith of the Roman Church' (*qui hanc apostolicam ecclesiam non apostolicæ traditionis doctrina lustravit, sed profana proditione immaculatam fidem subvertere conatus est.* See Mansi, *Concilia*, Tom. XI., p. 731."

"History knows of other heretical popes. Zepirinus (201-219) and Callistus (219-223) were Patripassians; Liberius (358) signed an Arian creed, and condemned Athanasius, 'the father of orthodoxy,' who mentions the fact with indignation; Felix II. was a decided Arian; Zosimus (417) at first indorsed the heresy of Pelagius and Celestius, whom his predecessor, Innocent I. had condemned; Vigilius (538-555) vacillated between two opposite decisions during the Three Chapter controversy, and thereby produced a long schism in the West; John XXII. (d. 1334) denounced a certain opinion of Nicholas III. and Clement V. as heretical; several popes taught the universal depravity of men in a manner that clearly includes the Virgin Mary, and is irreconcilable with the recent doctrine of the immaculate conception; Sixtus V. issued an edition of the Latin

Bible with innumerable blunders, partly of his own making, and declared it the only true, authentic text. Bellarmin, the great Roman controversialist and infallibilist, could not deny the facts, and advised the printing of a new edition with the bold statement in the preface, charging the errors of the infallible pope upon the fallible printer, though the pope himself had corrected the proofs. Pius IX., who proclaimed his own infallibility, started out [as pope] as a political reformer, and advocate of Italian unity, but afterwards detested and condemned it as the worst enemy of Christianity.”¹ The author of this statement might have added his words found elsewhere, that, by this infallible interpreter of the Bible, in his Syllabus of 1864, “Bible societies are put on a par with socialism and communism, as pestilential errors worthy of the severest reprobation.”

History makes sad havoc of the doctrine of papal infallibility. But what matter? If the facts are against us, contended the infallibilists, so much the worse for the facts!

(4) Some things must be said in regard to the decree of infallibility by the Vatican Council.

Either the council was fallible or it was infallible.

Let us, first, take the supposition that it was fallible. It would follow that it might have decided truly, and that it might have decided erroneously. According to the supposition, it was fallible: it might have erred. But if so, the decree of the infallibility of the pope was founded upon a fallible decision — at least one arrived

¹ Schaff in *Schaff-Herzog Encyc.*, Art. *Infallib. of the Pope.*

at by a fallible body; and infallibility would rest upon fallibility. It was, however, necessary that there should be infallible certainty attaching to the dogma; for otherwise it is not infallibly certain that the pope is infallible. Water cannot rise higher than its source. If the council was not infallible in pronouncing the pope infallible, neither is the pope certainly infallible, unless there be some other ground than the infallible authority of the council upon which the pope's infallibility infallibly rests. We have seen that there *is* no other ground. The fact is, that the council itself was split, as there was a party of powerful men in it who were definitely opposed to the doctrine of papal infallibility. It comes to this, that the dogma of the infallibility of the pope was the creature of that council; and then it is clear that if the council was fallible, so must be the pope. A fallible council could not infallibly determine the question. In other words, we have a fallible infallibility.

This is not the worst of it. The majority, the great majority of the council — that is, the deciding body — were utterly opposed to the infallibility of any council, and, therefore, of this council. They believed and held the doctrine of the infallibility of the pope *versus* the infallibility of councils. They followed the lead of Bellarmin and Perrone, with other influential theologians. This constituted probably the chief “plank in the platform” of the Ultramontane or Jesuitical party. As they were practically the council, it follows that the council itself held the doctrine of its own fallibility. The supposition, therefore, of the fallibility of the council upon which the preceding hypothetical argument

was based, was not a supposition with the council; it was their doctrine.

It cannot be objected that there may be more than one seat of infallibility, just as there was more than one infallible apostle; for, in the first place, the council itself, so far from holding such a view, limited the seat of infallibility to the pope. In the second place, no one apostle was the supreme head and infallible teacher of the whole church. As the infallibilists and the council made that claim for the pope, there is no analogy between the cases. In the third place, there cannot be two supreme heads and oracles of the same body.

Further, what an argument was this in the hands of the anti-infallibilists in the council! If they did not use it, they missed a great chance. If they did, they addressed an irresistible *ad hominem* argument to the concessions of every infallibilist in the body, and its failure to produce conviction is only another instance illustrating the maxim, "Might makes right."

Let us, on the other hand, take the supposition that the council was infallible.

In the first place, as it decided, after protracted argument between the infallibilists and the anti-infallibilists, to pronounce the pope infallible, it formally surrendered its claim, and the claim of every future council, to infallibility. Now what right had it to abdicate the seat of infallibility, and transfer it to an individual? Whence had it derived so exalted a prerogative? Professedly from the apostles by divine gift. Every bishop was a successor of the apostles, and the collection of bishops in a council possessed apostolic infallibility.

But as the apostles received their infallible prerogative from God, so did the councils. What right, then, had this council to transfer this divinely imparted power to a single individual, when their theory was that it was lodged in a collection of bishops assembled as a council? If, according to the supposition, the Vatican Council was infallible, it perpetrated a horrible enormity in alienating from itself, and assigning to another, and that a single person, an attribute which Christ had bestowed upon it.

In the second place, if this council was infallible, all preceding œcumenical councils were infallible. If not, how came this council to be infallible, while the others were not? But if, from the necessity of the case, previous œcumenical councils, including the Council of Trent, were infallible, how happened it that those infallible bodies did not know of this great truth of the infallibility of popes, which the infallible council of the Vatican so clearly apprehended and so solemnly proclaimed? This is a wonder of wonders, and it may be left to the advocates of conciliar infallibility to furnish its explanation.

In the third place, the question arises, Where was the seat of infallibility in the whole past history of the church? It certainly was not in the early local bishops of the Roman Church. The supposition is absurd. If it was anywhere, it must have been in those great general councils which stamped out heresy, and fixed the type of doctrine for the church. But if so, what a stupendous change occurred, when an œcumenical council deposed councils from their high seat and enthroned in it the

pope of Rome! What then becomes of the vaunted immutability of the church? If it be replied that the question of the seat of infallibility had never been settled, that is all one with saying that the doctrine of infallibility had not been settled; for it is idle to talk of the infallibility of the church in the general, with no special organ to give it expression. The doctrine of infallibility, therefore, was *not* settled in the past, but it *is* settled now; and how that relieves the charge of mutability a Jesuit alone may determine. To say that the church had not defined the doctrine of infallibility until the Vatican Council, in the nineteenth century, is to admit her mutability at a most vital, a tremendously vital, point. What becomes of her authority as a *teacher*?

This brings us to the last, and, to my mind, the clearest and strongest argument against papal infallibility.

(5) Infallibility supposes inspiration; inspiration supposes miraculous credentials; the pope fails to furnish miraculous credentials of his inspiration; therefore, the pope is not infallible.

First. Infallibility supposes inspiration. In the first place, sin has not only destroyed the spiritual life of man, but deranged his reason, so far as the processes of the thinking faculty in regard to religion are concerned. The fundamental laws of his rational nature still exist, but they are either not recognized, or are so falsely interpreted and applied in the operations of thought, either so disjoined from those operations in the quest of consistency of thought, or so perverted by them, that

those fundamental laws become practically ineffective. The fact of sin, its revolutionizing influence upon the rational faculty, renders human infallibility impossible without the supernatural agency of the Holy Spirit.

In the second place, were the reason what it was previously to the occurrence of sin, in its unimpaired integrity, it would be utterly incompetent to deal with the moral emergencies and the religious questions created by sin. The *a fortiori* argument here is too obvious to be pressed.

In the third place, the prophets and apostles were rendered infallible by the supernatural gift of inspiration. This need not be argued, since the Church of Rome herself explicitly acknowledges the fact, and formally takes the ground that this inspiration was by the dictation of the Holy Ghost.

In the fourth place, as according to the Romanist, the pope is the infallible successor of the infallible Apostle Peter, he must get his infallibility from the same source from which his ecclesiastical ancestor derived his — the inspiration of the Holy Spirit; and —

In the fifth place, the uniform experience and observation of mankind establishes the fact of the fallibility of men. The conclusion is irresistible that no sinful, erring man can be made infallible, except by the extraordinary gift of supernatural inspiration.

Secondly. Inspiration supposes miraculous credentials.

By a miracle I mean an event which in its own nature proves that it was produced by the immediate efficiency of God. If such events occur in an evidently designed

connection with a claim to supernatural and divine influence the claim is absolutely established; if not, it is worthless.

In the first place, reason requires that an alleged extraordinary interposition of God in the religious affairs of mankind should be substantiated by extraordinary proofs. So great is the danger of deception in this matter, and so many are the fraudulent pretensions on the part of deluded, or ambitious and designing men to be the instruments of such a divine intervention; so inconceivably precious are the interests involved both on the side of God's glory, and on the side of the highest and everlasting welfare of man, that nothing short of demonstrative evidence is sufficient to meet the case. Now a professed revelation from heaven touching the religious condition, duties and destinies of men claims to be just such an extraordinary intervention of God. But the medium through which, if we judge from facts, such a revelation is communicated is supernatural inspiration. Certain men are inspired to be its imparters. It is not necessary to expand these obvious considerations, inasmuch as the parties to the present controversy, the Romanist and the Protestant, are agreed in regard to them. They both admit that God has met the just requirement of reason, and furnished miraculous — that is, the most extraordinary — proofs of alleged inspiration.

In the second place, not only are the parties theoretically agreed in the premises, but also as to the facts. Both hold that the inspiration of the prophets and the

apostles was attested by miraculous proofs, either directly or indirectly.

To argue further about the matter would be superfluous. By common consent, it is allowed that inspiration supposes miraculous credentials.

Thirdly. The pope fails to furnish miraculous credentials of his inspiration.

We have seen that infallibility is grounded in inspiration; that the claim to inspiration behooves to be supported by miraculous proofs; consequently as the pope claims to be infallible, and therefore inspired, it is necessary that he produce miraculous credentials of pretensions so extraordinary. Let us attend to the exact state of the question. It is not now whether the Church of Rome can furnish miracles in attestation of her infallible authority. The great Vatican Council has consigned that to the limbo of dead questions. It must be insisted upon that the question is whether the pope can furnish miraculous proofs of *his* inspiration and consequent infallibility.

Even if the reputed miracles of Rome could be adduced in favor of the pope's claims, they would fail to prove anything. Such miracles as the visits of the Virgin Mary to her votaries, the weeping of statues of the Virgin, the healing of pilgrims at certain sacred shrines, the recovery of the diseased or maimed by the application to them of relics of saints, the liquefaction of the blood of St. Januarius, and the like, are all impeachable. It would not require the ingenuity of the rationalist to explain them upon natural principles. They are all — to use no stronger terms — palpably

inadequate to substantiate a claim to inspiration. Nor could it be pleaded that these *past* miracles were capable of being adduced in support of the infallibility of *past* popes. Who can show that they were ever used for that specific purpose? Much less, then, it is needless to say, can they be alleged to support the claim of infallibility by a present pope. How, it may be asked, could these past miraculous credentials be advanced in attestation of a papal infallibility which was first declared in dogmatic form by a council which convened in 1870? What an extraordinary prolepsis! And if it be said that these miracles continue to occur *now*, and therefore may be appealed to in support of the claim made for the pope *now*, one craves to know what extraordinary cause has operated to produce so astonishing a change in their evidential office. Formerly they proved the infallible authority of the church in general; now they prove the inspiration and infallibility of the pope in particular!

No. The pope must have new miracles specially designed to prove *his* inspiration and infallibility. Where are they? This is a snap judgment, it may be urged; the pope may yet work miracles. To this I answer: If he could have wrought miracles, if he could have raised the dead, he would have done so. The fact that he has not done so, proves that he cannot, and therefore that he never will. Pio Nono never did; if Leo XIII. is not quick about it, he will soon be in the same category.

The conclusion is that the pope fails to furnish miraculous credentials of his claim to inspiration, and, therefore, he is not infallible.

It remains to say a few words concerning the connec-

tion between the infallibility of the pope and the rule of faith and duty — the topic under discussion. The connection is plain. The exposition of a law by a supreme court is the law. The pope is the infallible and supreme judge of the meaning of Scripture and tradition, which together constitute the rule. The sense, therefore, which the pope puts into Scripture and tradition is the ultimate rule of faith and duty to the Church of Rome.

APPENDIX TO THE DISCUSSION OF ROMANISM:

On the Destiny of the Church of Rome.

The preceding argument dealt with the question of the Romanist rule of faith and duty as logically pertinent to the department of Introductory Theology, which is under treatment. Some additional remarks, by way of an appendix, of the nature of a digression, will be made in regard to the predicted doom of the apostate system of Rome.

I. Some preliminary questions must be attended to, so as to ensure clearness. The place of the Church of Rome in prophecy must be ascertained.

1. There is some difference of opinion as to the propriety of applying the terms *Antichrist* and *Antichristian* to Rome. Any doctrine or system which is definitely opposed to Christ and Christianity is antichristian, and any power which maintains that attitude is Antichrist. The Apostle John says that there were many antichrists in his time. No one system, therefore,

can be regarded as exclusively antichristian, and no one power can properly be denominated the only Antichrist. Some have been prominent at certain periods, and others at others. For centuries past two apostate powers have been entitled to this "bad eminence"—Mohammedanism and popery. In Christendom the papal power has been predominantly antichristian. Infidelity, although antichristian, has not the consolidated unity, the organized resources and the aggressive vigor of the papacy. It is idle for any Protestant, on the ground of its nominal adhesion to Christianity, to deny that the Church of Rome is antichristian. The reformers, Continental and British, had no such scruples; and, as the infallible pope is now officially declared and recognized to be the head and front — the exponent and representative of that church — it is equally idle for him to deny that the pope is Antichrist. So far for the present. But listening to prophecy, we learn that before the close of this ante-millennial period, another power will arise — Daniel's wilful king — who, after first supporting, will destroy the papal system as such, absorb it into his own gigantic imperialism, and arrogating to himself universal secular and ecclesiastical supremacy, will strike a last desperate blow at the existence of the true Christian religion before the mediatorial Sovereign shall introduce his millennial reign. This, I take it, will be the final and consummate development of Antichrist before the millennium.

2. The Church of Rome is the "little horn" of Daniel, and the "two-horned beast" of the Apocalypse; for, first, Daniel declares that the saints of God would be delivered

into the hands of the power designated by the little horn arising out of the Roman beast. This matches the Roman Catholic power, for the reasons that it sprung from the old Roman dominion, and it was the power into the hands of which the saints were delivered, when, by imperial decree, the bishop of Rome was made bishop of bishops and supreme head of the church. Secondly, John, in Revelation, predicts that the two-horned beast should spring up among the ten horns of the Roman beast — that is, the ten kingdoms into which the Roman empire was divided; and there is no other power to which this symbolic description is applicable but the papal.

It need occasion no difficulty that two apparently discrepant symbols are employed, the one pointing to unity, the other to duality. It is one and the same power which manifests itself in two great forms. What the two forms indicated in the prophecy are, I undertake not to say. Some commentators take them to be the papal secular and regular clergy. It may be that they are the temporal and the spiritual power claimed by Rome. These two, by Romanists themselves, are held to be complementary to each other and indissolubly united, so that it is argued that the maintenance of the spiritual power is suspended upon the preservation of the temporal. This grounds the urgent call to the adherents of the pope, now that his temporal power is either destroyed or badly impaired, to make every effort to restore that power to the head of the church and rightful ruler of the world.¹ And this may yet lead on to a

¹ "Rector Orbis."

conflict the bitterness and the extent of which no one can estimate, except from the apocalyptic prediction of that struggle of the nations, which is to ultimate in the fateful battle of Armageddon, in the great day of God Almighty.

While this subject is before us, it may be well to point out a distinction, sometimes overlooked, between the temporal sovereignty of the pope — over the city of Rome and the Papal States; his temporal supremacy — over princes, kings and nations; and his spiritual supremacy — over the church as a spiritual organization. It is evident that the first two of these kinds of power come under the denomination *temporal*, and that the division temporal and spiritual exhausts the notion of papal power.

3. The Church of Rome alone answers to the fearful prophetic portraiture of “the Man of Sin,” of “the Mystery of Iniquity,” of “that Wicked,” given by Paul in Thessalonians and by John in Revelation. It sat for that picture. It is conceded by both Romanists and Protestants that Rome was thus prophetically delineated. Now, either pagan Rome or ecclesiastical Rome was intended. There was no other power future to the seer of Patmos and the apostle to the Gentiles to which the description could apply. We must elect between pagan and papal Rome. Pagan Rome is out of the question; for —

First. There was no mystery to Paul and John in pagan Rome. Her antichristian policy and methods were open and above-board. She was the avowed enemy of the Christian church. She announced herself the

truculent butcher of Christians; and the undisguised determination to extirpate them from the earth was ferociously and relentlessly pursued, until her inability to annihilate the immortal stood confessed. What mystery was there in all this?

Secondly. What power hindered the development of pagan Rome? She had already developed into the mistress of the known world. What obstacle stood in the way of her power? But Paul said that there was a hindrance to the development of the Mystery of Iniquity of which he wrote, and a hindrance that would continue to operate until taken out of the way. This consideration is in itself conclusive.

Thirdly. Paul says, "Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come except there come a falling away [an apostasy] first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition," etc. How could the apostle have conditioned the coming of the pagan Roman ascendancy upon a falling away or apostasy yet future in his day? Had not pagan Rome already come? Falling away or apostasy supposes the truth of Christianity previously held. When did pagan Rome ever hold the truth of Christianity and apostatize from it?

Further, the apostle says that this coming power would sit in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God. When did pagan Rome ever sit in the church of Christ, or sit in any Christian edifice?

Fourthly. John, in the Apocalypse, describes the destruction of this power, with the name *Mystery* written upon its front, as to occur in the far distant future, just preceding the dawn of the millennial period. Was

this true of pagan Rome, which was overthrown but a few centuries after John wrote? Could it possibly have been true of a power which *we*, who have not yet desecrated the faint day-spring of the millennial morning, know to have been destroyed about sixteen centuries ago?

These considerations suffice to show that Paul and John were not portraying pagan Rome in those awful pictures in Thessalonians and Revelation.

As there were only two possible suppositions in the case, and the first has been destroyed, it follows that the second is established — that Paul and John characterized papal Rome; and I shall do no more than cite the striking and eloquent words of Canon Wordsworth, of the English Church, upon the point. “*Heathen Rome persecuting the church,*” says he, “was no mystery. But a *Christian church*, calling herself the Mother of Christendom, and yet drunken with the blood of the saints — this is indeed a *mystery*. A *Christian church*, boasting herself the Bride, and *being* the Harlot; styling herself Sion, and being Babylon — this is indeed a *mystery*. A *mystery* indeed it is, that when *she* says to all, ‘Come unto me,’ the voice from *heaven* should cry, ‘Come out of her, my people.’ A *mystery* indeed it is, that she who boasts her sanctity should become the habitation of devils: that she who claims to be infallible should be said to corrupt the earth; that a self-named Mother of Churches should be called by the Spirit the Mother of Abominations; that she who boasts to be indefectible should in one day be destroyed, and that apostles should rejoice at her fall; that she who holds, as she says, in her hands the keys of heaven should be cast into the lake

of fire by Him who has the keys of hell. All this, in truth, is a great and awful mystery." ¹

4. The Church of Rome is the *woman* of the Apocalypse, the mother of harlots, drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus, the persecutor of another woman — the true church of Christ that fled into the wilderness from her pursuit.

That the Church of Rome is this woman is evident.

First. She is said to sit upon many waters — that is, to be enthroned upon multitudes of peoples and nations, as the symbol is expressly interpreted in Revelation. This is true of the Church of Rome.

Second. She is represented as sitting "upon a scarlet colored beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns." This points as with the finger to the Roman power which supported the woman. There are two beasts symbolized in prophecy — the Roman secular power and the papal power; the great beast of Daniel and the Apocalypse, and the two-horned beast, Daniel's little horn. It is the latter, which in the diversification of the symbols is characterized as the apostate woman. Now what ecclesiastical power has been supported by the Roman secular power save the Church of Rome?

Thirdly. The woman is pictured as holding in her hand a golden cup "full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication," with which she intoxicates the nations. The Church of Rome requires men to surrender their reason and conscience to her will. "And then she pours into their minds a delirious draught of strange

¹ *On the Apocalypse*, pp. 307, 308.

doctrines, with which she makes their heads dizzy, and their eyes to swim, and their feet to stagger; and this swoonlike phrensy she calls Faith."

The woman entices "the kings of the earth to commit fornication with her," and they are said to "give their power and strength to the beast." "These words are strikingly characteristic of papal Rome. She has trafficked and tampered with all the kings and nations of the earth. . . . She has caressed and cajoled them with amatory gifts of flowers, pictures and trinkets, beads and relics, crucifixes, and *Agnus Deis*, and consecrated plumes and banners. She has drenched and drugged their senses with love-potions of bewitching smiles and fascinating words; and has thus beguiled them of their faith, their courage, and their power. Like another Delilah, she has made the Samsons of this world to sleep softly in her lap. She has then shorn them of their strength. And she has captivated, and still captivates, the affections of their prelates and clergy, by entangling them in the strong and subtle meshes of oaths of vassalage to herself, and has thus stolen the hearts of subjects from their sovereigns, and has made kingdoms to hang upon her lips for the loyalty of their people; and so, in her dream of universal empire, she has made the world a fief of Rome. Yes, . . . and such is the spell with which she still enchains nations, that even they who are excommunicated by her, and whose heroic Virgin-Queen [Elizabeth] was anathematized by her as an usurper, and whose land is now partitioned out into papal dioceses, as if it were a Roman province, and the names of whose greatest cities are given away by her as if they

were Italian villages, are fain to seek intercourse with her without requiring any retraction of the unrighteous oaths which she imposes on English subjects, or any revocation of the imprecatory anathemas which she has denounced on English sovereigns; and as if it were possible for us to sever what she declares indissolubly united — her temporal and spiritual sway.”

The development of facts has lent far greater emphasis to these solemn and impressive words of Canon Wordsworth than when he wrote them; and much of what he said of England applies with redoubled force to the United States of America. No sagacity is requisite to perceive that the intention of Rome is to grasp the sovereignty of this once highly-favored Protestant land. And why not, since the pope, as she claims, is the infallible monarch of the world?

Fourthly. The woman is represented as “arrayed in purple and scarlet color, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls.” “Let us now inquire,” says Dr. Wordsworth, “whether this description is applicable to the Church of Rome. With this view let us refer — not to any private sources — but to the authorized *Book of Sacred Ceremonies* of the Church of Rome.

“This book, sometimes called *Ceremoniale Romanum*, is written in Latin, and was compiled three hundred and thirty years ago by Marcellus, a Roman Catholic Archbishop, and is dedicated to Pope Leo X. Let us turn to that portion of this volume which describes the first public appearance of the pope, on his election to the pontificate.

“We there read the following order of proceeding,

'The pontiff elect is conducted to the sacrarium, and divested of his ordinary attire, and is clad in the papal robes.' The color of these is then minutely described. Suffice it to say, that five different articles of dress, in which he is then arrayed, are *scarlet*. Another vest is specified, and this is covered with *pearls*. His mitre is then mentioned, and this is adorned with *gold* and *precious stones*.

"Such, then, is the dress in which the pope is arrayed, *as pope*, and in which he *first* appears, *as such*. Refer now to the Apocalypse. We have seen that *scarlet*, *pearls*, *gold*, and *precious stones* are thrice specified by St. John as characterizing the mysterious power portrayed by himself."

Behold the vesture of the Church of Rome in the person of her head! Who does not recognize the reality represented by the apocalyptic picture?

Fifthly. The woman is dreadfully characterized as "the mother of abominations." The term *abominations* has especial, but not, I think, exclusive, reference to idolatrous practices in connection with the worship of God. The idolatrous doctrines, rites and images, together with the moral iniquities, enforced, necessitated and actualized by the Church of Rome, entitle this vaunted "mother of churches" to the frightful designation of the "mother of abominations."

Sixthly. The woman is said to be "drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus." Of course, the applicability of this picture to the Church of Rome is vehemently denied by her own theologians. I shall not enter into a discussion with

them on this point. One feels that he would degrade his intelligence by descending into that arena. Powerful as the Church of Rome is, she cannot manufacture history. She may if facts are against her cry, with the infallibilists of the Vatican Council, "so much the worse for the facts!" But the facts will not down at her bidding. Did Protestants not know when their fellow-Protestants were tortured and butchered by her? Was the story of the persecutions of the Albigenses and Waldenses a mere myth? Was Cromwell's message to the Duke of Savoy and the pope, warning them to desist from their resolution to attack the Vaudois Protestants, or England would have something to say about it, a conjured up fancy? Were the burnings of Cranmer and Bradford, Ridley and Latimer, Lambert and others incidents in a blood-curdling novel? Was the invasion of the Dutch by the Duke of Alva a got-up sensational romance of Mr. Motley? Was the dragooning of the French Huguenots an illusion? Was Mr. Quick dreaming when he states that there were 200,000 Huguenot martyrs in the space of a decade, and furnishes the figures church by church? If so, was it also a dream that a people, by no means migratory, but wedded to their dear, native soil, fled by thousands from their "beautiful France," to seek an asylum in foreign lands? If that was a dream, what of their descendants, now around me as I write, bearing with them the ineffaceable traditions and the written records of papal persecution? No. It is no legend, it is history, that millions of Protestants have fallen under the sword of Rome, or

have tasted the tender mercies of her "holy office" of the Inquisition more cruel than the grave.

This is a false indictment, exclaims the Romanist; the church did not put heretics to death, she handed them over to the "secular arm" to be executed. The secular arm of what body? Was Bellarmin utterly mistaken when he elaborately argued to prove that the state is subject to the church? If he was not mistaken, was the civil power not the obedient subject of the church in discharging the duty, laid upon it by ecclesiastical authority, of executing Protestant heretics? Either Rome must deny her own doctrine that the state is subject to the church, or admit that the "secular arm" executed the mandates of the church.

The "secular arm" was it? What meant, then, the personal presidency of Torquemada and Ximenes and other inquisitors over courts, which condemned heretics to a torture and a death which they witnessed with a serene composure, that sprung from the conscientious conviction (!) that they were doing God service?

The "secular arm"? What, then, signified the processions of priests who followed the poor creatures to their martyrdom at the stake, and glutted their eyes with the spectacle of their dying agonies?

It is a most amazing fact that the descendants of ancestors, who felt the merciless cruelty of Rome, now listen with innocent gullibility to the pacific and charitable effusions of popish ecclesiastics. We are confidently assured by Protestants in high places that Rome is relaxing her rigor, that she is modifying her prin-

ciples and liberalizing her policy! Liberalize her policy to extend her influence she may for a time; but that she will modify her principles — never! Should she so increase in numbers and civil power as to render charity no longer either necessary or desirable, she will contract her liberalizing policy within the narrow lines of her bloody principles.

Which, then, shall be credited, her evanescent phrases, or her iron-clad tenets? Which shall be believed, the milk and water flattery of her orators, or the damning execrations of her catechisms?

Look you upon that picture, painted by the hand of the apocalyptic seer, of a woman arrayed in scarlet, sitting upon a scarlet colored beast, drunken with the blood of the saints, and holding out in her hand the cup of her sorceries to the enchanted and deluded nations? It is the Church of Rome.

5. The Church of Rome is the *Babylon* of the Apocalypse. Romanists labor to show that this characterization applies to pagan Rome, and not to papal Rome. Some argument has already been submitted going to show that the prophecies of Daniel, of Paul, and of John in Revelation cannot be interpreted of pagan Rome. Further argument will now be employed in the same general direction, but with special reference to the epithet *Babylon*; and I will attempt upon this question to do little more than briefly to present proofs furnished by others, especially the learned writer already cited upon other points, Dr. Wordsworth, formerly Canon of Westminster, whose discussion upon this point appears to me eminently cogent and convincing. And this is

done the more readily, in view of the fact that he was an Anglican High Churchman, who seemed desirous of avoiding the reproach of holding Puritan views.

First. It has previously been shown that the woman so fearfully described in the Apocalypse is none other than the Church of Rome. But this woman is by John expressly called Babylon. After picturing the woman as sitting upon a scarlet colored beast, and arrayed in purple and scarlet color, etc., he says, "And upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT." It is only necessary to put the two things together in order to deduce the consequence that the Church of Rome is Babylon.

Secondly. Christian fathers who wrote before the destruction of the pagan Roman empire applied the prophetic designation *Babylon* to Rome, and to a Roman power which would succeed pagan Rome.

"Irenæus interpreted the prophecies of St. John, concerning the woman on the seven hills, the woman which *reigneth*, the woman which is 'Babylon, the mother of fornications,' of no other city than *Rome*; and, we might add, he did not apply them to *pagan Rome*, for he expressly says that the antichristian power represented by that name *was not yet come.*"¹

"The most learned of the Christian fathers of the Latin Church of that age was Tertullian. He affirms that the Christians of his day *pray* for the duration of the Roman empire.² And why? Because its fall would be marked by the rise of an antichristian power. And

¹ S. Iren., V. 30.

² Tertull. Apol. c. 32.

in two places of his works he uses these words, 'Names are employed by us as signs. Thus, Samaria is a sign of idolatry, Egypt is a symbol of malediction, and, in like manner, in the writings of our own St. John, *Babylon* is a figure of the Roman city, mighty, proud of its sway, and fiercely persecuting the saints.' "

Thirdly. "All the ancient expositors agree in identifying these prophecies with *some heretical church*. And though the destruction of *heathen Rome* was a most striking event, yet not a single witness of *any antiquity* can be cited in favor of the exposition of Bossuet and his co-religionists, which sees a *fulfilment* of the predictions of the Apocalypse concerning the destruction of Babylon in the fall of *heathen Rome*." "Pitmasius, Bede, Haymo, Aquinas and Ambrosius Ansbertus, who lived either *before* the corruptions of Rome became flagrant, or wrote under her influence, generalize some of these predictions into denunciations against heresy; but *not one of them* supposed them to have been fulfilled in *heathen Rome*." "Indeed, that exposition is a very *modern* one; it is an afterthought; and has been devised by Bossuet and others to meet the other, which they call the *Protestant* interpretation. In a word, the identification of the apocalyptic Babylon with *ancient heathen Rome* is an invention of *modern papal Rome*."

Fourthly. Allow that the apocalyptic prophecies "*were* believed by some of the early Christians to be consummated in *heathen Rome* — which is not the case; then what follows? Some few Christians are instructed by them; and observe, instructed to do *what?* To avoid the idolatry of *heathen Rome*. Not to sacrifice

to Jupiter! Not to burn incense to the statue of the Roman emperor! What! Did they need a new prophecy from Patmos to teach them *that*? St. Peter and St. Paul had done this. All the apostolic martyrs had done this. The Apocalypse was not necessary to save them from apostasy [to paganism]. No; with reverence be it said, here was *no* worthy crisis for the intervention of the Holy Spirit of God.

“But now change the hypothesis. Suppose Babylon to be, not a *pagan city*, but a *corrupt church*, such, alas! as Rome is. Then all is clear. Here is a *new form* of evil. Spiritual idolatry; an antichrist sitting in the church. And such an antichrist; one clothed as an angel of light. Teaching error disguised as truth. Hiding deadly corruptions under the fair forms of antiquity, sanctity, unity, and universality. A harlot claiming to be the bride. Babylon professing to be Sion. An antichrist pretending zeal for Christ, and gilding all his sins with the glorious name of Christ. Here is a strong delusion, one that may ensnare the world. Here is a fit occasion, an urgent exigency for the interference of the Holy Ghost. Here is a most profitable exercise of his divine office of prophecy, guidance, and warning to the church. Behold here a fit mission for the Comforter!

“And, *if* such a corrupt church as we have now described has at any time existed, and has continued to exist for many centuries, and does now exist in the world; yes, has so existed, and does still exist, at *Rome*: and if the apocalyptic Babylon is confessed on all hands to be the city of Rome, then we here see a conclusive

proof that the Babylon of the apocalypse is not only the Roman *city*, but the Roman *Church*."

Fourthly. The woman, called a Harlot and Babylon the Great, is represented as sitting upon — governing and supported by — a beast having ten horns bearing crowns, which are ten kingdoms. Now, when was this ever true of pagan Rome, the fall of which antedated the rise of the ten kingdoms? But it *was* true of the papal church. "The European kingdoms which arose at the dissolution of the Roman empire did surrender themselves to the dominion of the *Church* of Rome. Italy, Switzerland, Germany, Poland, Hungary, France, Belgium, Spain, Portugal, and . . . England, for many centuries, were subject to the papacy." We thus have another proof that the Babylon of the Apocalypse is the Church of Rome.

Fifthly. We are astonished by the further prophecy that these ten kingdoms will at last destroy the power they had supported. Now what is that designated power which is to be destroyed by them? Let us hear the apocalypticist. "And the ten horns which thou sawest upon the beast, these shall hate *the whore*,¹ and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh and burn her with fire. For God hath put in their hearts to fulfil his will, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled." It is needful to keep in mind the distinction already signalized between the great ten-horned secular beast and the two-horned ecclesiastical beast. It is certain that the ten kingdoms did not destroy pagan Rome, for they

¹ We have seen that the harlot is the Church of Rome.

arose after it had been destroyed. It remains that they will destroy the only other Rome, namely, papal Rome.

Sixthly. Hear again the words of the prophecy, "Babylon the Great is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and the cage of every unclean and hateful bird." The Romanists who contend that the Babylon of the Apocalypse was heathen Rome, must admit that papal Rome, on the very site of pagan, is "the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and the cage of every unclean and hateful bird!" Will they face the consequence? If they do, they are self-condemned. If they do not, papal Rome is the Babylon yet to fall.

"Nearly eighteen centuries," eloquently says Dr. Wordsworth, "have now passed away, since the Holy Spirit declared, by the mouth of St. John to the church, that this mystery would be revealed in that city which was then the queen of the earth, the city on seven hills — the city of Rome.

"The mystery was then dark as midnight. Man's eye could not pierce the gloom. The fulfilment of the prophecy seemed improbable, almost impossible. Age after age rolled away. The mist which hung over it became less thick. The clouds began to break. Some features of the dark mystery began to appear, dimly at first, then more clearly, like mountains at daybreak. Then the form of the mystery became more and more distinct. The seven hills and the woman sitting upon them became more visible. Her voice was heard. Strange sounds of blasphemy were muttered by her. Then they became louder and louder. And the golden

chalice in her hand, her scarlet attire, her pearls and jewels, glittered in the sun. Kings and nations were seen prostrate at her feet, and drinking her cup. Saints were slain by her power. And now the prophecy became clear, clear as noonday; and we tremble with awe at the sight, while the eye reads the inscription emblazoned in large letters, 'MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT,' written by the hand of St. John, guided by the Spirit of God, on the forehead of the CHURCH OF ROME."

II. The place of the Church of Rome in prophecy having been determined, the way is open for considering the question of her destiny. This question will be treated under two heads: (1) The *fact* of her destruction. (2) The *time* of its occurrence.

1. The *fact*. Our appeal upon this subject must be to the prophecies of Scripture. We have seen that the Church of Rome is described in prophecy as the "little horn" of Daniel that sprang up from the great Roman beast, or the two-horned beast of Revelation; as the mystery of iniquity (or lawlessness) culminating in that wicked one; as the woman sitting upon a scarlet-colored beast, arrayed in purple and scarlet color, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication; and as Babylon the Great. To prove, then, that the power thus characterized will be destroyed, is to prove that the Church of Rome will be destroyed. The proof will consist in a simple recital of the prophecies which assert the fact.

The papal power described as a beast will be destroyed. Daniel says, "Then I would know the truth of the fourth

beast,¹ which was diverse from all the others, exceeding dreadful, whose teeth were of iron, and his nails of brass; which devoured, brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with his feet; and of the ten horns that were in his head, and of the other which came up, and before whom three fell; even of that horn that had eyes, and a mouth that spake very great things, whose look was more stout than his fellows. I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them; until the Ancient of days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the Most High; and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom. Thus he said, The fourth beast shall be the fourth kingdom upon earth, which shall be diverse from all kingdoms, and shall devour the whole earth, and shall tread it down, and break it in pieces. And the ten horns out of this kingdom are ten kings that shall arise: and another shall rise after them; and he shall be diverse from the first, and he shall subdue three kings. And he shall speak great words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time.² But the judgment shall sit, and *they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end.*"³

John says, "And the fifth angel poured out his vial upon the seat of *the beast*; and his kingdom was full of darkness; and they gnawed their tongues for pain."⁴

¹ Conceded to be the Roman Empire.

² That is, after the saints shall be given into his hand—1260 years.

³ Dan. vii. 19–26.

⁴ Rev. xvi., x.

This is the first instalment of Rome's destruction. The sixth angel pours out his vial upon the great river Euphrates, which, without dogmatizing, I suppose to symbolize Rome's twin apostate power — Mohammedanism; and then the vial of the seventh (and last) angel completes the destruction of the papal power.

Paul declares the destruction of the papal power, "For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way. And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming."¹ John utters the same prediction with reference to the woman upon whose forehead was written the name MYSTERY.²

John says of the woman, the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth, "And the ten horns which thou sawest upon the beast, these shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire."³

A graphic and awful description of the destruction of the Church of Rome as *Babylon* is given in the eighteenth and nineteenth chapters of Revelation. It is like a sublime and passionate piece of music, which opens with the prelude, "Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen," moves on with the solemn notes of a most mournful dirge in which all the adherents and admirers of Rome blend their doleful lamentations, and closes with a choral burst of rapturous joy from apostles and prophets, martyrs and the whole church triumphant, the refrain of which is, "Alleluia; salvation, and glory, and honor,

¹ 2 Thess. ii. 7, 8.² Rev. xvii.³ Rev. xvii. 16.

and power, unto the Lord our God: for true and righteous are his judgments: for he hath judged the great whore, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand. Alleluia!"

"And her smoke rose up forever and ever."

Having settled the point that the prophecies plainly predict the *fact* that the Church of Rome will be destroyed, and destroyed in an awful manner, we are prepared to consider the last aspect of the subject.

2. The *time* of its destruction.

(1) The question is a difficult one, and I desire to write in relation to it, not with peremptory dogmatism, but with humility and sobriety; but, at the same time, with such firmness of belief in the conclusions reached as is consistent with the confessed fallibility of human judgment.

(2) I pause not to discuss the non-chronological hypothesis, which is that the times indicated in the prophecies are incalculable. The hypothesis is utterly untenable, because it strips the prophecies of all definite meaning and envelops them in a fog of vagueness and pointless uncertainty, and also because some of the times designated, when looked at from a chronological point of view, have, so far as they have borne upon the past, been marked by an extraordinary precision. We are justified in holding that the same will be true respecting the times of the present and the future.

(3) This discussion is not directly concerned about the question whether there will be a millennium, a definite future period marked off from previous periods by

characteristic features, although I strenuously contend that there will be such a period; nor with the question whether the second advent of Christ will be pre-millennial or post-millennial, although I strongly lean to the belief that it will be post-millennial, and what I may say will receive its complexion from that belief. If, as some pre-millennialists hold, the prophecies declare that the second, visible, glorious coming of the Lord Jesus will take place before the introduction of the millennium, when he will raise and judge the righteous dead, one would be restrained from attempting to fix that time by the words which he himself spoke, "But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father." If it was not given to the Son to reveal it, it is not supposable that it was given to Daniel and John to reveal it. It is, I conceive, vain for the pre-millennialist to say that those words exclude the knowledge of the day or the hour, but not of the year. But disposed as I am to hold that the Christian *dispensation* is to be regarded as consisting of two *periods*, the one closing at the introduction of the millennium, the other beginning at that time and lasting to the end of the world, I can see no restrictive bearing of the Saviour's words on an attempt to forecast the predicted termination of this present ante-millennial period, and the time when the papal power will be destroyed. Without positively asserting the view I maintain in regard to the matter, it seems to me the sense of Scripture that our Lord will *come* to close the present period, and bring on his millennial reign, but that that coming will not be his second

glorious advent. The prophecies of Daniel and John speak very definitely of the times to elapse until the end of this period. The 1260 days (years), the forty and two months, and the time, times, and the dividing of time, must designate particular sections of time; and a blessing is pronounced upon him who reads and understands the prophecies which emphasize them.

4. The canonical authority of the Apocalypse is assumed; not only because that question has been settled by the church, but because it is evident that the Apostle John acknowledged his authorship of the book, for there is nothing to prove that it was issued after his death; and because its divine origin is conclusively shown by the fulfilment of some of its predictions — predictions, the accomplishment of which no uninspired mind could possibly have foreseen.

5. Two things deserve especial notice in regard to the prophecies. The first is, that sometimes they predict the rise and development of the papal system up to the time when it claimed supremacy, and that they sometimes describe its progress subsequently to that point. The second is, that when the end of the papal power is predicted, it is not to be inferred that its *full* end comes all at once; the destruction will *begin* at a definite time, but there is "the time of the end" during which it will be carried on to completion, which *complete* destruction will also occur at a definite time.

6. What is called the "year-day" theory is here accepted — that is, that the day of prophecy is ordinarily to be understood as a year. Thus the emphatic period of 1260 days is to be construed as a period of 1260 years.

This theory of computation has been so generally adopted since the Reformation that but few writers take the trouble to prove it. The following proof furnished by George Stanley Faber, in his able *Dissertation on the Prophecies*, appears to me conclusive, "That *days* mean *years* may, I think, be proved, so far as matters of this nature are capable of proof, from the writings even of Daniel and St. John themselves. We may venture to assume that the same mode of computation which is used by these writers in one passage will be used by them in all other passages, at least in all those which are marked by the common feature of treating, not of the fate of individuals, but of the fortune of communities. Hence, if any of their numerical prophecies be *already* accomplished, we shall thereby have a clue for ascertaining the proper method of interpreting all the rest. Upon these principles, when we find that Daniel's famous prophecy of the seventy *weeks* has been proved by the event of our Lord's advent to speak of seventy *weeks of years*, or 490 years, we may infer that his three years and a half mean years of years, and that his 2300, 1290, and 1335 *days mean the same number of natural years*. In a similar manner, finding equally from the event that *the ten days' persecution of the church of Smyrna mean the ten years' persecution carried on by Diocletian*, that *the five months' ravages of the Saracenic locusts mean 150 years*, and that *the year, the month, the day, and the hour of the Euphratean horsemen mean 391 years and 15 days*; we may thence infer that St. John's *three years and a half* are years of years; his *42 months, months of years*; and his *1260 days*, and his *three days and a half*, the

same number of natural years. But we find that *the three years and a half, the 42 months, and the 1260 days,* are all plainly descriptive of one and the same period.”¹

7. The next question is in regard to the *duration* of the papal power. Commentators are very generally agreed, and I see no reason to dissent from them, that it will continue for the period denominated variously as 1260 days (years), forty-two months, and a time, times, and half a time. The forty-two months, prophetically computed, is 1260 years. The three times and a half are the same period; for reckoning a month as 30 days, the prophetic month is 30 years. Then, $30 \times 42 = 1260$. Computing a time as a prophetic period of 360 years, then, $360 + 720 + 180 = 1260$. Papal Rome, therefore, according to this view will last for 1260 years.

8. The most difficult question to decide is, when did this period begin — what is its *terminus a quo*? If this could be determined, the time when the Church of Rome will be destroyed, or begin to be destroyed, would be a matter simply of arithmetical calculation.

Concerning this question I desire to speak without dogmatic positiveness, and to use probable arguments. Yet probabilities may be so strong as to amount almost to certainty.

I shall endeavor to show by probable arguments that the 1260 years of the career of papal Rome began in the early part of the seventh century of the Christian era.

First. It would seem clear — and upon this point expositors are so generally agreed that argument is deemed useless — that the beginning of the 1260 years

¹ Vol. I., p. 25.

was when the saints of the Most High were given into the hand of the little horn that should arise from among the ten horns of the great secular Roman beast — that is, were given into the hand of papal Rome. “And they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time.” (Dan. vii. 25.) This is sufficiently plain. Papal Rome would persecute the saints for 1260 years from the time when its power to persecute would begin. From that time, the woman, the true church of Christ, fled into the wilderness, and from that time the witnesses commenced to prophesy in sackcloth.

Secondly. This could not have happened *before* the beginning of the seventh century. The proof of this position may be safely rested upon a single, but most significant circumstance. Pope Gregory I., commonly called the Great, died in 604. But he, as we have seen, utterly repudiated the title of universal bishop. “I confidently affirm,” said he, “that whosoever calls himself universal bishop, or desires to be so called, in the pride of his heart, is the forerunner of Antichrist.” How could the bishop of Rome have had the power to persecute the saints of the Most High, if he were not universal bishop? And this also settles the question whether the beginning of papal supremacy is to be dated from the previous decree of Justinian conferring upon the bishop of Rome the title of head of all the churches. If Gregory, who lived subsequently, did not acknowledge the title, of what earthly force was it? It had no practical influence. This ought to be enough, but events have decided the question. From 533 or 534, the date of Justinian’s decree, 1260 years would bring us to 1793

or 1794, when nothing occurred to show that the papal power had received a death-blow. These considerations prove that the 1260 years of papal supremacy could not have begun *before* the commencement of the seventh century.

Thirdly. The first argument that will be presented in favor of the beginning of the 1260 years of the papal career in the early part of the seventh century is derived from the parallel case of Mohammedanism.

We know from history that Mohammed was born in the year 570; that he went into the cave of Hera to ex-cogitate his system in 606; that he began to teach his religious tenets privately from 608–610, and to broach them more publicly in 614; and that the Hegira or his withdrawal from Mecca to Medina occurred July 15th or 16th, 622, from which date the Mohammedan calendar begins, as the Christian does from the birth of Christ.

The arguments of Mr. Faber appear to me convincing, that the little horn of *the he-goat* is neither Antiochus Epiphanes, nor the great Roman beast, and consequently not the papal little horn, but a religious power which sprang up from the ruins of one of the four kingdoms into which the empire of Alexander the Great was divided, and that power was Mohammedanism. No other exposition accords with the numbers of Daniel, or the facts of history.

I concur with Mr. Faber, also, in taking the ram standing by the river to have been, not Rome, as some untenably hold, but the Medo-Persian empire, the lesser horn symbolizing the Median, and the greater the Per-

sian power. Alexander was the he-goat, with a notable horn between his eyes, that came from the west on the face of the whole earth, and touched not the ground (so swift were his movements), and ran unto the ram in the fury of his power, smote him and brake his two horns. But when the he-goat waxed very great, and was strong, the great horn was broken; and for it came up four notable ones toward the four winds of heaven. Out of one of these came forth a little horn. Was not Mohammedanism little, like the papal horn, in its incipency? But the little horn waxed exceeding great, toward the south, and toward the east, and toward the pleasant land. All this was true of Mohammedanism. This was the power that is characterized by Daniel as the transgression of desolation (or the desolating transgression), which removed the daily sacrifice by reason of transgression — that is, in all probability, by reason of the defection of Christians from the true worship of God — and gave both the sanctuary and the host to be trodden under foot. *This* abomination of desolation could not, on chronological grounds, be possibly supposed to have been the *Roman* profanation of the temple at Jerusalem. The latter cannot be adjusted to the prophetic numbers touching the future.

“The king,” says Mr. Faber, “or kingdom, symbolized by the little horn, was to stand up at the end of the four Greek kingdoms, and out of one of them. We may here note the different manner in which *the two little horns* are introduced. *The papal horn* was to arise among *the ten horns of the Roman beast*, and to be contemporary with them; *the Mohammedan horn* was to come up out

of the ruins of *one of the four Greek horns of the Macedonian beast*, as *they four* had arisen out of the ruins of *the one great imperial horn*, and not to be contemporary with any of them, for it was to stand up at the end of their kingdom. Such, accordingly, was the event. When *all the four Greek kingdoms* had come to their end, *the religion of Mohammed* made its appearance, agreeably to the prediction, in the year 606, at the beginning of *the 1260 years* during which it was to flourish contemporaneously with *the papacy*. Mecca was the first theatre of its actions: but in a very short period of time after its rise, it invaded Syria, and thus accomplished its prophetic character of being a little horn of one of the four subverted horns of the he-goat.

“The first war between the Saracens and the Romans took place in the year 629 and 630; and between the years 632 and 639 the whole of Syria was conquered by them. (*Hist. Decline and Fall*, Vol. IX., pp. 312, 379–421.) Dr. Zouch, in his work on Prophecy, objects that *the little horn of the he-goat* cannot be Mohammed (Mr. Whitaker, whom he is opposing, ought rather to have said Mohammedism, for a horn, in the language of symbols, does not mean *an individual*, but *a power*) because that impostor sprung up in Arabia, which was never subject to *the Syrian horn*; whereas *the little horn* was to come out of *one of the four notable ones of the he-goat*. Hence he prefers the interpretation of Sir Isaac and Bishop Newton, and supposes with them that *the little horn is the Roman power*, which first penetrated into the East by way of *Macedon*, one of the four horns or kingdoms of the Greek empire. When Dr.

Zouch made this objection, he certainly was not aware that it applies with equal force to his own system, as to that which supposes *Mohammedism* to be the *little horn*. *The Roman power* sprung up no more within the territories of *any of the four Greek horns* at its first rise than *the religion of Mohammed*. Consequently, if *the one* must not be esteemed *the little horn*, because it originated in *Arabia*, neither must *the other*, because it first arose in *Italy*; and on the contrary, if *the one* may be esteemed *the little horn* because it became a *power within the limits of the he-goat's empire* by the conquest of *Macedon*, so likewise may *the other* with equal propriety, because it became a *power within the limits of the same empire* by the conquest of *Syria*. The fact is, Dr. Zouch's objection is one of those, which, by proving too much, prove nothing." ¹ Mr. Faber answers other objections with equal felicity.

One or two other considerations may be added, which show that Mohammedanism is the little horn of the he-goat. In the first place, it is the only power in the East to which the prophecies are applicable. The election must lie betwixt secular Rome and Mohammedanism. But the secular Roman empire came to an end in the fifth century of the Christian era, whereas the power of the little horn of the he-goat is to continue until the time of the end, and the accomplishment of the wonders, which will be at the close of and following the period of 1260 years. In the second place, it would be to mix the symbols unwarrantably to suppose one and the same Roman power to be characterized as a great beast and a

¹ *Dissert. on Proph.*, Vol. I., pp. 193, 194.

little horn; and, in the third place, the prophecies which so accurately depict the Saracens and the Turks, and designate the periods of their respective ascendancy, can have no other application than to Mohammedanism.

Mohammedanism is the great apostasy of the East, as popery is the great apostasy of the West.

Now, if it can be shown that the rise of these two apostasies took place at the same time, that the origins of the two were synchronous, as we know the date at which Mohammedanism begun, we will have ascertained that from which to calculate the 1260 years of the papal career. I shall endeavor to show that they began together in time.

In the first place, the *fifth* angel is represented in the Apocalypse as pouring out his *vial* of incipient destruction upon the seat (or throne) of the beast, and the *sixth* angel as pouring out his vial upon the great river Euphrates. Now nearly all expositors, except Romanists, agree that the fifth vial is poured out upon the Church of Rome. There is a difference of exposition in regard to the symbolical significance of the great river Euphrates. Some interpreters consider it to symbolize the resources of the Church of Rome, the modern Babylon, as the Euphrates was the great artery through which ancient Babylon obtained her supplies. The majority of interpreters, however, regard the Euphrates as symbolizing the Turkish empire through which the literal river runs — the empire which is the principal upholder of Mohammedanism. If the latter interpretation — which I cannot but consider the more probable — be the true one, the argument now submitted is little less than

conclusive; for, if at the end of the 1260 years the incipient destruction of the papal power is spoken of in the prophecy before the incipient destruction of the Mohammedan power, it follows that popery, as supreme, could not have arisen *after* Mohammedanism. If it had, why should the vial of destruction be represented as *first* poured out upon the system which had the *later* origin?

But we have seen that popery could not have originated before Mohammedanism, for the latter had its rise in the early part of the seventh century and Gregory the Great, who lived until 604, indignantly rejected the ascription to him of papal power, and it was not until 606 or 607 that Boniface III. received and accepted an imperial grant of supreme episcopal power.

The inference seems clear that the origins of the two systems were synchronous.

In the second place, I cite the argument of Mr. Whitaker as quoted by Mr. Faber, "Daniel states *the rise of Mohammed* as to take place when the transgressors are come to the full. St. Paul says that *the delusion of the man of sin* shall be sent as a punishment, because men believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness; where surely *the same period* (that in which the sins of the people call for judgment) is characterized for *the rise of these two powers.*"

In the third place, each of these systems — Mohammedanism and popery — is prophesied to run a career of 1260 years. But it is prophesied of each that it will terminate at the same time — namely, the "time of the end," and the finishing of all the wonders. Now, unless it be supposed that there is more than one time of the

end, which is inadmissible, since Daniel says that at that time, the close of the 1260 years, "*all* these things shall be finished," it follows from the fact that both Mohammedanism and popery shall *end* at the same time, that at the same time they *begun*. "Since," remarks Mr. Faber, "the 1260 years of Mohammedanism, the 1260 years of the papal horn, and the 1260 years of the revived Roman beast, all apparently terminate together at *the time of the end*, they must in that case all necessarily begin together." ¹

As, therefore, Mohammedanism is known from history to have begun in the early part of the seventh century, it follows that Romanism began its distinctive career at that time.

The second argument to show that the 1260 years of papal ascendancy commenced in the early part of the seventh century is derived from the probability, little short of certainty, that the saints were given into the hand of the papal little horn at that time. We have seen that the 1260 years must have begun when that event took place. The question now is, *When* did that event occur? It has been conclusively evinced that it could not have taken place before the beginning of the seventh century.

It has been urged that the Church of Rome did not begin her career of persecution as early as that period. To this it is replied, that by imperial edict *the power* to persecute was conferred at that time upon the pope. He had the saints in his "hand," to do with them as he pleased. But, further, the power of the pope to control

¹ *Dissert. on Proph.*, Vol. I., p. 177.

and even coerce other bishops *was* soon put into exercise. Boniface III., in whom the power of a universal bishop and supreme head of the church was vested by the decree of the Emperor Phocas, died in 607, and was succeeded by Boniface IV. That pope in 610, in council with Italian bishops, issued decrees in accordance with which the hitherto independent See of Britain was to order some of its affairs. Gregory the Great had condemned image-worship, but this pope, soon after his accession to power, obtained from the emperor the famous Pantheon, and changed it into a church, substituting the mother of God for the mother of the gods, and the Christian martyrs for the pagan deities adored there before; so that only the names of the idols were altered.¹ This was the development of a few years only. How rapidly from that time the development of papal despotism proceeded let the records of history attest.

True, the arbitrary power of the Church of Rome did not all at once leap into full exercise. But it soon manifested itself, more and more, in the absolute control of other churches, the corruption of worship by idolatrous elements, the repression of true worship by God's sincere people, and the assertion of temporal authority, until at last the throne of the popes was incarnadined with the blood of the saints. The whole process had its origin in the investiture of the pope with universal power, and that took place in the early part of the seventh century.

As the historical truth of this transaction has been disputed, the following argument upon the point by

¹ Bower's *Hist. of the Popes*, Vol. I., p. 428.

Mr. Faber is submitted, "The account which Cardinal Baronius¹ gives of this grant is interesting, because it tallies so exactly with the prophecy. In the spirit of a true papist he maintains, that *de jure* the pope was always the *universal bishop* [!], and that Phocas did not so much confer upon him what he did not possess already as *sanction* by his imperial authority the undoubted right of the pope, thus constituting him *universal bishop de facto* as well as *de jure*. Now what is this but, in the language of the prophet, *giving the saints into his hand*; that is to say, decreeing him by imperial authority to be a spiritual sovereign over all Christians, or (as they are constantly termed in the New Testament) *saints*?

"Some, I believe, have doubted whether such a grant was ever made by Phocas, but, as it appears to me, without much reason. We know how severely the title of *universal bishop* was reprobated by Pope Gregory at the end of the sixth and at the beginning of the seventh century; we know, likewise, that the title was borne not long afterwards by the Roman pontiff, and that it was formally confirmed to him by the second council of Nice in the year 787. Hence we are certain that it cannot have been assumed very late in the seventh century, and would have ascribed it (as they did to Constantine the original grant of St. Peter's patrimony) not to a murderous usurper, but to some emperor whose character stood high in the Christian world. On these grounds I give credit to the assertions of Paulus Diaconus and Anastasius, neither of whom lived very long after the time when the grant is said to have been made;

¹ Annal. Eccles., A. D. 606.

and probably on the same grounds, 'the most learned writers, and those who are most remarkable for their knowledge of antiquity,' as it is observed by Mosheim, 'are generally agreed,' that the title of *universal bishop* was formally conferred by Phocas upon Boniface.

"The general agreement of various writers on this point, and the grounds which the Romanists take, are well stated by Dr. Brett from Bishop Carlton's book of jurisdiction, regal, episcopal and papal (Cap. VI., pp. 82, 83). 'Phocas,' says he, 'fixed Boniface, the third pope of that name, in that universal pastorship, which the Roman see claims and exercises over the other sees of Christendom at this day; and this, as Baronius and Estius, so these following historians assert: I will begin with Paulus. Now Baronius tells that it was assumed in the year 606, giving for his authorities Anastasius and Paulus Diaconus; the former of whom flourished in the ninth, and the latter in the eighth century; and I can see no reason why we should refuse to credit an assertion which places the assumption of the title *about* the very time when we must *unavoidably* suppose it to have been assumed. In short, if the account be nothing more than a forgery, it is one of the most unnecessary and one of the most ill-contrived forgeries that ever was executed; unnecessary, because the pope had been solemnly declared *universal bishop* by the second council of Nice in the year 787; ill-contrived, because the wily defenders of the papacy must have departed very far from their wonted subtlety to deduce falsely the grant in question from such an infamous monster as Phocas. Had it never been made by *any* emperor, and had they

been disposed to *forge* it for the purpose of aggrandizing the papacy, they would surely have pitched upon a more reputable patron than Phocas; Diaconus, who saith, *Phocas statuit sedem ecclesiæ Romanæ ut caput et (?) omnium ecclesiarum*. Abbas Usburgensis says the same, to-wit, that *Phocas ordained that the see of the Roman apostolical church should be the head of all churches*. Platina says that Boniface III. agrees with them herein, though he declares it in different words; *Bonifacius obtinuit a Phoca, ut sedes beati apostoli, quæ est caput omnium ecclesiarum, ita diceretur et haberetur ab omnibus*. Blondus saith, *Phocas antistitem Romanum principem episcoporum omnium constituit*. And Nauclerus saith, *Phocas ad universum orbem, dimissa sanctione, constituit, ut Romanæ ecclesiæ, Romanoque Pontifici, omnes urbes ecclesiæ obedirent*. And now our Romanists believe, as others have declared before them, that the Roman chair had this primacy by divine right, antecedent to Phocas's decree, by which he only engaged to make it law in the empire.' (*Independent Power of the Church not Romish*, pp. 268, 269, 270.) This opinion, which (as I have already observed) exactly accords with the prediction that *the Roman beast should deliver the saints or Christians into the hand of his little horn*, is thus stated by Estius the Schoolman, *Nec aliud a Phoca imperatore impetravit Bonifacius tertius, quam ut cathedræ Romanæ primatum, qui ei jure divino competeat, imperiali potestate tueretur contra præsumptionem Episcopi Constantinopolitani, qui se palam in suis literis Universalem Episcopum scribebat*. (*Comment. in Senten.* l. iv. § 9; Tom. IV. Pars. Post. cited

by Brett, p. 264.) Protestants have frequently urged to papist the disgraceful manner in which this grant was made; but they never, on that account, ventured to exchange their patron Phocas for one that would have done them more credit. Thus, when Illyricus maintained against Bellarmine that *Antichrist* was born when Phocas, in the year 606, granted to the Roman pontiff that he should be called *the head of the whole church*; the Cardinal readily allowed the truth of the premises, but denied the validity of the conclusion. See *Brightman cont. Bellarm. de Antichris.*, Cap. 3, Fol. 297.”¹

The conclusion which seems justified by these arguments is that we must date the 1260 years of the domineering course of the papal beast, the Church of Rome, from the early part of the seventh century, and very probably from the year 606. Some writers have assigned the date of Phocas’s decree to 607; but the judgment of Roman Catholic historians and of others, especially of Flacius Illyricus, the indefatigable investigator of the sources of ecclesiastical history, which has just been cited, is in favor of the year 606.

These appear to me to be the strongest arguments in favor of the beginning of the critically important period of the 1260 years of prophecy in the early part of the seventh century.

There are one or two other considerations to which allusion will be briefly made, as seeming to lend some strength to these arguments.

One is, that if we come up this side of the commence-

¹ *Dissert. on the Prophecies*, Vol. I., pp. 168-170.

ment of the seventh century, and with some expositors assume the dates of certain occurrences in the eighth century as the initial points of the 1260 years, events which have already occurred¹ appear to show the fallacy of these calculations. These dates are, 727, when the pope and the Romans finally broke their connection with the Eastern emperor; 755, when the donation was made by Pepin to the pope of temporal authority, and the pope obtained the Exarchate of Ravenna; 774, when the pope received from Charlemagne, in addition to his temporal domain, the greatest part of the kingdom of Lombardy; and 787, when the worship of images was fully established, and the supremacy of the pope was formally acknowledged by the second Council of Nice. Starting with the earliest of these, we are carried to 1987; with the last to 2047: $727 + 1260 = 1987$; $787 + 1260 = 2047$. These final dates are yet in the distant future; but the papal power has already suffered a severe blow in the unification of Italy into one kingdom, and the consequent demolition of the *temporal sovereignty* of the pope, and also in the decrease of his *temporal supremacy*; while it is undeniable that the Turkish empire, the principal supporter of Mohammedanism, is more and more decaying. It would seem as if the fifth and sixth vials of Revelation are now discharging their fatal contents.

Another consideration is, that the calculations of the prophetic times by most recent expositors, who have had the events of the nineteenth century before them, point together to the consummation of the period covered

¹ This is written in 1893.

by the 1260 years in the latter part of the present century. Pre-millennialists and post-millennialists concur in this. There is something very striking in this concurrence. Those who have based their calculations upon the long period of Daniel's prophecy, and those who — as in the argument of this discussion — have founded theirs upon the shorter period of 1260 years, are curiously agreed, to a great extent, in the conclusions they have reached.

Let us now test the accuracy, or at least the probable accuracy, of this interpretation of the prophecies concerning the time of the papal church's destruction, by assuming the year 606 as the initial date of the 1260 years, and inquiring whether the year 1866, which would have concluded that period calculated from 606, included any events bearing significantly upon the Church of Rome.

For some time previously to that year, the great statesman, Count di Cavour, and Victor Emmanuel [!], king of Sardinia, had endeavored to secure the unification of all the Italian States into one kingdom. To this project the pope, of course, was desperately opposed, as its success would inevitably bring about his loss of the Papal States, and consequently his temporal sovereignty, and inflict other baneful results upon the papacy. In the accomplishment of this scheme Cavour and Victor Emmanuel were completely baffled by Austria, which supported the cause of the pope, and defeated the Sardinians in two decisive battles. Their hopes seemed to be extinguished; but in July, 1866, at the battle of Königgratz or Sadowa, Prussia so thoroughly crushed the power and

crippled the resources of Austria that she was no longer able to lend any assistance to the pope against his adversaries. The consequence was, as every one knows, that the Sardinian project was again pushed, and in 1870, Victor Emmanuel entered Rome a conqueror, and made it the capital of the kingdom of United Italy. In the same year — and it was the year in which the Vatican Council crowned the iniquities of Rome by declaring the pope infallible — the battle of Sedan put it out of the power of France again to carry the woman clothed in scarlet. It was, then, in 1866 that the cause was set in operation, which issued in the most serious disaster that had ever befallen the papal power. The temporal sovereignty of the pope was ruined, and, in 1882, the last vestige of it was obliterated by the decree of an Italian civil court, which authorized the Roman police to enter and inspect the premises of the Vatican. It looks as if the theory, that the 1260 years of papal supremacy began in 606, had received confirmation from the critical events which signalized and followed the year 1866.

“Between 1854 and 1874, when the borrowing power of Turkey came to an end, fourteen several loans had been contracted to meet deficiencies. At the end of that period the foreign debt of Turkey amounted to £184,981,783. . . . Further to stave off the evil day, the government has issued vast quantities of *caimes* or paper money, probably to the nominal value of ninety million pounds sterling.”¹ In 1866, the Cretans revolted, and it cost the Porte a long struggle and heavy expense to suppress the insurrection. In 1867 it was

¹ *Chambers's Encyc.*, Art. *Turkey*.

compelled to concede to Servia the removal of the Turkish garrisons from her fortresses. And since, Turkey has been engaged in wars which have increased the debts which had before rendered her bankrupt. To-day she is subsisting on loans. The crash cannot be far off. The day is not distant when the European powers will be squabbling over her bones. The drying up of the Euphrates (if that symbol is correctly interpreted) has been going on for some time past. The financial resources of the Ottoman empire appear to have taken their chief downward plunge in the decade which included the year 1866. It is not improbable, therefore, that the 1260 years of Mohammedan power expired at that time. The case of Mohammedanism has been adverted to, in consequence of the ground having been taken in these remarks that, as popery and Mohammedanism probably began their careers together, they would probably end them together.

It has been already observed that the close of the 1260 years would introduce a consuming *process* of destruction to which popery and Mohammedanism would be subjected. Now Daniel, in the closing chapter of his prophecy, speaks of two apparently supplementary periods, one of 30 years and another of 45 years. He speaks of 1290 years, and says also, "Blessed is he that waiteth, and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days" — 1335 years. If the opinion be correct that the 1260 years expired in 1866, thirty years afterward, 1896, some remarkable event or events may be expected to occur, and from that time for forty-five years an unexampled time of trouble will be experienced,

during which those dreadful struggles will take place that will precede the end of this period, and the introduction of the millennium. Somewhere in the seventy-five supplementary years popery and Mohammedanism will be *completely* destroyed,¹ the final Antichrist will be manifested, and the Jews and Israelites will be restored to their own land; and at their close the battle of Armageddon, the battle of that great day of God Almighty, will be fought, the beast and the false prophet cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, and the glorious period ushered in, when Satan will be bound, universal peace will bless the world, the Spirit will be poured out on all flesh, and JESUS will reign from sea to sea, and from pole to pole. O blessed, golden age, how will the beams of thy rising Sun gladden the earth, so long ruled over by the devil, drenched in the blood of God's saints, and sunk in the guilt and filth of open idolatry.

¹ This will take place *before* the destruction of the final anti-Christian, infidel beast and the false prophet, which will be effected near the close of the seventy-five years.

[If Dr. Girardeau had lived he would probably have rewritten the latter part of this article. The *period* in which Mohammedanism had its rise was from 606, the time Mohammed entered the cave, to 642, by which time Palestine, Egypt and Persia had been conquered. The *period* in which the papacy proper had its rise was from 606, when the decree of Phocas made the bishop of Rome universal pontiff, to 649, when Martin exercised his high prerogative by condemning the imperial decrees and anathematizing the Monothelites, with the consent of a Lateran synod. It does not seem necessary to begin the 1260 years of Mohammedanism, and the 1260 years of the papacy from the same year.

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

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

PROTESTANTISM.

THE INSPIRATION OF THE SCRIPTURES.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

¹ *Syst. Theol.*, I., 153.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

¹ 2 Peter II., 21.

² Acts i. 1, 2.

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

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

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

¹ Acts i. 16.

² Acts ii. 4.

³ Acts xxviii. 25.

⁴ Mark xii. 35, 36.

⁵ 1 Peter i. 10, 11.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The impression conveyed by some of Dr. Charles

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

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

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

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

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

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

What inspiration did for the sacred writers the in-

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

First, the *degree* of inspiration.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

In the second place, if the evangelists who heard their

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

¹ *Dogmat. Theol.*, Vol. I., p. 74.

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

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

¹ *Coll. Writings*, Vol. III., p. 51.

“thus saith the Lord” to ground an unquestioning faith.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Secondly. Another class of transcendent truths is

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Secondly. The *scope* of inspiration.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

In his unanswerable argument with the Pharisees in

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

He assigned to the prophet *Jonah* a singular eminence

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

¹ Sermons: On Inspiration, p. 147.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

¹ *Early Religion of Israel*, p. 489.

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

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

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

highest value when it grounds belief in verbal inspiration.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

OBJECTIONS TO THE VERBAL INSPIRATION OF THE
SCRIPTURES.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

¹ ἐγένετο οὖν παροξυσμὸς, Acts xv. 39.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

¹ *Comm.* on Acts ii. 4.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

AUTHORITY OF THE SCRIPTURES.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

In the fourth place, no other revelation provides for

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The second extract is from the Formula of Concord:

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

The Second Helvetic Confession :

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

The Bohemian Confession :

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

The French Confession :

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

The Belgic Confession :

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

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

The (Polish) Confession of Thorne:

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

The Scotch Confession:

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

¹ Translated from the Latin.

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

The Irish (Episcopal) Confession (1615):

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

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

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

The Westminster Confession:

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

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

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

THE PERSON OF CHRIST.

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

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

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

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

tion of human nature, therefore, into connection with the divine person of Christ must be so understood as not to imply any intrinsic change in his personality. There is the co-existence, since the incarnation took place, of the human nature of Christ with his divine nature, both being related to his person, but there is neither intrinsic addition to his divine nature nor to his personality. It is the same person that now has two natures, who, previously to the incarnation, had actually, though not in the divine decree, one nature only. The assumption of human nature into connection with the person of the Son of God involved no intrinsic addition to his personality.

What, then, was the nature of the act by which the assumption of human nature was effected? It was the constitution of a new relation, grounding a new *manifestation* of the eternal Son of God, "God was manifest in the flesh."

Now, although this is an altogether transcendent mystery, for "great is the mystery of godliness — God was manifest in the flesh;" still it can scarcely be said to be, in one aspect of it, more mysterious than any new manifestation of the divine being which involves the creation of other beings or substances than God himself, and the constitution of new relations between him and them. The difficulty occasioned by the plenitude, the omnitude, of an infinite substance is common to both doctrines. We *believe* the fact, but we cannot *conceive* how there can be an infinite being and other distinct beings beside. The supposition, to thought, appears to be equivalent to infinity *plus* something else, which seems to be a contradiction. But reason and Scripture

alike enforce the fact of creation, and the consequent existence of substances different from God, without the result of any substantial addition to the divine being. The creation of the human nature of the Son of God, therefore, does not induce the consequence that any addition was thereby made to his divine substance; and the same course of reasoning would apply to his divine personality.

We have, then —

1. The eternal, divine personality of Christ, by virtue of which he is a distinct subsistence.

2. The eternal, divine nature of Christ, which afforded a divine ground for the expression of his personality.

3. The creation and assumption of the human nature of Christ — the assumption not of a human personality, but of a human nature, into connection with the divine person of Christ.

4. The doctrine, negatively, that this involves no intrinsic change either in the divine nature, or the divine person of Christ. The terms *constitution of the person of Christ* are not to be so understood as to convey the impression that a new person — a mediatorial, complex person — began to be, who did not exist before; or that, whereas the person of the Son of God was, previously to the incarnation, simple, it is since composite.

5. The doctrine, positively, that there is involved the creation of a new nature, the constitution of a new relation, and the institution of a new medium of manifestation: a new nature — the human nature of Christ; a new relation — that between the person of Christ and

his created human nature; a new medium of manifestation—namely, the human nature, which affords a human ground for the expression of Christ's personality.

6. Two distinct, but related consciousnesses, namely, of the divine and human natures of Christ. This does not suppose a third consciousness, that of the person; but it is the same person — Christ the Son of God — who is divinely conscious in the divine nature, and humanly conscious in the human nature.

7. Two separate, but related wills — that of the divine nature, and that of the human nature. Through the divine will the person, Christ, energizes divinely; through the human will the person, Christ, energizes humanly. If the infinite God may finitely manifest himself, if he may voluntarily energize through finite existences, that is, if the infinite power of God is not always infinitely exercised, the difficulty in the doctrine that Christ as a divine person energized through his human will is relieved. It is this doctrine that grounds the infinite value and sufficiency of the human sufferings of Christ as the substitute of the sinner. As an infinite person he energized through the finite will of his human nature. This imparted infinite merit to his human obedience in life and in death.

8. The union of two natures, divine and human, in the person of Christ — a union without the conversion, composition, or confusion of the natures, but one which is not a mere juxtaposition, or a mere moral association. It is a personal union, to the apprehension of which we are helped by the conviction we have of a personal union of our souls and bodies. From this it follows, that what

is predicable of either nature (or substance, or essence) is predicable of the person, Christ. He is infinite, he is finite. This is not possibly predicable of the Father or the Holy Spirit; it is true only of the Son, in consequence of the stupendous and all-controlling fact of his incarnation. This union is technically termed the hypostatical union.

9. A communion of the attributes of the two natures, divine and human, in the person of Christ, but not a communication of the attributes of either nature to the other.

As, in the case of the Trinity, personality is not treated as of the divine essence or substance, so, in the case of the hypostatic union, personality is not treated as of the human essence or substance. In either case personality is indispensable, is inseparable from the essence, but not strictly essential, that is, of the very essence itself. In the hypostatic union some personality is indispensable, but it is not human, it is divine, personality. The essential conditions for the expression of personality are human — namely, individuality, intelligence, affections, will, and conscience, but the personality which expresses itself through these human conditions is divine.

The mystery of the Trinity, utterly insoluble by thought, although received by faith, is, that three persons consist with one essence. The mystery of the hypostatic union is the inverse of this, to-wit, that three essences consist with one person. For there is the divine essence, the essence of the human soul, and the essence of the human body. This can no more be comprehended by

thought than the triunity of God. But as faith receives the doctrine of the Trinity upon the testimony of God, it accepts, upon the same ground, the equally mysterious doctrine of Christ's hypostatic union.

Let us briefly consider, first, some of those forms in which the speculative reason has attempted to get rid of the difficulties encompassing the subject, and, secondly, the modes in which the effort has been made to relieve the apparent contradiction in the church-doctrine, that Christ assumed a true and proper human nature, without human personality.

1. The doctrine of two persons — the so-called Nestorian theory.

If, to escape the difficulties emerging to speculation in connection with the doctrine of Christ's person, we adopt the hypothesis of a dual personality, we only substitute heresy for the truth.

(1) If Christ be held to have two persons, it is maintained that he has two subsistences, the one divine, the other human. There would not be one Christ, but two Christs — a divine and a human.

(2) There would be no bond of union between the two persons. The church-doctrine holds that the bond of union between the two natures of Christ is his one divine person. But if there be two persons, the hypostatical union is destroyed. There could be no conceivable *nexus* between the persons. It could not be the divine nature, for that would involve the interfusion and mixture of the persons as well as of the natures. The position that the bond of union between the supposed persons is a moral one is entirely insufficient. There is a moral

union between the person of the believer and that of Christ, but that union consists with a difference of person.

(3) If there were two persons, each could address the other as different from itself; each could say *I*, and address the other as *thou*. But no such representation is found in the Scriptures. Christ is so addressed, and says *I*, implying that he is one person; but there is no statement to the effect that a divine Christ addresses a human Christ as *thou*, or *vice versa*, or that either of these person, supposed to exist, says *I*.

All the other theories which are not orthodox, and which have at any time prevailed, may be reduced to two general classes: those which admit, and those which deny, the personality of Christ.

Those which admit the personality of Christ are characterized by one common feature — the affirmation of only one nature, or the attempt to reduce two natures to one, as the ground of personal manifestation.

1. The affirmation of but one nature is palpably opposed to the plainest testimonies of Scripture; and apart from Scripture the question as to the person of Christ is non-existent.

2. The attempt to reduce two natures to one is also opposed to the plain teachings of Scripture; but, in addition, it involves contradictions, and is, therefore, false on fundamental grounds of reason.

(1) It supposes, at one time, the reduction of two substances to unity, which is a contradiction; and the contradiction, were it possible, becomes more pronounced when an infinite and a finite substance are said to be one.

No contradiction can be greater than an infinite-finite substance.

(2) It supposes, at another time, the transfusion of the properties of one nature into the other nature. Now, this involves the hypotheses, either —

First, that the transference is total, or,

Secondly, that the transference is partial.

If the first — that the transference is total — then :

In the first place, you have a substance existing without any attribute; which is a contradiction.

In the second place, a substance which has its own complement of attributes *plus* the complement of attributes of another substance; which is a contradiction.

In the third place, a substance with infinite attributes *plus* finite attributes; which is a contradiction.

In the fourth place, a substance with infinite attributes of a certain sort *plus* finite attributes of the same sort, as, for example, infinite love *plus* finite love; which is a contradiction of contradictions.

If the second hypothesis be maintained — that the transference of attributes is partial — then :

In the first place, some of the contradictions already signalized are encountered on the side of the nature added to by the transference, and —

In the second place, on the side of the nature subtracted from you have a substance without some of its attributes, which, if not itself a contradiction, involves, in the case considered, this consequence: that one of the natures of Christ is mutilated and imperfect; and that supposes a mutilated and imperfect Christ, which is a contradiction.

(3) The attempt to reduce two natures to one supposes the reduction upon the same substance of incompatible and irreconcilable attributes, which is a contradiction; for as an attribute is a manifestation of a substance, the same substance would, on this supposition, manifest itself in contradictory modes. It manifests itself, for example, as infinite and as finite, as divine and as human. The argument here is not that different attributes are made to inhere in the same substance, but contradictory attributes.

If the ground be taken that the attributes transferred are taken up into — absorbed into — the attributes of the substance to which the transference is made, that involves either the continued existence of the attributes transferred, or their destruction. If they continue to exist, you have not only the coexistence of contradictory attributes in the same substance, which is a contradiction; but the inhesion of an attribute in another attribute to which it is contradictory; which is a supreme contradiction and absurdity. If the attributes transferred are destroyed, then there is no transference; for that which, in the supposed act of transference, ceases to exist, is not transferred. A thing cannot be said to be transferred and destroyed, without a contradiction.

If this reasoning be correct, the result to which Dr. Dorner's learned and elaborate exposition of the doctrine concerning the person of Christ has conducted him cannot be sustained — namely, that Christ is possessed of a divine-human consciousness, and a divine-human volition, inasmuch as he is a divine-human person with a divine-human essence. A few citations will give his

conclusion. "Whether, therefore, we take our start with the logos or with man, we find that the self-consciousness (and volition) of each includes the other momentum in itself as a determination of itself. What, consequently, is present on both sides, is nothing but the *divine-human* consciousness, one and the same, which is neither a merely human consciousness of the logos, nor a merely divine consciousness of man, but a divine-human consciousness of both; that is, as both actually exist, to-wit, as united; consequently, divine-human consciousness and volition." ¹

"At the centre of his being, it is true, this man is from the very beginning divine-human essence: but, in the first place, many things are lacking to this person; other things in it are still dissolubly united — for example, the body is still mortal; other things are still mutable, without detriment to its identity. The divine-human articulation, the bodily and the spiritual eternal organism, of the divine-human person, needs first to be developed; and this can only take place through the continued act of the incarnation of the logos." ²

The "depotentialisation" of the divine essence in the humanity of Christ, as maintained by some German theologians, may be resigned to the tender mercies of Dr. Dorner, who has made sad havoc of it; but his criticism might as well have turned its edge upon his own theory of the "self-limitation" of the divine essence by which it was contracted to the dimensions of the humanity, so that a "divine-human growth" resulted.

¹ Div. II., Vol. III., p. 249: T. & T. Clark, 1878.

² *Ibid.*, p. 258.

It amounts to the enunciation of an illimitable-limited essence! A "divine-human consciousness, one and the same," and a "divine-human volition," of course, suppose a divine-human essence one and the same. What is this but the assertion that the infinite and the finite may be one and the same. From this absolute contradiction the church-doctrine, existing from the Council of Constantinople, A. D. 681, is free. It affirms the union of the divine and human natures without conversion, division, or composition (*ἀτρέπτως, ἀμερίστως, ἀσυγχύτως*) in the one person of Christ, who is divinely conscious and divinely wills in the divine nature, and is humanly conscious and humanly wills in the human nature. This is mysterious enough; but it does not make the extraordinary draft upon our intelligence of believing that the infinite is finite or the finite infinite. Dr. Dorner expresses his gratification that the "old dualism," that is, the doctrine of two distinct, but related natures in the person of Christ, is coming to be more and more abandoned by theologians; which is very much like his rejoicing over the fact, that theology is retracing its steps on the back track to the monophysitism and monothelitism, which, after centuries of conflict, the church deliberately and solemnly rejected.

Only a few words need be said here in regard to the theories which deny the personality of Christ.

Under this class come some modern German theories. As they deny the divine personality of Christ, they cannot without a solecism be designated as theories concerning the person of Christ. They are not only unscriptural, but flatly anti-scriptural and infidel. Under

this class must be ranked Schleiermacher's famous speculation, by which he fabricated a Christ from himself. It denied Christ's divine person, as it also rejected the person of the Holy Ghost, and was therefore antichristian.

All these theories — the spawn of human pride and folly — have two features in common: first, the denial of the objective authority of the Scriptures as plerarily inspired — rationalism; and, secondly, the philosophical hypothesis of the unity of an impersonal God and the universe — pantheism. They are, therefore, to be treated as all other infidel theories are: to be met with an assertion of the testimony of God's written Word, so far forth as they falsely pretend to be religious, and, as philosophical speculations, to be brought to the test of sound principles of reason.

The church-doctrine touching the hypostatical union being now reverted to, it must be acknowledged that to reason it involves a difficulty at the formidable character of which it were idle to blink. It is that it seems to imply a contradiction, in affirming that Christ became a true and proper man, and denying that he became a human person. If human nature cannot be conceived as entire without personality, how can it be maintained, without a contradiction, that the Son of God assumed an entire human nature, and yet did not assume human personality?

Let us consider some of the most prominent modes in which it has been attempted to relieve this apparent contradiction.

One form of the solution of this difficulty is the

hypothesis that the Son of God assumed *generic* human nature. But there are difficulties attending this hypothesis, almost, if not quite, as formidable as that which it attempts to solve.

1. The supposition of the existence of a generic nature of man is attended by all the difficulties which attach to the doctrine of realism.

2. A generic nature, strictly speaking, must be regarded as destitute of consciousness. Hence Dr. Shedd, who held the view that it was the generic human nature which sinned in the first instance, contends, in his theological essays, that the first sin was unconsciously committed, at least unconsciously originated. But the church-doctrine ascribes a human consciousness to Christ. The hypothesis under consideration, therefore, is out of harmony with that doctrine.

3. The hypothesis would seem, upon the principles of those who hold that generic human nature is capable of moral action, to involve the inference that Christ's human nature was implicated in the first sin. This is avoided by the doctrine that the first sin was committed by Adam as a person, representing the persons of his posterity. As in accordance with the principle of federal representation, his guilt is derived to his descendants through the channel of parental propagation, it follows that as Christ was born out of the line of ordinary generation, the guilt of Adam, in the first sin, could not have been derived to him. And this is the doctrine of the church. Christ was not represented in Adam; on the contrary, he represented Adam. Birth, according to ordinary generation, designates the parties

upon whom the covenant of works terminates, just as the second birth denominates the parties upon whom the covenant of grace takes effect. Christ not having been ordinarily generated, was not a party to the first covenant. Consequently, moral turpitude, the stain of sin, could not have existed, consistently with justice, in him. He inherited no judicial result of the breach of the covenant. Not having been representatively guilty, he could not have been inherently depraved. In this way a clear account is given of the sinlessness of Christ, notwithstanding the fact that he was a human being.

But, if Christ assumed the generic human nature, the limiting conditions which we have seen to be imposed by the principle of representation would be removed. They would have no existence. No account could be fairly given of his exemption from sin. For, if it was the generic nature which sinned, and in that way the imputation of sin is grounded, as he had the generic nature and the generic nature alone and simply, he must have sinned when that nature sinned. It is scarcely conceivable what supposition even ingenuity could devise, in order to avoid this difficulty — a difficulty, however, which if not removed inevitably swamps the hypothesis.

If it be said, that as, in the case of the glorified saint, grace is able to sanctify nature, so Christ's nature was perfectly sanctified, that is true, but the difficulty is not removed. The saint was first a sinner and then is sanctified. Was Christ also a sinner before sanctification? He must have been so, according to this hypothesis before us, for the generic nature which it supposes him to have assumed sinned in the first instance. But

it certainly will not do to say that Christ, as possessor of that nature, sinned when Adam sinned.

Nor will it do to say that Christ's case was exceptional. For, according to the hypothesis, he did not assume a nature, but generic human nature. How could his generic nature have been distinguished from the generic nature of man, so as to allow of its being exceptional? Manifestly it could not. The supposition is absurd. It amounts to the assertion that as his case was singular he had an individual human nature which was at the same time merely generic. And it deserves notice that the hypothesis makes the exceptional sinlessness of Christ an impossibility, and therefore makes redemption an impossibility.

If it be said that God in some way prevented the implication of Christ in the first sin, the question is, How? Did he do it by decree? Then it would follow that as he decreed not to prevent the sin of the generic nature, he at the same time decreed to prevent the sin of the generic nature; for, according to the supposition, Christ had the generic nature. A contradiction emerges. And if God did not accomplish this result by decree, how else is it conceivable that he accomplished it? Is there anything done by him, which he did not decree to do? That is out of the question.

There is no conceivable mode in which this hypothesis can unload itself of the tremendous difficulty that it implicates Christ in the first sin of the race, and that consideration alone is sufficient to refute it.

4. This hypothesis involves the exclusion of Christ's possession of individual attributes, and his performance

of individual acts. This is obvious, for the hypothesis limits his human nature to a generic nature. Other men may be conceived as possessing a generic nature, and at the same time existing as individual men, manifesting that nature in specific and peculiar qualities and acts. But, upon this hypothesis, Christ is restricted to the activity of a generic nature, and what that could be it is difficult, if not impossible to conceive. To such a view of the human nature of Christ the whole testimony of Scripture is opposed. It represents him as an individual man, characterized by individual attributes and discharging individual functions. It speaks of him as *a* man, not merely as man. He who supped with his disciples was contradistinguished as an individual man from them. John, while he lay in his bosom, was not Jesus, nor was Jesus he.

To this it may be replied that the individualization of Christ must be referred to his divine personality; that only as he was a person did he possess individuality: it was the divine person who hungered, thirsted, suffered, prayed, loved, shed tears of sympathy with the sisters of Bethany, wept passionately at the gates of Jerusalem, and in the agony of the human soul in Gethsemane, uttered the mysterious words, "Let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not my will, but thine be done."

But this view involves the position that the divine person of Christ, as divine, was susceptible of suffering. There are many mysteries in Scripture which pass our ability to comprehend; but this view not only implies a mystery, but a contradiction. God as such cannot suffer, and as the person of Christ is divine, the

same must be predicated of it. Suffering and want infer finiteness, and Christ's person is infinite. The connection of his divine person and his divine nature with the human nature imparted to its sufferings an infinite value, and by virtue of that connection the human nature was preserved from sinking into extinction under the pressure of an infinite curse; but it was the human nature which was the subject of suffering. In consequence also of the hypostatic union the sufferings of the human nature are predicated of the divine person, but that by no means shows that it was the divine person which actually experienced the sufferings.

It would seem, then, that on the one hand a mere generic humanity is not sufficient to account for acts and sufferings which necessarily suppose an individual actor and sufferer, with an individual consciousness, and on the other that the fact of individuality is not competently explained upon the hypothesis that it consists in the communication of the individualizing element from the divine person — *communicatio personæ*. All that we can say, in view of all the facts in the case taken together is, that there was an individual human consciousness, and that the divine person expressed itself humanly through that consciousness. Not that there was, as some of the Lutheran theologians contend, a divine-human consciousness, but a divine person, who was, in a way incomprehensible by us, humanly conscious. To assert a divine-human consciousness is either, first, to maintain a compound consciousness, partly human and partly divine, which would be to mutilate the human consciousness, and also to predicate conscious-

ness of the divine person, as person, apart from the divine nature; neither of which suppositions can be validly supported; or, secondly, to affirm the absorption of the human consciousness into the divine on the one hand, or the transfusion of the divine into the human on the other, and then, to the extent of the absorption or transfusion, the consciousness absorbed or transfused vanishes and the resultant could not be denominated divine-human, since it would be either divine or human; or, thirdly, to hold that both consciousnesses exist in their integrity in one compound consciousness, which would violate all our conceptions of the nature of consciousness as absolutely simple.

Christ was not simply man, but a man, not simply human nature, but a human being. But this man, this human being, had personal subsistence in a divine person. Thus he is at once properly the Son of man and properly the son of God. These appear to be the facts. Their explanation may not belong to this sphere of thought.

5. I confess, moreover, that this view of the assumption by the Son of God of generic humanity appears to lean too decidedly to the semi-pantheistic doctrine of some of the modern theologians of Germany — that there is, by virtue of such a union, a Christic life in the church as an organic whole, to which its development is to be attributed. The orthodox doctrine is, that Christ dwells in the church, but the mode of this indwelling is explained by the inhabitation of the Holy Spirit in the church as a collection of individual believers. Christ is in the church by his Spirit, in the sense that he is in

every believer by his Spirit. This doctrine is that the development of the church is the development of the substance of Christ incarnate, as that of the world is the development, according to the pantheistic conception, of the substance of God. Too much care cannot be taken to guard the Scripture doctrine touching the personality, offices and work of the ever-blessed Spirit against this insidious hypothesis.

Another mode in which the difficulty under consideration may be sought to be met is, by supposing that the Son of God assumed human nature with personality, but that the human personality was absorbed into the divine.

This involves one or other of two subordinate suppositions. Either, first, the human personality continued after this absorption, and then the personality of the Son of God became composite and so changed from its original simplicity — which contradicts our conception of the intrinsic immutability of the second person in the Godhead; or, secondly, the human personality ceases in consequence of the absorption, and then the difficulty of an impersonal human nature returns in all its force. If the absorption took place upon the assumption of the human nature into union with the divine person, there never was actually and historically any personal human nature in the case. If the absorption took place after the assumption of the human nature, there was a period when Christ had a dual personality, and the orthodox doctrine is denied, the Nestorian affirmed.

Such considerations are sufficient to show the untenableness of the supposition that the human personality was absorbed into the divine.

The same difficulties, substantially, oppose the supposition that Christ assumed human personality, but that it is subjected to and dominated by the divine personality.

Another view, which I have heard expressed, is that Christ may have possessed human personality without having been a human person. In this way it was sought to reconcile the church-doctrine with itself. But if it be conceded that he had human personality, it cannot be denied that he was a human person. Whatever may be held in regard to the nature of personality, it must be confessed that it supposes a person to whom it belongs, and a person akin to its nature. What is it, if it be not a property of a person? The word is simply an abstract term signifying the property of a person in the concrete. No meaning can be attached to it apart from such a signification. Wherever there is personality, there must be supposed a person in whom it inheres. Now, as it would be illegitimate, if not contradictory and absurd, to say that the human personality of Christ was a quality belonging to and characterizing his divine person, the admission of human personality is the admission that he was a human person.

On the other hand, if the church-doctrine be received, namely, that he was not a human person, it cannot, if the foregoing reasoning be correct, be at the same time held that he was possessed of human personality. This view must be regarded as an inadequate attempt to solve the difficulty growing out of the orthodox doctrine that Christ assumed the entire human nature, but not a human person, into connection with his divine person.

Another method of resolving the difficulty was that of some of the Spanish Scotists, and with them the acute Jesuit Suarez concurred upon certain points. "They wished," as Dorner remarks,¹ "to make greater earnest with the full truth of the humanity, and therefore held more to the doctrine of Duns Scotus, who, like Descartes and the monophysites, did not hold personality, which [Christ's] humanity was generally assumed to lack, to be a reality, but deemed it to be simply the limit of the *natura*; so that nothing failed the humanity of Christ of completeness."

To deny the reality of personality, it may be answered, is to violate one of the primary convictions of our minds. In whatever way this conviction obtains, whether by the direct testimony of consciousness, or by a necessary belief accompanying that testimony, it has the effect of impressing upon us the reality of personality. How else could we hold to our personal identity, and the important practical consequences which flow from it? It is not in this way that we can meet the difficulty under examination.

Still another mode of solving the problem was that of those Thomists, who viewed the personality as something real. They "held personality," says Dorner,² "to be something so essential to human nature, that they assumed it to be stirred by a natural tendency thereto; nay more, some of them said, it would have attained the *personalitas connaturalis* to which it tended, even if the Word had not intervened. But even if this intervention

¹ *Person of Christ*, Vol. IV., p. 447, note: Clark's Ed.

² *Ibid.*, p. 448.

were not conceived as a consumption of the human personality by the divine, there still remained behind a hindrance to the impulse towards personification, which was both foreign and external to the humanity. So in the case of Vasquez (Disp. 34), according to whom the humanity of Christ, although it has in the *Verbum* the highest personality, yearns after its own personality even in the *Unio*; because without it, it cannot be in the true and full sense humanity."

This is unsatisfactory, for this reason, if no other, that we are not told what that hindrance to personification was, which apart from the intervention of Christ's divine person, acted as a foreign and external force. In addition to this, the statement is objectionable, that the human personality may have been consumed by the divine, for reasons already given, and, moreover, the doctrine is inadmissible, that not only is the human nature assumed into union with the divine person, but becomes personal in Christ, so that he is now a divine-human person. For this, if it mean anything, must mean that Christ is both divinely and humanly personal in one complex person. It may be sufficient to say that such a view involves the present existence of the human personality in Christ, and therefore renders superfluous the question how he could have assumed an entire and an impersonal human nature at the same time. If he now has human personality he must have assumed it in the act of assuming human nature. Otherwise how did he get it?

There are only two conceivable modes of answering this difficulty: either, first, that the divine person be-

came also a human person; or, secondly, that both divine and human personality consist in one complex person.

The first supposition is absurd. It is impossible that the infinite divine person could become also a finite human person. It is infinitely more difficult to believe it than to believe all the contents of space packed into a thimble.

The second supposition — that of Christ's complex personality — infers one of two things: either, first, that the complex personality consists of two personalities brought together in one whole; or, secondly, that the assumption of the human nature into connection with the divine person changed the simple personality into a complex one.

The first inference is rejected by the orthodox writers who hold the doctrine of a complex person. They deny that Christ assumed human personality.

The second inference cannot be maintained. For, if the relation of a nature to personality has the effect of changing the simplicity of the personality to complexity, the eternal relation of the divine nature to the personality of the Son of God stamped it an eternally complex personality. That, of course, will be denied. But if so, then, *a fortiori*, it must be denied that the relation of the human nature to the personality of the Son of God could have had the effect of making it a complex personality.

The only supposition remaining is, that the relation of both the divine and human natures to the personality rendered it complex. But it cannot be shown that what

neither could, in any degree, separately effect, they may in combination accomplish. The question still occurs, How can the union of nature with personality render the personality complex?

The fact is, that in theological usage nature and person are two distinct categories. If, therefore, you unite them, neither is the nature changed by the union, nor the person. They cannot be conceived as reduced to unity in one complex whole. The compound would consist of heterogeneous elements. The divine nature is not the person; neither is the human. Both are inseparably related to one and the same unmodified person, but neither one nor the other can be considered an element constituent of the person, nor can both be regarded as together discharging that office.

Having thus endeavored to evince the unsatisfactoriness of the hypotheses which have been considered, I have to admit that the only way in which I am able in any degree to free the church-doctrine of the person of Christ from the apparent contradiction under which it labors, is by supposing that human nature may in some sense be regarded as entire without the possession of *human personality*. For it is held, in that doctrine, that the Son of God assumed the entire human nature, but assumed it as impersonal. Some personality is demanded for its completeness, but not necessarily, in every instance, human personality. The essential elements of human nature may be individuality, intelligence, affections, will and moral qualities. These may constitute the indispensable conditions upon which personality expresses itself; and where they exist some

personality is required. In the case of all other men but Christ that personality is human; in his case it was divine. Ordinarily a human person expresses himself through these conditions. In the extraordinary — the miraculous, instance of Christ, the divine person expresses himself through these human conditions. The human nature in him is not *ἀνύποστατος* — not absolutely impersonal; it has no human personal subsistence, but it has subsistence in his divine person.

It may be that personality is neither of the essence of human nature, nor a quality separable from it. If so, Christ may have assumed the entire human nature, as to its essence, and supplied the inseparable quality of personality from his divine person.

If, however, all attempts of the speculative reason should fail to remove the apparent contradiction which has been under consideration, we must throw ourselves back upon the testimony of the divine Word, accept it by an unquestioning faith, and rest in the conclusion that the contradiction is only apparent and not real. Mindful of the weakness of our faculties it becomes us to refrain from dogmatizing upon a question so profoundly difficult as that of personality confessedly is, and to await the light of another sphere, when, if it should please God to impart it, a further revelation may dissipate all our difficulties. But should he never furnish it, we will believe, and believe upon his naked testimony, forever.

SOME ADDITIONAL THOUGHTS.

1. There are not in Christ three wills — the will of the divine nature, the will of the human nature, and the will of the person.

2. What limitation took place at the incarnation was of the divine *glory* and of the *exercise* of divine power.

3. We must distinguish between the influence of the will of the divine nature upon the will of the human nature and the energizing of the person through the will of the human nature.

4. There is no more difficulty in supposing the imperfection and development of the will of the human nature, though energized by the person, than in supposing the imperfection and development of the intelligence of the human nature. Both belonged to the person.

5. As the determining grace of God does not all at once determine the believer to entire sanctification, so the divine power did not produce a perfect development of the human will of Christ all at once.

6. We are liable to be confused by supposing that there was a personal will of Christ that operated through his human will. The human will *was Christ's will*.

It was he who had the self-determining power of the human will. It was his will which was brought into conflict with the devil, and elected to endure the divine wrath.

This grounds the precious doctrine of his real sym-

pathy with his people under their temptations and trials.

The question has been sometimes discussed, What was it that became incarnate? Was it the divine person or the divine essence? Some take one view and some the other. The true statement would seem to be that the divine nature or essence as related to the person of the Son, and only so far as thus related, became incarnate. God became incarnate, but as neither did the Father nor the Holy Ghost become incarnate, the above-stated view would appear to be necessitated.

In this conclusion, to which I had come independently, I am supported by Calovin and Deutschmann, as cited by Dorner, who say, "The divine nature became incarnate, not in so far as it was common to the Father and the Holy Spirit, but so far as it subsists in the *persona filii*."

Finally, the profoundly difficult questions arise, What is personality? What is a person? Upon these questions I do not pretend to dogmatize. Partial answers are capable of being inferentially derived from the statements of Scripture, and whatever light we thus possess must modify the conclusions to which the philosophical reason is conducted by the method of analysis and synthesis.

1. I agree with those thinkers who regard the conviction of personality as native. It necessarily springs from a fundamental law of belief, elicited into formal expression by the conditions furnished by experience. Being an original principle, it is simple and incapable of resolution. An attempt, therefore, strictly to define

it must be expected to fail. But, like other fundamental beliefs, it may, when developed in consciousness upon empirical conditions, be described both negatively and positively. We are entitled to say what its contents do not imply, and what they do.

2. A just account of personality, so far as its specific difference is concerned, must exclude all the spontaneous elements which are common to man with the lower animals: First, the appetites and sensations of a bodily organism; secondly, whatsoever intelligence, feelings, will, collected in an individual contradistinguished to other individuals, may characterize a lower animal; thirdly, consciousness, for every animal must have consciousness, to some extent. This would seem to be clear, unless we are prepared to adopt the exceptional hypothesis that the lower animals are, in some sense, persons.

3. It must, as specific, exclude all the essential elements which are common to Christ with man. What are they? Individuality, intelligence, feelings, will, and moral qualities. These belong to the human essence, for if any of them are eliminated the integrity of the essence is destroyed. It may be objected that individuality is not essential: That could only be shown by proving that a generic human essence, without individualization, has ever been an historic fact. But why must these essential elements be excluded from the differentia of personality? Because the Scriptures teach us that Christ possesses the entire human essence, but not human personality. This, to all believers in the inspired authority of the Scriptures, settles the fact that the human essence and personality, as specific, are dis-

tinguishable. To this view, accordingly, the church-doctrine is conformed. Individuality, intelligence, will, moral qualities, and the consciousness of their activities, must be thought away from a just description of personality, except as it presupposes them as a nature-basis for its action, as the spontaneous conditions upon which it exerts its peculiar energy. Without them there could not be personality, but they do not constitute it. It is something specifically distinguishable from them.

4. It must exclude any element which cannot be predicated of man through all the moral changes which have marked his history. Whatever may be the transitions through which he has passed, it cannot be denied that personality abides an unchanging element of his being. He may not be what he once was, but he is still a person. Hence, it would seem necessary to exclude the element of a freedom of the will involving self-determination which some represent as the chief distinctive mark of personality. For, to deny that man has, by a free self-decision determined himself as sinful, so that, while he freely concurs with a fixed, evil spontaneity, he has not the ability by an elective act to substitute for it a good spontaneity, would be to deny as well the universal facts of experience and observation as the plain statements of the Scriptures. Although, however, this be so, the personality of man continues to express itself through a determined sinful spontaneity. As a person man reflectively appropriates and acts through the nature which has become fixed in corruption. Granted, that in other relations he may possess the attribute of self-determination—of otherwise determining—in this

respect he does not. A proper description of personality, therefore, must be broad enough to include both of these elements. It would be too narrow if it were confined to one only. The essential must be embraced, the accidental excluded.

5. It must leave out any element which cannot be predicated of the person of the Son of God, and perhaps, more generally, which cannot be affirmed of any person in the ever-blessed Trinity. For aught that appears to the contrary, personality in the Godhead is the archetype of which human personality is the ectype, and personal fellowship among the divine persons the original of personal fellowship among created beings; and it may be legitimate to argue, on natural grounds, from the existence of the latter to that of the former, and thus to construct a valid rational argument for Christianity against any religion—Mohammedanism, for instance—which affirms the mere uni-personality of God. Such a view is not liable to the objection that it assumes an analogy of man, or any other creature, as finite, to the deity as infinite. But the incommunicable or modal attributes of God, which can have no image or likeness in the creature, being left out of account, it is legitimate to maintain, we are warranted by the Scriptures in maintaining that there is some analogy between the attributes of man and the communicable or determinative attributes of his Maker. Personality must be assigned a place in this latter category. It constituted a part of that natural image of God in which man was made. If this be so, as moral responsibility cannot, without a solecism be predicated of the persons of the

Godhead, it would appear improper to include it in the distinctive peculiarities of personality.

There are needed elements which designate personality in its widest sense, as existing in the Godhead as well as in humanity, which, without supposing responsibility in the former, would involve it in the latter; for it must be admitted that personality is accompanied with responsibility in man, while it is not in God; somewhat as it is attended by the power of self-determination in one phase of man's history, and not in another, as has already been intimated.

In reply to this the view may be suggested that the person of the Son of God was responsible, so far forth as he was Mediator. He is termed in the Scriptures, and he confessed himself to be, the servant of the Father, under obligation to execute the Father's will. But it must be considered that —

(1) Some things are predicable of Christ, as mediator, which cannot be predicated of him simply as the second person of the Godhead.

(2) The Son freely consented to undertake the engagements of a mediator, federal head and representative of his human seed. He entered into a new relation without undergoing an intrinsic change in his divine personality, a relation of such a character as to involve responsibility, growing out of a subjection to law which did not exist antecedently. It was an assumed, not an eternal and necessary responsibility inherent in him as a coequal person in the Godhead.

(3) The responsibility assumed was derived not from the divine, but the human side of his mediatorial person.

For even when in eternity he accepted the call of the Father to undertake the work of redemption, the engagements into which he entered supposed his susception of human nature; that is, it was not simply as a divine person that he covenanted to execute the work of man's salvation, but as a divine person appointed and purposing to become incarnate, and in the very act of covenanting he represented the human constituents given to him by the Father to be redeemed. It was as the appointed mediator and federal head that he assumed that obligation which carried responsibility with it. Now, as mediator he is God and man; and while responsibility may be affirmed of him in this twofold aspect, it cannot be properly said to have belonged to him in the single aspect of his divine personality. There must have been some element of his divine person which, when he became incarnate, rendered possible the assumption of responsibility. What it was, an attempt will humbly be made in the sequel to indicate, should not this analysis prove abortive.

Having briefly endeavored to point out the elements which personality, viewed as specific, that is, as distinct from a generic essence, must exclude, we may pass on to the inquiry, what distinctive features it ought to be conceived as embracing.

1. Generically speaking, it supposes an individual being — what in theology is termed a subsistence — an individual being possessed of an essence (or substance, or nature) consisting of intelligence, feelings, will, and moral qualities with consciousness of their operations. These essential elements are not constituents of per-

sonality; they are the conditions of its energy. Their operation is spontaneous, and in this fact we detect a principal difference between an essence and a person.

2. Considered specifically, that is contradistinguished to a generic essence, personality involves the knowledge which an individual being possesses of its *identity*. We have no reason to suppose that a brute, although an individual being, has this knowledge. We certainly act upon the contrary supposition. It has memory, in a certain sense, and memory sometimes strongly manifested; but we would not, at a given time, hold a brute responsible for an injurious act done by it years before, and punish it for that act. Sameness of individual being is one thing, but the conviction of that sameness is quite another; and we proceed upon the supposition that the conviction of identity conditions the infliction of penalty. In a word, the brute is not a subject of law consciously obliging it at every period of its existence.

In this respect man is distinguished from the lower animals. He knows at sixty years of age that he is responsible for an act committed at twenty. Upon this fact, that man continues identically the same individual being in every period of his life, and that he is conscious of that identity, many of the processes of human law are founded; and in this regard it justly reflects those of the divine law. Sameness of individual being is common to man with the brute, but the knowledge of his identity which characterizes man is peculiar to him. As, therefore, that knowledge does not belong to man regarded simply as an individual being, it must be referred to him as personal. It is as a person that he

knows his identity, and the transcendently important consequences which flow from it. This is substantially the view of Kant, who regarded "the consciousness of identity" as one of the distinctive features of personality.

It affords some countenance to this conclusion that it is applicable to the persons of the Godhead. The divine essence abides eternally the same, and in this respect there is no distinction between the divine persons. Nor can we refuse individuality to that essence, although infinite, since it is different from all the individual essences in the created universe. But he who is the Father, as such, is not the Son, nor is the Father or the Son, as such, the Spirit. And as (what) each person must eternally be what he is as person, each must eternally know his identity as person.

3. Another peculiar element of personality, the designation of which is here adventured, is *reflective activity*, in contradistinction to the *spontaneous* activity of the essence to which it belongs. Every constituent element of the essence is spontaneously active; but that is very different from saying that they are reflectively active. Reflection does not pertain to the essence; and by reflection is not meant consciousness, or attention, which is but consciousness intensified; but the power by which the spontaneous states and activities of the essence are deliberately appropriated, and made the conditions of deliberate action. This it is in man which, in connection with the conviction of personal identity, grounds personal responsibility, and this it is, be it reverently spoken, which constitutes the personality of man an

image of the divine personality. Is it venturing too far to say that as all the persons of the Godhead have one and the same spontaneous essence, each person appropriates that essence and energizes peculiarly through it in his peculiar relation to the other persons? It is this power of reflective activity in man which at one time expresses itself in self-determination, and at another in deliberate concurrence with an already determined spontaneity.

As the result of this analysis the following descriptive statements are presented:

Personality is the knowledge of its identity possessed by an individual being, and its reflective activity upon the spontaneous conditions of intelligence, feelings, will, and moral qualities, furnished by its essence.

A person is an individual being (or subsistence) knowing its identity, and reflectively acting upon the spontaneous conditions of intelligence, feelings, will, and moral qualities, furnished by its essence.

THE DOCTRINE OF ADOPTION.

THE doctrinal truths of Scripture are fixed and unalterable. In themselves considered, they are, like their divine Author, perfect, and therefore unsusceptible of change. There can be no human development of their intrinsic nature.

But the knowledge of these unchanging truths by the imperfect mind of man is capable of development. It may be more or less perfect. This subjective apprehension of objective truth may be increased in intensity, in scope and in adequacy. It is needless to observe that its growth, in the history of the church, has largely depended upon the challenge of acknowledged truth by errorists, by the conflict of theological views, and by the thorough-going discussion which has for these reasons been necessitated. In this way the church's knowledge of the doctrine of the Trinity, of sin, and of justification has been cleared up, matured and crystallized. To the precisely formulated statements of these truths it is not to be expected that much that is either novel or important will be added.

The same, however, is not true of the doctrine of adoption. It has not been made the subject of much controversy, nor has it received the didactic exposition which has been devoted to most of the other topics included in the theology of redemption. Its importance

has been to a large extent overlooked, its place in a distinct and independent treatment of the covenant of grace has been refused, while leading theologians have differed in regard even to its nature and its office.

In recent years, however, some elaborate discussion has been had upon the question of the Fatherhood of God, in which the subject of adoption has received a measure of consideration. Dr. Candlish in his work on the Fatherhood of God, Mr. Wright in his book on the same theme, and Dr. Thornwell in his lectures on theology, have definitely maintained the ground that by nature man is not a son of God, but simply a subject and servant; that it depended upon Adam's fidelity as a subject and servant, during the time of trial assigned him, whether he would by adoption have been elevated into the relation of a son; and that the only filial connection with God that can be predicated of sinners is that which is constituted by the grace of adoption. To the views of Dr. Candlish and Mr. Wright a reply was offered by Dr. Crawford, professor of Divinity in the University of Edinburgh, in his work on the Fatherhood of God.

This makes it proper that before the topic of adoption is directly considered, some preliminary remarks should be made upon the question of man's natural relation to God. Is he, in any sense, a son of God by nature?

The remarks which will be submitted on this subject consist of several distinct papers prepared at different times. On this account they contain repetitions to a certain extent, but they have not been reduced to one logical whole, principally because each several discussion

presents some statements and aspects of the question which are peculiar to itself.

I.

The Scripture passages which bear upon the subject have been subjected to so particular a consideration in the argument between Dr. Candlish and Dr. Crawford, that it is not deemed necessary here to reproduce the discussion. Until recent times the *consensus* of commentators and theologians has, with but a few exceptions, been in favor of the doctrine that man was by nature, in some sense, a son of God. This, of course, does not settle the question, but it creates a presumption, which can be rebutted only by considerations of the most convincing character. To my mind, this presumption has not been rebutted by the ingenious arguments which have been adduced to the contrary. It seems to me clear that the genealogical table in Luke affirms Adam's filial relation to God in some real sense; that the parable of the prodigal son proceeds upon the assumption that man was a son of God, and not merely a servant, before his apostasy; and that Paul's argument at Mars Hill, in which he alleged the testimony of Aratus and Cleanthes to the fact of man's filial relation to God, is dealt with violently when it is treated as simply an *argumentum ad hominem*.

Inasmuch, however, as godly and learned men have, in recent times, differed in their interpretation of Scripture testimonies upon the point, there is room for discussion. Those who desire to examine the exegetical argument are referred to the works of Dr. Candlish and Dr. Crawford.

II.

How do we become children of God? In the first instance, by regeneration. We are re-begotten. The very force of this term is derived from the mode in which man was originally made a son of God. The only possible way in which we can conceive the relation to be formed between God and man is *creation*. Man must be *made* a son of God by the creative act. Hence, in the case of a sinner, the relation is constituted by a new creation in Christ Jesus. What, then, was the old creation, if it did not involve the constitution of the filial relation, as well as that of a servant? What regeneration, what new creation, would there be, were there not a generation, a creation? The terms *regeneration* and *new creation* are scriptural. It would seem that the condition to which we are restored by regeneration or new creation is one which man had, in a certain degree, previously held, and which he had lost.

There would appear also to be a distinction between what is natural and what is spiritual in man's original relation of a son to God. The natural relation is one which once constituted can never be destroyed. It is a fact incapable of ceasing to be. It is essential, not accidental. The relation which a son sustains to his human father, as a natural fact, can, from the nature of the case, never be changed. The son may be disinherited, disowned, cast out, in consequence of his bad conduct, but to a disgraceful end he will continue to be his father's son. Somebody's child he must be; he is not the child of nobody. In this purely natural sense, the sinner is a son of God. Even the heathen are his

offspring, as the apostle Paul acknowledges in his sermon on Mars Hill. Sinners and devils are sons in revolt — sons disinherited, excommunicated, reprobated, but still sons, under the indestructible obligation of nature to render filial obedience to God. A subject does not cease to be a subject of his monarch because he rebels. While going to execution for treason he is a subject still, under obligation to render obedience to his sovereign. So is it with a son.

There are two senses — and they are accidental, not essential — in which man by his fall ceased to be a son of God.

In the first place, he lost his spiritual life, and, therefore, ceased to be spiritually a son of God, and became, in this spiritual sense, a child of disobedience, a child of the devil. The nature of these expressions determines the sense in which the filial relation is regarded. Man never was produced, created, by disobedience or the devil, as he was produced, created, by God. The spiritual character of the moral agent is here depicted. Man voluntarily broke with God, and, so far as his own agency went, destroyed the tie which bound him to his Maker.

In the second place, man, by sin, ceased to be legally a son of God. His disobedience disinherited him. His rights were contingent upon continued holiness. That gone, they went with it. God disowned and excommunicated him. Thenceforward he became a child of *wrath*.

The prodigal *son* voluntarily departs from his *father's* house. He voluntarily severs the filial tie, so far as it is

possible for him to do so. He revolts, sets up for himself, apostatizes, links himself with strangers; yet, at the swine-troughs he says, "I will arise and go to *my father*." This is the Saviour's picture of our apostate nature. The natural relation of man to God as a Father remains. Spiritually and legally it has been destroyed. By grace, through faith and penitence, it may be spiritually and legally restored.

III.

The strongest point made by those who deny that Adam sustained the filial relation to God is, that moral government and moral discipline are incompatible with each other, if directed to the same individual. Adam certainly was under moral government; therefore, he was not under moral discipline.

1. It would appear to be obvious that moral government is a proximate genus under which moral discipline is a species. Is not discipline a sort of government? And is not moral discipline a sort of moral government? If so, it is clear that they are not generically distinct. And as the whole essence designated by the genus must enter into each of the species included under it, government, and government as moral, must be admitted to be the essence of discipline.

2. Moral government as generic may be regarded as distributable into the two species — moral government as retributive, and moral government as disciplinary. The question, fairly put, is not whether moral discipline is inconsistent with moral government, but whether it is inconsistent with retributive moral government — in

relation to the same moral agent. The question, then, is really, whether Adam could have existed under both these specific forms of moral government. The denial that he could must be proved.

3. But supposing it proved that he could not have existed under a retributive and disciplinary moral government at one and the same time, the further question arises, whether he was, strictly speaking, under discipline. Or, rather, the question first is, whether the relation of father and son necessarily involves the administration of government merely in its disciplinary form. May it not be that there is a wide difference between a son simply considered, and an adopted son?

4. But supposing, further, that such a possibility is disproved, may not the question still arise, whether in the case of a son whose obedience is contingent — that is, a son who is not confirmed in his father's regard — the disciplinary feature of moral government may not, to a certain extent, be mingled with that of retributive government?

All these suppositions must be squarely met by the deniers of Adam's filial relation before their position can be established.

5. In addition to these points another must be noticed. It is the wide difference between the application of moral government to a sinner, and to an innocent being.¹ What is predicable of one case is not necessarily predicable of the other. More strictly, all that is predicable of the one may not be predicable of the other. It is

¹ See Thornwell's *Coll. Writ.*, Vol. I., p. 262.

clear that no unpardoned sinner can be under a government of discipline. But that, of course, is a question foreign to the present argument. The only question is, whether Adam as innocent could have been under a disciplinary *regime*.

Now in regard to the question, whether retributive and disciplinary government may be contemporaneously exercised towards the same individual, the following views deserve consideration :

1. It is certainly conceivable that the same person may be at the same time both magistrate and father; and also that the relations of subject and son may co-exist in the same person.

(1) Human analogy, if it be legitimate to appeal to it here — and how can it be excluded altogether? — proves the possibility of the case supposed.

(2) The facts of redemption prove it. First, Christ was both subject and Son. Secondly, believers are both servants and sons. If so, God in each of these instances combines the relations of ruler and Father. Now, either the ruler is sunk in the father; or, the father is sunk in the ruler; or, they are separate, but related. It would be unscriptural to adopt either of the first two of these suppositions. It remains that the last is the only one which is scriptural. It is difficult to see that, while this coexistence of the two relations, in actual exercise, is a fact in the economy of redemption, it was impossible under the scheme of natural religion.

2. The relation to law and will is not peculiar to a subject or servant; it is also sustained by a son. Surely there are such things as parental law and parental will.

If there be such a thing as parental government, this is obvious.

3. The authority of a ruler and that of a father may not only terminate on the same person, but on the same course of conduct or the same specific act.

4. Leaving out of account the case of adoption as an element in God's dealings with man, which has singular and peculiar characteristics, it is clearly conceivable that the rule of a father may, to a certain extent, be administered retributively towards a son. Its punitive inflictions may be final and irremediable. It is hard to imagine how this can be denied, in the case of a son whose obedience is contingent, whose rights are not confirmed, and whose standing is conditioned upon the maintenance of filial integrity. At least, those measures which are ultimate and remediless, if not in their own proper nature retributive, are so to all intents and purposes. They have the same effect as retribution; and they are all the more severe because of the closeness of the relation which has been disregarded, and the peculiar imperativeness of the obligations which have been violated. The inflictions rise in severity in proportion to the strength of the motives which have been resisted.

5. Even in the case of the adopted child of God in the sphere of redemption, the principle of distributive justice is, in a certain sense and to a certain extent, employed — that is, as an element of God's fatherly rule over his own house. This follows from the doctrine of degrees of glory. That doctrine is clearly enunciated by our Saviour in the parable of the pounds, and is taught elsewhere in the New Testament. The degree

of reward to be attained by each saint is determined by the measure of his fidelity. The principle upon which the relative distribution will proceed cannot be anything else than justice — the justice of God, not as he is ruler simply, but as he is fatherly ruler. That any reward can be attained at all is due to the principle of grace; but the attainment of reward being guaranteed by grace, the degree of the reward will be assigned by justice. It is true that so far as the believer in Christ is concerned, justice will never operate as rectoral and retributive to the exclusion of all reward, and the infliction of any punishment. That function of justice is rendered impossible by the operation of redeeming grace.

But the question is, not whether some special features of distributive justice — penal features — exist in relation to the believer, but whether the principle of distributive justice holds in regard to him in any respect. For the ground is maintained that distributive justice as the peculiar principle of moral government is excluded from disciplinary rule. But, if it must be conceded that it does, in any degree, operate in the case of the *adopted* child of God, that position is untenable. And then it may be argued that the principle of distributive justice is not necessarily incompatible with moral discipline; and *a fortiori* that if Adam had sustained the filial relation to God distributive justice may have entered, must have entered, into the discipline to which he was subjected. Surely, if the principle of distributive justice is applicable to the adopted son of God, it was not inapplicable to a son who was not yet confirmed, but whose relative status was contingent upon the preser-

vation of filial integrity. And so, as far as appears, there is no just reason for denying that it could, in such a case, have inflicted punishment as well as have bestowed reward.

IV.

It has already been shown that moral government is generic, and that it contains under it the two species, retributive and disciplinary government. They are both moral, but are distinguished from each other by peculiar properties. Now, there are two distinct questions which are apt to be confounded.

1. There may be the question, whether the two relations of servant and son may co-exist in the same person. This is a question which can be decided in the affirmative by an appeal to the facts of Scripture. Christ was both a servant and a Son. The believer in Christ is both a servant and a son. The co-existence is a fact in certain cases. There is, therefore, no impossibility which opposes its realization. Adam, consequently, may have combined these two relations in his individual person. Whether he actually did or not, is a question to be settled by the testimony of Scripture, either explicitly or by good and necessary inference. If it can be shown from that source that he did, no apparent contradictoriness between the two relations that is suggested by reason can weigh against the scriptural proof of their actual co-existence.

2. There may be also another question — namely, whether the same person can at the same time be related to retributive (or distributive) justice and fatherly justice, to retributive government and disciplinary

government. Now, it would be shown that this is not impossible, if a single case can be proved by Scripture to have actually involved these two relations. Such a case we unquestionably have in Christ. He was under the retributive government of God, for "he hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, having been made a curse for us." But he was also a subject of discipline, for "we have not an high priest who cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." His discipline was not corrective, for there was nothing in him to be corrected who was "holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners;" but it was perfective, for he was the Captain of our salvation who was perfected through suffering. He was disciplined in the school of trial, that he might be able to sympathize with his people as they pass through their afflictions. This case, then, proves that there is no impossibility that the same person should at the same time sustain a two-fold relation to retributive and disciplinary moral government.

In inquiring whether Adam may have sustained this two-fold relation, we must be careful to distinguish his case from that of the sinner unredeemed and unregenerate, and also that of the sinner redeemed and regenerate. It is impossible to suppose that the unredeemed sinner is under fatherly discipline, for the simple reason that he is under the curse of a broken law. Discipline, as far as a sinful being is concerned, is from its very nature remedial, and inasmuch as God has provided no remedy for the sinner except through the redemption achieved by his Son, it is evident that the sinner apart

from Christ is simply under the government of law in its retributive and punitive aspects.

On the other hand, it is equally impossible to suppose that a sinner redeemed and regenerate should be under moral government contemplated as retributive, in the sense of penal. His substitute has fully satisfied in his behalf the demands of retributive justice and of the law which reflects it, and he is discharged. He can, therefore, be regarded as being simply under moral government in its disciplinary aspect.

The case of Adam in innocence was out of analogy to the sinner, however conditioned, whether unredeemed or redeemed. He was neither subject to the penal measures of retributive government, nor the corrective discipline of fatherly government. He was, as innocent, an accepted servant and son of God, neither exposed to the curse of the Judge, nor to the chastisements of the Father. But there is no impossibility in supposing him to have been under moral government, both as retributive and disciplinary. He was, as a subject and servant, under obligation to render perfect obedience to the moral law as the rule of God's retributive government. That is denied by no orthodox thinker. But he was also under a discipline which was intended to perfect him in the discharge of filial obedience to the law as the rule of God's fatherly government. In both respects his obedience was contingent. He might, in one respect, have secured the reward of justification as a subject and servant; and, in the other, the reward of confirmation as a son. In the first case, he would have been confirmed in God's rectoral regards; in the second, he would have

been confirmed in God's parental regards. He was subject to temptation, but one may be tempted to disobedience as a son, as well as a servant, and the trial may have been adapted to his probation in both of these respects. Against this view several difficulties have been urged.

(1) It is contended that the co-existent relations of the same person to retributive disciplinary government are inconsistent with each other. This difficulty is professedly founded upon the nature and ends of these sorts of government. But it has been shown that in an actual, historic case, these relations did co-exist. That is sufficient to show that they are not intrinsically inconsistent. Dr. Thornwell says, in distinguishing the relation of a servant from that of a son, that in the former "the law is looked upon more as an expression of *will* — its authority is prominent. In the case of a son, the prominent notion is that of imitation — 'imitators of God as dear children.'" But, I humbly submit that two distinct questions seem here to be confounded: the one, Why must obedience be rendered? The other, How must obedience be rendered? Whether the person be a servant or a son, the answer to the first question must be, Because the authority of God requires it; in one case, the authority of God as magistrate, in the other, the authority of God as father. In both cases, there is the obligation to obey springing from the expression of a superior will. The fact that the element of will is more prominent in one than the other does not destroy the obligation to obey in the case of the son. The authority may be brought to bear in different aspects and degrees,

but the authority exists. And the same may be said to some extent as to the question, How is obedience to be rendered? The principle which grounds it and should regulate its expression, in either case — that of an innocent servant and an innocent son, is love; for the greatest of teachers has summed up obedience in love, and an inspired apostle has said that love is the fulfilling of the law. It is true that that great principle may operate in different degrees upon a servant and upon a son; but the principle remains the same. Nor can it be shown that the imitation of God, as a duty and a privilege, is confined to the obedience of a son. Surely a servant may, and is bound to, imitate the virtues of his master.

But if the ground be taken that, on God's side, the principles upon which he proceeds, and the methods which he pursues, are different in the respective cases of retributive and disciplinary government — so different that they cannot be harmonized in relation to the same subject of rule, I answer, that it is admitted all this holds good in reference to sinners. The question now is, however, not in regard to sinners, but to man in innocence. The relations in the two cases are so widely different that they are not susceptible of common predication, so far as the matter in hand is concerned. On the supposition that Adam had maintained his integrity during his time of trial, it is conceded that he would have been justified, that is, confirmed as a servant, upon the principle of retributive justice. He would have secured the promised reward in consequence of personal obedience. Now, on the supposition that he

had stood, on what principle would he have been adopted — if adopted at all — except upon the same principle of retributive justice? Would he not have secured, on the ground of personal obedience, the promised reward of confirmation in the family of God? To say that he would have been justified legally, but adopted graciously, would be to destroy the nature of the covenant of works; for surely those who say that he would have been adopted, hold that he would have attained that great reward in consequence of the provisions of that covenant. The principle and the methods upon which God would have proceeded would have been the same, if we suppose that Adam would have been justified, that is, had ceased to be contingently related to God as a servant, and that he would have been adopted, that is, ceased to be contingently related to God as a son. It is also clear that God exercised love as well as justice toward man in innocence.

It is said that the *ends* proposed by the two species of government are different and inconsistent with each other. But again the different postures of the subjects of rule must be kept in view. One cannot be the subject of a penalty and of fatherly discipline at the same time. But one contingently related to the penalty of law may be conceived as expecting the reward of legal obedience, and at the same time expecting the fruits of parental discipline — discipline, not as corrective, but as perfective. To say that “the end of moral discipline is the improvement of the subject; the end of moral government is to maintain the authority of law,” is not to prove that both these ends were not contemplated in God’s rule

over man in innocence. What is there incompatible between them?

It is contended that they differ in their *penalties* — in the one, the correction of faults, in the other, the punishment of crimes. But supposing man in innocence to have been contingently related to God as son as well as servant, the disobedience of the son would have been a crime of the deepest dye and deserving of severest punishment. The faults of God's redeemed children are crimes, and crimes all the more aggravated because of the filial relation, but the reason why they are not visited with retributive penalties is that Christ bore the penalty in full for them. They are not, like Adam in innocence, contingently related to the divine favor.

It is further urged that "righteousness in the one is a qualification, in the other a right." How this can be maintained by those who admit that Adam might have been adopted, it is difficult to see. In his case, the qualification for and the right to adoption would have coincided. The covenant imparted to him the right, not originally possessed, to qualify himself for justification and adoption alike — for confirmation in God's rectoral and paternal favor.

(2) The difficulty is raised that if Adam were a son of God by creation, it would be incompetent to say that he might have been adopted, since adoption supposes the transfer of its subject from one relation to another; but that the way was clear for his adoption if, in innocence, he were simply a servant. He would by adoption have been transferred from the relation of servant to that of son. The first obvious answer which may be

made to this position is, that if Adam had by adoption been removed from the relation of a servant to that of a son, he would have ceased to be a servant. His relation to God's rectoral government would have been destroyed. The consequence refutes the doctrine. Further, justification, as distinguished from adoption, would, on this supposition, have been impossible; for it is a servant or subject who is capable of justification.

In the second place, it may be doubted whether the application of the term *adoption* be strictly correct as to Adam's possible reward. He would have been confirmed in the fatherly favor of God. The believer in Christ is with strict propriety affirmed to be adopted, since he is formally and authoritatively translated from the family of Satan into the family of God: his relations are changed. But on the supposition that Adam was a son, as he was, in innocence, contingently related to God in that capacity, had he stood he would have been removed from that contingent relation into one fixed beyond contingency, and such a change would in some sense have been due to adoption. Confirmation of his standing in God's house would have ensued, and that is one of the essential features of adoption. This view saves us from the supposition implicated in the other doctrine — namely, that Adam would have ceased to be a servant of God, had he been elevated to the condition of a son. It represents his possible confirmation as twofold: that of a servant and that of a son. And in this regard his condition, had he been confirmed, would have been precisely analogous to that of believers in Christ, who are both servants and sons, established beyond

contingency in the rectoral and paternal favor of God.

(3) It is objected, that the effect of creation is simply to constitute the relation of a subject of moral government, not that also of a son. It is forgotten by those who urge this objection that regeneration makes us new creatures, and as such new subjects of God's moral government, but at the same time, as a creative act constitutes us sons of God; for he who is born of God is surely God's son. But as this re-creation does not of itself — that is, apart from adoption — fix us in God's family beyond contingency, so neither did the creation of man as innocent, supposing it to have made him a son, confirm him in the fatherly favor of God. If the new creation restores us to sonship, why could not the first creation have instituted sonship? And if the sonship restored in the new creation needs to be confirmed, and is susceptible of confirmation by adoption, why should not the same be true of the first?

(4) It may be objected, that if Adam had been a son of God, the filial relation would have, as the higher, absorbed and rendered superfluous the lower one of servant. This is a mere speculation, and it is vacated of force by the fact that believers in Christ do not lose the relation of servants of God in consequence of being sons of God. It is true that the one relation is higher than the other, but it does not displace it. They are not merely servants, but they are servants still. Henceforth, said the Lord Jesus to his disciples, "I call you not servants, but friends." Did he mean to say that they did not continue to be his servants? Why, then, did

the apostles, in their inspired epistles, term themselves servants of Christ? "Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ"; so begins his second epistle; and Paul, in the opening passage of Romans calls himself "a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle." If this was true of the apostles, why should Adam's filial relation have swallowed up and destroyed that of a servant?

It may be replied to this, that the apostles were servants only officially. But, in the first place, the concession is made in the objection itself that they were in some sense servants, notwithstanding the fact that they were sons. In the second place, if God remain the ruler of men after they become children by his grace, the employment of them in specific service of an official character is exactly in harmony with the natural and indestructible obligation which characterizes them in the general. Let us suppose that a king appoints his son to discharge some official service. The son could not plead his filial relation as inconsistent with the duty thus assigned him by his father. For the appointment would be made by the father not as father, but as sovereign; and the general obligation arising from the relation of the son as subject would underlie and enforce his specific duty to perform the official service supposed to be assigned him. Angels might have been commissioned as apostles, and in that case the special office laid upon them would have grounded its sanctions primarily in the relation of subjects they sustain to God and the obligation arising out of it.

The objection proceeds upon the unwarranted assump-

tion that the apostles ceased to be subjects of the divine government when they were constituted sons of God by adoption, and that the obligation upon them to perform apostolic service sprang alone from arbitrary appointment. It is true that they could not have come under this special obligation had they not been commissioned to perform so special a service. But having been commissioned to discharge it, the law of obedience in the general enforced the performance of the particular duty. Adam could not have felt the obligation resting on him as a federal head and representative of his seed, had not God appointed him to that momentous office. But having been appointed, the law of obedience embedded in the very essence of his nature obliged him to the discharge of that specific trust.

It will not be denied that the apostles, and all officers of the church as well, received their appointments from Christ as king of Zion. But all the adopted children of God are subjects of Christ's kingdom. And however the relations of children and subjects may seem to differ, they certainly co-exist in the case of every believer. God's family is precisely Christ's kingdom. This is one of the paradoxes of the gospel, no more difficult to apprehend than the declaration that sin and holiness co-exist in the personality of the believer, or than those which Paul, in the fourth chapter of second Corinthians predicates of himself and his fellow-apostles. The adopted children of God the Father are the subjects and servants of Christ as mediatorial king. The laws by which they are governed are God's laws administered in the hands of the mediatorial sovereign. For "we are not without

law to God, but under the law to Christ." The primal authority is not in Christ as mediator; it is in God essentially considered. But Christ as mediator has by his work acquired the right under the covenant to dispense these laws, as conditioned by redemption, to those whom the Father gave to him, and whom he has purchased for himself by his blood. This particular section of God's subjects are, in consequence of the mediatorial work of Christ, peculiarly related to God through him. Through Christ they are introduced into the favor of God as ruler, and at the same time into the regard of God as Father. To the rectoral government of God they stand related through Christ as priest and king; to the fatherly rule of God they stand related through Christ as their brother. As the subjects of Christ they are the accepted subjects of God; as the brethren of Christ they are the accepted children of God. The family of God, then, is coincident with the kingdom of Christ. They are the same thing viewed under different relations. The conclusion is generally that believers are both children and subjects or servants; and particularly that the apostles were not servants of Christ merely because of their appointment to office.

In the third place, the language in which Peter and Paul speak of themselves opposes the supposition that they were servants simply as apostles. Peter calls himself a servant of Christ and an apostle, evidently implying that he was a servant before he was an apostle, and that his apostolic service was superadded to his service considered as generic. Paul still more clearly intimates

the same thing when he styles himself "a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle."

In the fourth place, this question is settled by the explicit testimony of Scripture. There can be no dispute about the teaching of the Old Testament. Believers are continually called servants of God. God calls Moses his servant, and Moses styles Abraham, Isaac and Jacob servants of God. So of the other Old Testament saints; and I agree with Calvin that the Old Testament saints were *adopted* sons of God. The New Testament is equally explicit. Jesus calls his disciples and all his followers servants. "Who then is that faithful and wise servant whom his Lord when he cometh shall find so doing?" "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." The apostles didactically express the same view. "But now being made free from sin and become servants to God." "He that is called being free is Christ's servant." "As free, and not using your liberty for a cloke of maliciousness, but as the servants of God." "To show unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass." "Hath avenged the blood of his servants." "Praise our God, all ye his servants." "There shall be no more curse, and his servants shall serve him." All believers are called the servants of God in this world, and are declared to be his servants in the world to come. They are, therefore, servants and sons now and forever.

It is objected also to the view I have presented, that man can only come into filial relationship to God by virtue of union to Christ, and a participation by adoption of his sonship. Adam, consequently, could not have

been a son of God, for he was not united to Christ. To this I reply:

(1) That this view cannot be urged without destroying the theory in regard to man's relation, in innocence, to God, which is held by the objectors. For they hold that had he stood during his period of probation, he would have been not only justified, but adopted. Either, then, he would have been adopted without union to the Son of God, and the objector contradicts himself; or he would have been adopted in consequence of it, and he answers himself. On the first supposition he contradicts himself, for he asserts that no man can be a son of God without union to the divine Son, and yet that Adam might have been, and all his posterity might have shared the relation with him. On the second supposition he answers himself, for if Adam might have become an adopted son of God by virtue of union with the divine Son, he gives up his doctrine that the incarnation of Christ was the indispensable condition of man's becoming a son of God.

(2) Those who deny that Adam was in innocence a son of God ought to exclude adoption from the proposed reward of the covenant of works, and limit it to justification. All that the covenant propounded as reward was life — indefectible life; that is, confirmation in holiness and happiness. Now, if he were simply a servant, all that can be fairly collected from this promise was confirmation as a servant. This is clear, unless it can be shown by other testimonies of Scripture that adoption was an element of the promised reward. That, I am disposed to think, cannot be done. One fails to see how,

upon the hypothesis of man's bare relation in innocence to God as a servant, he could have secured adoption as the reward of obedience.

But on the supposition that he was a son as well as a servant, standing contingently in each relation, his fulfilment of his probation would have secured him life in respect to each of them — that is, confirmation both as a servant and a son — indefectible holiness and happiness in both relations. Confirmation as a son might not have been precisely adoption; but in taking that view we would be relieved of the necessity of proving from Scripture that adoption, strictly considered, was a part of the reward promised in the covenant of works. And in that way adoption would be conceded all the glory which belongs to it as a benefit secured to his people by the ever-blessed Son of God: a formal translation of believers in him from the condition of children of the devil to that of children of God.

It may be contended that had Adam been a son of God, as well as servant, this inconsistency would emerge, that he would have secured justification, in one relation, as a debt, and that he would have inherited the blessing of adoption as a fruit of mere grace. An inheritance, this objection assumes, cannot be won.

I answer that there is here a confusion — and it is a very common one — between the status of a covenant head and representative on the one hand, and that of his constituents on the other. It is plain that if Adam had stood during his time of trial, his posterity would not have secured justification on the ground of their conscious and subjective obedience to law. They would

have inherited justification. It would have been the bestowment of grace to them. So would it have been also in regard to their confirmation as children of God. That is certainly true of Christ's seed.

But so far as the representatives were concerned, it may be argued, from the analogy between them, that as Christ by his obedience won the blessing of adoption for his seed, the same might have been true in the case of Adam. In either case the inheritance was suspended upon the fulfilment of the condition of the covenant under which each acted. But the inheritance secured by the obedience of the representative would become a gratuitous boon to his constituents, so far as their own conscious and subjective agency is concerned.

V.

Dr. Candlish¹ and Dr. Thornwell maintain that the fact of creation does not render God, in any proper sense, the Father of man; but that the relation which man sustained to God was simply that of a subject and servant.

1. Now, it must be admitted that these relations are not exclusive of each other. Christ, in the estate of his humiliation, was both a Son and a servant; and the saint is likewise both a son and a servant at one and the same time.

2. It does not follow from the mere existence of the filial relation, that it implies indefectible obedience, or

¹ These remarks were written before Dr. Crawford's reply to Dr. Candlish was seen.

confirmed favor with God. Contingency may characterize the obedience of a son, as well as that of a servant, unless he has been confirmed in standing by a federal act. Each of these relations may receive confirmation as conditioned upon perfect obedience during a limited time of probation. Both Dr. Candlish and Dr. Thornwell appear to hold that from the nature of the relation, the standing of a son in his father's favor is uncontingent, that he could never lapse finally from his father's regards and be by him condemned. This is certainly true of the *adopted* children of God in Christ Jesus, but to my mind, it is not proved to be true of one who is a son by nature. These eminent writers confound natural and adoptive sonship.

3. On the supposition that man originally sustained both of these relations to God, the fall involved him in the double guilt of a disobedient servant and a disobedient son; and in that view of the case there would seem to have been peculiar fitness in a constitution of recovering grace, by which the substitute who should by his obedience secure the re-establishment of the sinner in God's favor should obey as a son and a servant alike. That was the case in the obedience of Christ.

4. Dr. Candlish appears to admit, and Dr. Thornwell definitely contends, that had Adam maintained his integrity during the probation assigned him, he would have been elevated to the condition of a son, and that this elevation would have been accomplished by adoption. Dr. Candlish thinks that the holy angels *have been* admitted to the relation of sons by adoption. Now, there is nothing inconceivable in the supposition that Adam

was a son of God, by nature, because he was eligible to sonship by adoption; for this reason, that if we can indicate any one instance in which God *has* done this, viz., elevated to a higher degree of sonship by adoption one who was previously in a lower degree of sonship by nature, we destroy the antecedent improbability which may be supposed to lie in the way of this being done. In the case of each regenerated sinner, God does this. He elevates one who by a spiritual birth is made his child to a position in which he is formally recognized and treated as a child, and authoritatively invested with an inviolable heirship in God's family and with all the distinctive rights of children in his house. There is, therefore, nothing in the nature of things which suggests a valid probability against the supposition that Adam may have been made God's son by creation, any more than there is such a probability against our being made God's children by a new creation. The presumption would seem to lie in favor of that supposition on the ground of analogy; and also from the consideration that it is likely that in God's dealings with his creatures the natural relation of sonship precedes the adoptive — *i. e.*, that God only adopts into his family those to whom he has previously imparted the *nature* and the *disposition* of children; adoption not, in the first instance, constituting the filial relation (that is, done by creation either natural or supernatural), but authoritatively and formally recognizing it.

It would appear that the notion of a natural filial relation is the fundamental conception of that relation. In the order of thought and of nature, it comes first, and

the adoptive filial relation second, as subordinate to it and grounded in it. The adoptive may actually secure greater honor and privilege, and in that sense may be conceived as the greater, but the very notion of it springs from the natural. Indeed, it would seem to be impossible to conceive the adoptive without the previous conception of the natural. So beyond a doubt is it in regard to these relations *as human*; the only question is whether this holds when the human being is considered as sustaining the filial relation to God. Now, the only way in which we, aside from revelation, could form the notion of the parental and filial relationship between God and man is through the analogy of human experience — just as we actually form our conceptions of God's attributes and relations in general from the existence of some likeness to them in ourselves. In the case of the first man it was different, but we cannot legitimately argue from his case to ours in this matter, in view of the fact that he enjoyed an immediate revelation from God. God, for example, told the first man that he was his creature and his subject; and if he were also a son, God informed him of the fact. Then when the human relations were historically developed, man acquired clearer conceptions of what had been only matters of divine testimony. First he believed; and then he empirically knew.

The probable inference from all this is, that Adam first sustained the natural filial relation before the possibility of his adoption could be realized.

5. Dr. Candlish contends that "the two relations [of servant and son] cannot be conceived of as originally

combined." Why not? If the conception is impossible — that is, if we cannot conceive the possibility of the fact — how is it that the combination of the two relations is a fact in the case of Christ, as mediator, and in the case of the believer in Christ? Dr. Candlish admits the co-existence of the two relations in the same person, in each of these instances. There is, then, *e concessio*, no impossibility in the nature of things that the two relations should co-exist in one person. Why may not one person sustain two distinct, but associated relations? If this be so, it must be shown that in Adam's case there was some peculiarity which created the impossibility. What was that peculiarity? If it cannot be indicated, then Adam's case must fall under the operation of the principle that it is possible that the two relations may co-exist in the same person — a principle which has been actually exemplified in the case of Christ and believers in him.

6. Dr. Candlish farther says that Adam must have been dealt with either as a guilty subject or an undutiful son. Why? Why may he not have been dealt with as guilty both of filial and servile disobedience? And why may not his disobedience as a son have aggravated his disobedience as a subject? As the same person may be both magistrate and father, so the same person may be both subject and son. The cases are correlative. In the latter case disobedience would both be that of a subject and son, and in the former, punishment would both be by a ruler and a father.

7. Dr. Candlish assumes that in the case of filial disobedience the only punishment that could be inflicted

would be fartherly discipline, and as that is not destructive, the co-existence of it with retributive punishment is impossible. This would require proof. If, without extraordinary arrangements, the standing of a son would be contingent, then, without them, the result of filial disobedience would be permanent. Dr. Candlish begs the question when he applies to the natural filial relation what is peculiar to the adoptive.

8. The doctrine of Calvin, enounced in the passage prefixed to the work of Dr. Candlish, that God is a father to angels or men, only with respect to his only-begotten Son, cannot be pleaded as supporting the view that neither angels nor men can be, in any sense, considered as sons of God except by adoption. Lord Bacon, in his confession of faith, holds that God cannot create, or hold intercourse with creatures, except with respect to his Son as mediator. With that view Calvin appeared to coincide; and in this passage all he can be fairly interpreted as teaching is, that the creature can sustain no filial relation to God apart from some connection with the Son of God. If, for example, the angels, at creation, were sons of God, or Adam at creation was a son of God, they were not so without some respect to the only-begotten Son. But this does not necessarily involve such an adoption as takes place in the case of the saint whose human nature the Son assumed, and who, in consequence of union to him, is admitted into God's family.

9. Dr. Candlish remarks (Supplement, p. 162) that "the popish dogma [of the *donum superadditum*] lies rather on the side of those who advocate an original sonship, if they allow it to have been compromised or

forfeited by the fall." This does not follow. Whatever endowments God was pleased to bestow upon man in innocency, although expressions of his grace, were not supernatural endowments. They were a part of the furniture of his original nature. For example, all Calvinists admit that the addition of covenant arrangements to a scheme of pure moral government—of naked law—was a signal mark of God's kindness which did not result from the necessities of man's original relation to him. This was the fruit of grace, but they would not allow that this additional arrangement, although supernaturally revealed, was supernatural in itself considered. It was an element of natural religion; and man's natural ability was all it required. So, if God were pleased to recognize Adam as a son and to confer upon him the endowments proper to the filial relation, the case would still have been in the region of the natural and not of the supernatural. The promise of adoption would have been supernaturally revealed; but its actual attainment would not have demanded supernaturally imparted strength. The very question is, Was the relation of sonship, in some sense, natural? If it be answered in the affirmative, then all the gifts and endowments bestowed on Adam in that relation were natural. Let us suppose with Dr. Thornwell (and Dr. Candlish *appears* to agree with him) that had Adam maintained his obedience during the time of his trial, he would have been adopted into the nearer relation of a son, still this higher boon of adopting grace would not have been supernatural. It would have been in the line of the natural. The *nature* of Adam, as it was, would have been developed, elevated,

confirmed; there would have been no necessity for the introduction of a supernatural element. The whole case would have occurred under the operation of the covenant of works. That being admitted, the supernatural element is excluded. That element we are accustomed to confine to the covenant of grace, and surely had Adam been confirmed in life and adopted into God's family, that result would not have been due to the introduction of the covenant of grace. All would have happened as legitimately actualizing the possibilities of the covenant of works.

The whole difficulty arises from Dr. Candlish's limitation of the idea of sonship to adoption. If Adam had been adopted at the first, and then have been supposed to have fallen from that relation, the consequences depicted by Dr. Candlish would ensue. But the case is an un-supposable one. None but papists hold that Adam was, in innocency, an adopted son of God. The only question is whether he was, by creation, made a son of God with the possibility of confirmation in that relation conditioned upon perfect obedience. The two states are different. Just as in the case of the saint, there is first the making of him a child by regeneration—re-begetting—and then the adopting of him as a child into God's family. In the latter case, the adoption is not conditioned upon his obedience, as in Adam's case. The case is supernatural. The adoption of the believer is conditioned upon Christ's obedience, and, therefore, to him, is not contingent at all, or even conditional in the strict sense. The only condition to him is faith, and that, as a gift of God won by Christ for him, is certain to be per-

formed. But the element of contingency or conditionality is accidental. What is important to be observed is that there may be sonship previous to adoption, and that sonship by creation or begetting is one thing, and sonship by adoption is another thing. One is in order to the other, but they are not the same. Adoption *formalizes* the previous *real* relation of sonship. It recognizes it, imposes upon it new sanctions, invests it with new rights, and fences it with guarantees of security.

The reference by Dr. Candlish to Witsius on the Covenants (Vol. I., Bk. I., Chap. III., § 26) confirms this view of Dr. Candlish's position. *All* that Witsius says is in opposition to the Romanist position, maintained by Bellarmin, that Adam in innocency was an *adopted* son of God.

It is curious that Witsius admits a sort of sonship by nature (Vol. I., Bk. III., Chap. X., "Of Adoption," § 3). "But they [believers] are not so [sons of God] only on this account that God, as *Creator* [italics his] gave them being and life (Mal. ii. 10), and as *Preserver* supports and provides them with all necessaries (Acts xvii. 25, 28)." Here the word "only" is an explicit declaration of the author's opinion that in *one* sense men are children of God who are not in another. They are children by nature, but may not be by regeneration and adoption. And he plainly teaches that those who are regenerated and adopted were previously, in some sense, children of God. What becomes of Dr. Candlish's citation of Witsius' authority?

10. Dr. Candlish (Supp., page 27) holds that the sin of Adam is adequately described as a "transgression of

law." This may be admitted. He then affirms that such a sin is possible only in the case of a subject of law; and that if filial sin were committed by Adam, no atonement has ever been made for it, *i. e.*, for the sin as filial sin. Now, the former of these positions may be safely admitted, and yet it would not follow that Adam may not have sinned as a son as well as a subject, simply considered. What is law? The rule expressing to an inferior the will of his superior. This is its generic signification; but under this are included several species, united under the genus, but differentiated from each other. A father may command as well as a ruler or magistrate. If the father has the right to command, the son is under obligation to obey. If he disobey, he transgresses law. Now it is conceivable that the rights of magistrate and father may unite in the same person, and it is conceivable, also, that the same material act may be commanded by that person both as magistrate and as father. In that case disobedience is a transgression both of rectoral and parental law.

But, if the ground be taken that in such a case, the father is really a ruler and the son a subject, and so the act is a transgression by a subject of the law of the ruler; this may be freely granted, and then the question is settled. For, *ex hypothesi*, the father is the ruler, and disobedience to the ruler is disobedience to the father. Now, if it be supposed that Adam was a son as well as a subject of God, then, without some express information given him that the prohibition as to the tree of knowledge issued from God as king, and not as father, his disobedience was to God as sovereign and as father in

the same act. God's authority in both respects would have bound him and his sin would have been a transgression of the law that obliged him as a subject and as a son alike. What is there in the nature of the filial relation of man to God which exempts filial disobedience from the guiltiness of sin as a transgression of law? And without redemptive provision made to meet the case what can save the perpetrator of filial disobedience to God from a penal and everlasting doom? In the case of the transgressions of God's adopted sons in Christ, nothing screens them from the hell which they *intrinsically* merit, but the provisions of the covenant of redemption operating through the blood and intercessions of their great high priest.

It is difficult to understand Dr. Candlish's position in this matter — to harmonize him with himself. First, his reasoning is, sin is the transgression of the law. None but subjects can transgress law. Adam's sin was a transgression of the law. Therefore, Adam sinned simply as a subject. Whatever may be thought of the truth of the argument, the meaning is clear.

But, secondly, he says, if Adam committed filial sin, then no atonement has been made for it. Now, if filial sin can only be removed by atonement, then filial sin is a transgression of law; for atonement, Dr. Candlish contends, is only possible for transgressions of law. So it would appear that sons, as well as subjects simply, may be transgressors of law. And so, farther, if Adam was a son his sin *as son* was a transgression of law. And if atonement was made for all his transgressions of law, it was made for his filial sin. Dr. Candlish's positions

do not hang together; or they have been misconceived. His book is referred to as evidence against the latter supposition.

Moreover, Dr. Candlish appears to hold that a son who is guilty of disobedience to his father is the subject of fatherly discipline only. Retribution is out of the question. This is simply extraordinary, when God is considered as the father. The Doctor is not at liberty to confound matters, which are distinct, by arbitrarily assuming that the only possible sort of son is an adopted son. He must be recalled to definition. What is sonship? is a question he has not answered. He quietly assumes that it is the result of adoption alone. The assumption cannot pass muster. But suppose that if Adam had been a son and had committed filial sin, there would have been necessary an atonement rendered by a son in order to expiate the sins of a son — was not Christ a Son as well as a servant in offering atonement? So Dr. Candlish himself holds. *Where is the difficulty?*

11. Admit that Adam was a son under the conditions of a servant in regard to his confirmation, and the difficulty appearing to encumber the hypothesis of his filial relation would disappear. He was a *minor*; and the condition of his attaining majority as a son with all the rights belonging to it was the maintenance of his integrity in God's house during the time of trial. Failing that, he would be cast out and excommunicated. He was an *heir*; and the condition of his actually possessing the inheritance was perfect obedience during the assigned probation. Failing that, he would be disinherited.

The case of Adam in this respect somewhat resembled that of the Old Testament believers — that is, in the fact of immaturity of both sonship and heirship. They like Adam were minors and heirs, and so, as Paul says in the fourth chapter of Galatians, scarcely differed from servants. Paul does not state that they were simply servants. On the contrary, he distinctly states that they were sons and heirs; but they were minor sons and heirs under a peculiar bondage to tutors and governors until the time for attaining majority and fully possessing the inheritance should come. In this respect their case was like Adam's. He was a minor son and heir. But in another, and an important and obvious respect, the two cases were entirely unlike. The attainment of majority and the actual possession of the inheritance, in Adam's case, was conditioned upon a perfect legal obedience during a specified probation. In the case of the Old Testament believers there was a perfect absence of any such condition. Their full realization of the promised blessings was conditioned upon Christ's perfect obedience; and, therefore, there was in their case no such contingency as obtained in Adam's.

There is also another respect in which the two cases widely differed. The Old Testament believers were minor heirs not because they did not in any degree actually possess the promised blessings — the inheritance. They did in some degree enter upon it. They were the regenerated children of God, and I am disposed to think that they were also his adopted children. They must have been regenerated, or they would have had no spiritual life, and in that case, they could not have been

believers, since faith is a fruit and function of the spiritual life. But being believers, they were justified. That is plain. There is, however, no greater difficulty in supposing them adopted than in admitting that they were justified. The difficulty in each case is that Christ had not yet appeared. His obedience was not yet rendered; and his obedience in the flesh unto death was the only ground upon which they could be received to God's favor either as sovereign or as father. They believed the promise of God which guaranteed the reality of that future obedience, and were justified in anticipation of the actual occurrence of the great facts of redemption. Why not adopted in the same way? But though justified and adopted, they were under bondage, and the full enjoyment of the liberties and privileges of the New Testament believers were not, and perhaps could not have been, conferred upon them. The spirit of the servant was more prominent in them than the spirit of the adopted child — of the subject rather than of the son. In Adam's case, there was no justification and no adoption. They waited in certain assurance that the full inheritance would be theirs. He waited in uncertainty. He might never attain to it. And so it actually was.

SUBSEQUENT REMARKS UPON DR. CANDLISH'S POSITION.

1. Dr. Candlish concedes that Adam was *potentially* a son of God. If by this mode of expression he means that Adam was possessed of the germ of sonship, which needed to be developed, and might have been developed, by the circumstances by which he was environed, by the

education to which he was subjected, and by the promissory provisions of the covenant of works — one cannot but think that he gives up the question. For his opponents do not contend that Adam was endowed with sonship in the fullest and richest sense of the term, but hold that it depended upon his fidelity during the time of trial assigned him whether he would attain to it in its highest form — whether he would be confirmed in his relation as a son, and fixed forever with his posterity in God's paternal regards.

If he means by Adam's potential sonship merely his capability of becoming a son, of passing out of the condition of a subject and servant in which he was created into a wholly new and different condition — namely, that of a son — the concession has no value. It is really nothing more than what he is understood to affirm: that Adam was created simply a subject and servant, and not a son in any sense; but that he might have been elevated by adoption into the relation of a son. The apparent admission exercises no modifying influence upon the question, but leaves it precisely as before.

2. The position that had Adam stood during his time of trial he would have been *adopted* as a son of God is out of analogy to any definite teaching of the Scriptures concerning the nature and office of adoption; and this in two respects:

(1) The doctrine of the New Testament is that, in the order of production, regeneration precedes adoption, and is in order to it. "But as many as received him, to them gave he power (the right or privilege) to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:

which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." (John i. 12, 13.) Here we are taught that upon those who received Christ by faith was conferred the authority, right, privilege, to become the sons of God. But we are also told that those who believed were born of God. They were regenerated in order to exercise faith. No Calvinist can hold that faith precedes regeneration. The passage, then, to him, cannot teach that we become the *regenerated* sons of God by faith. It must mean that having been regenerated, and thus become *born* sons of God, we believe in Christ, and thus become his *adopted* sons. Regeneration, in the order of production, precedes faith, and, in that order, faith precedes adoption. The same truth is delivered in Galatians iii. 26, "For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus."

The new birth, then, which in the first instance *makes* us sons of God, implants in us the nature, the dispositions, the tempers of children, at least in their principle, and accordingly we are by regeneration adapted to the higher, the confirmed estate of adopted children. We are not confirmed as adopted sons before we have received the qualities of children by the regenerating act.

But according to the view under consideration Adam was not *created* a son of God, but would have been, had he stood, directly elevated to sonship by adoption from the mere condition of a servant. He would have been constituted a son without having had implanted in him the nature and temper of a son, and with only the culture of the servant's dispositions. If it be replied that in

adopting him as a son, God would have created in him the filial nature and temper, why contend so strenuously, as Dr. Candlish does, against the possibility of one's being constituted a son by creation? In neither case would creation have been conditioned upon anything in Adam which would have preceded it. This is all the more noticeable because the eminent advocates of the theory before us insist upon the great difference which exists between the dispositions of a servant and those of a son. The Scriptures teach us that when God designs to adopt one as a son, he first creates in him the filial nature — the adopted son is first the new-created son. This doctrine is, that had God adopted Adam he would not previously have *made* him a son, would not have engendered in him the filial nature, by creation. The two positions are out of analogy with each other.

(2) The Scriptures further teach us that in adoption there is a translation from the family of Satan into the family of God. The notion of a change of family enters into the conception of adoption — a change which is distinguished from that of regeneration in that it is legal, formally authoritative and irreversible. The point, however, now emphasized is that adoption supposes the previous existence of the adopted in the family of the devil. Jesus said to his opponents, "Ye are of your father the devil." Paul denounced Elymas as a "child of the devil." John, in his second epistle, says, "In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil." Those, therefore, whom God purposes to save he not only delivers from the kingdom of darkness and Satan into the kingdom of his dear Son,

but formally transfers from the household of the devil and fixes in his own family forever.

According to the theory in hand, had Adam stood, he would have been translated from no family into the family of God. He would simply have passed from the condition of a servant into that of a son. It is perhaps conceivable that such a change may have been effected, but it would have been out of analogy to that change which the Scriptures denominate adoption.

It may be said that a human being may adopt his servant as his son. That may be true; but it would be impossible for him to adopt a servant who was not the son of another man. All adoption of which we know anything supposes the change of one kind of sonship into another. He whom God adopts now was previously his own born son by regeneration; and before his new birth was a child of the devil.

3. It is admitted by those who hold the doctrine here contended against that man was, by creation, made a subject and servant of God. Now, when he fell into sin did he cease to be a subject and servant of God? He ceased to be an *obedient* subject and servant. But the *physical* relation, if the language may be used, must be conceded to have continued, and so must the moral obligations which necessarily sprung from it. Man by sin became a revolted subject, a runaway servant, but could not cancel the obligations originally resting upon him to render service as subject and servant. Hagar, a runaway servant, was divinely commanded to return to her duty. She was Sarah's servant still. So with Onesimus. Absalom rebelled as a subject, and was guilty of the

most atrocious conduct as a son. But when he had been slain in the very flagrancy of his crimes, David poured out his pathetic lament for the death of his son. The young man died a rebellious subject and a disobedient son. The *natural* relation in which he was born was indestructible, and aggravated his crime and doom.

This leads to the remark that if Adam was created a son of God, his fall would no more have destroyed his natural sonship than it did his natural relation as subject and servant. Once constituted, both these relations must as natural, as physical, continue with all the obligations arising from them, and with all the penal consequences due to their infraction.

It must be shown that there is some peculiarity in the filial relation which lifts it out of the scope of this reasoning, and makes these consequences impossible. What is this peculiarity? If it be said that sonship cannot be created, the position is absolutely rebutted by regeneration, which on all hands, by Calvinists, is held to be the creation of spiritual sonship, and by the advocates of the theory before us maintained to be the origination of sonship in any respect. If it be urged that sonship, in any sense, when once constituted is uncontingent and not liable to retribution, the case of Absalom and others, as also the analogy of human experience, are utterly opposed to the hypothesis. And if it be contended that no appeal is allowable to human analogy considered under proper limitations, there is an end of all reasoning on the subject — either in regard to man's relation to the divine government or to the divine fatherhood.

4. Does the *sinner* in his unregenerate estate sustain,

in any sense, a filial relation to God? *Legally*, he does not. His sin has disinherited him. He is under the wrath and curse of God. He cannot at the same time experience the frown of the Judge, and the smile of the Father. *Spiritually*, he does not. He has lost his holy nature, broken the spiritual bond which bound him to his Maker, and erased the moral image of God from his soul. He has abandoned his Father's house, renounced his Father's authority, and has become a child of disobedience, a child of the devil, a child of wrath.

Is, then, anything left of the filial relation? Is God, in any sense, the Father of unregenerate sinners? The fact of creation cannot be changed by man's apostasy. The relation springing from creation simply is unaltered. The natural image of God originally stamped upon man's soul is not, like the moral image, entirely obliterated. There is still some natural analogy between man and his Maker—an analogy which grounded Paul's argument on Mars Hill to show the hideous absurdity of idolatry. How could those worship "gold or silver or stone," who confessed that they were God's "offspring"?

A son, by his wicked rebellion against his father, and his inexcusable desertion of him, may, so far as his agency goes, annul the filial relation, but he is still, naturally speaking, his father's son, and *must be*. So, the prodigal son, when reduced to extremity, said, "I will arise and go to my father." "And he arose and came to his father." This was succeeded by the kiss of reconciliation, the investment with the best robe, and the adjustment to the finger of the ring as a pledge of fatherly forgiveness and affection.

CHRISTIAN ADOPTION.

I pass on now to consider adoption as an element of the scheme of redemption. It will be treated under the following heads: First, the *Nature and Office* of adoption; secondly, its *Grounds*; thirdly, the *Rights* involved in it; fourthly, the *Duties* resulting from it; and fifthly, its *Evidences*.

I. *Its Nature and Office.*

Turretin, followed by Dr. Charles Hodge, regards adoption as identical with the second constituent element of justification, namely, the acceptance of a person as righteous in God's sight, and his investiture with a right and title to eternal life. Dr. A. A. Hodge views it as the generic result of which regeneration and justification are the specific factors. He who is regenerated and justified is *ipso facto* adopted. In order to show, on the contrary, that adoption has a distinctive and peculiar value of its own, it will be compared with regeneration and justification, and the features indicated in which it is distinguishable from those benefits of redemption.

1. Adoption is not to be confounded with regeneration.

(1) Regeneration is not conditioned upon faith; adoption is. Regeneration conditions faith—is in order to faith. Until we are “born again,” we are “dead in trespasses and sins” — utterly destitute of the principle of spiritual life. It is, therefore, impossible for us, until

regenerated, to perform any of the functions of spiritual life, and, therefore, impossible for us to exercise a saving faith, since it is one of those functions. We cannot, consequently, be said to be the *regenerated* children of God by faith. But Paul tells the Galatians that they were the children of God by faith, "Ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus." The conclusion is that there is another sense in which we are the children of God than by regeneration. We are the *adopted* children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. While faith does not condition regeneration, it does condition adoption; just as while faith does not condition regeneration, it certainly does justification.

This view is confirmed by the words in the first chapter of John's Gospel, "But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." The passage itself defines receiving Christ to be believing on his name, and declares that those who believed on him were born of God. But to those who, being regenerated, received him by faith he gave [not *δύναμις*, but *ἐξουσία*] authority or right to become the sons of God — that is, manifestly, to become the *adopted* sons of God. The power by which we are made by regeneration the children of God is not the same as the authority conferred upon us to become his children by adoption. Regeneration and adoption are as different divine acts as are regeneration and justification. In the one case dynamic power is exerted, in the other legal authority is conferred.

(2) Regeneration is a creative act, adoption not. By regeneration we are created children of God in Christ Jesus; by adoption we are, as the already *created* children of God, *authorized* to take our places in his family.

(3) Regeneration is a *physical* act; adoption a *legal* act. The former affects our nature; the latter, our relations. The term *physical* here, it is almost needless to remark, is not used as synonymous with bodily, but in the sense of the old theologians as discriminated from merely moral.

(4) Regeneration is a *real translation*; adoption a *formal translation*. By the former we really become God's children, are really taken out of the family of Satan; by the latter we are formally, that is, legally and authoritatively, translated from the devil's family into God's.

(5) Regeneration *adapts* us to our place in God's family; adoption *formally introduces* us into it. By the one we have the tempers of children, by the other their rights.

(6) Regeneration *makes* us God's children; adoption *recognizes* and *treats* us as his children — legally admits us into the family of God, and invests us with all the rights, privileges and immunities of his children. Sometimes one born in his father's house is debarred the rights of a child in that house. This never takes place, cannot take place, in God's family. He who by regeneration is a born child, is always by adoption a privileged child.

(7) But if we are constituted children of God by regeneration, where is the necessity, the fitness, the

propriety, of adoption? Being his children, we will be dealt with by him as such. Why adopt one who is already a child? To this objection it is replied:

First. Regeneration does not necessarily and of itself *confirm* us as children of God; adoption does. Regeneration does not necessarily involve an indefeasible right to the inheritance of God; adoption does. In regeneration the heirship of the child is not necessarily uncontingent and absolute; in adoption it is. As was pointed out in the preceding discussion, Adam in innocence was a son of God by creation, but he was contingently not absolutely related to God's favor. He needed to be confirmed as a son. In like manner, the regenerate man is a son of God by a new creation; but he needs to be confirmed as a son. That is done by adoption.

To this, no doubt, it will be rejoined, that the comparison is not fairly instituted. It ought to be between the regenerate and those who would have been children of Adam in case he had stood during his time of trial and had been confirmed in holiness and happiness. They would, on that supposition, have been born partakers of the confirmation conferred upon their federal head. So the regenerate are at their spiritual birth possessors of the confirmation won for them by Christ as their federal head and representative. The rejoinder is acute, and, I confess, seems difficult to meet. But against it I urge the great and undeniable fact of justification.

As the case was never historically realized, we know not what God may have required of the children of Adam had he stood and been confirmed. But we have

the positive statement of Scripture that the regenerated children of God are required to believe — to exercise conscious faith — in Christ in order to their being justified. It is at least supposable upon inferential grounds that the children of Adam, had he been justified, would, when they reached the years of voluntary activity, have been required to exercise conscious faith in him as their federal representative in order to their “actual” and complete justification. But however this may have been, we know that the regenerated children of God do, when adults, exercise conscious faith in Christ in order to their “actual” and complete justification. This is no speculation; it is a scriptural fact. Now, the question is inevitable, Why, if they are required to exercise faith in Christ in order to be justified, may they not be required to do the same in order to be adopted? The objection to adoption, upon the ground of its want of necessity, would operate with equal force in relation to justification.

The Scriptures settle the question, and leave no room for mere reasoning. The regenerate children of God do believe in Christ in order to be justified. That cannot be gainsaid. With almost equal clearness we are taught that they believe in Christ in order to be adopted.

The difficulty is, to my mind, at least in some measure cleared up by the Calvinistic doctrine of virtual justification.¹ The elect children of God — the seed of Christ

¹ Otherwise denominated Fundamental, General, Passive, Pactional, Federal, Representative, Justification. For a statement of the doctrine see Witsius, Owen, Halyburton, Thornwell; and, if I may take leave to do so, I would refer to a discussion on “The Federal Theology: its Import and its Regulative Influence.”

— were representatively justified, *in foro Dei*, in the justification of their federal head and representative. In this sense they are, when regenerated, justified in Christ. But it pleases God to require of them conscious faith in Christ in order to their “actual” justification. I see no reason why the eminent theologians who have advocated the doctrine of virtual justification should not have also contended for that of virtual adoption. The principle is the same as to both of the acts of justification and adoption, which stand upon the same foot as affecting legal relations in contradistinction to inward character.

If, then, vital union to Christ effected by regeneration does not vacate the necessity of actual justification, no more does that union destroy the necessity of adoption. In our wisdom, we may suppose that regeneration renders both unnecessary and superfluous. God judges otherwise, and that should satisfy us. In his all-wise plan, it is as needful for us to have our legal relations to him confirmed beyond contingency by justification and adoption, as it is to have the vital principle of holiness infused into us by regeneration, and its development effected by sanctification. It is true that the vital union with Christ operated in regeneration is a guarantee of eternal life, but God has ordained that the union with Christ is not consummated without justification and adoption. They *confirm* the union with God begun in regeneration.

Secondly. The fitness of adoption, even to our imperfect apprehension, lies also in the fact that although translated from Satan’s family into God’s, we still bear

within us the old, sinful nature as a badge of our former relation. It would be difficult for us, conscious as we are of continued sinfulness and pollution, to believe ourselves entitled to the immunities and privileges of God's children, were we not assured by him of our adoption into his family. This gives us boldness in our access to him, and our fellowship with the holy angels and the glorified church.

2. Adoption ought not to be confounded with justification.

(1) They terminate on different relations. In justification the relation specially regarded is that of subject or servant; in adoption, it is that of child.

(2) Justification secures the confirmation of the subject or servant in God's rectoral regard — his regard as ruler and judge; adoption secures the confirmation of the child in God's paternal regard — his regard as Father.

(3) Both presuppose regeneration; but justification legally and formally introduces the regenerated sinner into the society of a righteous universe as a community or polity; adoption legally and formally introduces the regenerated sinner into the society of God's family. Justification confers upon him the rights of a righteous man; adoption, the rights of a child.

(4) A subject of moral government is not, strictly speaking, an heir. Heirship supposes another relation — that of child. Justification, therefore, does not of itself entitle to an inheritance. Adoption does. Justification conveys a title to the rewards of moral government; adoption, a title to the inheritance of sons.

Adoption, consequently, does more than justification, rich as are the blessings conferred by the latter. It is grace upon grace, rich, exuberant, transcendent grace.

To all this it may be objected, that if justification terminates, on the regenerate, that is, on God's children, it confirms them as children: they are *justified children*. Where, then, is the difference between justification and adoption? I answer:

First. The Scriptures make a difference between them. They treat adoption as something over and beyond justification. So do the Westminster Standards. But why should adoption be thus articulately signalized, if it be, as Turretin and others represent, simply the second element in justification, or, as Dr. A. A. Hodge makes it, a complex result of which regeneration and justification are the components?

Secondly. Regeneration is not simply the new creation of children of God. It does that, but it also does more. It makes us new creatures. It infuses a new principle of spiritual life, which is the conditioning law of *all obedience*. Previously to regeneration, we are slaves, as well as children, of the devil. We are servants of sin, revolted subjects of God's government, as well as his apostate children. If the foregoing argument has been of any avail, it has proved that these two relations co-exist in us before the new birth. Now, the regenerating act affects us in both these relations. It creates the subject anew as well as the son. It introduces us into the family of God — "ye must be born again"; but it also introduces us into the kingdom of God — "who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and

hath translated us into the *kingdom* of his dear Son." We are, by regeneration, not only made children of God, but new creatures, and renewed subjects and servants of his moral government. If this view be correct, the position is established, that justification takes the new creature as subject and servant, and confirms him as such, adoption takes the new creature as child, and confirms him in that relation.

Thirdly. This view is strengthened by the scriptural representations of the dual relations of the believer. He is at once a servant and a son. The apostles called themselves servants of God. So are all saints said to be. But it is denied by none that they are also declared to be sons of God.

Fourthly. It has been said,¹ that this view would suppose a two-fold obedience of Christ — that of a servant and that of a son — to ground justification on the one hand and adoption on the other. Well, Christ was both servant and son. His obedience was as well that of a son as that of a servant. In this respect, he supplied the defects of Adam's obedience as servant and son, and makes us accepted and confirmed servants and sons of God. His obedience was complete, covering perfectly all our relations and duties. What a view does this give us of the consummate righteousness of Christ!

If it be still urged that a justified child must be, from the nature of the case, an adopted child, and that it is unwarrantable to separate the obedience into two kinds or aspects — that of a servant and that of a son; that

¹ Candlish, *Fatherhood of God*.

Christ was a servant as a son and precisely because he was a son, and so his filial, as the highest type of obedience, took up and absorbed into itself the obedience of a servant as the lower form; and that thus the one obedience of Christ grounded the justification and adoption of the believer as one and the same result — if this be still urged, let us see to what consequences we would irresistibly be led.

It would follow, that the obedience of the believer could not be regarded as embracing two aspects — that of a servant and that of a son, but since he is a servant as he is a son and because he is a son, his filial obedience would absorb and annihilate that of a servant or subject. Then, further, since redemption restores us, at the least, to the condition of Adam in innocence, it would follow that Adam would have obeyed as a servant precisely as he was a son; and we would reach a doctrine exactly the reverse of that maintained by Thornwell and Candlish — which was, that Adam obeyed only as a servant, and not at all as a son. Now, although in this argument it is held that Adam was both a servant and a son, it has not gone the length of contending that he was a servant as a son and because he was a son.

I am constrained to believe that while the two relations co-existed in Christ, and co-exist in the believer, they are not identical. The one is not sunk in the other. The two sorts of obedience springing from them possess, in themselves considered, distinctive specific characteristics. They are, however, brought into the consistency of one generic obedience upon the one person who obeys. Somewhat like the two natures in Christ, the two rela-

tions are brought into union with each other upon one and the same person, but are not interfused or blended so as to lose their peculiar properties. And as in the latter case the personal obedience was undivided, so in the former.

I can see no reason, therefore, for receding from the position, that the obedience of Christ as the mediatorial servant of the Father, a subject under moral law, grounded the justification of his people as subjects of law, and that his obedience as a Son grounded their adoption as children in God's house. The one entitles them to bow before God's throne, the other to sit at God's table.

Yet I must admit that if it be held that the justifying act terminates on the elect sinner *as a child*, those who adopt that view would be warranted in doubting whether adoption, in its nature and office, could be considered as more than justification presupposing regeneration. If it could be shown that regeneration is limited to the production of sonship, I would have little motive for differing from the eminent men whose views have been mentioned.

I cannot, however, help thinking that regeneration effects more than this — that it restores to the sinner the temper of obedience as a subject of law as well as the disposition of a child. And so thinking, I am obliged to attribute to justification and adoption specifically different offices. They both confirm, but one confirms the regenerate man as a subject of God's rectoral government, the other confirms him as a member of God's family. One may be an accepted and honored

subject of a king, but he is not therefore entitled to all the privileges of his monarch's household.

The Westminster Shorter Catechism seems to sustain this view by its statement of the second element of justification — “accepteth us *as righteous*,” and by the affirmation that in consequence of adoption “we have a right to all the privileges of *the sons of God*.” If adoption were only the second element of justification, no articular definition of adoption would have been necessary. At least, it would only have been requisite to state, in separate form, that second element. But an articular definition of adoption is given, and its contents are not the same with those of the definition of the second constituent part of justification. So far as the Westminster Standards are concerned, the view here maintained is supported. Their statements have been expanded, and given a particular exposition which seems to be needed. Adoption accomplishes something distinctively different from that achieved by effectual calling and justification. The distribution of the Westminster divines, which makes it a separate article, is vindicated by distinctions which are grounded in reality.

It might be contended in favor of the view that adoption is but a special aspect of either justification, or regeneration and justification combined, that the plan of salvation is treated in the Scriptures as distributed into the two great divisions of justification and sanctification. These two departments of it are symbolized by the blood and the water — justification by the blood, sanctification by the water. In this determination, as regeneration is treated as a part of sanctification, so

adoption may be as a part of justification, or of regeneration and justification taken together. To make adoption distinctive and coördinate with the other doctrines is unnecessarily to multiply the heads of redemptive theology, to violate the simplicity of the above-mentioned distribution. To this it is replied:

1. Although regeneration, as effecting a subjective change, is the initial act in sanctification, yet it is usual to distinguish between it as an act producing the new birth instantaneously and once for all, on the one hand, and sanctification as a continuous influence effecting and developing a state of holiness, on the other. There are adequate grounds for this distinction. So, although in one aspect of it adoption is closely allied to regeneration, and in another aspect to justification, still there are real differences between it and them, and it is proper to signalize these differences.

2. The famous distribution mentioned into justification and sanctification appears to be grounded in the distinction between those elements of redemption which are objective or external and those which are subjective or internal — that is, those which done without us affect our legal relations and those which done within us affect our nature and character.

This being so, we have regeneration and sanctification as one pair falling under the head of the subjective. They differ between themselves sufficiently to warrant their being separately treated, but they are reduced to unity by the fact of their subjectivity. They both come into the category of the water. In like manner justification and adoption are discriminated from each other on

the ground of difference in the relations they severally suppose, but they are brought into unity by the fact of their objectivity. They constitute another pair which may be contemplated together, inasmuch as they both as legal acts affect our relations and not directly our character. But as they accomplish that general result in modes specifically distinct from each other, they are with justice treated separately. Justification determines our relation as subjects and servants to God as ruler and judge; adoption our relation to God as father. It is our relations which are altered in each case, but the sort of relation in one is different from that in the other — as the relation of servant and the relation of child. It is one thing to be approved by a governor, another to be loved by a father.

A precise and comprehensive statement of the distribution alluded to would then be, (1) The blood, symbolizing the change in our relations to God, including under it justification and adoption; (2) the water, symbolizing the change in our nature and characters, including under it regeneration and sanctification. The following table exhibits the reduction:

OBJECTIVE.		SUBJECTIVE.	
<i>Justification</i>	<i>Adoption.</i>	<i>Regeneration</i>	<i>Sanctification.</i>

The nature and office of adoption having been analyzed, the following definition is proposed:

Adoption is an act of God's free grace, whereby, for the sake of Christ, he formally translates the regenerate from the family of Satan into his own, and legally confirms them in all the rights, immunities and privileges of his children.

II. *The Grounds of Adoption.*

The grounds of adoption are:

1. The eternal purpose of God the Father. He eternally predestinated the elect to be conformed to the image of his Son. Rom. viii. 29, "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first-born among many brethren." He eternally predestinated the elect to the adoption of children. (Eph. i. 5, "Having predestinated us to the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will.")

2. Union with the Son of God, *naturally*, by virtue of his incarnation, and his consequent community of nature with the elect. Gal. iv. 4-7, "When the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ."

The second chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews was designed to show the necessity of the incarnation. It was necessary that the glorious Substitute should partake of the nature of his people. He thus became their Brother, and they become his brethren. "Wherefore he is not ashamed to call them brethren." But if his brethren, they are sons of his Father. "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also

himself likewise took part of the same." A common nature with the Son of God, as human, is therefore one of the grounds of adoption.¹

3. Union with the Son of God *spiritually* and vitally. This is accomplished, first, on God's part, by regeneration, and, secondly, on man's part, by faith.

4. Union with the Son of God *federally*, as he is the covenant-head and representative of the elect. This involves the imputation by God the Father of Christ's vicarious righteousness to his people; and this again implies the imputation to them of his filial obedience, which is the special and immediate ground of their adoption, in contradistinction to the imputation of his obedience as subject, the special and immediate ground of their justification. Of course, his vicarious righteousness is one and undivided, embracing these two aspects of his obedience as a subject and as a son; just as his obedience to the precept of the law and to its penalty are but two aspects of one and the same righteousness.

We are thus, if believers, first, made one with God's Son by community of nature — we become his brethren and therefore sons of God with him. Secondly, we are

¹ It is not intended to intimate that Christ was possessed of a two-fold sonship, as he was divine and as he was human. Upon this point I must concur with Dr. Candlish in opposition to Dr. Crawford. His sonship is eternally one. Had he become the Son of God as human, and thus, in addition to his divine sonship, assumed human sonship, the consequence would be involved that he became a human person, since sonship supposes personality. That doctrine the church has always rejected. The last attempt made to support it, by the school of "Adoptionists," failed to receive the suffrages of the Roman Catholic Church, and has not been approved by the Protestant.

partakers of his life, because partakers of his Spirit, and are as he in God the Father's regard. Thirdly, we are possessed by imputation of his filial obedience, which performed the condition upon which we are indefectibly instated as sons in the fatherly favor of God.

III. *The Rights Involved in Adoption.*

The rights conferred by adoption may be divided into two classes, general and special.

The general may be summed up in heirship. Paul says (Rom. viii. 17), "And if children, then heirs; heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ." We are heirs of God because we are children of God; and the mode in which the heirship exists is that of joint-heirship with Christ. We are thus led to the consideration of the following points:

1. The nature of heirship in general.

(1) It is a right to a patrimony derived from sonship. Its correlative idea is that of inheritance.

(2) This sonship may be either, first, natural, by descent; or, secondly, constituted, by adoption.

(3) The heirship which is derived from these sources may be, first, absolute, or, secondly, contingent. It is absolute, when it is limited by no conditions. The bare fact of sonship entitles to the possession of the inheritance. It is contingent, when the possession of the inheritance is conditioned upon the conduct of the heir apparent. The right, in this case, is originally inchoate. It is only complete upon the performance of the condition.

(4) This contingency is removable by the required obedience of the heir, which fulfils the condition. But it is conceivable that such an obedience, by covenant arrangement, may be vicariously rendered, and its merit transferred to another, and entitle him to the inheritance. This was the prospect before the children of Adam in innocence, and we shall see that the supposition is realized in regard to the heirship of God's children in Christ Jesus.

2. The acquisition of God's inheritance by Christ for his people.

(1) Notice the appointment by God the Father of his Son as the heir to the inheritance. There is a distinction between the essential rights of the Son of God as he is divine, and his rights as the mediator and federal head appointed by the Father, and acquiescing in that constitution. In the latter respect, the rights are stipulated by covenant arrangement in behalf of the seed of Christ, and suspended as to their fruition upon the perfect obedience of the federal head and representative.

(2) Christ, as we have seen, was both a Son and a servant.

(3) His actual possession of the inheritance having been conditioned upon his perfect obedience to the Father in the work of mediation, this condition was perfectly fulfilled by him, and he is, by the Father's act, seized of the inheritance. The Father has formally put him in possession.

(4) His obedience, according to the covenant, was vicarious, and is, by God the Father, imputed to those for whom it was rendered. The inheritance won was

fully theirs, *de jure*, from the moment when Christ's righteousness was finished and formally approved by the Father. It is partially theirs now, *de facto*, and will in that sense be completely theirs when their mortal pilgrimage is ended, and they enter into the rest of glory.

(5) We may here note the distinction between the covenant under which Christ inherited, and the administration of it by him in the form of a testament, under which we actually and consciously inherit.

3. The mode in which we are made heirs, and actually enter upon the possession of the inheritance.

Let us observe its several steps.

(1) The preparatory steps are our regeneration and justification. The way is thus cleared.

(2) The presentation of us by Christ to the Father, and his claim that we be *adopted* by him, constituted heirs with his Son, and invested with a formally confirmed right in him to the inheritance.

(3) The adopting act of the Father. What was conditional in Christ's case is unconditional in that of his people. His perfect obedience as a Son is by the Father transferred to their account. This is declared by the Father in the court of heaven, and he authoritatively adopts them as his sons. They as adopted children, because brethren of Christ, inherit in him. The inheritance is theirs because Christ acquired it for them, and the Father fulfils his eternal promise to bestow it upon Christ and upon them in him, as the reward of his consummated obedience. The title to the inheritance is indefeasible. That title is theirs.

4. What the inheritance is.

Briefly, it is all that can be conceived or believed as embraced in the *paternal* favor and love of God :

(1) Here, in this world of temptation and conflict, vicissitude and trial; here, amidst the perils of life, and in the awful crisis of death.

(2) Hereafter, at the resurrection of the dead, at the bar of final judgment, in the world of heavenly bliss, and through the ages of eternity. In a word, it is the riches of grace and the riches of glory.

Home! All that is wrapped up in that sweet, transcendent word, heightened, sanctified, glorified, and projected everlastingly; our Father's house, because Jesus' Father's house, with all it includes, of fellowship with God the Trinity, with holy angels, with glorified saints, with elect relatives, brethren and friends. Ineffable communion! And to this will be added, if to it aught can be added, all outward circumstances of glory which can be collected by an Almighty Father around the brethren of his Son.

We come now to state concisely the *special* rights pertaining to adoption. They may be contemplated as rights to immunities and privileges.

1. Immunities:

(1) From an abject, slavish temper of obedience.

(2) From bondage to human authority, in religious matters, when exercised contrary to, or apart from, the Word of God.

(3) From bondage to the ceremonial law.

(4) From bondage to the moral law as a standard of justification, broken and condemning; and consequently from the fear of condemnation and the fear of death.

It is true that these immunities are not altogether peculiar to adoption. They are also conferred by justification. But it must be confessed that they are mightily enhanced by adoption into the family of God. The justified subject of law must feel that they are wonderfully strengthened, if he is also conscious that he is an adopted child, and that the Holy Spirit bears witness to his sonship.

2. Privileges:

(1) The free spirit of filial obedience, leading to boldness of access to God, and liberty of communion with him as children. This constitutes one of the most marked differences between the saints of the New Testament and those of the Old. Radically, as redeemed, there is no difference between them. Both must be viewed as regenerated, justified and adopted. But the Old Testament saints, according to Paul's description in the fourth chapter of Galatians, were minor children, under bondage to tutors and governors. They were as if servants. They were more characterized by the temper of servants than by that of sons. The New Testament saints possess in greater fulness the rich grace of adoption. The servant, with hat in hand, stands at a respectful distance awaiting the orders of his master; the child of God, as Luther has graphically suggested, rushes into the presence of his Father, leaps into his lap, and nestles in his bosom.

(2) Liberty to offer imperfect, though sincere, obedience, and to hope for its acceptance.

(3) The wholesome, loving, saving discipline of children in God's family:

First, perfective discipline.

Secondly, corrective and reformatory discipline.

(4) The enjoyment of all conceivable good in God as the portion of the soul.

IV. *The Duties Springing from Adoption.*

1. To render to God the honor which is due to him as our Father.

2. To exercise towards him all those affections and feelings which are due from children to a father:

(1) Filial love.

(2) Filial trust.

(3) Submission to, and acquiescence in, his parental will and government.

(4) Filial hope.

3. To obey him as a Father.

4. To imitate him as a Father; to strive to be like him; to be "imitators of God as dear children"; to endeavor to be "perfect even as our Father in heaven is perfect."

5. To render to the Lord Jesus the utmost honor, love, gratitude and obedience, as our Brother through whom alone we are related to God as a Father.

6. To pray for, receive and honor the Holy Spirit as the Spirit of adoption, crying in us Abba, Father, and bearing witness with our spirits that we are children of God.

7. To love all God's people, and treat them as our dear brethren — our Father's children in Christ Jesus our Lord. There is a peculiar sympathy and confidence which is unavoidable and proper in relation to those who are of the same denominational fold with us; but

this, if we are possessed of the Spirit of adoption, will and must consist with affection for all, of every name and connection, who love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, both theirs and ours, and will ever preserve us from that bigotry which would exclude from our love and communion any of the true people of God. It should be a maxim with us, that whenever we perceive in others the lineaments, however faint and disfigured with error or weakness, of our Father's children, they shall surely experience the embrace of a brother's arms.

8. To separate ourselves from the world, so far as it is out of sympathy with God as our Father. "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty."

9. Ever to aspire with longing towards heaven — our Father's house, the family gathering place, our glorious and everlasting home.

V. *The Evidences of Adoption.*

We come, finally to consider the evidences of adoption. These are, in the Scriptures, distributed into two kinds, the witness of our own spirit, and the witness of the Holy Spirit. Paul, in the eighth chapter of Romans, says, "The Spirit itself beareth witness (*συνμαρτυρεῖ*) with our spirit that we are the children of God." The Spirit here cannot mean the subjective temper of sonship. For, in the first place, no argument can be derived from the fact that the neuter gender is employed — the

Spirit itself, *αὐτο τὸ Πνεῦμα*. The noun *spirit* in the Greek is neuter, and hence the necessity of its relatives being used in that gender. When the Lord Jesus promised to send the Holy Spirit to his disciples, he employed the personal pronoun *he*. In the second place, Paul, in the immediate context, speaking of the Spirit of adoption says, *ἐν ᾧ κραζομεν Ἀββα ὁ πατήρ*. Without stopping to inquire whether “by whom we cry” is not a preferable translation to “whereby we cry,” let us compare the declaration with the parallel one in the fourth chapter of Galatians, “And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying *Abba, Father*.” It is not our hearts which are here said to cry, but the Spirit, *τὸ Πνεῦμα—κραζον*.

Further, if the Spirit of adoption that is said to bear witness with our spirit be the temper of sons, we would have the extraordinary affirmation that our spirit bears witness with our own spirit that we are the children of God! But, enough as to this matter. In company with the great majority of evangelical expositors, I understand Paul to say that the Holy Spirit bears witness with our spirit that we are God’s children.

We have, then, two distinct, but concurrent, witnesses to the fact of our adoption — that of the Holy Spirit, and that of our own spirit.

1. *The Witness of Our Own Spirit.*

The witness of our own spirit is a judgment of our understanding, based on the testimony of God’s Word as to the marks — *indicia* — which distinguish his chil-

dren, and on our consciousness of possessing those marks. From these premises we conclude that we are children of God. The Scriptures furnish the major premise, our consciousness the minor, and our understanding the judgment derived from the premises. Let this be illustrated by examples:

Every one that is born of God believes on the Lord Jesus Christ; I believe on the Lord Jesus Christ; therefore, I am born of God.

Every one that is born of God loves the brethren; I love the brethren; therefore, I am born of God.

Every one that is born of God forgives his enemies; I forgive my enemies; therefore, I am born of God.

Other examples of the same kind may be furnished. But these are sufficient for the purpose in view. It may be said that these arguments avail only to prove regeneration. The answer is easy. All who are regenerated are also adopted. The proof needs only an obvious expansion — thus: Every one that is regenerated is adopted; I am regenerated; therefore, I am adopted. The proof of regeneration having been given, that of adoption is inevitable.

It will be observed that this is very different from Thomas Watson's statement of the grounds of assurance. "Assurance," says he, "consists of a practical syllogism, where the Word of God makes the *major*, conscience the *minor*, the Spirit of God the *conclusion*. The Word saith, he that fears and loves God is loved of God; there is the *major* proposition. Then conscience makes the *minor*: But I fear and love God. Then the Spirit makes the *conclusion*: Therefore thou art loved of God.

And this is that which the apostle calls, The witnessing of the Spirit with our spirit (Rom. viii. 16)."

I do not pause to find fault with Watson's source of the minor, which he makes conscience. Possibly he may have meant consciousness, or have intended to include it. The great difficulty in his statement of the case is that he so mixes the witness of our own spirit and the witness of the Holy Spirit in his "practical syllogism" as to leave but one witness. The only way in which one can understand him is by supposing that he regarded the witness of our own spirit as inchoate and incomplete until consummated by the witness of the Holy Spirit. But, if it be conceded that our own spirit is competent to perceive the testimony of the Word as the major, and to supply the minor, what hinders it from drawing the conclusion? Here Watson appears to deny the distinctness and immediacy of the Spirit's witness, but in other places he seems to acknowledge them.

It is true that the Spirit assists us in interpreting the facts of Scripture and of our own consciousness, but he also assists us in coming to the conclusion derived from their comparison. Nothing, however, yet comes to the view but the witness of our own spirit, aided by the *influence* of the Holy Spirit. The concurrent *witness* of the Holy Spirit is another thing.

In all the examples which have been here afforded of the mode in which the witness of our own spirit is borne, it will be noticed that the process is mediate and inferential. The Word of God supplies the marks of sonship; our own spirit through consciousness testifies that we possess those marks; and then our own spirit, through

the intellect, furnishes the judgment that we are the adopted children of God. Of course, the testimony thus borne is of our own spirit to itself; but the testimony is mediate. It is never immediate — as though our spirit should directly say to us, You are children of God. We shall see that such a direct and immediate testimony is borne to us by the Spirit of God.

The witness of our own spirit is mediate and inferential. It is borne through the testimony of the Scriptures, through the conscious possession of the graces of the Spirit, and through the conclusion of our logical understanding.

2. *The Witness of the Holy Spirit.*

The witness of the Holy Spirit is, negatively, not mediate and inferential, like the witness of our own spirit, but, positively, is an immediate certification made to believers of the fact of their adoption. By immediate is not meant instantaneous in time, but not mediate, not rendered through or by means of anything else. It may be well to say that the term *witness* is used as synonymous with *testimony*. The Spirit of God and our own spirit are alike witness-bearers, but in the discussion it is the testimony respectively borne which is that upon which attention centres. The issue, clearly, is between the mediate testimony and the immediate testimony of the Holy Spirit, to the fact of the believer's adoption.

The reformers, Continental and British, maintained the doctrine of the immediate witness of the Holy Spirit. Afterwards a school of theologians arose, containing in it

many Calvinists, which contended for the mediate witness.

It is somewhat difficult to harmonize with each other the advocates of the mediate witness, and consequently difficult to get a clear conception of their theory. Some put the case in this way: Our own spirit, through consciousness, perceives in us the marks of sanctification indicated in the Word, and the Holy Spirit "makes the conclusion," draws the inference that we are adopted. Others say, that the Spirit of God "enables" us to draw this inference. Others maintain that the Holy Spirit intensifies and clarifies the witness of our spirit; the latter is apt to be obscure, the Spirit makes it clear; it is weak, the Spirit makes it strong. Others still represent the Spirit as "shining" upon his own graces in the soul, and thus rendering them more distinctly apprehensible by our consciousness.

What seems to be common to those differing modes of representing the case is, that the witness of the Holy Spirit is *mediated* through our graces and our consciousness of possessing them. It is denied to be direct or immediate; it is not a separate (though concurrent) testimony to the fact of our adoption, but is blended with the testimony of our own spirit. The Spirit assists and strengthens the testimony of our spirit; it has no distinct individuality of its own. This applies even to the view which holds that we perceive the marks of sonship in the Word, are conscious that they belong to us, and the Spirit of God "makes the conclusion" that we are sons of God. For, if we have been competent to frame the major and the minor premises in this syllo-

gism, we *must* adopt the conclusion, unless our logical faculty is held in abeyance when we attempt to infer or conclude anything in religious matters. It comes to this, that the Holy Spirit assists and strengthens us in "making the conclusion" for ourselves.

In order to clearness, it is needful to bear in mind what it is precisely to which the testimony is borne. Strictly speaking, our own spirit, through consciousness, bears witness to our possession of the marks of sonship; that we are adopted is an inference. The Holy Spirit, on the other hand, directly testifies to the fact of our adoption. He does not infer that fact; he does not, as one has said, proceed "by argumentation."

The contention, in these remarks, is in favor of the doctrine held by the reformers, namely, that of the immediate or direct witness of the Spirit.

(1) It is possible. This could be denied only by those who deny the personality of the Holy Ghost. Admit that he is a person, and it is evident that he performs personal acts. He who said, "Separate me Saul and Barnabas," was not only proved by that fact to be a person, but also to have known Paul and Barnabas as his own inspired messengers. It must also be confessed that he could have assured them of their divine call and commission. But if he could have certified to them their inspiration, why not their adoption? Can an earthly father testify to his child that he had confirmed him in his inheritance, and is the same power denied to our heavenly Father? Can he not hold direct intercourse with us by his Spirit? Is not this implied in the doctrine of "the communion of the Holy Ghost," which the

Scriptures expressly teach, and the whole church universal has steadily maintained? To say that the Holy Spirit cannot immediately witness to our adoption, is to symbolize with the pantheist; to say that the doctrine breeds fanaticism is to make common cause with the formalist and the adherent of Trent.

(2) It is a concurrent testimony. Paul, in the classical passage in Romans, does not say that the Spirit bears witness *to* our spirit that we are God's children. If he had said so, he would have affirmed only one witness, and that the witness of the Holy Spirit; and then the doctrine that our spirit is the witness to our adoption, and that its testimony is only strengthened, illuminated and confirmed by the Holy Spirit — the doctrine here contended against — would be without scriptural foundation.

But Paul says that the Spirit bears witness *with* our spirit that we are the children of God. That *does* teach that our spirit bears testimony, but it also as distinctly teaches that the Holy Spirit bears his testimony, and bears it jointly with the testimony of our spirit. We are unequivocally taught the concurrence of the two testimonies to the believer's adoption. It would be superfluous to remark that two separate witnesses can bear testimony to the same fact. In this case, the fact testified to is the believer's adoption. The two separate witnesses to the fact are the Holy Spirit and our own spirit. Who would deny that they are distinct from each other? — that they are not identically one and the same witness-bearer? It is true that Paul speaks of a mysterious identification of God's Spirit with our

spirits, when at one time he speaks of our crying, Abba, Father, and at another declares that the Spirit cries, Abba, Father. But this is a moral and not a substantive identity. He is not we, and we are not he. Both concurrently cry, Abba, Father. So with the testimony to our adoption. The Spirit testifies, and our own spirit testifies, to the fact. The witness-bearers are distinct, but they bear concurrent testimony.

If, then, one is not conscious of possessing the true marks of God's children, his own spirit could bear no valid testimony to his adoption; and it would, of course, follow that the Holy Spirit would not testify to his adoption. The absence of the true witness of our own spirit would involve the absence of the Spirit's witness. I am not prepared to assert that the two testimonies are always associated in time. That is a profoundly difficult point, and dogmatism about it would perhaps be rash and ill-advised. But it is clear that if one never has had any consciousness of possessing the marks of sanctification, he cannot enjoy the Spirit's testimony to his adoption. Should such a one claim to have the witness of the Spirit, his claim would be false. That claim can alone be true, where there is, or has been, some consciousness of the work of sanctification in the heart. The two testimonies God has joined together. They cannot be put asunder.

(3) As to its nature, it is a special illumination by the Holy Spirit of the believer's soul in regard to the question of his adoption. This illumination is immediately imparted by the Spirit, and, to the extent to which it is furnished, assures the believer of his adop-

tion. It has been, by its advocates, variously designated as a suggestion, an impression, and even as an inspiration or a revelation. None of these terms are objectionable, provided they are employed with proper limitations, and the doctrine itself is guarded from abuse. They have all be charged with leading to mysticism and fanaticism. Even the Calvinistic opponents of the direct witness of the Spirit have declared that it opens the flood-gates of religious enthusiasm. Strange, that the reformers did not see this danger as clearly as their modern followers!

The whole question hinges upon the alleged fact of the direct or immediate testimony of the Holy Spirit to the believer's adoption. If that fact be denied, it is *its maintenance* which is stigmatized as conducing to fanaticism. If it be admitted, then, no terms by which it is justly represented, are liable to any more criticism than the fact itself. Concede the reality of the immediate witness, and what fair objection can be urged against its being characterized as a special illumination, a suggestion, an impression, or, if you please, an inspiration or a revelation? It is the thing itself, not its names, which is the target against which the shafts are shot. If the Spirit directly testifies to the believer that he is adopted, does not the Spirit inform him that he is adopted? And as no one contends that the information is imparted in writing or in spoken and audible words, why not say that it is a suggestion to, or an impression upon, the believer's mind? Why not, if the *assurance* of adoption is directly imparted to his mind? Grant that, and you admit not only a suggestion, an im-

pression, but a powerful suggestion, a powerful impression.

The main force of the objection, however, is directed against the words inspiration and revelation. It is said that they imply the mystic's doctrine of an inner light, that they lift the recipient of the immediate witness to the level of prophets and apostles. But if it be a fact that the Holy Spirit bears direct testimony to the believer that he is adopted, if he thus specially illuminates him so that he clearly apprehends his adoption, where is the harm in saying that the Spirit inspires him to know the fact? And if the Spirit informs, assures, the believer of his adoption, one craves to see the impropriety of saying that he reveals to the believer the fact of his adoption. The whole difficulty arises from the employment, in a certain relation, of these words in a very peculiar sense. The terms inspiration and revelation, when used in relation to prophets and apostles, have a very peculiar and extraordinary signification. Granted. But does it follow that they are never employed in a different sense? or, that they are improperly employed in another and a more common sense?

If I say that one is inspired with noble and lofty conceptions of a subject, do I mean to say that he is a prophet or an apostle? Or, if I say that one received a revelation of a secret of which he had been ignorant, do I intend to assign him to the same special and extraordinary class? When, in the Episcopal liturgy, the prayer is offered up that God would cleanse the hearts of the worshippers "by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost," is it a supplication that they all may be made

prophets and apostles? When Paul prayed that God might give unto the Ephesian believers the spirit of wisdom and revelation, did he design to ask that they might become inspired prophets or apostles?

The Synod of Dort acknowledged as an element of the believer's assurance "the testimony of the Holy Ghost," and says that this certain assurance "does not accrue to them from a particular revelation." The Westminster Assembly of Divines confessed the concurrent witness of the Holy Spirit with that of our own spirit, and says that infallible assurance may be attained "without extraordinary revelation." The "extraordinary revelation" of Westminster interprets the "particular revelation" of Dort. It is evident that both bodies meant to exclude revelation in its technical sense, as involving the idea of persons inspired — as were prophets and apostles. And in that sense, revelation is universally denied by the evangelical abettors of the immediate witness of the Spirit to be involved in that testimony. Should one be agitating the question whether he be a child of God, and the Holy Spirit should bear witness with his spirit that he is a child of God, that would be a revelation to him of the fact of his adoption, or it would be no witness at all.

The distinction between the two cases is too plain to detain the discussion long. In the one, revelation is made only to certain, select persons; in the other, it is possible to all believers. In the one, it is the very matter of Scripture; in the other, it is the assurance that one is a child of God. In the one, it is communicated to inspired organs of God to be by them, as infallible

teachers, communicated to others; in the other, it is a communication which terminates on those to whom it is made, and is not intended to be by them communicated to others. In the one, it is sustained by miraculous attestation; in the other, not. It looks, therefore, very much like trifling to charge the advocates of this doctrine with claiming for those who enjoy the direct witness of the Spirit to their adoption the extraordinary gifts of inspired prophets and apostles.

Equally incorrect is it to impute fanaticism to the doctrine, on the ground that it countenances a peculiar tenet of mysticism. It is a distinctive contention of the mystic that the Spirit immediately reveals to individuals new, original truth, not contained in the Scriptures. In this case, on the contrary, the Spirit applies to individual believers the truths embraced in the Bible. There is no pretension that the Spirit, in his immediate witness, departs in the slightest degree from his own inspired Word. His direct witness cannot be confounded with the inner light of the mystic.

Furthermore, what has already been said in regard to the concurrence of the Spirit's witness with that of our own spirit is, in itself, sufficient to guard the doctrine from this misapprehension and consequent misconstruction. The very gist of the witness of our own spirit is that a comparison is instituted between our conscious experience and the marks of grace laid down in the Scriptures. Now with a witness thus grounded in Scripture the witness of God's Spirit concurs. The two witnesses are joint. The Scriptures are conformed to in both.

The doctrine of the immediate witness of the Spirit is not liable to the criticisms passed upon it. It could not be, if, as has been attempted to prove, it is affirmed in God's Word.

(4) It is often suddenly and unexpectedly imparted. This fact, in addition to what has already been urged, discriminates the immediate witness of the Holy Spirit from the mediate witness of our own spirit. The latter, from the nature of the case, is the result of reflection. It is a conclusion from premises which have been pondered; and while it may rejoice, cannot surprise, us. The former, on the other hand, is not founded upon reasoning, nor attained by reflection. One may receive the heavenly boon when dejected by doubt and distressed by fear. It may flash into his clouded soul like a beam of heavenly glory. With this no gleam of assurance, glimmering from some evanescent consciousness of grace, can be put in comparison. As well compare the phosphorescent glitter of a wave with the full blaze of a light-house.

(5) The tests of its genuineness are its concurrence with the sincere desires of the recipient for holiness, and its own inherent tendency to produce holy results. It has before been shown that where there is no consciousness of grace in the soul, there can be no direct witness of the Spirit to the fact of adoption. It is, moreover, true that when possessed its inevitable effect is the increase of holiness in the heart. Nothing more effectually tends to engender profound humility, a deep sense of dependence on the Holy Spirit, and the assiduous employment of the means of grace. For, as it is a free

gift, bestowed in sovereignty in answer to fervent prayer, and not elaborated from the inferential processes of the believer's mind, the recipient of the heavenly boon cannot but be humbly grateful to God for its bestowal, and anxious to retain it by walking in the paths of holy obedience. The joy accompanying it is too precious to be imperilled by a careless indulgence in the sins either of omission or of commission. Like one upon whom a check for a fortune has been conferred, the recipient of the witness of the Spirit — his conscious title to heaven — ought, at least, to guard it with scrupulous and unremitting fidelity. That this blessed witness should tend to produce the delusion of the fanatic, the spiritual pride of the formalist, or the licentious carelessness of the antinomian, is simply impossible. It were blasphemy to say that it is a premium for sin. None of God's people can so misrepresent it without first misconceiving it; and none of the pretenders to this high and glorious distinction utter the truth, who live in the allowed indulgence of sin, or do not "endeavor after new obedience."

But he who, in doubt as to his spiritual condition, sincerely struggles against sin and earnestly prays to be delivered from its power as well as its guilt, feels a sudden accession to his soul of joy-imparting assurance, impelling him in the way of holiness, is entitled to conclude that the Spirit bears immediate witness to the fact of his adoption.

(6) It is perfectly assuring. The witness of our own spirit is more or less assuring; it admits of degrees of strength and clearness. The direct witness of the Holy

Spirit is, from the nature of the case, infallible. If the God of truth assure one of his adoption into the divine family, no doubt can attach to the testimony. God cannot lie; and the Spirit is God.

(7) It is liable to be silenced by sin. The cessation of effort against sin, the tolerance of temptation to sin, the conscious, allowed indulgence in any known sin, alienate from the soul this inestimable evidence of God's favor, pull from the finger the ring which pledges his fatherly love, and extinguish the light in which we "read our title clear to mansions in the skies."

(8) Its absence is a great deprivation. Its loss is to the believer's soul what the extinction of sight and the absence of sunlight would be to the body. The body might, in the case supposed, continue to discharge some of its functions, but nothing could compensate for the loss of vision. So, the soul which has been deprived of the witness of the Spirit may perform, in some measure, the functions of spiritual life, but must go mourning after its lost treasure, and crying with the penitent Psalmist of Israel, "Take not thy Holy Spirit from me."

(9) When lost, it may be recovered. God who in sovereignty at first bestowed it, and then withdrew it, may again impart it. David, when sunk in the depths of grief for his great sin, confessed that he had lost it, but pleaded with God for its restoration to his soul, in the affecting prayer, "Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free Spirit."

(10) It assures the believer of his final salvation. Here the Wesleyan Arminian advocates of the immediate witness of the Spirit break with its Calvinistic

asserters. This they must do, or break with their theological system. And break with their system they ought to, if their doctrine of the Spirit's direct testimony is true. The two are inconsistent with each other. They are happily inconsistent in maintaining the doctrine. It has been characterized by an able writer as the green spot in the desert of Wesleyan Methodism. So long as it is adhered to, it will serve to check the otherwise inevitable tendency of that theology to develop into semi-Pelagianism.

In the January and April numbers of the *Quarterly Review of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South*, for 1849, Dr. Thomas O. Summers, the late distinguished professor of Systematic Theology in Vanderbilt University, has two articles, reviewing Walton's treatise on the Evidence of the Believer's Adoption, in which, after a defence of the doctrine of the Spirit's direct witness, he is at pains to show that it does not involve the assurance of final salvation. *That*, he contends, is a Calvinistic *addendum* to the doctrine, and he pronounces it both "unscriptural and dangerous." The question of the dangerousness of the Calvinistic view depends altogether upon the question of its scripturalness. If it be unscriptural it is certainly dangerous; if scriptural, it is certain that there is no danger in it. The main issue, then, must be in regard to the scripturalness or unscripturalness of these antagonistic positions. The question of the final perseverance of the saints, which lies at the bottom of this special inquiry, will not be discussed at length, but so far as it is necessarily implicated in the matter before us.

First. Is the Calvinistic position liable to the charge of being unscriptural?

“While the Bible,” remarks the reviewer, “abounds with passages which inculcate the doctrine of assurance, so far as it relates to the believer’s present acceptance with God and his eternal salvation, on condition of his enduring to the end, there is not a text which intimates that this assurance is extended to the believer’s perseverance and consequent salvation. And no wonder, for such an assurance would be false in many cases, and dangerous in all.” Without pausing, at this point, to dwell upon the characteristically Arminian assertion that because, in the reviewer’s opinion, the disputed feature of the Spirit’s witness would be false and dangerous, it cannot be scriptural, let us inquire whether the confident affirmation, that there is not a text which intimates the Calvinistic view, can be sustained.

The first appeal is taken to 2 Cor. v. 1–9. Paul says, “We know,” words which will be admitted to be equivalent to *we are assured*. We know, we are assured of, what? That, if we endure to the end, we shall get to heaven? No. “We know” — we are assured — “that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.” We are assured that when we die our disembodied spirits will go to heaven, and be there eternally. It is noteworthy that, in speaking of the home in heaven, Paul says “we have” it — (ἔχομεν) — we now have that home. We are indubitably assured that it is ours.

Will it be answered that Paul speaks of himself? He

uses the plural — we know. He includes others with himself.

Will it be said that he speaks only of himself and his fellow-apostles? Was assurance of heaven peculiar to the official servants of our Lord? Was “the earnest of the Spirit” a gift limited to them? Was it true only of them that whilst they were at home in the body they were absent from the Lord? If assurance of heaven is unscriptural and dangerous, why was it conferred upon apostles? But if upon them, why is it unscriptural and dangerous when bestowed upon other believers?

Will the ground be taken that the apostle inserts the condition claimed by Arminians, when he says, “If so be that being clothed (or, as some render the word, *unclothed*) we shall not be found naked”? Even the Authorized Version does not necessarily express a doubt. Nothing is more common in English than to state an assumption, an admitted point, in the words, *if it be so*. But learned scholars contend that the Greek words are susceptible of the rendering, *seeing it is so*, or a like one. The case is settled by the consideration that after the apostle had used these words he says, “Therefore we are always confident, knowing that whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord.” The plain meaning is, we are assured that when we die we shall be present with the Lord. Is not this the assurance of final salvation?

Having seen the bearing of this great passage upon the alleged unscripturalness of the doctrine that we may be assured of ultimate salvation, let us notice, before we dismiss it, its utterance as to the alleged dangerousness

of that doctrine, as leading to carelessness of walk. After stating the believer's assurance of "perseverance and consequent salvation," the apostle thus concludes, "Wherefore we labor, that whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him." *Because* we are sure of heaven, we labor to be meet for it; *because* we are sure of being present with the Lord, we labor to be accepted of him.

An appeal may also be taken to Phil. i. 6, "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you, will perform it [or, will finish it] until the day of Jesus Christ." Either this refers to the apostle's assurance or that of the believers whom he addressed. If the former, the question is unavoidable, Why, if Paul was assured of the Philippian believers' "perseverance and consequent salvation," might they not have been assured of the same? If the latter, the declaration is express, that believers may be assured of their perseverance," or rather of their divine preservation, and "consequent salvation." On either supposition, the assurance of final salvation is certainly not "unscriptural."

Let us invoke also Psa. xxxviii. 7, 8, "Though I walk in the midst of trouble, thou wilt revive me: thou shalt stretch forth thine hand against the wrath of mine enemies, and thy right hand shall save me. The Lord will perfect that which concerneth me," etc. The Psalmist in these words professes his personal experience. The assurance of final salvation is so definitely expressed that argument would be idle.

Were a reference to be made to 2 Tim. i. 12, "For I

know whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day," the Arminian would at once except against its relevancy to the present question, since he does not deny the *ability* of Christ finally to save, or the believer's assurance of that ability; the only question being whether the believer may be assured that Christ will, in fact, ultimately save him. Nevertheless, the passage does teach that fact by necessary implication. For, if the apostle *had* deposited in his Saviour's hands the interests of his soul, and was assured of Christ's acceptance of the deposit, he must have been also assured of Christ's faithfulness to the sacred trust, or have discredited his truth and fidelity to his promises. The deposit of *himself* in Jesus' hands *was* consciously made. The Greek proves that. Was he not, then, assured that Jesus would *keep him* to everlasting life?

One would be disposed to cite Job xix. 25-27, and to insist on that glorious testimony of the venerable patriarch, were it not that the attempt has been made for centuries, and is making now, to eviscerate it of its reference to the Messiah and the final resurrection of the dead; and that, in this discussion, shelter might be taken under these unsettling constructions. Even the Jewish rabbins, however, as John Howe testifies, gave it that reference; and to those who maintain the orthodox genius of the passage it affords an illustrious proof that the saints of God in the dim ages of the past may have been assured, by the witness of the Holy Ghost, of their "perseverance and consequent salvation."

A sufficient number of testimonies have been adduced

from Scripture to evince the rashness of the assertion that "there is not a text which intimates" that the believer may be assured of his final salvation.

But this is not all. The Holy Spirit, in his inspired Word, frequently declares that believers will be finally saved. It would be easy to allege the proofs. Now, the point is made, that if the Spirit bears testimony to the fact of the believer's final salvation in *the external Word*, he may bear testimony to the same fact in the believer's *internal consciousness*. If the one is scriptural, the other cannot be unscriptural; and if the revelation of the doctrine is not dangerous, no more so can be the delivery of the witness.

Secondly. An argument, addressed to the reviewer's concessions, will be employed.

He admits that the Spirit bears witness to the believer's present salvation. This is the language of his school. What is this present salvation? It is conceivable that one might be temporarily delivered from the sense of guilt, from the apprehension of judgment, and from the fear of hell. But if these awful emotions may return upon him, it is obvious that he is not *saved* from them. Further, of what avail would be salvation for a time from the sense of guilt, the apprehension of judgment, and the fear of hell, if he is not finally saved from guilt, judgment, and hell as actually experienced realities? A present salvation, in this view, would not be a real salvation, and the witness of the Spirit to the believer's salvation would be reduced to zero.

But it may be replied that the foregoing statement of the case is erroneous and misleading; that the present

salvation contended for is an actual salvation from the guilt and power of sin, and from the eternal consequences of sin. Only, this state of salvation may or may not be temporary. It depends upon the believer's will, whether, with the help of grace, he will continue in it, or whether, yielding to temptation, he will lapse from it — possibly into final apostasy.

In the first place, guilt, at the very least, that is, according to a definition which is admitted by all evangelical parties, is *liability* to eternal punishment. If the believer is at present saved from this liability, he is, *ex necessitate rei*, saved from eternal punishment; for, if he ever incur that punishment, he was never saved from liability to it. The concession, therefore, that the Spirit bears witness to the believer's present salvation from guilt, is a concession that the Spirit testifies to his salvation from eternal punishment.

In the second place, the statement of present salvation from the *reigning* power of sin is scriptural; but it is unscriptural to say that the believer enjoys a present, entire salvation from all the power of sin — in other words, that he is conscious of entire sanctification. But even if it were granted that this is possible, if this present salvation from the power of sin may be succeeded by the possessor's final destruction by that power, it would be a *lost salvation* from the power of sin, and how that could be considered salvation from it, it is impossible to see. Equally impossible is it to perceive how, upon this hypothesis, the Spirit bears witness to any real salvation.

In the third place, a present salvation of the believer

from the eternal consequences of sin is incomprehensible — is indeed a contradiction in terms — if by the same man those consequences may be eternally felt. This is too evident to need argument. How can one be saved from the eternal results of sin, who will actually experience them? And how can the Spirit bear witness to such a salvation?

To this it will be replied that the salvation is complete so far as God's agency is concerned, but the eternal consequences of sin may be reincurred by our own agency. This is the hinge of the Arminian's position. The rejoinder is obvious. Our own agency is the chief source of the danger of eternal damnation to which we are exposed. It is a mine of peril in our very foundations. The devil can tempt us, and powerfully tempt us, to sin; but he cannot make us sin. He is the tempter to sin, not the creator of it. Were he removed from all connection with men, they would still sin. That will be proved to the conviction of the world, and the satisfaction of the universe, by the millennial exposition of its malignity. Unless, then, we are not saved from our own sinful agency, we are not saved at all. To say that we may throw away a God-given, present deliverance from hell, and wilfully plunge into it at last, is to say that we are not really delivered from the wrath to come. We need to be saved from ourselves, as well as from the devil and the world. Any other salvation is no salvation. Jesus saves his people "from their sins."

To one who has had a so-called present salvation, and is finally lost, the present salvation was only a reprieve, a mere respite, a postponement of the day of doom. It

would be a new use of terms to say that a man whose sentence to be hanged was respited only, was saved from hanging, or that one who was acquitted of murder, and committed another, and was hanged at last, was forever saved from hanging. To talk of his having once had a present salvation from hanging, and, therefore, that he was saved from future hanging is but to trifle. But enough upon this point. If the Spirit of God bears witness to a present salvation, he, *ipso facto*, testifies to an eternal salvation.

The reviewer also concedes that the Spirit bears witness to the believer's adoption. Now, what is adoption if it be not a confirmation of sonship, begun in regeneration? If, therefore, the Spirit bears witness to the believer's adoption, he witnesses to his confirmed sonship. Adam revolted against the kindly, paternal rule of God, and was saved only by the mercy of God in a Redeemer. But Adam, when he fell, was not an adopted son of God. Had he been, he could never have fallen. God loses none of his *adopted* children. He never saw the funeral of one of them, and will never see such a funeral. He promises to them his fatherly favor forever. Either he cannot fulfil that promise, or he can and will not. If he cannot, he is not almighty; if he can and will not, he is untrue. Either supposition is blasphemous. The *fact* that he makes such a promise will be denied. The contest is really between two radically different theologies. It boots little to maintain, that the witness to adoption is a witness to final salvation, against those who affirm that justification and adoption are alike amissible benefits; who hold that one

who is adopted may be disinherited, and one who is justified may be damned.

Another concession made by the reviewer is that the believer may, and ought to, possess the assurance of hope, as terminating on final salvation; and, if he is not misunderstood, he held that this assurance of hope is involved in the direct witness of the Spirit. No matter whether he maintained that this hope is divinely engendered, or humanly originated, he admitted that it is an assured hope, a hope assured by the infallible testimony of God's Spirit. Now the Apostle Paul says of such a hope that it "maketh not ashamed." It will never be disappointed. He who is blessed with this assured hope of final salvation on earth will be blessed with its fruition in heaven. The concession, therefore, that the Spirit confers this assurance of hope is a concession that the Spirit bears witness to and with the believer's spirit that he will be finally saved.

There are two of the reviewer's positions which must be briefly animadverted upon before these remarks are closed.

One is, that, according to the Calvinistic doctrine, when the Spirit bears witness to the believer's perseverance to final salvation, he assures him of his continuance in the discharge of particular duties, and the avoidance of particular sins. The reviewer answers himself in thus misstating the Calvinistic view. For he elaborately argues to show that the Calvinist's admission of the lapses of the believer into temporary sin is inconsistent with his doctrine of assurance. How, in the name of reason, could the reviewer hold that the Cal-

vinist contends for the possibility and the impossibility of a believer's falls into sin?

The other position is, that when a believer falls into sin he falls from a "state of grace." This needs to be answered by simply asking a question. Did the pious reviewer lapse from a "state of grace" every time that he misrepresented the views of his Calvinistic brethren? If so, he must have had a series of lapses from the "state of grace," in which he faithfully "persevered unto the end." His Calvinistic brethren, however, believe that their able opponent continued in a "state of grace" when he did some graceless things, finished his course in triumph and entered into everlasting rest. He was very confident that David, Solomon and Peter fell from the state of grace; and he might have added to the enumeration Noah, Abraham and Moses, Barnabas, Paul, and all the other apostles who forsook their Master and fled, when the crisis of his work and the approaching climax of his passion most imperatively challenged for him their sympathy and support. Every one of us, Calvinists and Arminians alike, not excepting the professors of entire sanctification, would stand in need of the miracle of miracles of many successive new births and new creations (!), if every fall into special sin were a fall from the "*state of grace.*"

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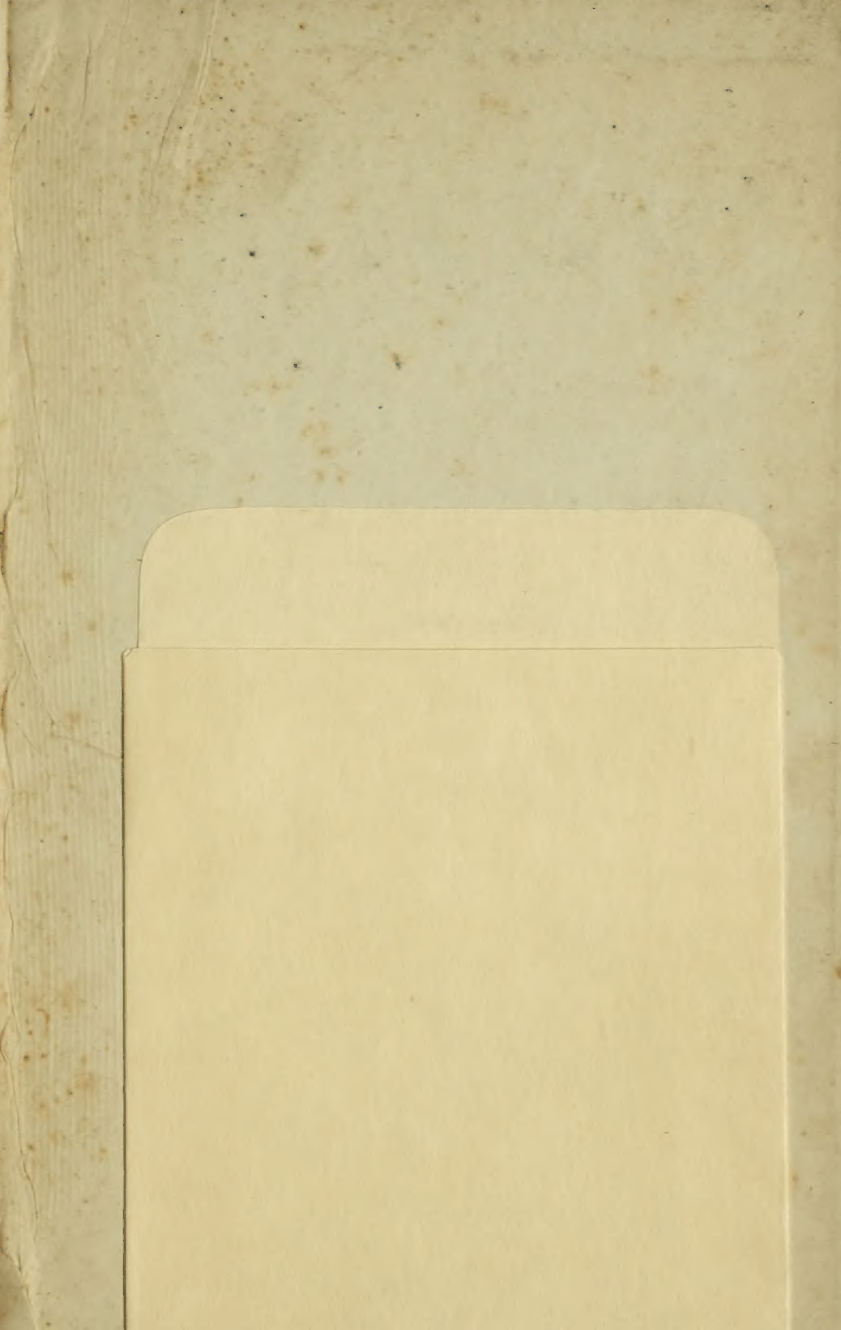
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