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Koine-Medium **LOWER CASE layout.**

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Koine-Medium **UPPER CASE – SHIFT NOT CAPS.**

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Louis Gaussen — The Man

GAUSSEN, François Samuel Robert Louis: **Swiss clergyman; b. at Geneva, Aug. 25, 1790; d. there June 18, 1863.** Two years after completing his studies at the university of his native city (1814), he was appointed minister at Satigny, near Geneva, where he succeeded Cellier, one of the few members of the Swiss clergy who clung to orthodoxy, and who exercised a profound influence on the formation of Gaussen's theological convictions. The period was almost contemporaneous with the dawn of the religious revival in French Switzerland. This awakening resulted in the issuance of an order (May 7, 1817) by the *Vénérable compagnie des pasteurs*, practically prohibiting the preaching of certain important doctrines of divinity. Gaussen and Cellier protested against this ruling in 1819, chiefly by republishing the new French edition of the Helvetic Confession, to which they added a preface in which they declared that a Church must have a declaration of faith, and that the **Second Helvetic Confession correctly voiced their personal convictions.** In the meantime Gaussen pursued his clerical duties in Satigny, besides **holding religious meetings in his own home, as well as in his mother's house in Geneva; striving to revive the national church, BUT not advocating separation from it.** At Geneva, Gaussen founded a missionary society, which held meetings, first in private houses and later in the church. In 1828, through the intervention of the *Vénérable compagnie*, certain new members were elected to its committee whom Gaussen considered heterodox in their views, and he therefore withdrew from the society. This conflict with the clergy of Geneva was the precursor of frequent storms which influenced his future career. Calvin's catechism had long been used as a basis for the instruction of the young, but the *Vénérable compagnie* now substituted another in its stead, and ordered Gaussen to use it. He tried to do so, but found it unsatisfactory and laid it aside. The clergy of Geneva lodged a complaint against him, and after a lengthy dispute he was finally censured by the *compagnie*, and deprived of his right to take part in its meetings for a period of one year (*cf. Lettres de Mr. le Pasteur Gaussen à la vénérable compagnie des pasteurs de Geneve, 1831; and Exposé historiue des discussions élevées entre la compagnie des pasteurs de Genève et Mr. Gaussen, 1831*) **With his friends, Merle d'Aubigné and Galland, Gaussen now founded an "Evangelical Society" to distribute Bibles and tracts, and to interest the public in missionary work among the heathen. Shortly afterward the Evangelical Society decided to found a school for the dissemination of Evangelical teachings, and this resolve was imparted to the state councilor of Geneva, as well as to the churches, in circular letters signed by**

Galland, Merle d'Aubigné, and Gausсен. Gausсен was accordingly deposed by the consistory on Sept. 30, 1831, while his two colleagues were suspended. For a long time he traveled through Italy and England, awakening strong sympathy for his cause in the latter country, but viewing the Roman Catholic Church with extreme disfavor. In 1834 he returned to Geneva, and accepted the chair of dogmatics at the newly established theological school. He inclined strictly toward Reformed Orthodoxy, and deviated from its doctrines only with regard to his theory of predestination, accepting the teaching of election by grace BUT denying supralapsarianism.

[This description of Gausсен's teaching by this introduction (*New Schaff Herzog Ency.* Is good BUT NOT perfect – aal) does not square with his teaching in his book on Divine Inspiration. Denying supralapsarianism would have Gausсен questioning the sovereignty of God. (See the following passages of the Bible: ^{1PE 2:8} και λιθος προσκομματος και πετρα σκανδαλου οι προσκοπτουσιν τω λογω απειθουντες εις ο και ετεθησαν

and a stone of offense and a rock of stumbling, to those who stumble at the Word, being disobedient. TO WHICH ALSO THEY WERE APPOINTED].

ROM 9:11 μηπω γαρ γεννηθεντων μηδε πραξαντων τι αγαθον η φαυλον ινα η κατ εκλογην προθεσις του θεου μενη ουκ εξ εργαων αλλ εκ του καλουντος
FOR NOT YET HAVING BEEN BORN, NOR HAVING DONE ANY GOOD OR EVIL, IN ORDER THAT THE PURPOSE OF GOD ACCORDING TO ELECTION MIGHT REMAIN, NOT OF WORKS BUT OF THE ONE WHO CALLS,

ROM 9:15 τω μουσει γαρ λεγει ελεησω ον αν ελεω και οικτιρησω ον αν οικτιρω

For to Moses He says, ***I will have mercy on whom mercy, and I will have compassion on whom compassion*** [EXO 33:19].

ROM 9:16 αρα ουν ου του θελοντος ουδε του τρεχοντος αλλα του ελεωντος θεου

THEREFORE THEN IT IS NOT OF THE ONE WHO WILLS, NOR OF THE ONE WHO RUNS, BUT OF GOD WHO HAS MERCY.

ROM 9:18 αρα ουν ον θελει ελεει ον δε θελει σκληρυνει

Therefore then has He mercy on whom He will have mercy, AND WHOM HE WILL HE HARDENS.

ROM 9:20 ω ανθρωπε μενουγγε συ τις ει ο ανταποκρινομενος τω θεω μη ερει το πλασμα τω πλασαντι τι με εποιησας ουτως

Oh man, who are you who replies against God? Shall the thing formed say to Him Who formed it, Why have you made me thus?

ROM 9:21 η ουκ εχει εξουσιαν ο κεραμευς του πηλου εκ του αυτου φουραματος ποιησαι ο μεν εις τιμην σκευος ο δε εις ατιμιαν

Has not the potter authority over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel to honor, and another to dishonor?

ROM 9:22 ει δε θελων ο θεος ενδειξασθαι την οργην και γνωρισαι το δυνατον αυτου ηνεγκεν εν πολλη μακροθυμια σκευη οργης κατηρτισμενα εις απωλειαν

What if God, willing to show His wrath, and to make His power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction:

ROM 9:23 ινα γνωριση τον πλουτον της δοξης αυτου επι σκευη ελεους α προητοιμασεν εις δοξαν

IN ORDER THAT HE MIGHT MAKE KNOWN THE RICHES OF HIS GLORY ON THE VESSELS OF MERCY, WHO HE HAD BEFORE PREPARED UNTO GLORY,

ROM 9:24 ους και εκαλεσεν ημας ου μονον εξ ιουδαιων αλλα και εξ εθνων
EVEN US, WHOM HE HAS CALLED, NOT ONLY OF THE JEWS, BUT ALSO OF THE NATIONS?

ROM 9:33 καθως γεγραπται ιδου τιθημι εν σιων λιθον προσκομματος και πετραν σκανδαλου και ο πιστευων επ αυτω ου καταισχυνησεται
even as it has been written, **BEHOLD, I PLACE IN ZION A STUMBLING STONE AND ROCK OF STUMBLING: BUT THE ONE BELIEVING UPON HIM WILL NOT BE DISAPPOINTED** [ISA 28:16].

ROM 11:7 τι ουν ο επιζητει ισραηλ τουτο ουκ επετυχεν η δε εκλογη επετυχεν οι δε λοιποι επωρωθησαν

Why therefore has Israel not obtained what it seeks? But the elect has obtained it, AND THE REST WERE HARDENED.

ROM 11:8 καθαπερ γεγραπται εδωκεν αυτοις ο θεος πνευμα κατανυξεως οφθαλμους του μη βλεπειν και ωτα του μη ακουειν εως της σημερον ημερας

According as it has been written, GOD HAS GIVEN THEM THE SPIRIT OF SLUMBER, EYES TO SEE NOT, AND EARS TO HEAR NOT [ISA 29:10]; **until this day.**

Three points of Evangelical theology were especially treated by Gausson: the divinity of Christ, the prophecies, and the Divine authority of Holy Scripture. In his *Théopneustia* (Geneva, 1840; English translation, *Divine*

Inspiration; the Divine Inspiration of the Holy Scriptures, London, 1841) **he maintained that all passages in the Old and New Testaments were verbally inspired**, but his theory of inspiration was attacked by members of his own theological school, and later also by Edmund Scherer, and he accordingly wrote, in vindication, *Le Canon des Saintes Écritures au double point de vue de la science et de la foi* (Lausanne, 1860; English translation, *Canon of the Holy Scriptures as Viewed Through Science and Faith*, London, 1862). He was also the author of numerous other works, including *Leçons sur Daniel* (3 vols., uncompleted, 1861; English translation, *The Prophet Daniel Explained*, 1873-74), consisting of several of his catechetical lectures on Daniel; and of *Les premiers chapîtres de l'Exode*, and *Le prophète Jonas* (the latter two published posthumously). His works enjoyed a wide circulation both in England and in France. (E. Bardet).

The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge. Edited by Samuel MacAuley Jackson, DD, LL.D. (Editor in Chief). with the assistance of Charles Colebrook Sherman and George William Gilmore, MA (Associate Editors). Volume IV, Funk and Wagnalls Company - New York and London, 1909.

The Divine Inspiration of The Holy Scriptures

Deduced from Internal Evidence,
and the Testimonies of Nature, History and Science

By L. GAUSSEN, DD
Professor of Systematic Theology,
Oratoire, Geneva

REVISED EDITION

DAVID SCOTT'S TRANSLATION

KILMARNOCK
John Ritchie
Publisher of Christian Literature
10-20 Sturrock Street

Two Notable Commendations:

1. CHARLES H. SPURGEON

The turning-point of the battle between those who hold *for the faith once delivered to the saints*, [JUD 1:3] and their opponents, lies in the true and real inspiration of the Holy Scriptures. This is the Thermopylae of Christendom. If we have in the Word of God no infallible standard of truth, we are at sea without a compass, and no danger from rough weather without can be equal to this loss within. *If the foundations be removed, what can the righteous do?* [PSA 11:3] and this is a foundation loss of the worst kind.

In this work the author proves himself a master of holy argument. Gausson charms us as he proclaims the Divine veracity of Scripture. His testimony is clear as a bell.

2. JAMES M. GRAY, DD.

Dean of The Moody Bible Institute of Chicago.

The milestones on my spiritual pathway have been marked by certain books I have read, and one that stands out in my memory more than any other is Gausson's great work, *The Divine Inspiration of the Scriptures*. The day it came into my hands as a young minister just beginning his work marks an epoch, and I speak from experience when I say that a Christian who reads and studies it need never again be troubled by attacks on the Word of God. For years it has been out of print in this country, and hardly to be obtained, even in an old book store. Now that *The Bible Institute Colportage Association* has purchased the plates and brought out a new edition my heart rejoices that earnest Christian workers of this generation may have the same opportunity to be established in the faith that God thus sent to me at that time.

TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE

Soon after the first publication of the **THEOPNEUSTIA**, the late Rev. Dr. Welsh wrote to me, urging me to translate it for the press. A series of other engagements prevented me from doing so for several years. At last, in answer to a call for a cheaper and less bulky translation than one that had meanwhile appeared in London, I applied myself to the task, and had completed it before seeing what my predecessor had published in the south. **The present translation being from the latest French edition**, has the advantage of all the author's improved arrangement.

The importance of the subject, the high character of the author, and the admirable manner in which he has acquitted himself, required that no ordinary pains should be bestowed in doing him justice. These pains I have not spared.

[PARTS OF THE FOLLOWING TWO PARAGRAPHS HAVE BEEN modified - aal].

I have endeavored to secure the utmost possible correctness in the references, [which in most cases, are only parts of verses (at times joined together with other parts of verses), allusions or very free translations (I have not been able to locate a reference for some) – aal].

After consulting an eminent authority as to the propriety of the change, **THEOPNEUSTIA** has been substituted **in most places** by the term **Divine inspiration**, borrowed by the author from the Greek. It was thought that the frequent occurrence of so unusual a word might repel ordinary readers, and make it appear that the book was exclusively for the learned.

At a time when almost all religious controversies seem to turn, more or less, on the question, How far the Holy Scriptures are inspired? And when persons of all ranks and classes are called upon to arm themselves against various errors having their root in false or inadequate views on this subject, it seems hardly possible to overrate the value of the work now before the reader. Nor is it only as a work of controversy that it is invaluable. It is saturated throughout with a spirit of affectionate earnestness and glowing piety, which, even when it makes the greatest demand on the intellect, never suffers the heart to remain cold. Add to this, the wonderful copiousness of the illustrations, which the author seems to borrow with equal ease from the simplest objects in nature, the deepest wells of learning, the remotest deductions of science, and the history at once of the most ancient and most modern times. In short, as we accompany him from page to page and chapter to chapter, we seem not so much to be reading a book, as to be listening to a devout and accomplished friend, enlarging on a favorite subject — a subject of the very greatest importance, and one amid all the details of which he is quite at home.

DAVID D. SCOTT
GLASGOW

PREFATORY OBSERVATIONS

A glance at this book and its title may have prejudiced certain minds against it, by creating two equally erroneous impressions. These I would gladly dissipate.

The Greek title **THEOPNEUSTIA**, although borrowed from Paul, and although it has long been used in Germany, from not having found its way into our language, may, no doubt, have led more than one reader to say to himself of the subject here treated, that it is too learned and hard to understand to be popular, and too little popular to be important.

Yet I am bold to declare, that if any thing has given me at once the desire and the courage to undertake it, it is just the double conviction I entertain of its importance and its simplicity.

And, first of all, I do not think that, after we have come to know that Christianity is Divine, there can be presented to our mind any question bearing more essentially on the vitality of our faith than this: "Does the Bible come from God? Is it altogether from God? Or may it not be true, as some have maintained, that there occur in it maxims purely human, statements not exactly true, exhibitions of common ignorance and ill-sustained reasoning? In a word, books, or portions of books, foreign to the interests of the faith, subject to the natural weakness of the writer's judgment, and mixed with error?" **Here we have a question that admits of no compromise, a fundamental question — a question of life!** It is the first that confronts you on opening the Scriptures, and with it your religion ought to commence.

Were it the case, as you whom I now address will have it, that all in the Bible is not important, does not bear upon the faith, and does not relate to Jesus Christ; and were it the case, taking another view, that in that book there is nothing inspired except what, in your opinion, is important, does bear upon the faith, and does relate to Jesus Christ; then your Bible is quite a different book from that of the Fathers, of the Reformers, and of the Saints of all ages. It is fallible; theirs was perfect. It has chapters or parts of chapters, it has sentences and expressions, to be excluded from the number of the sentences and expressions that are God's; theirs was all given *by inspiration of God, all profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness* [2TI 3:16], and for rendering the man of God perfect by faith in Christ Jesus. In that case, one and the same passage is, in your judgment, as remote from what it was in theirs as Earth is from Heaven.

You may have opened the Bible, for example, at the 45th Psalm, or at the Song of Songs; and while you will see nothing there but what is most human in the things of the Earth — a long poem in honor of a bride or bridegroom, or the love talk of a daughter of Sharon and her young bridegroom — they read there of the glories of the Church, the endearments of God's love, the deep things of Jesus Christ — in a word, all that is most Divine in the things of Heaven; and if they found themselves unable to read of those things there, they knew at least that they were there, and there they tried to find them.

Suppose now that we both take up one of Paul's epistles. While one of us will attribute such or such a sentence, the meaning of which he fails to seize, or which shocks his carnal sense, to the writer's Jewish prejudices, to the most common intentions, to circumstances altogether human; the other will set himself, with profound respect, to scan the thoughts of the Holy Spirit: he will believe these perfect even before he has caught their meaning, **AND WILL PUT ANY APPARENT INSIGNIFICANCE OR OBSCURITY TO THE ACCOUNT OF HIS OWN DULLNESS OR IGNORANCE ALONE.**

Thus, while in the Bible of the one all has its object, its place, its beauty, and its use, as in a tree, branches and leaves, vessels and fibers, epidermis and bark even, have all theirs; the Bible of the other is a tree of which some of the leaves and branches, some of the fibers and the bark, have not been made by God.

But there is much more than this in the difference between us; for not only, according to your reply, we shall have two Bibles, but no one can know what your Bible really is.

It is human and fallible, say you, only in a certain measure; but who shall define that measure? If it be true that man, in putting his deadly impress upon it, have left the stains of humanity there, who shall determine the depth of that impression, and the number of those stains? You have told me that it has its human part; but what are the limits of that part, and who is to fix them for me? Why, no one. These every one must determine for himself, at the bidding of his own judgment; in other words, this fallible portion of the Scriptures will be enlarged in the inverse ratio of our being illuminated by God's light, and a man will deprive himself of communications from above in the very proportion that he has need of

them; in like manner as we see idolaters make to themselves divinities that are more or less impure, in proportion as they themselves are more or less alienated from the living and holy God! Thus, then, ever one will curtail the inspired Scriptures in different proportions, and making for himself an infallible rule of that Bible, so corrected by himself, will say to it: "Guide me henceforth, for you are my rule!" like those makers of graven images of whom Isaiah speaks, who make to themselves a god, and say to it, *Deliver me, for you are my god* [ISA 44:17b].

But this is not all; what follows is of graver importance still. According to your reply, it is not the Bible only that is changed, — it is you.

Yes, even in presence of the passages which you have most admired you will have neither the attitude nor the heart of a believer! How can that be, after you have summoned these along with the rest of the Scriptures before the tribunal of your judgment, there to be pronounced by you Divine, or not Divine, or semi-divine? What authority for your soul can there be in an utterance which for you is infallible only in virtue of yourself? Had it not to present itself at your bar, along with other sayings of the same book, which you have pronounced to be wholly or partly human? Will your mind, in that case, put itself into the humble and submissive posture of a disciple, after having held the place of a Judge? This is impossible. The respect you will show to it will be that perhaps of mere consent, never that of faith; of approval, never of adoration. Do you tell me that you will believe in the divinity of the passage? But then it is not in God that you will believe, but in yourself! This utterance pleases, but does not govern you; it stands before you like a lamp; it is not within you as an anointing from above — a principle of light, a fountain of life! I do not believe there ever was a Pope, however possessed with notions of the importance of his own priestly office, who could confidently address his prayers to a dead person, whom he had himself, by canonizing him of his own plenary [absolute - aal] authority, raised to the rank of the demigods. How, then, shall a reader of the Bible, who has himself canonized a passage of the Scriptures, however possessed with a high idea of his own wisdom, possibly have the disposition of a true believer with regard to such a passage? Will his mind come down from his pontifical chair, and humble itself before this utterance of thought, which, but for himself, would remain human, or at least doubtful? No one tries to fathom the meaning of a passage which he has himself pronounced legitimate, only in virtue of a meaning which he thinks he has already found. One submits only by halves to an authority which he has had it in his power to decline, and which he has once held to be doubtful. One worships but imperfectly what he has first degraded.

Besides, and let this be carefully noted, inasmuch as the entire divinity of such or such a passage of the Scriptures depends, in your view, not on its being found in the book of God's inspiration, but on its presenting certain traits of spirituality and wisdom to your wisdom and your spirituality. The sentence that you pass cannot always be so exempt from hesitation as that you shall not retain, with regard to it, some of the doubts with which you set out. Hence your faith will necessarily participate in your uncertainties, and will be itself imperfect, undecided, conditional. As is the sentence, so will be the faith; and as is the faith, so will be the life. But such is not the faith, neither is such the life of God's elect.

But what will better show the importance of the question which is about to occupy us is, that if one of the two systems to which it may lead have, as we have said, all its roots saturated with skepticism, its fruit inevitably will be a new unbelief.

How do we come to see that so many thousands can every morning and evening open their Bibles without once perceiving their doctrines which it teaches with the utmost clearness? How can they thus, during many a long year, walk on in darkness with the Sun in their hands? Do they not hold these books to be a revelation from God? Yes, but prepossessed with false notions of the Divine inspiration, and believing that there still exists in Scripture a mixture with human error — yet ready to find in it, nevertheless, its reasonable utterances of thought, in order to their being authorized to believe these Divine — they make it their study, as if unconsciously, to give these a meaning that their own wisdom approves; and thus not only do they render themselves incapable of recognizing therein the wisdom of God, **but they sink the Scriptures in their own respect. IN READING PAUL'S EPISTLES, FOR EXAMPLE, THEY WILL DO THEIR UTMOST TO FIND IN THEM MAN'S RIGHTEOUSNESS BY THE LAW**, his native innocence and bent towards that which is good, the moral omnipotence of his will — the merit of his works. But, then, what happens? **ALAS! JUST THAT AFTER HAVING GIVEN THE SACRED WRITER SUCH FORCED MEANINGS, THEY FIND HIS LANGUAGE SO ILL-CONCEIVED FOR HIS ASSUMED OBJECT, SUCH ILL-CHOSEN TERMS FOR WHAT HE IS MADE TO SAY, AND SUCH ILL-SUSTAINED REASONING, THAT, AS IF IN SPITE OF THEMSELVES, THEY LOSE ANY RESPECT FELT FOR THE LETTER OF THE SCRIPTURES**, and plunge into rationalism. It is thus that, after having commenced with unbelief, they reap a new unbelief as the fruit of their study; darkness becomes the reward of darkness, and that terrible saying of Christ is fulfilled, *From him who has not, shall be taken away even that which he has* [MAT 25:29b].

Such, then, it is evident, is the fundamental importance of the great question with which we are about to be occupied.

According to the answer which you, to whom we now address ourselves, make to it, the arm of God's Word is palsied [paralysis of any voluntary muscle as a result of some disorder in the nervous system, sometimes accompanied with involuntary tremors-Webster's - aal] for you; the sword of the Spirit has become blunted — it has lost its temper and its power to pierce. How could it henceforth penetrate your *joints and marrow*? [HEB 4:12] How could it become stronger than your lusts, than your doubts, than the world, than Satan? How could it give you energy, victory, light, peace? No! It possibly may happen, at wide intervals of time, by a pure effect of God's unmerited favor, that, in spite of this dismal state of a soul, a Divine utterance may come and seize it at unawares; but it does not remain the less true, that this disposition which judges the Scriptures, and doubts beforehand of their universal inspiration, is one of the greatest obstacles that we can oppose to their acting with effect. *The word spoken*, says Paul, *did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in those who heard it* [HEB 4:2]; while the most abundant benedictions of that same Scripture were at all times the lot of the souls who received it, *not as the word of men, but as it is truly, the word of God, working effectually in those who believe* [1TH 2:13b].

It will thus be seen, that this question is of immense importance in its bearing upon the vitality of our faith; and we are entitled to say, that between the two answers that may be made to it, there lies the same great gulf that must have separated two Israelites who might both have seen Jesus Christ in the flesh, and both equally owned Him as a prophet; but one of whom, looking to His carpenter's dress, His poor fare, His hands hardened to labor, and His plain followers, believed further, that He was not exempt from error and sin, as an ordinary prophet; while the other recognized in Him *Immanuel, the Lamb of God, the everlasting God, our Righteousness, the King of kings, the Lord of lords* [Titles of God from parts of several passages. MAT 1:23 (ISA 7:14), JOH 1:29, ISA 40:28, JER 33:16, REV 19:16].

The reader may not yet have admitted each of these considerations; but he will at least admit that I have said enough to be entitled to conclude that it is worth while to study such a question, and that, in weighing it, you hold in your hands the most precious interests of the people of God. This is all I desired in a preface. It was the first point to which I wished to direct the reader's attention beforehand, and now comes the second.

If the study of this doctrine be the duty of all, that study is also within the reach of all; and the author hesitates not to say, that **IN WRITING HIS BOOK, THE DEAREST OBJECT OF HIS AMBITION HAS BEEN TO MAKE IT LEVEL TO THE COMPREHENSION OF ALL CLASSES OF READERS.**

Meanwhile, he thinks he hears many make this objection. You address yourself to men of learning, they will say; your book is no concern of ours: we confine ourselves to religion, but here you give us theology.

Theology no doubt! but, what theology? Why, that which ought to be the study of all the heirs of eternal life; and with respect to which a very child may be a theologian.

Religion and theory! Let us explain what we mean; for often are both these terms abused to the injury of both, by people presuming to set the one against the other. Is not theology defined in all our dictionaries as “the science which has for its object, God and His revelation?” Now, when I was a boy at school, the catechism of my childhood made this the designation of my religion. “It is the science,” it told me, “that teaches us to know God and His Word, God and His counsels, God in Christ.” So, then, there is no difference between them, in object, means, or aim. Their object is truth; their means, the Word of God; their aim, holiness. *Sanctify them in the truth. Your Word is truth.* [JOH 17:17]. Such is the aim contemplated by both, as it was that of their dying Master. How, then, shall we distinguish the one from the other? By this alone — that theology is religion studied more methodically, and with the aid of more perfect instruments.

Men have contrived, no doubt, to make, under the name of theology, a confused compound of philosophy; or the traditions of men with God’s word; but that was not theology — it was only scholastic philosophy.

It is true that the term Religion is not always employed in its objective sense, to signify the science that embraces the truths of our faith; but it is used also, with a subjective meaning, to designate rather the sentiments which those truths foster in the hearts of believers. Let these two meanings be kept distinct. This is what we may do, and ought to do; but to oppose the one to the other, by calling the one Religion, the other Theology, were a deplorable absurdity. This would be to maintain, in other terms, that one might have the religious sentiments without the religious doctrines from which alone they spring; this would imply that you would have a man to be moral without having any religious tenets [beliefs or teachings - aal], pious without belief, a Christian without Christ, an effect

without a cause — living without a soul! Deplorable illusion! *And this is life eternal, that they might know You the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent* [JOH 17:3].

But even were it rather in its objective sense that people set themselves to oppose religion to theology — that is to say, the religion a Christian learns in his native tongue in his Bible, to the religion which a more accomplished person would study in the same Bible with the aid of history and of the learned languages — still I would say, even in this case, distinguish between the two; don't oppose them to each other! Ought not every true Christian to be a theologian as far as he can? Is He not enjoined to be learned in the Word of God, nurtured in sound doctrine, rooted and established in the knowledge of Jesus Christ? And was it not to the multitude that our Lord said, in the midst of the street, *Search the Scriptures* [JOH 5:39a].

Religion, then, in its objective meaning, bears the same relation to theology that the globe does to astronomy. They are distinct, and yet united; and theology renders the same services to religion that the astronomy of the specialists in geometry offers to seamen. A ship captain might, no doubt, do without the *Mécinique Céleste* [Mariners charts of the Heavens – aal] in finding his way to the seas of China, or in returning from the Antipodes [exact opposites - aal]; but even then it is to that science that, while traversing the ocean with his elementary notions, he will owe the advantage he derives from his formulas, the accuracy of his tables, and the precision of the methods which give him his longitudes, and set his mind at ease as to the course he is pursuing. Thus too, the Christian, in order to his traversing the ocean of this world, and to his reaching the haven to which God calls him, may dispense with the ancient languages and the lofty speculations of theology; but, after all, the notions of religion with which he cannot dispense, will receive, in a great measure, their precision and their certainty from theological science. And while he steers towards eternal life with his eyes fixed on the compass which God has given him, still it is to theology that he will owe the certainty that that heavenly magnet is the same that it was in the days of the apostles — that the instrument of salvation has been placed intact in his hands, that its indications are faithful, and that the needle never varies.

There was a time when all the sciences were mysterious, professing secrecy, having their initiated persons, their sacred language, and their freemasonry [a skilled itinerent mason, free to move from town to town without restraint by local guilds – Websters - aal]. Physical science, geometry, medicine, grammar, history — everything was treated of in Latin. Men soared aloft in the clouds, far above the common crowd; and

would drop now and then from their sublime heights a few detached leaves, which we were bound to take up respectfully, and were not allowed to criticize. Today, all is changed. Genius glories in making itself intelligible to the mass of mankind; and after having mounted up to the upper regions of science, there to pounce upon truth in her highest retreats, it endeavors to find a method of coming down again, and approaching near enough to let us know the paths it has pursued, and the secrets it has discovered. But if such be at present the almost universal tendency of the secular sciences, it has been at all times the distinctive character of true theology. That science is at the service of all. The others may do without the people, as the people may do without them; true theology, on the contrary, has need of flocks, as they again have need of it. It preserves their religion; and their religion preserves it in turn. Woe to them when their theology languishes, and does not speak to them! Woe to them when the religion of the flocks leave it to go alone, and no longer values it! We ought then, both for its sake and for theirs, to hold that it should speak to them, listen to them, study in their sight, and keep its schools open to them as our churches are.

When theology occupies the professor's chair in the midst of Christian flocks, its relations with them, constantly keeping before its eyes the realities of the Christian life, constantly recall to it also the realities of science: man's misery, the counsels of the Father, the Redeemer's cross, the consolations of the Holy Spirit, holiness, eternity. Then, too, the Church's conscience, repressing its wanderings, overawes its resistance, compels it to be serious, and corrects the effects of that familiarity, so readily running into vanity, with which the science of the schools puts forth its hand and touches holy things. In speaking to it, day after day, of that life which the preaching of the doctrines of the Cross nourishes in the Church (a life, without the knowledge of which all its learning would be as incomplete as the natural history of man were it derived from the study of dead bodies), the religion of the flocks disengages theology from its excessive readiness to admire those branches of knowledge which do not sanctify. It often repeats to it the question addressed by Paul to the perverted science of the Galatians: *Received you the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?* [GAL 3:2b]. It disabuses it of the wisdom of man; it permeates it with reverence for the Word of God, and (in that holy Word) for those doctrines of the righteousness of faith which are *the power of God our Savior* [2PE 1:1 – possible Ref. - aal], and which ought to penetrate the whole soul of its science. Thus does it teach it practically how to associate, in its researches, the work of the conscience with that of the understanding, and never to seek after God's truth but under the combined lights of study and prayer.

And, on the other hand, theology renders in its turn, to Christian flocks, services with which they cannot long dispense without damage. It is it that watches over the religion of a people, to see that the lips of the minister keep knowledge, and that the law may be had from his mouth. It is it that which preserves purity of doctrine in the holy ministry of the gospel, and the just balancing of all truths in preaching. It is it that assures the simple against the confident assertions of a science inaccessible to them. It is it that goes for its answers to the same quarters from where those assertions have come; which puts its finger on the false arguments of the adversaries of truth, overawes them by its presence, and compels them, before the flocks, to avoid exaggeration, and to put some reserve on the terms they employ. It is it that gives the alarm at the first and so often decisive moment, when the language of religion among a people begins to decline from the truth, and when error, like a rising weed, sprouts and grows into a plant. It then gives timely warning, and people hasten to root it out.

It has ever happened that when flocks have been pious, theology has thrived. She has perfected (matured) herself with learning; she has put due honor on studies that require vigorous effort; and, the better to qualify herself for searching the Scriptures, not only has she desired to master all the sciences that can throw light upon them, but she has infused life into all other sciences, whether by the example of her own labors, or by gathering around her men of lofty minds, or by infusing into academic institutions a generous sentiment of high morality, which has promoted all their developments.

Thus it is that, in giving a higher character to all branches of study, she has often ennobled that of a whole people.

But, on the contrary, when theology and the people have become indifferent to each other, and drowsy flocks have lived only for this world, then theology herself has given evident proofs of sloth, frivolity, ignorance, or perhaps of a love of novelties; seeking a worldly popularity at any cost; affecting to have made discoveries that are only whispered to the ear, that are taught in academies, and never mentioned in the churches; keeping her gates shut amid the people, and at the same time throwing out to them from the windows doubts and impieties, with the view of ascertaining the present measure of their indifference; until at last she breaks out into open scandal, in attacking doctrines, or in denying the integrity or the inspiration of certain books, or in giving bold denials to the facts which they relate.

And let a man beware of believing that the whole people do not before long feel the consequences of so enormous a mischief. They will suffer from it even in their temporal interests, and their national existence will be compromised. In degrading their religion, you proportionally lower their moral character; you leave them without a soul. All things take their measure, in a nation, according to the elevation that is given to Heaven among the people. If their Heaven be low, everything is affected by it even on the Earth. All there becomes before long more confined and more creeping; the future becomes narrowed; patriotism becomes materialized; generous traditions drop out of notice; the moral sense loses its tone; material well being engrosses all regard; and all conservative principles, one after another, disappear.

We conclude then, on the one hand, that there exists the most intimate union, not only between a people's welfare and their religion, but between their religion and true theology; and, on the other hand, that if there have always been most pertinent reasons for this science being taught as such, for all and before all, never was this character more necessary for it than when treating of the doctrine which is about to occupy us. It is the doctrine of doctrines; the doctrine that teaches us all others, and in virtue of which alone they are doctrines; the doctrine which is to the believer's soul what the air is to his lungs — necessary for birth in the Christian life — necessary for living in it — necessary for advancing in it to maturity, and persevering in it.

Such, then, has been the twofold view under which this work has been composed. Every part of it, I trust, will bear testimony to my serious desire to make it useful to Christians of all classes.

With this object I have thrown off the forms of the school. Without entirely relinquishing, I have abstained from multiplying, quotations in the ancient tongues. In pressing the wonderful unanimity of Christian antiquity on this question, I have confined myself to general facts. In short, when I have had to treat the various questions that bear upon this subject, and which must be introduced in order to complete the doctrine which it involves, I have placed them all into a separate chapter. And even there, against the advice of some friends, I have employed a method considered by them out of harmony with the general tone of the book, but which to me has seemed fitted to enable the reader to take a clearer and more rapid view of the subject.

It is, then, under this simple and practical form that, in presenting this work to the Church of God, I rejoice that I can recommend it to the blessing of Him who preached in the streets, and who, to John the

Baptist, pointed to this as the peculiar character of his mission - *To the poor the gospel is preached* [LUK 7:22].

Well will it be if these pages confirm in the simplicity and the blissfulness of their faith those Christians who, without learning, have already believed, through the Scriptures, in the full inspiration of the Scriptures! Well will it be if some weary and heavy laden souls are brought to listen more closely to that God who speaks to them in every line of His holy book! Well will it be if, through any thing said by us, some travelers Zionward (like Jacob on his pilgrimage at the stone of Bethel), after having rested their wearied being with too much indifference to this book of God, should come to behold at last that mysterious ladder which rises from it to Heaven, and by which alone the messages of grace can come down to their souls, and their prayers mount up to God! Would that I could induce them, in their turn, to pour out the sacred unction of their gratitude and their joy, and that they also could exclaim — *Surely the Lord is in this place!... This is the house of God, ... the gate of Heaven!* [GEN 28:16, 17 - Parts of two verses].

For myself, I fear not to say, that in devoting myself to the labor this work has cost me, I have often had to thank God for having called me to it; for while engaged in it, I have more than once beheld the Divine majesty fill with its brightness the whole temple of the Scriptures. Here have I seen all the tissues, coarse in appearance, that form the garments of the Son of man, become white, as no worker with wool on Earth could whiten them. Here have I often seen the Book illuminated with the glory of God, and all its words seem radiant; in a word, I have felt what one ever experiences when maintaining a holy and true cause, namely, that it gains in truth and in majesty the more we contemplate it.

Oh my God, give me to love this Word of Yours, and to possess it, as much as You have taught me to admire it!

All flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man is as the flower of the grass: the grass withers, the flower thereof fades, but the word of God abides for ever; and it is this word which, by the gospel, has been preached unto you [1PE 1:24, 25].

DIVINE INSPIRATION; OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURES

OUR OBJECT in this book, with God's help, and on the sole authority of His Word, is to set forth, establish and defend the Christian doctrine of Divine Inspiration.

CHAPTER 1 DEFINITION OF DIVINE INSPIRATION

SECTION 1

This term is used for the mysterious power which the Divine Spirit put forth on the authors of the scriptures of the Old and New Testament, in order to their composing these as they have been received by the Church of God at their hands. *All Scripture*, says the apostle Paul, *is* [Θεοπνευστος] *God breathed* [2TI 3:16a].

This Greek expression, at the time when Paul employed it, was new perhaps even among the Greeks. Yet though the term was not used among the idolatrous Greeks, such was not the case among the Hellenistic Jews. The historian Josephus, a contemporary of Paul's, employs another closely resembling it in his first book against Apion, when, in speaking of all the prophets who composed, says he, the twenty-two sacred books of the Old Testament [*Josephus, Flavius, Complete Works*. Translated by William Whiston (1667-1752); 1737; 1963 reprint by Kregel Publications, Grand Rapids: MI; (*Antiquity of the Jews* - Flavius Josephus Against Apion; Book I, No. 8, p. 609)], he adds, that they wrote *according to the pneustia* (or the inspiration) *that comes from God*. And the Jewish philosopher Philo [P.1022, edit. Francof], himself a contemporary of Josephus, in the account he has left us of his embassy to the emperor Caius, making use, in his turn, of an expression closely resembling that of Paul, calls the Scriptures "*theochrest oracles*" [θεοχρηστα]; that is to say, oracles given under the agency and dictation of God.

DIVINE INSPIRATION is not a system, it is a fact; and this fact, like everything else that has taken place in history of redemption, is one of the doctrines of our faith.

SECTION 2

Meanwhile it is of consequence for us to say, and it is of consequence that it be understood, that this miraculous operation of the Holy Spirit had not the sacred writers themselves for its object — for these were only His

instruments, and were soon to pass away; but that its objects were the holy books themselves, which were destined to reveal from age to age, to the Church, the counsels of God, and which were never to pass away.

The power then put forth on those men of God, and of which they themselves were sensible only in very different degrees, has not been precisely defined to us. Nothing authorizes us to explain it. Scripture has never presented either its manner or its measure as an object of study. What it offers to our faith is solely the inspiration of what they say — the divinity of the book they have written. In this respect it recognizes no difference among them. What they say, they tell us, is Divinely inspired: their book is from God. Whether they recite the mysteries of a past more ancient than the creation, or those of a future more remote than the coming again of the Son of man, or the eternal counsels of the Most High, or the secrets of man's heart, or the deep things of God — whether they describe their own emotions, or relate what they remember, or repeat contemporary narratives, or copy over genealogies, or make extracts from uninspired documents — their writing is inspired, their narratives are directed from above; it is always God who speaks, who relates, who ordains or reveals by their mouth, and who, in order to this, employs their personality in different measures: for *the Spirit of God has been upon them*, it is written, *and His word has been upon their tongue*. And though it be always the word of man, since they are always men who utter it, it is always, too, the word of God, seeing that it is God who superintends, employs, and guides them. They give their narratives, their doctrines or their commandments, *not with the words of man's wisdom, but with the words taught by the Holy Spirit*, and thus it is that God Himself has not only put His seal to all these facts, and constituted Himself the author of all these commands, and the revealer of all these truths, but that, further, He has caused them to be given to His Church in the order, and in the measure, and in the terms which He has deemed most suitable to His heavenly purpose.

Were we asked, then, how this work of Divine inspiration has been accomplished in the men of God, we should reply, that we do not know; that it is not necessary for us to know; and that it is in the same ignorance, and with a faith quite of the same kind, that we receive the doctrine of the new birth and sanctification of a soul by the Holy Spirit. We believe that the Spirit enlightens that soul, cleanses it, raises it, comforts it, softens it. We perceive all these effects; we admire and we adore the cause; but we have found it our duty to be content never to know the means by which this is done. Be it the same, then, with regard to Divine inspiration.

And were we, further, called to say at least what the men of God experienced in their bodily organs, in their will, or in their understandings, while engaged in tracing the pages of the sacred book, we should reply, that the powers of inspiration were not felt by all to the same degree, and that their experiences were not at all uniform; but we might add, that the knowledge of such a fact bears very little on the interests of our faith, seeing that, as respects that faith, we have to do with the book, and not with the man. It is the book that is inspired, and altogether inspired: to be assured of this ought to satisfy us.

SECTION 3

Three descriptions of men, in these late times, without disavowing the divinity of Christianity, and without venturing to decline the authority of the Scriptures, have thought themselves authorized to reject this doctrine.

Some of these have disowned the very *existence* of this action of the Holy Spirit; others have denied its *universality*; others, again, its *plenitude* [completeness - aal].

The first like Dr Schleiermacher [Schleiermacher, *der Christliche Glaube*, band i. s. 115], Dr De Wette, and many other German divines, reject all miraculous inspiration and are unwilling to attribute to the sacred writers any more than Cicero accorded to the poets – “a divine action of nature, an interior power resembling the other vital forces of nature” [De Wette, *Lehrbuch Anmerk. Twesten, Vorlesungen uber die Dogmatik*, tome i. p. 424, etc.].

The second, like Dr Michaelis [Michaelis, *Introduction to the New Testament*], and like Theodore of, while admitting the existence of a Divine inspiration, would confine it to a part only of the sacred books: to the first and fourth of the four evangelists, for example; to a part of the epistles, to a part of Moses, a part of Isaiah, a part of Daniel. These portions of the Scriptures, say they, are from God, the others are from man.

The third class, in brief, like M. Twesten in Germany, and like many divines in England [Drs Pye Smith, Dick, Wilson], extend, it is true, the notion of a Divine inspiration to all parts of the Bible, but not to all equally. Inspiration, as they understand it, might be universal indeed, but unequal; often imperfect, accompanied with innocent errors; and carried to very different degrees, according to the nature of different passages: of which degrees they constitute themselves, more or less, the judges.

Many of these particularly in England, have gone so far as to distinguish four degrees of Divine inspiration: the inspiration of **superintendence**, they have said, in virtue of which the sacred writers have been constantly preserved from serious error in all that relates to faith and life; the inspiration of **elevation**, by which the Holy Spirit further, by carrying up the thoughts of the men of God into the purest regions of truth, must have indirectly stamped the same characters of holiness and grandeur on their words; the inspiration of **direction**, under the more powerful action of which the sacred writers were under God's guidance in regard to what they said and abstained from saying; finally, the inspiration of **suggestion**. Here, they say, all the thoughts, and even the words, have been given by God, by means of a still more energetic and direct operation of His Spirit.

“The **Divine inspiration**,” says M. Twisten, “extends unquestionably even to words, but only when the choice or the employment of them is connected with the religious life of the soul; for one ought, in this respect,” he adds, “to distinguish between the Old and New Testament, between the Law and the Gospel, between history and prophecy, between narratives and doctrines, between the apostles and their apostolic assistants.”

To our mind these are all incredible distinctions; the Bible has not authorized them; the Church of the first eight centuries of the Christian era knew nothing of them; and we believe them to be erroneous in themselves, deplorable in their results.

Our design then, in this book, in opposition to these three systems, is to prove the existence, the universality and the completeness of the Divine inspiration of the Bible.

First of all, it concerns us to know if there has been a Divine and miraculous inspiration for the Scriptures. We say that there has. Next, we have to know if the parts of Scripture that are divinely inspired are equally and entirely; or, in other terms, if God have provided, in a certain though mysterious manner, that the very words of His holy book should always be what they ought to be, and that it should contain no error. This, too, we affirm to be the case. Finally, we have to know whether what is thus inspired by God in the Scriptures, be a part of the Scriptures, or the whole of the Scriptures. We say that it is the whole Scriptures; — the historical books as well as the prophecies; the Gospels as well as the Song of Solomon; the Gospels of Mark and Luke, as well as those of John and Matthew; the history of the shipwreck of Paul in the waters of the Adriatic, as well as that of the shipwreck of the old world in the waters of the flood;

the scenes of Mamre beneath the tents of Abraham, as well as those of the day of Christ in the eternal tabernacles; the prophetic prayers in which the Messiah, a thousand years before His first advent, cries in the Psalms, *My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?* [PSA 22:1a] *they have pierced My hands and My feet — they have cast lots upon My garment — they look and stare at Me* — as well as the narratives of them by John, Mark, Luke or Matthew.

In other words, **IT HAS BEEN OUR OBJECT TO ESTABLISH BY THE WORD OF GOD THAT THE SCRIPTURE IS FROM GOD, THAT THE SCRIPTURE IS THROUGHOUT FROM GOD, AND THAT THE SCRIPTURE THROUGHOUT IS ENTIRELY FROM GOD.**

Meanwhile, however, we must make ourselves clearly understood. In maintaining that all Scripture is from God, we are very far from thinking that man goes for nothing in it. We shall return in a following section to this opinion; but we have felt it necessary to state it here. There, all the words are man's; as there, too, all the words are God's. In a certain sense, the Epistle to the Romans is altogether a letter of Paul's; and in a still higher sense, the Epistle to the Romans is altogether a letter of God's.

Pascal might have dictated one of his Provincial Letters to some Clermont artisan, and another to the Abbess of Port Royal. Could the former have been on that account less Pascalian than all the rest? Undoubtedly not. The great Newton, when he wished to hand over to the world his marvelous discoveries, might have employed some Cambridge youth to write out the fortieth, and some college servant the forty-first proposition of his immortal work, the *Principia*, while he might have dictated the remaining pages to Barrow and Halley. Should we any the less possess the discoveries of his genius, and the mathematical reasoning which lead us to refer to one and the same law all the movements in the universe? Would the whole work be any the less his? No, undoubtedly. Perhaps, however, some one at his leisure might have further taken some interest in knowing what were the emotions of those two great men, or the simple thoughts of that boy, or the honest thoughts of that housekeeper, at the time that their four pens, all alike teachable, traced the Latin sentences that were dictated to them. You may have been told that the two latter, as they used the feather quill pen, allowed their thoughts to revert indifferently to past scenes in the gardens of the city, or in the courts of Trinity College; while the two professors, following with the most intense interest every thought of their friend, and participating in his sublime career, like eaglets on their mother's back, sprang with him into the loftiest elevations of science, borne up by his mighty wings, soaring with

delight into the new and boundless regions which he had opened to them. Nevertheless, you may have been told, among the lines thus dictated, there may have been some which neither the boy nor even the professors were capable of understanding. These details are of little consequence, you would have replied; I will not waste any time upon them; I will study the book. Its preface, its title, its first line, and its last line, all its theorems, easy or difficult, understood or not understood, are from the same author, and that is enough. Whoever the writers may have been, and however different the respective elevation of their thoughts, their hand, faithful to its task, and superintended while engaged in it, has equally traced their master's thoughts on the same roll of paper; and there I can always study, with equal confidence, in the very words of his genius, the mathematical principles of Newton's philosophy.

Such is the fact of the Divine inspiration of the Scriptures; nearly to this extent, that in causing His books to be written by inspired men, the Holy Spirit has almost always, more or less, employed the instrumentality of their understanding, their will, their memory, and all the powers of their personality, as we shall before long have occasion to repeat. **And it is thus that God, who desired to make known TO HIS ELECT**, in a book that was to last for ever, the spiritual principles of Divine philosophy, has caused its pages to be written, in the course of a period of sixteen hundred years, by priests, by kings, by warriors, by shepherds, by tax collectors, by fishermen, by scribes, by tentmakers, associating their affections and their faculties therewith, more or less, according as he deemed fit. Such, then, is God's book. Its first line, its last line, all its teachings, understood or not understood, are by the same author; and that ought to be sufficient for us. Whoever may have been the writers — whatever their circumstances, their impressions, their comprehension of the book, and the measure of their individuality in this powerful and mysterious operation they have all written faithfully and under superintendence in the same roll, under the guidance of one and the same Master, for whom a *thousand years are as one day*; and the result has been the Bible. Therefore I will not lose time in idle questions: I will study the book. It is the word of Moses, the word of Amos, the word of John, the word of Paul; but still the thoughts expressed are God's thoughts, and the words are God's words. *You, Lord, have spoken by the mouth of Your servant David. The Spirit of the Lord spoke by me, said he, and His word was-in-my tongue* [ACT 4:25; 2SA 23:1, 2.].

It would then, in our view, be holding very erroneous language to say — certain passages in the Bible are man's, and certain passages in the Bible are God's. No; every verse without exception is man's; and every verse without exception is God's, whether we find Him speaking there directly in

His own name, or whether He employs the entire personality of the sacred writer. And as Bernard has said of the living works of the regenerated man, *that our will does nothing there without grace, but that grace does nothing there without our will*; so ought we to say, that in the Scriptures God has done nothing but by, man, and has done nothing but by God.

In fact, it is with Divine inspiration as with efficacious grace. In the operations of the Holy Spirit while causing the sacred books to be written, and in those of the same Divine agent while converting a soul, and causing it to advance in the ways of sanctification, man is in different respects entirely active and entirely passive. God does all there; man does all there; and it may be said for both of these works what Paul said of one of them to the Philippians, It is God Who works in you *to will and to do* [PHI 2:13 – Part of the verse AND what he is teaching may be more of Edwards theology than Bible teaching - aal]. Thus you will see that in the Scriptures the same operations are attributed alternately to God and to man. God converts, and it is man that converts himself. God circumcises the heart, God gives a new heart; and it is man that should circumcise his heart, and make himself a new heart. *Not only because, in order to obtain such or such an effect, we ought to employ the means to obtain such or such an effect*, says the famous President Edwards in his admirable remarks against the errors of the Arminians, *but because this effect itself is our act, as it is our duty; God producing all, and we acting all* [Edwards' Remarks, etc., p. 251].

Such, then, is the Word of God. It is God speaking in man, God speaking by man, God speaking as man, God speaking for man! This is what we have asserted and must now proceed to prove. Possibly, however, it will be as well that we should first give a more precise definition of this doctrine.

SECTION 4

In point of theory, it were allowable to say that a religion might be divine without the books that teach it being miraculously inspired. It were possible, for example, to figure to ourselves a Christianity without divine inspiration; and one might conceive, perhaps, that all the miracles of our faith have been performed with the single exception of this one. On this supposition (which nothing authorizes), the everlasting Father would have given His Son to the world; the creating Word, made flesh, would have submitted for us to the death of the cross, and caused to descend from Heaven upon His apostles the spirit of understanding and the power of working miracles; but, all these mysteries of redemption once

consummated, He might have relinquished to these men of God the care of writing, according to their own wisdom, our sacred books; and their writings would thus have presented no more than the natural language of their supernatural illuminations, of their convictions, and their love. Such an order of things, no doubt, is but an idle supposition, directly opposed to the testimony which the Scriptures have rendered to what they are. But without saying here that it resolves nothing, and that, miracle for miracle, that of illumination is not less explainable than that of inspiration; without saying, farther, that the Word of God possesses a Divine power which belongs to it alone — such an order of things, granting it were a reality, would have exposed us to innumerable errors, and plunged us into the most dismal uncertainty. Upon what testimony could, in that case, our faith have rested? On something said by men? But faith is founded only on *the Word of God* [ROM 10:17]. In such a system, then, you would only have had a Christianity without Christians. Deprived of any security against the imprudence of the writers, you could not even have given their books the authority at present possessed in the Church by those of Augustine, Bernard, Luther, and Calvin, or of so many other men whom the Holy Spirit enlightened with a knowledge of the truth. We are, in fact, sufficiently aware how many imprudent expressions and erroneous propositions have found their way into the midst even of the finest pages of those admirable doctors. And yet the apostles (on the supposition we have made) would have been far more subject to serious mistakes even than they were since they would not have had, like the doctors of the Church, a Word of God by which to direct their own; and since they themselves would have had to compose the whole language of religious science. (A science is more than half formed when its language is formed). What deplorable and inevitable errors must have necessarily accompanied, in their case, this revelation without Divine inspiration! And in what deplorable doubts would their hearers have been left! — errors in selection of facts, errors in the appreciation of them, errors in the statement of them, errors in the mode of conceiving the relations they bear to doctrines, errors in the expression of those very doctrines, errors of omission, errors of language, errors of exaggeration, errors in adopting certain national prejudices, or prejudices arising from a man's rank or party, errors in the foresight of the future, and in judgments pronounced upon the past.

But, thanks be to God, it is not thus with our sacred books. They contain no error; they are written throughout by inspiration of God. *Holy men spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit*; [1PE 1:21] they did so, *not with words that man's wisdom teaches, but with words which the Spirit of God taught*; in such sort, that not one of these words should be neglected, and that we are called to respect them and to study them, even to their

smallest iota and their slightest jot: for *this Scripture is pure, like silver refined seven times; it is perfect...*

These assertions, which are themselves testimonies of the Word of God, have already comprised our last **definition of Divine Inspiration, and lead us to characterize it, finally, as that inexplicable power which the Divine Spirit put forth of old on the authors of holy Scripture, in order to their guidance even in the employment of the WORDS they used, and to preserve them alike from all error and from all omission.**

This new definition, which might appear complex, is not so really; for the two traits of which it is composed are equivalent, and to admit the one is to accept the other.

We propose them disjunctively to the assent of our readers, and we offer them the alternative of accepting either. One has more precision, the other more simplicity, in so far as it presents the doctrine under a form more disengaged from all questions relative to the mode of inspiration, and to the secret experiences of the sacred writers let either be fully accepted, and then there will have been rendered to the Scriptures the honor and the credit to which they are entitled.

What we propose, therefore, is to establish the doctrine of Divine inspiration under one or other of these two forms:

THE SCRIPTURES ARE GIVEN AND WARRANTED BY GOD, EVEN IN THEIR LANGUAGE; AND, THE SCRIPTURES CONTAIN NO ERROR — (WHEREBY WE UNDERSTAND THAT THEY SAY ALL THAT THEY OUGHT TO SAY, AND THAT THEY DO NOT SAY WHAT THEY OUGHT NOT TO SAY).

Now, how shall a man establish this doctrine? By the Scriptures, and only by the Scriptures. Once we have recognized these as true, we must go to them to be taught what they are; and once they have told us that they are inspired of God, it belongs to them farther to tell us how they are so, and how far they are so.

To attempt the proof of their inspiration *a priori* — by arguing from that miracle being necessary for the security of our faith — would be to adopt a feeble mode of reasoning, and almost to imitate, in one sense, the presumption which, in another sense, imagines *a priori* four degrees of Divine inspiration. Further; to think of establishing the entire inspiration of the Scriptures on the consideration of their beauty, their constant wisdom, their prophetic foresight, and all the characters of divinity which occur in them, would be to build on arguments no doubt just, but contestable, or at least contested. **IT IS SOLELY ON THE DECLARATIONS OF HOLY SCRIPTURE, THEREFORE, THAT WE HAVE TO TAKE OUR STAND.** We have no authority but that for the doctrines of our faith; and Divine inspiration is just one of those doctrines.

Here, however, let us anticipate a misapprehension. It may happen that some reader, still but feebly established in his Christianity, mistaking our object, and thinking to glance through our book in search of arguments which may convince him, might find himself disappointed, and might conceive himself authorized to charge our line of argument with some false reasoning, as if we wanted to prove in it the inspiration of the Scriptures by the inspiration of the Scriptures. It is of consequence that we should put him right. We have not written these pages for the disciples of Porphyry, or of Voltaire, or of Rousseau; and it has not been our object to prove that the Scriptures are worthy of belief. Others have done this, and it is not our task. **WE ADDRESS OURSELVES TO MEN WHO RESPECT THE SCRIPTURES, AND WHO ADMIT THEIR VERACITY. TO THESE WE ATTEST, THAT, BEING TRUE, THEY SAY THAT THEY ARE INSPIRED; AND THAT, BEING INSPIRED, THEY DECLARE THAT THEY ARE SO THROUGHOUT: WHENCE WE CONCLUDE THAT THEY NECESSARILY MUST BE SO.**

Certainly, of all truths, this doctrine is one of the simplest and the clearest to minds meekly and rationally submissive to the testimony of the Scriptures. No doubt modern divines may be heard to represent it as full of uncertainties and difficulties; but those who have desired to study it only by the light of God's Word, have been unable to perceive those difficulties, or to find those uncertainties. Nothing, on the contrary, is more clearly or oftener taught in the Scriptures than the Inspiration of the Scriptures. Accordingly, the ancients knew nothing on this subject of the embarrassments and the doubts of the doctors of the present day: **for**

them the Bible was from God, or it was not from God.

On this point antiquity presents an admirable unanimity [See on this subject the learned dissertation in which Dr Rudelbach establishes the sound doctrines on inspiration historically, as we have sought to establish them by Scripture. (*Zeitschrift für die gesammte Lutherische Theologie und Kirche*. von Rudelbach and Guericke, 1840)]. But since the moderns, in imitation of the Talmudistic Jews and Rabbis of the Middle Ages. have imagined learned distinctions between four or five different degrees of inspiration, who can wonder that for them difficulties and uncertainties have been multiplied? Contesting what the Scriptures teach, and explaining what the Scriptures do not teach, it is easy to see how they come to be embarrassed; but for this they have only their own rashness to blame.

So very clear, indeed is this testimony which the Scriptures render to their own inspiration, that one may well feel amazed that, among Christians, there should be any diversities of opinion on so well defined a subject. But the evil is too easily explained by the power of preconceived opinions. The mind once wholly pre-occupied by objections of its own raising, sacred passages are perverted from their natural meaning in proportion as those objections present themselves; and, by a secret effort of thought, people try to reconcile these with the difficulties that embarrass them. The Divine Inspiration of the Scriptures is, in spite of the Scriptures, denied (as the Sadducees denied the resurrection), because the miracle is thought inexplicable; but we must recollect the answer made by Jesus Christ, *Do you not therefore err, because you know not THE SCRIPTURES, nor THE POWER of GOD?* [MAR 12:24]. It is, therefore, because of this too common a disposition of the human mind, that we have thought it best not to present the reader with our scriptural proofs until after having completed our definition of Divine inspiration, by an attentive examination of the part to be assigned in it to the individuality of the sacred writers. This will be the subject of the following section. No less do we desire being able to present the reader with a more didactic expression of the doctrine that occupies us, and of some of the questions connected with it: but we have thought that a more fitting place might be found for this development elsewhere, partly because it will be more favorably received after our scriptural proofs shall have been considered; partly because we have no desire, by employing the forms of the school, to repel, at the very threshold, unlearned readers who may have taken up these pages with the idea of finding something in them for the edification of their faith.

SECTION 5. On the Individuality of the Sacred Writers

The individuality of the sacred writers, so profoundly stamped on the books they have respectively written, seems to man impossible to be reconciled with a Divine Inspiration. No one, say they, can read the Scriptures without being struck with the differences of language, conception, and style, discernible in their authors; so that even were the titles of the several books to give us no intimation that we were passing from one author to another, still we should almost instantly discover, from the change of their character, that we had no longer to do with the same writer, but that a new person had taken the pen. This diversity reveals itself even on comparing one prophet with another prophet, and one apostle with another apostle. Who could read the writings of Isaiah and Ezekiel, of Amos and Hosea, of Zephaniah and Habakkuk, of Jeremiah and Daniel, and proceed to study those of Paul and Peter, or of John, without observing with respect to each of them, how much his views of the truth, his reasonings, and his language have been influenced by his habits, his condition in life, his genius, his education, his recollections — all the circumstances, in short, that have acted upon his outer and inner man? They tell us what they saw, and just as they saw it. Their memory is put into requisition, their imagination is called into exercise, their affections are drawn out — their whole being is at work, and their moral physiognomy is clearly delineated. We are sensible that the composition of each has greatly depended, both as to its essence and its form, on its author's circumstances — and peculiar turn of mind. Could the son of Zebedee have composed the Epistle to the Romans, as we have received it from the apostle Paul? Who would think of attributing to him [John] the Epistle to the Hebrews? And although the Epistles general of Peter were without their title, who would ever think of ascribing them to John? It is thus, likewise, with the evangelists. All four are very distinctly recognizable, although they all speak of the same Master, profess the same doctrines, and relate the same acts. Such, we are told, is the fact, and the following consequences are boldly deduced from it:

1. Were it God who speaks alone and constantly in the Scriptures, we should see, in their various parts, a uniformity which is not to be found there.
2. It must be admitted that two different impulses have acted at the same time on the same authors, while they were composing the Scriptures; the natural impulses of their individuality, and the miraculous impulses of inspiration.
3. There must have resulted from the conflict, the concurrence, or the balanced action of these two forces, — an inspiration variable, gradual, sometimes entire, sometimes imperfect, and oftentimes even reduced to the feeble measure of a mere superintendence.

4. The variable power of the Divine Spirit, in this combined action, must have been in the ratio of the importance and the difficulty of the matters treated of by the sacred author. He might even have abstained from any intervention when the judgment and the recollections of the writer could suffice, inasmuch as God never performs useless miracles.

“It belongs not to man to say where nature ends, and where inspiration begins,” says Bishop Wilson [*Lectures on the Evidences of Christianity*, p. 506].

The exaggeration we find in the notions which some have entertained of inspiration, says Dr Twisten, does not consist in their having extended them to all, but in their having extended them to all equally. If inspiration does not exclude the personal action of the sacred authors, no more does it destroy all influence proceeding from human imperfection. But we may suppose this influence to be more and more feeble in the writers, in proportion as the matter treated of is more intimately related to Christ [Vorles. ueber die Dogmatik, tome i].

Dr Dick recognizes three degrees of inspiration in the holy Scriptures:

1. There are many things in the Scriptures which the writers might have known, and probably did know, by ordinary means..... In these cases, no supernatural influence was necessary to enlighten and invigorate their minds; it was only necessary that they should be infallibly preserved from error.

2. There are other passages of Scripture, in composing which the minds of the writers must have been supernaturally endowed with more than ordinary vigor.....

3. It is manifest, with respect to many passages of Scripture, that the subjects of which they treat must have been directly revealed to the writers” [See an *Essay on the Inspiration of the Holy Scriptures*, by the late John Dick, DD Fourth edition. Glasgow, 1840. Chapter 1].

5. Hence it follows, that if this Divine Inspiration were sometimes necessary, still, with respect to matters at once easy and of no religious importance, there might be found in the Scriptures some harmless errors, and some of those stains ever left by the hand of man on all he touches. While the energies of the Divine mind, by an action always powerful, and often victorious, enlarged the comprehension of the men of God, purified their affections, and led them to seek out, from among all their recollections of the past, those which might be most usefully transmitted to the Church of God, the natural energies of their own minds, left to

themselves in so far as regarded all details of no consequence either to faith or virtue, may have led to the occurrence in the Scriptures of some mixture of inaccuracy and imperfection. *We must not therefore, says M. Twisten, attribute an unlimited infallibility to the Scripture, as if there were no error there. No doubt God is truth, and in matters of importance all that is from Him is truth; but if all be not of equal importance, all does not then proceed equally from Him; and if inspiration does not exclude the personal action of the sacred authors, no more does it destroy all influence of human imperfection [Ut supra].*

All these authors include in their assumptions and conclusions the notion, that there are some passages in the Scriptures quite devoid of importance, and that there are others alloyed with error. We shall before long repel with all our might both these imputations; but this is not yet the place for it. The only question we have to do with here, is that respecting the living and personal form under which the Scriptures of God have been given to us, and its alleged incompatibility with the fact of a Divine Inspiration. To this we proceed to reply.

1. We begin by declaring how far we are from contesting the fact, alleged, while, however, we reject the false consequences that are deduced from it. So far are we from not acknowledging this human individuality stamped throughout on our sacred books, that, on the contrary, it is with profound gratitude — with an ever growing admiration — that we contemplate this living, actual, dramatic, human character diffused with so powerful and charming an effect through all parts of the book of God. Yes (we cordially unite with the objectors in saying it), here is the phraseology, the tone, the accent of a Moses; there, of a John; here of an Isaiah; there of an Amos: here of a Daniel or of a Peter; there of a Nehemiah, there again of a Paul. We recognize them, listen to them, see them. Here, one may say, there is no room for mistake. We admit the fact; we delight in studying it; we profoundly admire it; and we see in it, as we shall have, occasion more than once to repeat, one additional proof of the Divine wisdom which has dictated the Scriptures.

2. Of what consequence to the fact of the Divine inspiration is the absence or the concurrence of the sacred writers' affections? Cannot God equally employ them or dispense with them? He who

can make a statue speak, can he not, as he pleases, make a child of man speak? He who rebuked by means of a dumb animal the madness of one prophet, can he not put into another prophet the sentiments or the words which suit best the plan of His revelations? He Who caused to come forth from the wall a hand, without any mind of its own to direct it, that it might write for him those terrible words, *Mene, mene, tekel, upharsin* [DAN 5:25], could he not equally guide the intelligent and pious pen of His apostle, in order to its tracing for Him such words as these: *I say the truth in Christ, and my conscience bears me witness in the Holy Spirit, that I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart, for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh, and who are Israelites?* [ROM 9:1-4a] Know you how God acts, and how He abstains from acting? Will you teach us the mechanism of inspiration? Will you say what is the difference between its

working wherein every individuality is discoverable, and its working where individuality is not discoverable? Will you explain to us why the concurrence of the thoughts, the recollections, and the emotions of the sacred writers, should diminish at all of their Divine inspiration? and will you tell us whether this very concurrence may not form part of it? There is a gulf interposed between the fact of this individuality and the consequence you deduce from it; and your understanding is no more competent to descend into that gulf to contest the reality of Divine inspiration than ours is to explain it. Was there not a great amount of individuality in the language of Caiaphas, when that wicked man, full of the bitterest spite, abandoning himself to the counsels of his own evil heart, and little dreaming that he was giving utterance to the words of God, cried out in the Jewish council, *You know nothing at all, nor consider that it is expedient for us that*

one man should die for the people? [JOH 11:49b-50a] **Certainly there was in these words, we should say, abundance of individuality; and yet we find it written that Caiaphas spoke *this* not of *himself* (αφ εαυτου), but that being high priest for that year, *he prophesied, unconsciously, that Jesus should die, in order that He might gather into one the children of God that were scattered abroad*** [JOH 11:51-52].

Why, then, should not the same Spirit, in order to the utterance of the words of God, employ the pious affections of the saints, as well as the wicked and hypocritical thoughts of his most detestable adversaries?

3. When a man tells us that if, in such or such a passage, the style be that of Moses or of Luke, of Ezekiel or of John, then it cannot be that of God — it were well that he would let us know what is God's style. One would call our attention, indeed, to the accent of the Holy Spirit — would show us how to recognise Him by the peculiar cast of His phraseology, by the tone of His voice; and would tell us wherein, in the language of the Hebrews or in that of the Greeks, His supreme individuality reveals itself!

4. It should not be forgotten, that the sovereign action of God, in the different fields in which it is displayed, never excludes the employment of second causes. On the contrary, it is in the linking together of their mutual bearings that He loves to make His mighty wisdom shine forth. In the field of creation He gives us plants by the combined employment of all the elements — heat, moisture, electricity, the atmosphere, light, the mechanical attraction of the capillary vessels, and the manifold operations of the organs of vegetation. In the field of providence, He accomplishes the development of His largest plans by means of the unexpected concurrence of a thousand millions of human wills, alternately intelligent and, yielding, or ignorant and rebellious. *Herod and Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel* (influenced by so many diverse

passions) *were gathered together*, He tells us, *only to do whatever His hand and counsel had determined before to be done* [ACT 4:27b-28]. Thus, too, in the field of prophecy does He bring His predictions to their accomplishment. He prepares, for example, long beforehand, a warlike prince in the mountains of Persia, and another in those of Media; the former of these He had indicated by name two hundred years before; He unites them at the point named with ten other nations against the empire of the Chaldeans; He enables them to surmount a thousand obstacles; and makes them at last enter the great Babylon, at the moment when the seventy years, so long marked out for the captivity of the Jewish people, had come to a close. In the field of His miracles, even, He is pleased still to make use of second causes. There He had only to say, "Let the thing be, and it would have its being;" but He desired, by employing inferior agents, even in that case to let us know that it is He who gives power to the feeblest of them. To divide the Red Sea, He not only causes the rod of Moses to be stretched out over the deep — He sends from the east a mighty wind, which blows all night, and makes the waters go back. To cure the man that was born blind, He makes clay and anoints his eyes. In the field of redemption, instead of converting a soul by an immediate act of His will, He presents motives to it, He makes him read the Gospel, He sends preachers to it; and thus it is that, while it is He who "gives us to will and to do according to His good pleasure," He "begets us by His own will, by the word of truth." Well, then, why should it not be thus in the field of inspiration (Divine inspiration)? Wherefore, when He sends forth His Word, should He not cause it to enter the understanding, the heart, and the life of His servants, as He puts it upon their lips? Wherefore should He not associate their personality with what they reveal to us? Wherefore should not their sentiments, their history, their experiences, form part of their inspiration (Divine inspiration)?

5. What may, moreover, clearly expose the error involved in this alleged difficulty, is the extreme inconsistency shown in the use that is made of it? In fact, in order to impugn the Divine Inspiration of certain portions of the Scriptures, the individuality with which they are marked is insisted on; and yet it is admitted that other parts of the sacred books, in which this character is equally manifest, must have been given directly by God, even to the most minute details. Isaiah, Daniel, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and the author of the Apocalypse, have each stamped upon their prophecies their peculiar style, features, manner — in a word, their mark; just as Luke, Mark, John, Paul, and Peter have been able to do in their narratives, or in their letters. There is no validity, then, in the objection. If it proved any thing, it would prove too much.

6. What still farther strikes us in this objection, and in the intermittent system of inspiration with which it is associated, is its triple character of complication, rashness, and childishness. Complication; for it is assumed that the Divine acton, in dictating the Scriptures, intermitted or fell off as often as the passage falls in the sea of difficulty, or in the scale of importance; and thus God is made to retire or advance successively in the mind of the sacred writer during the course of one and the same chapter, or one and the same passage! Rashness; for the majesty of the Scriptures not being recognized, it is boldly assumed that they are of no importance, and require no wisdom — beyond that of man, except in some of their parts. We add childishness; one is afraid, it is alleged, to attribute to God useless miracles, — as if the Holy Spirit, after having, as is admitted, dictated, word for word, one part of the Scriptures, must find less trouble in doing nothing more elsewhere than aiding the sacred author by enlightening him, or leaving him to write by himself under mere superintendence!

7. But this is by no means all. What most of all makes protest against a theory according to which the Scriptures are classed into the *inspired*, the *half inspired*, and the *uninspired* (as if this sorry doctrine needed to flow from the individuality stamped upon them), is its direct opposition to the Scriptures. One part of the Bible is from man (people venture to say), and the other part is from God. And yet, mark what its own language on the subject is. It protests that *All Scripture is given by inspiration of God*. [2TI 3:16a]. It points to no exception. What right, then, can we have to make any, when itself a itself admits none? Just because people tell us, if there be in the Scriptures a certain number of passages which could not have been written except under Divine Inspiration, there are others for which it would have been enough for the author to have received some eminent gifts, and others still which might have been composed even by a very ordinary person!. Be it so; but how does this bear upon the question? When you have been told who the author of a book is, you know that all that is in that book is from him — the easy and the difficult, the important and the unimportant, then, the whole Bible *is given by inspiration of God*, of what consequence is it to the question that there are passages, in your eyes, more important or more difficult than others? The least among the companions of Jesus might no doubt have given us that 5th verse of the 11th chapter of John, *Now Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus*; as the most petty schoolmaster also might have composed that first line of Athalie, "Into his temple, lo! I come, Jehovah to adore." But were we told that the great Racine employed some village schoolmaster to write out his drama, at his dictation, should we not continue, nevertheless, still to attribute to him all its parts — its first line, the notation of the scenes, the names of the *dramatis personae*, the

indications of their exits and their entrances, as well as the most sublime strophes of his choruses? If, then, God Himself declares to us His having dictated the whole Scriptures, who shall dare to say that that 5th verse of the 11th chapter of John is less from God than the sublime words with which the Gospel begins, and which describe to us the eternal Word? Inspiration, no doubt, may be perceptible in certain passages more clearly than in others; but it is not, on that account, less real in the one case than in the other.

In a word, were there some parts of the Bible without inspiration, no longer could it be truly said that the whole Bible is divinely inspired. No longer would it be throughout the Word of God. It would have deceived us.

8. Here it is of special importance to remark, that this fatal system of a gradual, imperfect, and intermittent inspiration, has its origin in that misapprehension to which we have more than once had occasion to refer to. It is because people have almost always wished to view inspiration in the man, while it ought to have been seen only in the book. It is *ALL SCRIPTURE*, it is all *that is written*, that is inspired of God. We are not told, and we are not asked, how God did it. All that is said to us is that He has done it. And what we have to believe is simply that, whatever may have been the method He took for accomplishing it.

To this deceptive point of view, which some have thought good to take in contemplating the fact of inspiration, the three following illusions may be traced:

First; in directing their regards to inspiration in the sacred author, people have naturally been led to figure it to themselves as an *extraordinary excitation* in him, of which he was conscious, which took him out of himself, which animated him, after the manner of the ancient Pythoneses, with an *afflatu divino*, a Divine fire, easily discernible; in such sort, that wherever his words are simple, calm, familiar, they have been unable to see how Divine inspiration could be attributed to him.

Next; in contemplating inspiration in persons, people have farther been led to attribute to it *different degrees* of perfection, seeing they knew that the sacred authors had themselves received very different measures of illumination and personal holiness. But if you contemplate inspiration in the book, then you will immediately perceive that it cannot exist there in degrees. A word is from God, or it is not from God. If it be from God, it is not so after two different fashions. Whatever may have been the spiritual state of the writer, if all he writes be divinely inspired, all his words are

from God. And (mark well) it is according to this principle that no Christian will hesitate, any more than Jesus Christ has done, to rank the scriptures of Solomon with those of Moses, any more than those of Mark or of Matthew with those of the disciple whom Jesus loved — nay, with the words of the Son of God Himself. They are all from God.

Finally; by a third illusion, from contemplating inspiration in the men who wrote the Scriptures, not in the Scriptures which they wrote, people have been naturally led to deem it absurd that God should *reveal* miraculously to any one *what that person knew already*. They would, on this ground, deny the inspiration of those passages in which the sacred writers simply tell what they had seen, or simply state opinions, such as any man of plain good sense might express without being inspired. **But it will be quite otherwise the moment inspiration is viewed, not as in the writer, but as in that which is written.** Then it will be seen that all has been traced under God's guidance — both the things which the writer knew already and those of which he knew nothing. Who is not sensible, to give an example, that the case in which *I should dictate to* a student a book on geometry, altogether differs from that in which, after having instructed him more or less perfectly in that science, I should employ him to compose a book on it himself under my auspices? In the latter work, it is true, he would require my intervention only in the difficult propositions; but then, who would think of saying the book was mine? In the former case, on the contrary, all parts of the book, easy and difficult alike, from the quadrature of the transcendental curves to the theory of the straight line or of the triangle, would be mine. Well, then, so is it with the Bible. It is not, as some will have it, a book which God employed men, whom he had previously enlightened, to write under His auspices. No — it is a book which He dictated to them; it is the word of God; the Spirit of the Lord spoke by its authors, and His words were upon their tongues.

9. That the style of Moses, Ezekiel, David, Luke, and John, may be at the same time God's style, is what a child might tell us.

Let us suppose that some modern French author had thought good, at the commencement of the present century, to aim at popularity by borrowing for a time the style, we shall say, of Chateaubriand; might it not then be said with equal truth, but in two different senses, that the style was the authors and yet the style too of Chateaubriand? And if, to save the French from some terrible catastrophe by bringing them back to the Gospel, God should condescend to employ certain prophets among them, by the mouths of whom He should proclaim His message, would not these men have to preach in French? What, then, would be their style, and what would you require in it, in order to its being recognized as that of God? If

such were His pleasure, one of these prophets might speak like Fenelon, another like Bonaparte; in which case there is no doubt that it would be, in one sense, the curt, barking, jerking style of the great captain; also, and in the same sense, the sustained and varied flow of the priest of Cambray's rounded eloquence! While in another, and a higher and truer sense, it would, in both these mouths, be the style of God, the manner of God, the word of God. No doubt, on every occasion on which He has revealed Himself, God might have caused an awful voice to resound from heaven, as of old from the top of Sinai, or on the banks of the Jordan [EXO 19; JOH 12:29]. His messengers, at least, might have been only angels of light. But even then what languages would these angels have spoken? Evidently those of the earth! And if he needed on this Earth to substitute for the syntax of Heaven and the vocabulary of the archangels, the words and the constructions of the Hebrews or the Greeks, why not equally have borrowed their manners, style, and personality?

10. This there is no doubt that He did, but not so as that any thing was left to chance. *Known unto Him are all His works from the beginning of the world* [ACT 15:18]; and just as, year after year, He causes the tree to put forth its leaves as well for the season when they respire the atmospheric elements, and, co-operating with the process at the roots, can safely draw nourishment from their juices, as for that in which the caterpillars that are to spin their silk on its branches are hatched and feed upon them; just as he prepared a gourd for the very place and the very night on which Jonah was to come and seat himself to the east of Nineveh, and when the next morning dawned, a gnawing worm when the gourd was to be withered; so, too, when He would proceed to the most important of His doings, and cause that Word to be written which is to outlast the heavens and the earth, the Lord God could prepare long beforehand each of those prophets, for the moment and for the testimony to which He had foreordained them from eternity. He chose there, in succession, for their several duties, from among all men born of women; and, with respect to them, fulfilled in its perfection that saying, *Send, Oh Lord, by the hand You should send* [EXO 4:13].

As a skilful musician, when he would execute a long score by himself, takes up by turns the funereal [suitable for a funeral - aal] flute, the shepherd's pipe, the merry fife, or the trumpet that summons to battle; so did Almighty God, when He would make us hear His eternal word, choose out from of old the instruments which it seemed fit to Him to inspire with the breath of His Spirit. *He chose them before the foundation of the world, and separated them from their mother's womb* [GAL 1:15; EPH 1:4].

Has the reader ever paid a visit to the astonishing organist, who so charmingly elicits the tourist's tears in the Cathedral at Freiburg, as he touches one after another his wondrous keys, and greets your ear by turns with the march of warriors on the riverside, the voice of prayer sent up from the lake during the fury of the storm, or of thanksgiving when it is hushed to rest? All your senses are electrified, for you seem to have seen all, and to have heard all. Well, then, it was thus that the Lord God, mighty in harmony, applied, as it were, the finger of His Spirit to the stops which He had chosen for the hour of His purpose, and for the unity of His celestial hymn. He had from eternity before Him all the human stops which He required; His Creator's eye embraces at a glance this range of keys stretching over threescore centuries; and when He would make known to our fallen world the everlasting counsel of His redemption, and the coming of the Son of God, He put His left hand on Enoch, the seventh man from Adam [JUD 1:14], and His right on John, the humble and sublime prisoner of Patmos. The celestial anthem, seven hundred years before the flood, began with these words, *Behold, the Lord comes with ten thousand of His saints, to execute judgment upon all*; but already, in the mind of God, and in the eternal harmony of His work, the voice of John had answered to that of Enoch, and closed the hymn, three thousand years after him, with these words, *Behold, He comes with clouds, and every eye shall see Him, and they also who pierced Him!* [REV 1:7a] *Even so, Lord Jesus, come quickly. Assuredly!* [REV 22:20b – BUT I have no idea whose translation. It is possible that it is translated from some French OR Latin version - aal] And during this hymn of thirty centuries, the Spirit of God never ceased to breathe in all His messengers; the angels, an apostle tells us, desired to look into its wondrous depths [1PE 1:12]. God's elect were moved, and life eternal came down into the souls of men.

Between Enoch and John, listen to Jeremiah, twenty-four centuries after the one, and seven hundred years before the other, *Before I formed you in the belly, says the Lord, I knew you; and before you came forth out of the womb I sanctified you, and I ordained you a prophet unto the nations* [JER 1:5-7]. In vain did this alarmed man exclaim, *Ah, Lord God! behold, I cannot speak: for I am a child.* The Lord answers him, *Say not, I am a child: for you shall speak whatever I command you; and the Lord put forth His hand and touched his mouth, Behold, said He, I have put My words in your mouth.*

Between Enoch and Jeremiah, listen to Moses. He, too, struggles on Mount Horeb against the call of the Lord, *Alas, Oh my Lord, I am not eloquent; send, I pray You, by the hand of him whom You will send.* But the anger of the Lord is kindled against Moses. *Who has made man's*

mouth? He says to him. Now therefore go, and I will be with your mouth, and will teach you what you will say [EXO 4:10, etc.].

Between Jeremiah and John, listen to Paul of Tarsus, *When it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, to reveal His Son in me, he called me by His grace, that I might preach Him among the heathen [Gal. 1:15, 16].*

You see, then, it was sometimes the artless and sublime simplicity of John; sometimes the impassioned, elliptical ["with a word or words omitted, with obscure, incomplete constructions, etc." Webster - aal], rousing, and logical energy of Paul; sometimes the fervor and solemnity of Peter; it was Isaiah's magnificent, and David's lyrical poetry; it was the simple and majestic narratives of Moses, or the sententious ["expressing much in few words" Webster.- aal] and royal wisdom of Solomon — yes, it was all this; it was Peter, it was Isaiah, it was Matthew, it was John, it was Moses; yet it was God.

"Are not all these which speak Galileans?" The people exclaimed on the day of Pentecost; yes, they are so; but the message that is on their lips comes from another country — it is from heaven. Listen to it; for tongues of fire have descended on their heads, and it is God Who speaks to you by their mouths.

11. Finally, we would be glad that people should understand that this human individuality to which our attention is directed in the Scriptures, far from leaving any stain there, or from being an infirmity there, stamps upon them, on the contrary, a Divine beauty, and powerfully reveals to us their inspiration.

Yes, we have said that it is God who speaks to us there, but it is also man; — it is man, but it is also God. Admirable Word of God! it has been made man in its own way, as the eternal Word was! Yes, God has made it also come down to us *full of grace and truth*, like unto our words in all things, yet without error and sin! Admirable Word, Divine Word, yet withal full of humanity, much-to-be-loved Word of my God! Yes, in order to our understanding it, it had of necessity to be put upon mortal lips, that it might relate human things; and, in order to attract our regard, needed to invest itself with our modes of thinking, and with all the emotions of our voice; for God well knew whereof we are made. But we have recognized it as the Word of the Lord, mighty, efficacious, *sharper than a two-edged sword*; and the simplest among us, on hearing it, may say like Cleopas and his friend, *Did not our hearts bum within us while He spoke to us? [LUK 24:32].*

With what a mighty charm do the Scriptures, by this abundance of humanity, and by all this personality with which their divinity is invested, remind us that the Lord of our souls, whose touching voice they are, does Himself bear a human heart on the throne of God, although seated on the highest place, where the angels serve Him and adore Him forever! It is thus, also, that they present to us not only that double character of variety and unity which already embellishes all the other works of God, as Creator of the heavens and the earth; but, further, that mingling of familiarity and authority, of sympathy and grandeur, of practical details and mysterious majesty, of humanity and divinity, which is recognizable in all the dispensations [the system(s) by which anything is administered; management – Webster - aal] of the same God, as Redeemer and Shepherd of His Church.

It is thus, then, that the Father of mercies, while speaking in His prophets, needed not only to employ their manner as well as their voice, and their style as well as their pen; but, further, often to put in operation their whole faculties of thought and feeling. Sometimes, in order to show us His Divine sympathy there, He has deemed it fitting to associate their own recollections, their human convictions, their personal experiences, and their pious emotions, with the words He dictated to them; sometimes, in order to remind us of His sovereign intervention, He has preferred dispensing with this unessential concurrence of their recollections, affections, and understanding.

Such did the Word of God need to be.

Like Immanuel, *full of grace and truth*; at once in the bosom of God and in the heart of man; mighty and sympathizing; heavenly and of the earth; sublime and lowly; awful and familiar; God and man! Accordingly it bears no resemblance to the God of the Rationalists. They, after having, like the disciples of Epicurus, banished the Divinity far from man into a third heaven, would have had the Bible also to have kept itself there.

“Philosophy employs the language of the gods,” says the too famous Strauss of Ludwigsburg, “while religion makes use of the language of men.” No doubt she does so; she has recourse to no other; she leaves to the philosophers and to the gods of this world their highest heavens and their language.

Studied under this aspect, considered in this character, the Word of God stands forth without its like; it presents attractions quite unequalled; it offers to men of all times, all places, and all conditions, beauties ever fresh; a charm that never grows old, that always satisfies, never becomes boring. With it, what we find with respect to human books is reversed; for

it pleases and fascinates, extends and rises in your regard the more diligently you read it. It seems as if the book, the more it is studied and studied over again, grows and enlarges itself, and that some kind unseen being comes daily to stitch in some fresh leaves. And thus it is that the souls, alike of the learned and the simple, who have long nourished themselves on it, keep hanging upon it as the people hung of old on the lips of Jesus Christ [LUK 19:48]. They all think it incomparable; now powerful *as the sound of mighty waters; now soft and gentle, like the voice of the spouse to her bridegroom*; but always perfect, *always restoring the soul, and making wise the simple* [PSA 19:7].

To what book, in this respect, would you liken it? Go and put beside it the discourses of Plato, or Seneca, or Aristotle, or Saint Simon, or Jean Jacques. Have you read Mahomet's books? Listen to him but for one hour, and your ears will tingle while beaten on by his piercing and monotonous voice. From the first page to the last, it is still the same sound of the same trumpet; still the same Medina horn, blown from the top of some mosque, minaret, or war-camel; still sybilline oracles, shrill and harsh, uttered in an unvarying tone of command and threat, whether it ordain virtue or enjoin murder; ever one and the same voice, surly and blustering, having no compassion, no familiarity, no tears, no soul, no sympathy.

After trying other books, if you experience religious longings open the Bible; listen to it. Sometimes you find here the songs of angels, but of angels that have come down among the children of Adam. Here is the deep sounding organ of the Most High, but an organ that serves to soothe man's heart and to rouse his conscience, alike in shepherd's cots and in palaces; alike in the poor man's rooms in the attic and in the tents of the desert. The Bible, in fact, has lessons for all conditions; it brings upon the scene both the lowly and the great; it reveals equally to both the love of God, and unveils in both the same miseries. It addresses itself to children; and it is often children that show us there the way to heaven and the great things of Jehovah. It addresses itself to shepherds and herdsmen; and it is often shepherds and herdsmen who lift up their voices there, and reveal to us the character of God. It speaks to kings and to scribes; and it is often kings and scribes that teach us there man's wretchedness, humiliation, confession, and prayer. Domestic scenes, confessions of conscience, pourings forth of prayer in secret, travels, proverbs, revelations of the depths of the heart, the holy courses pursued by a child of God, weaknesses unveiled, falls, recoveries, inward experiences, parables, familiar letters, theological treatises, sacred commentaries on some ancient Scripture, national chronicles, military annals, political statistics, descriptions of God, portraits of angels, celestial visions,

practical counsels, rules of life, solutions of cases of conscience, judgments of the Lord, sacred hymns, predictions of future events, narratives of what passed during the days preceding our creation, sublime odes, inimitable pieces of poetry; — all this is found there by turns; and all this meets our view in most delightful variety, and presenting a whole whose majesty, like that of a temple, is overpowering. Thus it is, that, from its first to its last page, the Bible needed to combine with its majestic unity the indefinable charm of human-like instruction, familiar, sympathetic, personal, and the charm of a drama extending over forty centuries. In the Bible of Desmarets, it is said, “There are fords here for lambs, and there are deep waters where elephants swim.”

But behold, at the same time, what unity, and, behold! what innumerable and profound harmonies in this immense variety! Under all forms it is still the same truth; ever man lost, and God the Savior; ever man with his posterity coming forth out of Eden and losing the tree of life, and the second Adam with his people re-entering paradise, and regaining possession of the tree of life; ever the same cry uttered in tones innumerable, “Oh heart of man, return to your God, for He pardons! We are in the gulf of perdition; let *us* come out of it; a Savior has gone down into it..... He bestows holiness as He bestows life.”

“Is it possible that a book at once so sublime and so simple can be the work of man?” was asked of the philosophers of the last century by one who was himself too celebrated a philosopher. And all its pages have replied, No — it is impossible; for every where, traversing so many ages, and whichever it be of the God-employed writers that holds the pen, king or shepherd, scribe or fisherman, priest or publican, you every where perceive that one same Author, at a thousand years’ interval, and that one same eternal Spirit, has conceived and dictated all; every where, at Babylon as at Horeb, at Jerusalem as at Athens, at Rome as at Patmos, you will find described the same God, the same world, the same men, the same angels, the same future, the same heaven; — every where, whether it be a poet or a historian that addresses you, whether it be in the plains of the desert in the age of Pharaoh, or in the prisons of the capitol in the days of the Caesars — every where in the world the same ruin; in man the same impotency; in the angels the same elevation, the same innocence, the same charity; in Heaven the same purity, the same happiness, the same meeting together of truth and mercy, the same mutual embracing of righteousness and peace; the same counsels of a God who *blots out iniquity*, and who, nevertheless, *does not clear the guilty*.

We conclude, therefore, that the abundance of humanity to be found in the Scriptures, far from compromising their Divine inspiration, is only one farther mark of their divinity.

CHAPTER 2

SCRIPTURAL PROOF OF THE DIVINE INSPIRATION

Let us open the Scriptures. — What do they say of their inspiration?

SECTION 1 — ALL SCRIPTURE IS DIVINELY INSPIRED.

We shall commence by reproducing here that often repeated passage, *All Scripture is given by inspiration of God* [2TI 3:16a]; that is to say, all parts of it are given by the Spirit or by the breath of God.

This statement admits of no exception and of no restriction. Here there is no exception; it is ALL SCRIPTURE; it *is all that is written* (πασα γραφη); meaning thereby the thoughts after they have received the stamp of language — No restriction; all Scripture is in such wise a work of God, that it is represented to us as uttered by the Divine breathing, just as human speech is uttered by the breathing of a man's mouth. The prophet is the Mouth of the Lord.

The purport of this declaration of Paul remains the same in both the constructions that may be put upon his words, whether we place, as our versions do, the affirmation of the phrase on the word Θεοπνευστος (*divinely inspired*), and suppose the verb to be understood (*all Scripture IS divinely inspired, profitable . . .*); or, making the verb apply to the words that follow, we understand Θεοπνευστος

(Divinely inspired) only as a determinative adjective (all Scripture Divinely inspired of God, is profitable . . .).-This last construction would even give more force than the first to the apostle's declaration. For then, as his statement would necessarily relate to the whole Scripture of the holy Letters (τα ιερα γραμματα), of which he had been speaking, would assume, as an admitted and incontestable principle, that the simple mention of the holy Letters implies of itself that Scriptures inspired by God are meant.

Nevertheless it will be proper to give a farther expression of this same truth, by some other declaration of our holy books.

SECTION 2 — ALL THE PROPHETIC UTTERANCES ARE GIVEN BY GOD.

Peter in his second epistle, at the close of the first chapter, thus expresses himself: *Knowing this first, that no Scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man; but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit* [2PE 1:20, 21]. — Note on this passage:

1. That it relates to *written* revelations (προφητεια γραφης);
2. That *never* (ου ποτε) did any of these come through the impulsion or the government of a *will of man*;
3. That it was as *urged* or *moved* by *the Holy Spirit* that those holy men wrote and spoke;
4. Finally, that their writings are called by the name of *prophecy*.

It will be proper then, before we proceed farther, to have the scriptural meaning of these words *prophecy, prophesy, prophet* (נְבִיא), precisely determined; because it is indispensable for the investigation with which we are occupied, that this be known, and because the knowledge of it will throw much light on the whole question.

Various and often very inaccurate meanings have been given to the biblical term prophet; but an attentive examination of the passages in which it is employed, will soon convince us that it constantly designates in the Scriptures, “a man whose mouth utters the words of God.”

Among the Greeks, this name was at first given only to the interpreter and the organ of the ***caticinations*** [messages - aal] pronounced in the temples (εξηγητης ενθεων μαντειων). This sense of the word is fully explained by a passage in the *Timaeus of Plato* [Tome IX. ed Bipont., p. 392]. The most celebrated prophets of pagan antiquity were those of Delphos. They conducted the Pythoness [a priestess of Apollo at Delphi - aal] to the tripod, and were charged with the interpretation of the oracles of the god, or the putting of them into writing. And it was only afterwards, by an extension of this its first meaning, that the name of prophet was given among the Greeks to poets, who, commencing their songs with an invocation of Apollo and the Muses, were deemed to give utterance to the language of the gods, and to speak under their inspiration.

A prophet, in the Bible, is a man, then, in whose mouth God puts the words which he wishes to be heard upon earth; and it was farther by allusion to the fullness of this meaning that God said to Moses [EXO 7:1], that Aaron should be his prophet unto Pharaoh, according as he had told him: *He shall be to you instead of a mouth, and you shall be to him instead of God* [EXO 4:16].

Mark, in Scripture, how the prophets testify of the Spirit Who makes them speak, and of the wholly Divine authority of their words: you will ever find in their language one uniform definition of their office, and of their inspiration. They speak; it is, no doubt, their voice that makes itself heard; it is their person that is agitated; it is, no doubt, their soul also that often is moved; — but their words are not only theirs; they are, at the same time, the words of Jehovah.

The mouth of the Lord has spoken; the Lord has spoken, they say unceasingly [MIC 4:4; JER 9:12; 13:15; 30:4; 60:12; ISA 8:11; AMO 3:1; EXO 4:30; DEU 18:21, 22; JOS 24:2]. *I will open my mouth in the midst of them, says the Lord to His servant Ezekiel. The Spirit of the Lord spoke*

by me, and His word was in my tongue, said the royal psalmist [2SA 23:1, 2]. *Hear the word of the Lord!* It is thus that the prophets announce what they are about to say [ISA 28:14; JER 19:3; 10:1; 17:20]. *Then was the word of the Lord upon me*, is what they often say. *The word of God came unto Shemaiah; the word of God came to Nathan*, the word of God came unto John in the wilderness [1KI 12:22; 1CH 17:3; LUK 3:2] the word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord [JER 11:1; 7:1; 18:1; 21:1; 26:1; 27:1; 30:1; and in many other places. See EZE 1:3; JER 1:1, 2, 9, 14; EZE 3:4, 10, 11; HOS 1:1, 2, etc]; *the burden of the word of the Lord by Malachi* [MAL 1:1], *the word of the Lord that came unto Hosea* [HOS 1:1], *In the second year of Darius, came the word of the Lord by Haggai, the prophet* [HAG 1:1].

This word came down upon the men of God when it pleased, and often in the most unlooked for manner.

It is thus that God, when he sent Moses, said to him, *I will be with your mouth* [EXO 4:12, 15]; and that, when he made Balaam speak, *he put a word in Balaam's mouth* [enebal en (eiv to); NUM 23:5]. The apostles, too, quoting a passage from David in their prayer, express themselves in these words: *You, Lord, have said by the mouth of Your servant David* [ACT 4:25]. And Peter, addressing the multitude of the disciples: *Men and brethren, this scripture must needs have been fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit, by the mouth of David, spoke before concerning Judas* [ACT 1:16]. The same apostle also, in the holy place, under Solomon's porch, cried to the people of Jerusalem, *But those things which God before HAD SHOWED BY THE MOUTH OF ALL HIS PROPHETS, that Christ should suffer, He has so fulfilled* [ACT 3:18].

In the view of the apostles, then, David in his psalms, and all the prophets in their writings, whatever might be the pious emotions of their souls, were only the mouth of the Holy Spirit. It was David who spoke; it was the prophets WHO SHOWED; but it was also God WHO SPOKE BY THE MOUTH of David, His servant; it was God WHO SHOWED BY THE MOUTH of all His prophets [ACT 1:16; 3:18, 21; 4:25].

And, yet again, let the reader be so good as carefully to examine, as it stands in the Greek, that expression which recurs so often in the Gospel, and which is so conclusive, *That it might be fulfilled which was spoken BY THE PROPHET*, (and even) *which was spoken OF THE LORD BY THE PROPHET*, (ΔΙΑ του προφητου, — and even, ΥΠΟ του Κυριο ΔΙΑ του προφητου), saying [MAT 1:22; 2:5, 15, 23; 13:35; 21:4; 27:9; 4:14; 8:17; 12:17]."

It is in a quite analogous sense that holy scripture gives the name of *prophets* and of *false prophets* to impostors, who lied among the Gentiles, in the temples of the false gods, whether they were only common cheats, falsely pretending to visions from God, or whether they were really the mouth or an occult power, of a wicked angel, of a spirit of Python [ACT 13:6; JER 29:1-8; 2KI 18:19. The LXX often renders נְבִיאַי by ψευδοπροφητης. (JER 6:13; 26:7, 8, 11, 16; 29:1, 8; ZEC 13:2)].

And it is, farther, in the same sense that Paul, in quoting a verse of Epimenides, a poet, priest, and soothsayer among the Cretans, called him *one of their prophets*; because all the Greeks consulted him as an oracle; because Nicias was sent into Crete by the Athenians to bring him to purify their city; and because Aristotle, Strabo [Georg. book 10], Suidas [*In voce epimen*], and Diogenes Laertius [*Vita epimen*], tell us that he undertook to foretell the future, and to discover things unknown.

From all these quotations, accordingly, it remains established, that in the language of the Scriptures the *prophecies* are *the words of God put into the mouth of man*.

Accordingly, it is by a manifest abuse also, that in common language people seem to understand no more by that word than a miraculous *prediction*. The prophecies could reveal the past as well as the future; they denounced God's judgments; they interpreted His Word; they sang His praises; they consoled His people; they exhorted souls to holiness; they testified of Jesus Christ.

And as *no prophecy came by the will of man* [2PE 1:21], a prophet, as we have already intimated, was such only at intervals, *and as the Spirit gave him utterance* [ACT 2:4].)

A man prophesied sometimes without foreseeing it, sometimes too without knowing it, and sometimes even without desiring it.

I have said, without foreseeing it; and often at the very moment when he could least expect it. Such was the old prophet of Bethel [1KI 13:20]. I have said, without knowing it; such was Caiaphas [JOH 11:51]. Finally, I have said, without desiring it; such was Balaam, when, wishing three times to curse Israel, he could not, three successive times, make his mouth utter any words but those of benediction [NUM 23 & 24].

We shall give other examples to complete the demonstration of what a prophecy generally is, and thus to arrive at a fuller comprehension of the extent of the action of God in what Peter calls *written prophecy* (*profhteian graphv*).

We read in the 11th of Numbers (25th to the 29th verses), that, as soon as the Lord made the Spirit to rest upon the seventy elders, *they prophesied*; but (it is added) *they did not cease*. The Spirit, then, came upon them at an unexpected moment; and after He had thus spoken by them; *and His word had been upon their tongue*, [2SA 23:2], they preserved nothing more of this miraculous gift, and were prophets only for a day.

We read in the First Book of Samuel [10:11], with what unforeseen power the Spirit of the Lord seized young king Saul at the moment when, as he sought for his father's female donkeys, he met a company of prophets who came down from the holy place. *What is this that is come to the son of Kish*, said they one to another; *Is Saul also among the prophets?*

We read at the 19th chapter, something still more striking. Saul sends to Ramah men who were to take David; but no sooner did they meet Samuel and the company of prophets over whom he was set, than the Spirit of the Lord came upon these men of war, and *they also prophesied*. Saul sends others, and *they also prophesy*. Saul at last goes thither himself, and *he also prophesied all that day and all that night before Samuel*. *The Spirit of God*, we are told, *WAS UPON HIM*.

But it is particularly by an attentive study of the 12th and 14th chapters of the First Epistle to the Corinthians, that one obtains an exact knowledge of what the action of God, and the part assigned to man severally, were in prophecy.

The apostle there gives the Church of Corinth the rules that were to be followed in the use of this miraculous gift. His counsels will be found to throw a deal of light on this important subject. One will then recognize at once the following facts and principles:

1. The Holy Spirit at that time conferred upon the faithful, for the common advantage, a great variety of gifts

[IMPORTANT INSERT

First CORINTHIANS FOURTEEN

Translation and notes by A. Allison Lewis.

INTRODUCTION to the problem of CONFUSION vss. 1-6

¹ Follow after love and desire spiritual gifts, but above all desire that you may prophesy [that is, speak for God; see also EXO 7:1]. ² He who speaks in a foreign language speaks not to those present, but to God, for none of the listeners understands [See also 1CO 14:16], even though, in the Spirit, he may speak wonderful things. ³ On the other hand, he who prophecies speaks to men to their profit by instruction and comfort. ⁴ He who speaks in a foreign language profits himself, but he who prophecies profits the congregation. ⁵ I would that all of you prophesied rather than spoke in foreign languages, for greater is he who prophecies than he who speaks with foreign languages, unless he interprets that the congregation may receive profit. ⁶ For example, brethren, if I come to you speaking in foreign languages, what will I profit you, except I shall speak to you either by revelation, knowledge, prophecy or teaching [**understandable things**]?

ILLUSTRATION 1 vss. 7, 8

⁷ Why, even things without life giving sound, whether pipe or harp, except they give a distinction in the sounds how will it be known what is piped or harped? ⁸ For if the trumpet give an uncertain sound who will prepare himself for the battle?

Application vs. 9

⁹ So likewise you, except you utter by the tongue words easy to be understood how will it be known what is spoken? You will just speak into the air!

ILLUSTRATION 2 vss. 10, 11

¹⁰ There are many kinds of voices in the world and none of them is without meaning. ¹¹ Therefore if I know not the meaning of the voice, I will be to him who speaks a barbarian and he who speaks will be a barbarian to me.

Application vss. 12-17

¹² Even so you, forasmuch as you are zealous of spiritual gifts, seek that you may excel to the profit of the congregation. ¹³ Therefore let him who speaks in a foreign language pray that he may interpret. ¹⁴

For if I pray in a foreign language, my spirit prays, but the prayer from my mind is of no profit to the hearers [as in 1CO 14:16].¹⁵ What will I do then? I will pray with my spirit and I will pray with my mind in your language. I will sing with my spirit and I will sing with my mind in your language.¹⁶ Otherwise when you bless in the spirit [in a foreign language], how will he who occupies the room of the unlearned say Assuredly at your giving of thanks since he does not know what you say?¹⁷ For you truly give thanks well but the other is not profited.

PAUL'S EXAMPLE vss. 18-20

¹⁸ I thank my God, I speak with foreign languages more than all of you: ¹⁹ yet in the congregation I had rather speak five words with my mind, that by my voice I might teach others also, than ten thousand words in a foreign language.²⁰ Brethren, be not children in your thinking, though in evil be like babies, but in your thinking be mature.

NATURAL MAN WILL NOT HEAR vss. 21, 22

²¹ In the Law it is written, With men of other languages and other lips will I speak to this people and yet for all that they will not hear Me, says the Lord [ISA 28:11].²² Wherefore foreign languages are for a sign, not to those who believe, but to those who believe not. But prophesying serves not for those who believe not but for those who do and will believe. [NOTE what our Lord said with reference to parables in MAT 13:15-16; 34, 35. Study also JOH 8:43; 9:39; 12:37-41; ISA 6:9; ACT 28:26; 2CO 4:3, 4; JER 5:21; EZE 3:27; 12:2; PSA 135:15-18; ROM 11:7-8; DEU 29:4 and 1CO 2:14-16. The only hope for sinners, dead in trespasses and sins, is the unmerited favor of God — His gift; EPH 2:1-10].

CONFUSION PROBLEMS vss. 23-40

Foreign Language Problem vss. 23-25

²³ Therefore if the congregation comes together and all are speaking at the same time and in different languages, and there come in those who are unlearned or unbelievers, will they not say that you are mad?²⁴ But if all prophesy [one at a time] and there come in one who believes not or is unlearned, he is convinced by all, he is judged by all.²⁵ Thus are the secrets of his heart made known and so

falling down on his face he will worship God and confess that God is truly among you.

Other Related Problems vs. 26

²⁶ *How is it then, brethren, that when you come together everyone of you has a psalm, a teaching, a language, a revelation, an interpretation [**total confusion**]? Let all things be done to profiting.*

Instructions for Speaking vss. 27-33

Limit to two or three

²⁷ *If any man speak in a foreign language limit it to two or at the most three and that by turns, and let one interpret.*

A Translator must be present

²⁸ *But if there is no interpreter let him keep silence in the congregation and let him speak to himself and God.*

Let the congregation judge what they say

²⁹ *Let those prophesying speak two or three, and let the others judge.*

Do not interrupt one another

³⁰ *If anything is revealed to another who sits by let him wait until the first one finishes.* ³¹ *For you may all prophesy [**Speak for God**] one by one, that all may learn, and all may be comforted.* ³² *The spirits of the prophets [**Speakers for God**] are subject to the prophets [**that is, he is in control of himself, i. e. the speakers for God**].* ³³ *For God is not the author of confusion but of peace, as in all congregations of the saints.*

Women's place in the congregation vss. 34, 35

³⁴ *Let your women keep silence in the congregations. It is not permitted that they speak: but they are to be under*

obedience, as also says the Law. ³⁵ If they have questions, let them ask their husbands at home; for it is a shame for a women to speak in the congregation [**See also 1TI 2:11, 12**].

COMMANDMENTS OF THE LORD vss. 36-38

³⁶ [**ARE YOU THE AUTHORITY**] What? Came the word of God out from you? Or came it to you only? ³⁷ **If any man think himself to be a prophet or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write to you are the commandments of the Lord.** ³⁸ But if any man be ignorant let him be ignorant.

SUMMARY vss. 39, 40

³⁹ Wherefore, brethren, desire to prophesy [**speak for God**]. Do not forbid to speak in foreign languages, **but remember,** ⁴⁰ **LET ALL THINGS BE DONE DECENTLY AND IN ORDER.**

CHAPTER 4 EXAMINATION OF OBJECTIONS

It is objected that the fallibility of the translators of the Bible, renders the infallibility of the original text illusory; that the fact of the apostles having availed themselves of the merely human version made by the Seventy, renders their Divine inspiration more than questionable. Objections are grounded on the various readings presented by different manuscripts, on the imperfections observed in the reasoning and in the doctrines, and on errors discovered in matters of fact. Objectors tell us that the laws of nature, now better understood than formerly, give the lie to certain representations of the sacred authors. Finally, we are told to look to what objectors are pleased to call the admissions made by Paul. To these difficulties we proceed to reply, taking them one after another; and we can afterwards examine some of the theories, by the help of which some have sought to rid themselves of the doctrine of a Divine Inspiration.

SECTION 1 — The Translations

The first objection may be stated thus. It is sometimes said to us, You assert that the inspiration of the Scriptures extended to the very words of the original text; but wherefore all this verbal exactness of the Holy Word, seeing that, after all, the greater number of Christians

can make use of such versions only as are more or less inexact? Thus, then, the privilege of such an inspiration is lost to the Church of modern times; for you will not venture to say that any translation is inspired.

This is a difficulty which on account of its insignificance, we felt at first averse to noticing; but we cannot avoid doing so, being assured that it has obtained some currency among us, and some credit also.

Our first remark on this objection must be, that it is not one at all. It does not bear against the *fact* of the verbal inspiration of the Scriptures; it only contests the advantages of that inspiration. With regard to the greater number of readers, it says, the benefit of such an intervention on the part of God, would be lost; because, instead of the infallible words of the original, they never can have better than the fallible words of a translation. BUT NO MAN IS ENTITLED TO DENY A FACT, BECAUSE HE DOES NOT AT FIRST PERCEIVE ALL THE USE THAT MAY BE MADE OF IT; AND NO MAN IS ENTITLED TO REJECT A DOCTRINE FOR NO BETTER REASON THAN THAT HE HAS NOT PERCEIVED ITS UTILITY.

All the expressions, for example, and all the letters of the *Ten Commandments* were certainly written by the finger of God, from the *aleph* with which they commence, to the *caph* with which they end; yet, would any one venture to say that the credibility of this miraculous fact, is weakened by most unlettered readers, at the present day, being under the necessity of reading the Decalogue in some translation? No one would dare to say so. It must be acknowledged, then, that this objection, without directly attacking the dogma which we defend, only questions its advantages: these, it tells us, are lost to us, in the operation of translating from the original, and in that metamorphosis disappear.

We proceed, then, to show how even this assertion, when reduced to these last terms, rests on no good foundation.

The Divine word which the Bible reveals to us, passes through four successive forms before reaching us in a translation. FIRST, it was from all eternity in the mind of God. SECOND, it was passed by Him to the mind of man. In the THIRD place, under the operation of the Holy Spirit, and by a mysterious process, it passed from

the prophets' thoughts, into the types and symbols of an articulate language; it took shape in words. **FOURTH**, after having undergone this first translation, alike important and inexplicable, men have reproduced and counter-chalked it, by a new translation, in passing it from one human language into another human language. Of these four operations, the three first are Divine; the fourth alone is human and fallible.

Shall it be said, that because the last is human, the divinity of the three former should be a matter of indifference to us? Mark, however, that **BETWEEN THE THIRD AND THE FOURTH — I MEAN TO SAY, BETWEEN THE FIRST TRANSLATION OF THE THOUGHT BY THE SENSIBLE SIGNS OF A HUMAN LANGUAGE, AND THE SECOND TRANSLATION OF THE WORDS BY OTHER WORDS — THE DIFFERENCE IS ENORMOUS.** Between the doubts that may cleave to us respecting the exactness of the versions, and those with which we should be troubled with respect to the correctness of the original text (if not inspired even in its language), the distance is infinite. IT IS SAID; OF WHAT CONSEQUENCE IS IT TO ME THAT THE THIRD OPERATION IS EFFECTED BY THE SPIRIT OF GOD, IF THE LAST BE ACCOMPLISHED ONLY BY THE SPIRIT OF MAN? IN OTHER WORDS, WHAT AVAILS IT TO ME THAT THE PRIMITIVE LANGUAGE BE INSPIRED, IF THE TRANSLATED VERSION BE NOT SO? BUT PEOPLE FORGET, ON SPEAKING THUS, THAT WE ARE INFINITELY MORE ASSURED OF THE EXACTNESS OF THE TRANSLATORS, THAN WE COULD BE OF THAT OF THE ORIGINAL TEXT, IN THE CASE OF ALL THE EXPRESSIONS NOT BEING GIVEN BY GOD.

Of this, however, we may become perfectly convinced, by attending to the five following considerations:

1. The operation by which the sacred writers express with words the mind of the Holy Spirit, is, we have said, itself a rendering not of words by other words, but of Divine thoughts by sensible symbols. Now this first translation is an infinitely surer matter, more mysterious and more liable to error (if God puts not His hand to it) than the operation can be afterwards, by which we should render a Greek word of that primitive text, by its equivalent in another tongue. In order to a man's expressing exactly the

thought of God, it is necessary, if he be not guided in his language from above, that he have thoroughly comprehended it in its just measure, and in the whole extent and depth of its meaning. But this is by no means necessary in the case of a mere translation. The Divine thought being already incarnated, as it were, in the language of the sacred text, **what remains to be done in translation is no longer the giving of it a body, but only the changing of its dress, making it say in French what it had already said in Greek, and modestly substituting for each of its words an equivalent word. Such an operation is comparatively very inferior, very immaterial, without mystery, and infinitely less subject to error than the preceding. It even requires so little spirituality, that it may be performed to perfection by a trustworthy pagan who should possess in perfection a knowledge of both languages. The version of an accomplished rationalist who desires to be no more than a translator, I could better trust than that of an orthodox person and a saint, who should paraphrase the text, and undertake to present it to me more complete or more clear in his French than he found it in the Greek or in the Hebrew of the original. And let no one be surprised at this assertion; it is justified by facts. THUS, IS NOT DE WETTE'S TRANSLATION, AMONG THE GERMANS, PREFERRED AT THE PRESENT DAY TO THAT EVEN OF THE GREAT LUTHER? AT LEAST, IS THERE NOT GREATER CONFIDENCE FELT IN HAVING THE MIND OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE LINES OF THE BASEL PROFESSOR THAN IN THOSE OF THE GREAT REFORMER; BECAUSE THE FORMER HAS ALWAYS KEPT VERY CLOSE TO THE EXPRESSIONS OF HIS TEXT, AS A MAN OF LEARNING SUBJECT TO THE RULES OF PHILOLOGY ALONE; WHILE THE LATTER SEEMS AT TIMES TO HAVE MOMENTARILY ENDEAVORED AFTER SOMETHING MORE, AND SOUGHT TO MAKE HIMSELF INTERPRETER AS WELL AS TRANSLATOR? The more then that one reflects on this first consideration, the more immeasurable ought the difference to appear between these two orders of operations; namely, between the translation of the Divine thoughts into the words of a human language, and the translation of the same thoughts into the equivalent terms of another language. **No longer, therefore, be it said, *What avails it to me, if the one be human, that the other is Divine?*****

2. A second consideration by which we perceive how different these two operations must be, and by which the making of our versions will be seen to be **infinitely** less subject to the chances of error than the original text (assuming that to be *uninspired*), is, that while the work required by our translations is done by a great many men of every tongue and country, capable of devoting their whole time and care to it — by men who have from age to age controlled and checked each other, and who have

mutually instructed and perfected each other — **THE ORIGINAL TEXT, on the contrary, was necessary to be written at a given moment, and by a single man. With that man there was none but his God to put him right if he made a mistake, and to supply him with better expressions if he had chosen imperfect ones. If God, therefore, did not do this, no one could have done it. And if that man gave a bad rendering of the mind of the Holy Spirit, he had not, like our translators, friends to warn, predecessors to guide, successors to correct, nor months, years, and ages in which to review and consummate his work. It was done by one man, and done once for all. This consideration, then, further shows how much more necessary the intervention of the Holy Spirit was to the sacred authors than to their translators.**

3. A third consideration, which ought also to lead us to the same conclusion, is, that while all the translators of the Scriptures were literate and laborious persons, and versed in the study of language, the sacred authors, on the contrary, were, for the most part, ignorant men, without literary cultivation, without the habit of writing their own tongue, and liable, from that very circumstance, if they expressed fallibly the Divine revelation, to give us an infallible thought in a faulty way.

4. A fourth very powerful consideration, which will make one feel still more sensibly the immense difference existing between the sacred writers and their translators, is, that whereas the thought from God passed like a flash of lightning before the soul of the prophet; whereas this thought could nowhere be found again upon Earth, except in the rapid expression which was then given to it by the sacred writer; whereas, if he have expressed it ill, you know not where to go in search of its prototype in order to recover the thought meant to be conveyed by God in its purity; whereas, if he have made a mistake, his blunder is for ever irreparable; it must last longer than Heaven and Earth, it has blemished the eternal book beyond remedy, and nobody on Earth can correct it; — it is quite otherwise with translators. These, on the contrary, have always the Divine text at hand, so as to be corrected and re-corrected, according to the eternal type, until they have become an exact counterpart of it. The inspired word leaves us not; we need not to go in search of it to the third heaven; it is still upon the Earth, just as God Himself first dictated it to us. You may thus devote ages to its study, in order that the human process of our translation may be subjected to its immutable truth. You can now, after the lapse of a hundred and thirty years, correct Osterwald and Martin, by means of a closer comparison of them with their infallible standard; after the lapse of three hundred and seventeen years, you can correct the work of Luther; after that, of fourteen hundred and forty years, that of Jerome. God's

phraseology is still before us, with which to confront our modern versions, as dictated by God Himself, in Hebrew or in Greek, on the day of its being revealed; and, with our dictionaries in your hand, you may, age after age, return to the examination of the infallible expression which it has been His good pleasure to give to the Divine thought, **until you become assured that the language of the modern ones has truly received the counter impression, and given you the most faithful facsimile of it for your own use. SAY NO MORE THEN, WHAT AVAILS IT TO ME, THAT THE ONE IS DIVINE SINCE THE OTHER IS HUMAN?** If you would have a bust of Napoleon, would you say to the sculptor, What good is it to me that your model has been molded at Helena on the very face of Bonaparte, seeing that, after all, your copy cannot have been so?

5. In conclusion, what further distinguishes the first expression which the mind of God has received in the individual words of the sacred book, from its new expression in one of our translations, is that, if you assume the words of the one to be as little inspired as those of the other, nevertheless, the range of conjectures which you might make on their possible faults would be, as respects the original text, a space without bounds and ever enlarging itself; while that same range, as respects the translations, is a very limited space, which is constantly diminishing the longer you remain in it.

If some friend, returning from the East Indies, where your father has, at a great distance from you, breathed his last, were to bring you from him a last letter, written with his own hand, or dictated by him, word for word, in Bengalee, would that letter's being entirely from him be a matter of indifference to you, because you are not acquainted with the Bengalee language, and can read it only in a translation? Don't you know that you can cause translations of it to be multiplied, until they leave you no more doubt of the original meaning than if you had been a Hindu? Will you not allow, that after each of these new translations your uncertainties will be always growing less and less, until they cease to be appreciable, as is the case in arithmetic with those fractional and convergent progressions, the last terms of which are equivalent to zero; while, on the contrary, if the letter were not from your father himself, but from some stranger, who says he has only reproduced his thoughts, then you would find no limits to possible suppositions; and your uncertainties, transported into spheres new and boundless, would go on increasing the more you allowed your mind to dwell upon them; as is the case in arithmetic with those ascending progressions, the last terms of which represent infinitude. It is the same with the Bible. **IF I BELIEVE THAT GOD HAS DICTATED THE WHOLE OF IT, MY**

UNCERTAINTIES WITH RESPECT TO ITS TRANSLATIONS ARE CONFINED WITHIN A VERY NARROW RANGE; AND EVEN IN THIS RANGE, IN PROPORTION AS IT IS RE-TRANSLATED, THE LIMITS OF DOUBT ARE CONSTANTLY DRAWN IN MORE CLOSELY. But if

left to think, on the contrary, that God has not entirely dictated it and that human infirmity may have had its share in it, where shall I stop in assuming that there may be errors? I do not know. The apostles were ignorant — shall I say, they were illiterate — they were Jews; they had popular prejudices; they judaized; they platonized; . . . I do not know where to stop. I will begin like Locke, and end like Strauss. I will first deny the personality of Satan, as a rabbinical prejudice; I will end with denying that of Jesus Christ, as another prejudice. Between these two terms, in consequence, moreover, of the ignorance, on many points, to which the apostles were subject, I will proceed, as so many others have done, to admit, in spite of the letter of the Bible, and with the Bible in my hand, that there is no corruption in men, no personality in the Holy Spirit, no divinity in Jesus Christ, no expiation in His blood, no resurrection of the body in the grave, no eternity in future punishments, no anger in God, no Devil, no miracle, no damned souls, no Hell. Paul was orthodox, shall I say? (as others have done) but he misunderstood his Master. **Whereas, on the contrary, if all have been dictated by God in the original, and even to the smallest expression, “to the least iota and tittle,” who is the translator who could seduce me, by his labors, into any one of these negations, and make even the least of these truths disappear from my Bible?**

Accordingly, who now can fail to perceive the enormous distance interposed by all these considerations between those two texts (that of the Bible and that of the translations), as respects the importance of verbal inspiration? **Between the passing of the thoughts of God into human words, and the simple turning of these words into other words, the distance is as wide as from Heaven to Earth. God was required for the one; man sufficed for the other.** **LET IT NO LONGER BE SAID, THEN, WHAT WOULD IT AVAIL TO US THAT WE HAVE VERBAL INSPIRATION IN THE ONE CASE, IF WE HAVE NOT THAT INSPIRATION IN THE OTHER CASE? FOR BETWEEN THESE TWO TERMS, WHICH SOME WOULD PUT ON AN EQUALITY, THE DIFFERENCE IS ALMOST INFINITE.**

SECTION 2 — USE OF THE SEPTUAGINT TRANSLATION

People insist and say, We agree that the fact of these modern translations does not at all affect the question of the first inspiration of the Scriptures; but we have much more to urge. The sacred authors of the New Testament, when they themselves quote the old Hebrew Scriptures in Greek, employ for that purpose *the Greek translation*, called that of *the Seventy* [LXX or Septuagint - aal], executed at Alexandria two centuries and a half before Jesus Christ. Now, no one among the moderns will dare to affirm (as was done in former times) that the Alexandrine interpreters were inspired. Would a man any more dare to contend that that version, still human at the time of Jesus Christ, acquired, by the sole fact of the apostolic quotations, a divinity which it did not previously possess? Would not this strange allegation resemble that of the Council of Trent, when it pronounced to be divine apocryphal writings, which the ancient Church rejected from the canon, and which Jerome called *fables, and a medley of gold and clay*; ... or when it pronounced that translation by Jerome to be authentic, which, at first, in the opinion of Jerome himself, and thereafter in that of the Church for above a thousand years, was no more than a human work, respectable, no doubt, but imperfect? Would it not further resemble the silly infallibility of Sixtus V., who declared his edition of 1590 to be authentic; or that of his successor, Clement VIII., who, finding the edition of Sixtus V. intolerably incorrect suppressed it in 1592, in order to substitute in its place another very different, and yet still more *authentic*? [See Korholt. *De Variis S. Scripturae editionibus*, p. 110-251. Thomas James, *Bellum Papale, give Concordia Discors Sixti V.* etc., London. 1600. Hamilton's *Introduction to the Reading of the Hebrew Scriptures*, p. 163, 166].

Here we gladly recall this difficulty; because, like many others, when more closely examined, it converts the objections into arguments.

No more is required, in fact, than to study the manner in which the apostles employ the Septuagint, in order to see in it a striking sign of the verbal inspiration under which they wrote.

Were a prophet to be sent by God in our day to the churches speaking the French tongue, how shall it be thought he would act in quoting the Scriptures? He would do so in French no doubt; but according to what version? As Osterwald and Martin's are those most extensively circulated, he would probably make his quotations in the words of one or other of them, in all cases where their translation should seem to him sufficiently exact. But also, notwithstanding our habitual practice and his, he would take care to abandon both those versions, and translate in his own way, as often as the thought intended to be conveyed by the original did not

seem to him to be rendered with sufficient fidelity. Nay, he would sometimes even do more. In order to our being enabled to comprehend more fully in what sense he meant to make for us the application of such or such a Scripture, he would paraphrase the passage quoted, and, in citing it, follow neither the letter of the original text nor that of the translations.

THIS IS PRECISELY WHAT HAS BEEN DONE BY THE SACRED WRITERS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT WITH RESPECT TO THE SEPTUAGINT.

Although it was the universal practice of the Hellenistic Jews, throughout the whole of the East, to read in; their synagogues and to quote in their discussions the Old Testament according to that ancient version [The Talmud even forbids the translation of the Scriptures, except into Greek. (Talmud Megillah, fol. 86.)], **the apostles show us the independence of the Spirit that guided them, by the three methods they follow in their quotations.**

First, when the Alexandrine translators seem to them correct, they do not hesitate to conform to the recollections of their Hellenist **auditors**, and to quote the Septuagint version literally and verbally [word for word - aal].

Secondly, **AND THIS OFTEN OCCURS WHEN DISSATISFIED WITH THE WORK OF THE SEVENTY, THEY AMEND IT, AND MAKE THEIR QUOTATIONS ACCORDING TO THE ORIGINAL HEBREW, TRANSLATING IT MORE CORRECTLY.**

Thirdly, in conclusion, **when they would point out more clearly in what sense they adduce such or such a declaration of the holy books, they paraphrase it in quoting it. It is then the Holy Spirit who, by their mouth, quotes Himself, modifying at the same time the expressions which He had previously dictated to the prophets of His ancient people. One may compare, for example, Micah 5:2 with Matthew 2:6; Malachi 3:1 with Matthew 11:10, Mark 1:2, and Luke 7:27.**

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SECTION 3 — THE VARIOUS READINGS

Then, other opponents will say and admit that they must give up the translations because they in no way affect the question of the primary inspiration of the original text. But the opponents will still object that in the text there are numerous differences among the ancient manuscripts which our Churches consult, and on which our printed editions are based. Confronted with proofs of such a fact, what then becomes of the doctrine of verbal inspiration, and what purpose can it serve?

Here, too, the answer is easy. We might say at once of the various readings of the manuscripts, what we have said of the translations: Why confound two orders of facts that are absolutely distinct: that of the first inspiration of the Scriptures, and that of the present integrity of the copies that have been made of them? **If it was God Himself Who dictated the letter of the sacred oracles (and that is a claim of the Scriptures that cannot be denied); and no more can the copies made of them, than the translations given to us of them, undo that first act.**

When a fact is once consummated, nothing that happens subsequently can efface it from the history of the past. There are here, then, two questions which we must carefully distinguish. Was the whole of Scripture divinely inspired? — this is the first question; it is that with which we have now to do. Are the copies made of it many centuries afterwards by doctors and monks correct? Or are they not correct? — that is the second question. This last can in no way affect the other. Don't proceed, then, to subject the former, by a strange piece of inattention, to the latter; they are independent of each other. A book is from God, or it is not from God. In the latter case, it were idle for me to transcribe it a thousand times exactly — I should not thereby render it Divine; and in the former case, I should in vain take a thousand incorrect copies; — neither folly nor unfaithfulness on my part, can undo the fact of its having been given by God. The Decalogue, yet once more we repeat it, was entirely written by the finger of Jehovah on two tables of stone; but if the manuscripts that give it to me at the present day present some various readings, this second fact would not prevent the first. The sentences, words, and letters of the *Ten Commandments*, would not the less have been all engraved by God. Inspiration of the first text, integrity of the subsequent copies — these are two orders of facts absolutely different, and separated from each other by thousands of years. Beware, then, of confounding what logic, time, and space compel you to distinguish.

It is by precisely a similar process of reasoning, that we reprove the lovers of the apocryphal writings. The ancient oracles of God, we tell them, were committed to the Jewish people, as the new oracles were committed afterwards to the Christian people. If, then, the Book of Maccabees was a merely human book in the days of Jesus Christ, a thousand decrees of the Christian Church could not have any such effect thereafter as that, in 1560, becoming what it had never been till then, it should be transubstantiated into a Divine book. Did the prophets write the Bible with the words which human wisdom dictated, or with words given them by God? — such is our question. But have they been faithfully copied from age to age, from manuscripts into manuscripts? — this is yours, perhaps.

It is very important no doubt; but it is entirely different from the first. Do not, then, confound what God has separated.

It is true, no doubt, people will say, that the fidelity of one copy does not make the original Divine, when it is not so; and the incorrectness of another copy will not make it human, if it was not so. Accordingly, this is not what we maintain. The fact of the inspiration of the sacred text in the days of Moses, or the days of John, cannot depend upon the copies which we shall have made of it in Europe and Africa, two or three thousand years after them; but though the second of these facts does not destroy the first, it at least renders it illusory, by depriving it of its whole worth and utility.

Now, then, mark to what the objection is confined. The question is no longer about the inspiration of the original text — the whole attack here is directed against its present integrity. It was first a question of doctrine: “Is it declared in the Bible that the Bible is inspired even in its language?” But it is no more now than a question of history, or of criticism: “Have the copyists copied faithfully? Are the manuscripts faithful?” Accordingly, we might say nothing now on a position of which we are not here called upon to undertake the defense; but the answer is easy; I will say more — God has rendered it so triumphant that we will not restrain ourselves from giving it. Besides, the faith of simple minds has been so often disquieted on this subject by a presentation of rapidly changing and confusing so called “learning”, that we consider it useful here to expose its hollowness. And, although this objection in some sort withdraws us from the field which we had traced out for our ourselves, we will follow it, for the purpose of answering it.

[The following material in Gausson’s book is so old and outdated that we are going to omit the rest of the book **AND MAKE A LINK TO THE MOST RECENT MATERIAL AVAILABLE CONCERNING THE SURVIVING MANUSCRIPTS. NO OTHER ANCIENT WRITINGS COME EVEN CLOSE TO HAVING THE VAST AMOUNT OF EVIDENCE THAT THE 66 BOOKS OF THE BIBLE HAVE.**]

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