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ARTICLE IV.

INSPIRATION;— WITH REMARKS ON THE THEORY PRESENTED IN LADD'S DOCTRINE OF SACRED SCRIPTURE.

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I. THE inspiration of the Bible must always be a theme of the highest interest. It implies, in any view which may be taken of it, communion between God and man. Those who hold to the doctrine must accept the personality of God and admit that he communicates instruction to certain of his rational creatures for ethical purposes. The mere consent, therefore, to discuss the topic raises us above Pantheism and Deism into the realm of moral government, administered through precepts, persuasions, and awards. We have also in inspiration the most conclusive evidence of the reality of the Christian system. It is true, the evidences of Christianity must be shown to be in a high degree convincing before an argument for inspiration can be of force; but if the fact of inspiration can be once established, this becomes one of the supernatural evidences of our religion, and takes its place by the side of miracles and prophecy as overwhelming proof that God is with his people. Those who hold to a real inspiration must hold, at the lowest, that the Bible contains the word of God—many words of God; Protestants have generally held that the Bible *is* the word of God. The only doctrine of inspiration which has been satisfactory to the Christian church has been one which justifies the claim that the Holy Scriptures are infallible in their moral and religious teachings, and are so based on the authority of God that they must be accepted as binding the conscience and dictating our duties.

There are two views of inspiration, fundamentally diverse,

which may be called generic. These views may, however, be held with such modifications, or with such accompanying adjuncts, that they shall seem at certain points to resemble each other, if not to be identical. One view teaches, that God so controlled the minds of the writers of the Bible that they wrote down such things, and only such things, as he proposed to give to mankind as an authoritative guide for a religious life. This view makes the Bible the book of God. It might be maintained in accord with it that God dictated to the writers every word which they were to transmit, thus making them simply his amanuenses; or it might be maintained that he exercised such a superintendency over their work as to secure in their manuscripts the thoughts and narrations which he desired to use in instructing men, and to exclude from their manuscripts all material which he did not choose so to use. A superintendency like this would probably imply at times the dictating of words to the Scripture authors, and at times it might imply merely a prompting to write out thoughts already in their minds.

The other view connects inspiration not with the writings, but with the thoughts of the person inspired. It teaches that God so affects the mind that it apprehends the truths which he would disclose. Generally these truths are of too exalted a character to be known without special divine aid. Generally the mental action put forth because of inspiration is intuition; God enables one to see the truth. He does not in any case give to the mind thoughts ready-made, he does not correct its understanding of the ordinary facts of history or science, but by the power of his Spirit raises the soul to fuller and larger views of truth, to deeper and more impressive experiences in the religious life. Under such inspiration the mind works out its apprehensions with a more intense energy and brings within the range of its consciousness truths that would ordinarily evade its grasp. The knowledge produced by such inspiration does not differ from ordinary knowledge; it rests on subjective experiences, is a conviction of the mind, and is not to be accepted by the world as authoritative because of

the source from which it comes. Knowledge thus acquired may be mixed with error, may approach more or less to the truth as apprehended by the divine mind. Inspiration of this character is always an effect produced upon one person by another,—upon man by God. Sometimes the man may not be in a state to respond properly to the divine influence, sometimes he may not be sufficiently moved to apprehend adequately the truths before him. The products of such an inspiration we are not therefore to receive as of course setting forth the truth of God, but are to receive as containing something that comes from God, and are to allow them an authority according to their value. One who has an adequate power of discernment can select from the various products of inspiration in the Bible much that has the mark of being truly from the divine mind, and which may therefore be called the “word of God.”

The theory¹ of inspiration presented by Professor George T. Ladd, D.D., of Yale College, is very fully wrought out, and may be taken as fairly representing the second kind of inspiration above noticed. We will present his view somewhat in detail, in order to compare it with inspiration of the kind first noticed.

Professor Ladd rejects decisively, as absurd if not impossible, the kind of inspiration first described. He says: “With the inspiration of the Bible, in the meaning of this term, which obtained almost without dispute in Protestant theology from the close of the sixteenth to the middle of the eighteenth centuries, we might properly give ourselves no further concern. Neither the claims and phenomena of the Bible, nor the rational and biblical idea of revelation, are consistent with such a meaning.”² He holds that the “old orthodoxy” divorced revelation from inspiration, and in this way really destroyed both. “Inspiration is thus separated from its living and organic connection with revelation, and

¹ The Doctrine of Sacred Scripture, by George T. Ladd, D.D. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1883.

² *Ibid.*, Vol. ii. p. 452.

is conceived of as something attached to a writing, rather than wrought out in a personality. It loses, then, its characteristic of personal communion between two spirits. . . . Thus does a wrong conception of inspiration, with the sundering of all the vital ties which unite revelation and inspiration, lead on to the complete destruction of both alike."¹ He maintains that such a view of inspiration is mischievous. "It is of no little importance that men should know what it is fair and safe *not* to expect from the Bible. The danger of sending men to the Bible with a false theory of its nature and origin is theoretically very great. . . . If the inquiring mind is directed to the examination of the Bible under the incubus of a dogma whose very essence consists in a pernicious application of the dictum, *Falsus in uno, falsus in omnibus*, how can any just complaint be made when such a mind proceeds with the consistent application of this dictum? We cannot save the Bible as a whole to the satisfaction of human reason, when we have once committed its case to the infallibility of its separate parts."²

In order to understand the view of inspiration presented in the work before us, it is necessary to observe the author's view of those faculties of the mind that apprehend moral and religious truth. He considers the conscience the faculty through which God has access to man. He calls the faculty also the moral reason, and considers it a power of perception or intuition, or, by whatever mental activity, a power of apprehension. This faculty in its natural state he considers incompetent to religious knowledge, or even to a sense of the ill-desert of sin. In like manner, the law of morals is not recognized by this faculty, except through a divine movement upon the soul. "The inner law, as existing within man, is only the effect; the cause and significance of this law are to be understood only in the light of a divine self-communication. What modern ethics might call the threatenings of a guilty conscience is the wrath of God revealed within; for what modern ethics calls an operation of the

¹ Doctrine of Sacred Scripture, Vol. ii. p. 454.

² *Ibid.*, Vol. ii. p. 635.

human intellect is really the word of God made known to the soul."¹ When this faculty has been developed and informed by, conformed inwardly to, the divine teaching, it is competent to judge of religious truth, and can recognize the divine communications made known apart from itself, as in the Bible or the writings of good men. Without the divine teaching, the self-communications of God, the conscience is incapable of forming an opinion upon revelation, but in its self-sufficiency is the special foe of revelation.² The conscience or moral reason is not, in fact, constituted to act independently of the special operation of God. Its apprehensions, resulting from its natural energy awakened by external events, would be erroneous and in opposition to the truths of revelation. This power can no more act with proper effect without the illuminations of the Holy Spirit than the eye can see without light. "Moral reason has need not only of development, but also of redemption. As it cannot have a purely natural development,—cannot, that is to say, develop itself,—so it cannot redeem itself. For both its development and its redemption the divine self-communications are necessary."³ This power, when properly developed by the aid of the Holy Spirit, and made apprehensive of the truth through the word of God, becomes the Christian consciousness, and is thus able to test the word of God—at least, to discern it when mingled with the words of men. The author speaks of this faculty, also, when blessed with divine communion and instructed by the divine word, as the ethico-religious consciousness. Under this name the faculty is made to discharge a most important office—becomes, with the various aids afforded it, the judge of the scriptural writings, the discerner of inspiration, of revelation, of the word of God wherever found.

We must also notice his view of revelation, and of the office of revelation. If this is a true view of the faculty of religious knowledge, it follows, of course, that all religious truth must be known by revelation, and that not such a reve-

¹ *Ibid.*, Vol. i. 481.

² *Ibid.*, Vol. ii. p. 378.

³ *Ibid.*, Vol. ii. p. 532.

lation as is sometimes said to be the basis of all knowledge, — whatever is seen being seen in the light which God gives us, — but an immediate and special revelation afforded for the purpose of disclosing a particular truth. If one sees, for instance, that disregard of God is war on himself, he sees it through a special divine communication. Moreover, when such a revelation is made, the mind is not competent to apprehend it by any energy which it possesses by nature. Indeed, there is no real revelation while the mind remains in its natural state. God must waken the mind to new activity whenever he makes disclosures of truth, i.e. of himself. This enabling the mind to receive a revelation is inspiration. Inspiration and revelation are correlative terms; practically they imply each other; neither could exist without the other. A few citations will exhibit the author's view of this subject. "In all legitimate uses of the term revelation we find that inspiration is involved as the subjective condition of revelation. Revelation, of whatever kind, is realized only through that condition of the subject of revelation which we fitly ascribe to the activity of the Divine Spirit within the human spirit, and which we therefore call inspiration."¹ "Revelation is, then, a divine work, which is regarded as taking place in the faculties of knowledge and as resulting in the making known of truth to its recipient. Inspiration relates to all the faculties of man, and emphasizes especially the ethical activities of faith. Inasmuch as the Holy Spirit is the personal principle of all truth, and especially of all truth concerning God as the Redeemer, and concerning the divine work in the kingdom of redemption, to have this Spirit within one is to be inspired with insight into the truth. To ask, however, for this inspired insight is the same thing as to pray that the Spirit of wisdom and revelation may be given; for by revelation the personal knowledge of the truth is gained, and by revelation the defects in the knowledge of every Christian are supplied."²

Professor Ladd again and again affirms that inspiration is

¹ *Ibid.*, Vol. ii. p. 456.

² *Ibid.*, Vol. ii. 461.

bestowed upon the church as a whole, that it is bestowed for the good of the community of believers, and that in all its forms it is essentially of one kind. "The general rule of distribution for this donative work of the Spirit [i.e. that described 1 Cor. xi.-xiv.] is the profit of the community. It is in accordance with the same fundamental law that the inspiration which constitutes the call, endowment, and guidance of the apostolic office is to be construed. We find, then, in this chief passage, all the essential elements of apostolic inspiration, except the selective act of Jesus with its accompanying commission, attributed to the entire community of believers."¹ "But the revelation and inspiration which are claimed and enjoyed by the apostles have already been shown to be the same in kind with those of all believers."² "Inspiration, as the subjective condition of biblical revelation and the predicate of the word of God, is *specifically* the same illumining, quickening, elevating, and purifying work of the Holy Spirit as that which goes on in the persons of the entire believing community."³ He designates four grades of inspiration, all being of the same kind: first, that of the apostles and prophets; second, that of "selected and official personages," who are able to make the right application of the truths of the gospel to practical life; third, that which imparts insight into the history of God's kingdom; fourth, that "which fills the soul of every true believer in God with joy, love, faith, hope, the spirit of prayer, and all the spiritual exercises of the religious life; and which expresses itself in invocation, exhortation, ascription of praise, and sacred psalmody."⁴ "It must be concluded, then, that the dogma which assumes to separate the Bible from all other books by defining the inspiration of its writers as *specifically* different from the inspiration of other believers fails entirely of its purpose."⁵ In accord with this view, inspiration must continue an endowment of the church through its entire existence. "Inasmuch as the same Spirit who has

¹ Ibid., Vol. i. p. 188. ² Ibid., Vol. i. p. 191. ³ Ibid., Vol. ii. p. 488.

⁴ Ibid., Vol. ii. p. 372.

⁵ Ibid., Vol. ii. p. 465.

spoken that which has become scripturally fixed, and who has ordained the events in history which constitute the past process of redemption, constantly operates within the soul of every believer, revelation and inspiration can never cease within the church. Inspiration and revelation must continue in a living process, or that which is past will become dead past — will become, that is to say, only a claimant for the title of revelation, and not a revelation realized.”¹

The relation between inspiration and revelation here set forth makes it a necessity that inspiration should involve a communion between two persons. The revealing and inspiring agent must be a person forming and carrying out designs, and the recipient of the revelation must be a person, since the revelation is possible only through a mind inspired to receive it. The transaction is between persons as persons. A truth so disclosed that the natural mind would understand it would not be a revelation, because there would be no inspiration of the recipient mind; and a mind elevated by ordinary stimuli, however animated and enlarged its survey of truth, would not be inspired, because there would be no proper revelation connected with its action. “In order to make the transaction valid, the second party in the transaction [man as the subject of inspiration] must be a being which is worthy of the name ‘person,’ must be that kind of free and self-conscious individuality which we call a personality. Only such a being has the capacity for revelation, or for that knowledge of God which the self-revealing Infinite Spirit produces within the finite spirit. Only such a being has the capacity for receiving those ethical and spiritual impressions and changes in which inspiration essentially consists.”²

To obtain an adequate view of the subject before us, it is necessary to notice still more particularly the agencies engaged in revelation and inspiration, although these have been necessarily alluded to in the remark that they imply a transaction between persons. Adopting a division of the theme from Kahnis, the author says: “Every revelation leads us to

¹ *Ibid.*, Vol. ii. p. 523.

² *Ibid.*, Vol. ii. p. 374.

inquire as to (1) its agent, (2) its subject, (3) its object, and (4) its method or form. In all revelation a personality acting as an agent imparts some new knowledge to another personality, through some means, or in some form, of communication. The revealing *agent*, the one who reveals, in all divine revelation, is God. In the special revelation of the Bible the agent of revelation is the inspiring and sanctifying Divine Spirit—it is God regarded as the energizing source of ethical and spiritual illumination and life; or it is the Logos, the Revealer, the Eternal Word. . . . The *object* of all revelation is God, and God alone. The content of revelation is not, however, the knowledge of God as he is in himself, but as he stands related to the world, to the soul of man, and to the course of human history. . . . The object of the biblical revelation is pre-eminently God as the Redeemer of man, and the activities of God in the historic process of redemption. The *subject* of revelation is man. . . . The *method* or *form* of revelation can be learned only by an actual study of the process of revelation.”¹ The factors of revelation give a clew to the method, and “are history, miracle, law, prediction, doctrine, and the God-Man Jesus Christ. . . . The Spirit *reveals* the Logos in and through the Bible; the Logos *is* the revelation of God.”²

Such a view of inspiration makes the Bible at once the foundation and product of the church. The church, as embracing redeemed humanity, is competent to produce the Bible, and to give utterance to so much of the word of God as is contained in the Bible. The founding of the church must be by the word also; but the incarnate word Jesus Christ was present at its foundation, laid the stone on which it was erected. Inspired men have from time to time apprehended God as the Redeemer, and he has been to them the same word that Christ was when in the flesh. The intuitions of truth attained through inspiration have been recorded, and much of the word of God has found its way into the Scriptures. Though there are writings of Christian men

¹ *Ibid.*, Vol. ii. 324.

² *Ibid.*, Vol. ii. p. 335.

which are more fully inspired than some portions of the Bible, on the whole the Bible is unique and incomparable in its value. The apostles were selected by Christ for their work, and the prophets had an inspiration of the same grade with theirs, so that some portions of the Bible have the authority of the very word of God. "The general principle which regulates the distribution of the gift of inspiration is, so far as its recipient is concerned, his own ethical fitness for receiving it and his fidelity in its use. But this condition by no means controls the distribution of the gift, so that we can conclude from the ethical character of the inspired one as to the relative value of the product of the inspiration and revelation given to him. Other historical conditions, which concern the great final purposes of redemption, and which regulate the place of each agent and age in the general course of historic revelation, may often be of chief importance."¹ The duty of Christians of every age is to study the Bible so as to discover its inspired and sacred portions; remembering that, though the Spirit still inspires the followers of Christ, the great ages of inspiration have sent down to us intuitions which we are to inherit and receive from history rather than attain through a present inworking of the inspiring agent. Our inspiration is rather an enabling us to see what others have seen than the awakening of new intuitions. If we can recognize and adopt the word of God as contained in the Scriptures, we shall ourselves stand on the foundation of the apostles and prophets.

The theory of inspiration presented by Professor Ladd is one akin to, if not identical with, others that have been entertained abroad, and to some extent in this country. It seems to agree in outline with that of Morell as given in his *Philosophy of Religion*. The latter, however, was represented, at the time of its publication, to be essentially the theory of Schleiermacher, with whom Professor Ladd would not agree on some important points. Tholuck wrote an article for the first edition of Herzog's *Encyclopedia* which advocates a view

¹ *Ibid.*, Vol. II. p. 467.

in some respects like that of our author. A translation of this article may be found in a collection of *Theological Essays* published by the American Unitarian Association, Boston, in 1856, and subsequently in later editions. Tholuck recognizes the difference between the Bible and the inspired portions which it contains. He says: "It may be a matter of dispute a hundred times over where the line of demarcation between the essential and non-essential is to be drawn; but that such a distinction, although subject to uncertainty, does really exist, is witnessed by the speech and logic of every nation where the question has been entertained. There is much that is non-essential which still in *some respects* touches the essential; but there is also that which does not touch it *at all*."¹ He seems also to imply that inspiration is an effect upon the mind of the writers as to their personal convictions, although he has in mind the writings themselves, the records, more prominently than our author.

These schemes are adopted by their adherents as being more in accord with the Bible records, and more philosophical, than the ordinary orthodox theory. It is said that an inspiration which teaches the infallibility of the Bible is to be rejected because the Bible is not infallible; because criticism shows that it abounds in error, inconsistencies, and contradictions; because in its most important narratives, as those of the crucifixion and the Sermon on the Mount, there are irreconcilable discrepancies. It is also said that an inspiration of the writers in some cases cannot be proved, because we do not know who the writers were, and in some cases would seem improbable, because their works as we have them are simply a compilation from many different authors. The points here suggested we leave to those who make a specialty of biblical criticism and biblical history, simply remarking that we do not believe every form of the old orthodox doctrine has as yet been shown, from considerations like these, to be untenable.

On the question whether the theory of Professor Ladd may

¹ *Theological Essays*, p. 107.

claim the preference on *philosophical* grounds some remarks suggest themselves. That it is a theory evolved from certain assumed principles, and hence is more explicable than the ordinary theory, may be granted; but that it more fully embraces the facts to be considered, and practically falls more into accord with the aims of the scheme of grace and with the approved methods of its propagation, may well be doubted.

1. It should be granted at the outset that the theory before us is not an unchristian theory. Any one may charge it with promoting infidelity, if such is his belief, but this it can do only indirectly. The presupposition of the theory is the fact of Christianity. Hence the theory claims to be eminently Christian. It does not discuss the reality of our revealed religion, because it holds to the historic fact of its existence as indubitable proof of its reality, and holds to the incompetency of any man to form an argument against it,—the believer cannot, for his principles of thought are derived from it—he might as well try to prove mathematically that there is no such thing as number; and the unbeliever cannot, for he has no such apprehension of ethico-religious principles as to enable him to say anything either for or against them—he does not live within their realm. The advocates of the theory, therefore, claim not only to be the friends of the Christian system, but the only friends who can defend it against the assaults of its enemies. The first sentence of Tholuck's article referred to above is: "The older form of doctrine concerning the inspiration of the Scriptures furnished rationalism with one of its chief points of attack upon the teaching of the church."

2. The theory of Professor Ladd seems to us to divide the Scriptures into three portions differing in kind, and, as a result, to make Bible inspiration a matter of little account. There is, according to this theory, an inspiration portion of the Bible, a supra-inspiration portion, and an infra-inspiration portion. The supra-inspiration portion consists of the words of Christ; the inspiration portion consists of those reve-

lations that have struggled through the medium of the human mind and, by the aid of inspiration, have found utterance in human language. The infra-inspiration portion is that which contains no revelation and so has nothing sacred in it. Our author admits of no inspiration except that between persons, in which there is a communication between two spiritual beings, in which one mind imparts truth to another "pre-eminently in the imparting of religious intuitions."¹ Of course our Lord is not the subject of any such operation by which he is made the recipient of intuitions otherwise above his capacity. Even the Jews of his own day saw that he spoke with authority, i.e. said what he himself knew. Our author says: "The subject and object, the agent and media, of revelation are united in him."² It is to be noticed here that the words of Christ are not Christ himself, who is the Word. It can be maintained with plausibility that Christ is known only as a revelation, and that we need the inspiration of the Spirit to apprehend him as divine, to recognize him as the Word which the Bible in part is; but the words which he *uttered* are to be taken from his lips, and there is no possibility of connecting them with inspiration in the sense proposed by our author; to be inspired to write them down, or to be inspired to understand them, would remove the inspiration from them. Yet he ascribes to them the highest authority and makes them the germinal centre of all Scripture that is sacred. He describes the difference between Paul's judgment and Christ's teaching thus: "The source of judgment in the one case is his own inspired, but not infallible 'subjectivity'; the source in the other case is the infallible objective word of Christ."³ Among the truths from the influence of which biblical criticism is not to be asked to set itself free is "the final authority of Christ upon the ethico-religious matters which it was his mission to teach."⁴ In reply to the question, What is there which the religious faculty must recognize as of sovereign authority? he says: "The

¹ Doctrine of Sacred Scripture, Vol. ii. p. 329.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid., Vol. i. p. 203.

⁴ Ibid., Vol. i. p. 227.

objective word of Christ furnishes the form within which, and the law according to which, the subjective development of the Christian consciousness must take place. . . . It is, then, the objective word of Christ in the Bible which makes the Bible a ground and norm and law unto the believing community. . . . The portions of the Bible which were written before his coming, the church carries forward to Christ, and receives his word upon them; the portions which were written after his coming, the church carries back to Christ to receive his word upon them. And, inasmuch as certain faiths regarding the older portions are involved in the infallible word of Jesus Christ concerning these portions, and certain faiths regarding the latter portions are founded upon his infallible promises, the Christian consciousness receives all such portions as being the word of God in Jesus Christ."¹ Christ's words must therefore be a part of the revealed word, and yet they are without inspiration. A revelation of this kind comes very near to that which the author would make to appear absurd by applying to it the expression of Rothe, "the imparting of ready-made religious cognitions of the intellect in the form of dogmas." This is no bad description of the words: "Blessed are the poor in spirit; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." The words of Christ the author admits to have been authentically reported to us, admits that they form a very considerable portion of the New Testament, and maintains that they so constitute the gorm and law of the whole, that it may, with slight exceptions, be accepted as a revelation and a rule of faith.²

An author has a right to define his own terms and use them accordingly. Professor Ladd has stated clearly what he means by the word inspiration, and has adhered to his definitions; we prefer to give the word a different signification and apply it to the words of Christ. We would call these objective words, admitted to be infallible, inspired or theopneustic. They are words which God breathes forth. And we would prefer, if possible, to connect other words

¹ *Ibid.*, Vol. ii. pp. 536, 537.

² *Ibid.*, Vol. ii. pp. 536, 576, 511.

found in the Scriptures with these of our Lord, or to find for them a similar source, that we might ascribe to them a similar inspiration. Of this, however, we will speak later. But it is to be noted here, that when Professor Ladd uses the word inspiration he means by it something totally different from that ordinarily intended, and yet that he does not exclude from a portion of the Bible an infallibility of precisely the same kind as that associated with the word inspiration as commonly used.

After the objective words of Christ, which are to be received as of absolute authority because of their source, come the inspired portions of the Scriptures. These are characterized, some by higher, some by lower, degrees of inspiration. "Next to the word of redemption which Christ in his own person is, and which he utters with his own actions and speech, stands that apostolic word which expands, explains, and applies the word of Christ. The authority of the apostolic word is guaranteed by the promises of Christ, which were all true, and were realized by the apostles, in the sense in which Christ meant them. . . . With an authority more indirectly derived, and always to be referred to and tested by the authority of Christ and the apostles, do the non-apostolic authors of the New Testament teach us the same divine truth. But of the Old Testament in general we must say that all its authority is relative, and that authority is to be assigned to its several portions and teachings according to the authoritative teaching of Christ and the apostles."¹ Elsewhere our author ascribes to some of the prophets, especially the author of Psalm cx., an inspiration equal to that of the apostles. He does not attempt to draw the line at which inspiration ceases, in making its descending grades, but clearly gives over some portion of the Bible to the rubbish-bags of errors and myths. He finds much more inspiration in the works of Christian writers than in portions of the canon. "We need not hesitate, then, to affirm the indubitable fact, that Christian symbols and creeds, in so far as

¹ *Ibid.*, Vol. ii. p. 578.

they are constructed by the activity of the Christian consciousness and are based upon the faiths which belong to the word of Christ and the apostles, have an authority superior to that of many portions of Sacred Scripture. Calvin and Augustine, although not infallible, can teach us concerning redemption with more authority than Ecclesiastes or Esther, or even the Mosaic Torah.”¹

The last quotation indicates the difference between the author's view of inspiration and that ordinarily entertained. Those who hold to the inspiration of the entire Bible do not estimate the degree of inspiration belonging to any passage as being in proportion to the amount of truth concerning redemption which it contains, but hold that it is inspired if it fills a place in the *system* of revealed truth. The Westminster Confession teaches the way of salvation better than the Book of Joshua, but the Bible would not be improved by substituting it for the Book of Joshua. Nor is there any inspiration in the Westminster Confession or in Calvin's Institutes except that which belongs to them as a statement of Bible truth. The inspiration which our author advocates is useful indeed, so far as it is a reality among Christian people, but is not of itself a source of authority in the instruction of mankind, is never an object of final appeal in settling difficult questions, and is moreover, even if an admitted fact, to be tested by the ethico-religious consciousness. In place of the simple and ultimate basis of religious teaching, “thus saith the Lord,” the system before us sets up another — the Christ of history. Christ is, we grant, the proper authority, when recognized in his true character; but his authority is degraded by combining with it human elements, if it is only such as we can accord him through the church's apprehension of him in its historical experiences.

This division of the Bible into portions that are authoritative, partially authoritative, and not at all authoritative — rather, erroneous and misleading — goes far toward destroying the unity of the Bible. It is true that our author finds much

¹ Ibid., Vol. ii. p. 608.

in the Old Testament looking forward to Christ, and considers the Bible in some sense a unit; but this is a conclusion which he can only affirm with qualifications. With the other view of inspiration the unity of the Scriptures forces itself upon us as an indubitable fact, is implied in the doctrine of inspiration itself. The two ideas, in fact, support each other, the inspiration accounting for the unity and the unity manifesting the inspiration; both being evidenced by the influence which the book has exerted. In a little tract (210 of the Presbyterian Board of Publication), Professor Warfield uses the following language: "Looked at from a purely external point of view, the volume [the Bible] is a rough bale of drift from the sea of time, a conglomerate of *débris* brought down by the waters and cast in a heap together. Nay, not only are there heterogeneous, but seemingly positively conflicting, elements in it. One half is a mass of Hebrew writings held sacred by a race which cannot look with patience on the other half, which is a mass of Greek writings claiming to set aside the legislation of a large part of its fellow. Yet it is this congeries of volumes which has had, and still has, this immense influence. The Hebrew half never conquered the world until the Greek half was added to it; the Greek half did not conquer save by the aid of the Hebrew half. The whole mass, in all its divinity, has attained the kingship."

3. The position of the author, that "the object of all revelation is God, and God alone," is one which cannot be maintained. That God is glorified by his revelation and is "the last end of all things" is not to be denied. But this is a truth that is perceived only as the result of revelation and a study of history and a contemplation of the divine government. It was after prolonged reflection, and as the utterance of a baffled understanding, that the apostle said: "For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things." There is no proper sense in which it can be said that each revelation is a revelation of God, that every apprehension of a revealed truth is an apprehension of God, that every disclosure in the divine government accomplishes its purpose only

by giving a view of God,—and God as a redeemer. Indeed the author seems conscious that his assertion is for the sake of a theory, rather than the expression of a clear truth, for he modifies his statement in such a way as almost to retract it. “The content of revelation is not, however, the knowledge of God as he is in himself, but as he stands related to the world,” etc.¹ Still the position that God is the sole object of revelation is vital to his system and may be profitably put to a more thorough test. It would have been well if he had cited instances of revelations and made application of his doctrine to them. It is not an easy task to do it for him; but perhaps the parables in the thirteenth chapter of Matthew will be as readily accepted as revelations as any passages of the Scriptures. They are closely connected with the scheme of redemption. The shortest one is that of the leaven, Matt. xiii. 33: “The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened.” The thing here revealed is the effect of preaching the gospel. The parable represents a well-known thing, the word of God, as leaven, and reveals the effect of the word as it is to appear in the kingdom of God—the leaven is to pervade the mass. To say that the truth set forth by the parable illustrates God’s character when it is taken with all the facts connected with the case, is to say nothing to the purpose; so does the French Revolution, so does an earthquake. Let us take a second passage; there are no clearer revelations than those of Matthew xxiv. Christ instructs his disciples in the matter of their future duties, tells them when to flee to the mountains, tells them that attempts to defend Jerusalem against the enemy soon to come upon the city will be useless; but there is here no more a revelation of God than there would have been in explaining to the disciples, after the destruction of Jerusalem, the mistakes they would have made if they had not followed the Master’s directions.

It is clear that the apostle Paul considered the aim of reve-

¹ *Ibid.*, Vol. ii. p. 325.

lation to be a good life — a life of communion with God and of blameless morals. He does not congratulate Timothy on his knowledge of God by elevated views and uncommonly early intuitions, but that from a child he had known the Scriptures, which are able to make wise unto salvation. And he sets forth the advantage of inspiration by declaring that Scripture having this quality is “profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.” One cannot avoid feeling, in reading this passage, that Paul valued inspiration as a motive power, because of the *moral* effects that are produced by it. It is not to be denied that one learns of God through inspiration, but it is for the most part indirectly. In a word, inspiration is not that we may know more (though that is the result), but that we may do better.

4. There is no need of inspiration in Professor Ladd’s meaning of the term for the understanding of most of the revelations which God makes. We believe fully in influences of the Holy Spirit similar to those which he calls inspiration. Elevation of mind in the pulpit labors of many a pastor, the demonstration of the truth and the power of persuasion granted to many a preacher, the “Saturday assurances” of many praying servants of God, are testimony of this; but this divine moving of the mind is not necessary for understanding revelations, rather revelations are made that the ordinary mind may know the truth without dependence on a special divine afflatus. What need is there of supernatural assistance to understand such words as these: “And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is he which was ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead”? or this, “That saith to the deep, Be dry, and I will dry up thy rivers; that saith of Cyrus, He is my shepherd, and shall perform all my pleasure”? Even obscure passages of the Scriptures are not made clear by a struggle of intellect, by straining after intuitions. Such passages are not made clear to men in general — there may be individual

exceptions for an ulterior purpose — by simple insight divinely given, but by events that manifest the truth in real experience. When Peter said, “This is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel, And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh,” etc., the prophecy was understood; but before that time there was not, so far as we know, any historical and inherited understanding of these words coming down from their inspired author. Probably Peter knew far better than Joel the import of the prophecy. Sometimes words were uttered in prophecy which confessedly were not understood, though prophecy is a high form of inspiration, as our author understands inspiration. Jesus said: “And now I have told you before it come to pass, that when it is come to pass ye might believe.” Here is no making competent to understand through inspiration. Daniel says: “And I heard, but I understood not; then said I, O my Lord, what shall be the end of these things? And he said, Go thy way, Daniel; for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end.”

5. Professor Ladd does not show that the inspiration which he recognizes — one of the charisms mentioned in the eleventh chapter of First Corinthians — is the inspiration that gives the Bible its divine character. Let it be granted that what he terms inspiration is known in the church, an endowment through all its history, it does not follow that this is the only inspiration; if it exists it can have no power to exclude an inspiration by which God communicates truth in a special way to men selected for a specific work. We have already seen that there are considerable portions of the Bible — all the words of Jesus — of the highest possible authority, of which this charism inspiration can not be predicated. And when we pass on to other portions there is no proof of an inspiration to be numbered among the ordinary charisms of the church. The Professor criticises the ordinary view of this subject very sharply because of its failure to connect inspiration with authorship. He says we do not know, never can know, who wrote some of the books of the

Bible, therefore we never can know that the writers were moved by the Holy Ghost in their writing. It cannot be shown that their words are dictated to them. But he equally fails in making the desired connections. He cannot deny that the inspiration of a passage written by an apostle or prophet may have been dictated, he cannot prove that the words and thoughts came by elevated intuitions imparted by the Holy Ghost. He has not attempted to show that the ethico-religious consciousness is able to distinguish between Christ's words and Paul's words by perceiving an inspiration in one and a quality above inspiration in the other. He bases the superiority of Christ's words on evidence wholly different from the critical discriminations of the reader. He cannot deny, therefore, that in some way the words of the apostles may be as much the words of God as the words of Christ are. If the Scriptures are inspired the fact must be learned from themselves. The quality must be perceived in the writings, or a credible claim to it be made by them. No one can say the authors of the Scriptures were inspired, therefore the writings are inspired; we only know them through their works; or if we knew them independently, and knew they were inspired, we should not know that their inspiration was exhibited in the works we have. We must begin with the writings themselves, and if we are assured of their inspiration we are perfectly safe in referring it to God as its source. We may investigate and speculate as we please about the men who wrote, and the influences under which they wrote, but we cannot in this way explain the fact of inspiration. We shall be obliged to content ourselves with the position that, if there is inspiration, God is its author.

II. The word "inspiration" does not definitely express that quality of the Sacred Scriptures which compels us to consider them as in some peculiar sense the work of God. That God is to some extent the author of the Scriptures is admitted by all Christians. The Bible is found, in their experience, to such a degree "profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness" that

they cannot avoid the conclusion that God is its author. Hence it is said to be inspired, or theopneustic. But the exact meaning of the word, adopted from Paul, is not easily determined. Tholuck says, "The word 'inspiration,' borrowed from 2 Tim. iii. 16, characterizes the contents of the sacred writings as having proceeded from the breath, the Spirit of God." The term, however, does not determine either the extent or the method of the divine influence in the production of the Scriptures. If the writers received every word they put in their manuscripts by dictation from God, if they wrote upon topics and used facts suggested to their minds by the Divine Spirit, if they were brought into sympathy with the Holy Spirit so as to be enabled to give to the world by their writings the instructions and the impressions which the Spirit desired to have given, if they were merely impelled to write, and restrained from writing what the Spirit of God did not desire to have communicated to the world,—in either case, the writing would be, in some sense, a product of the divine mind, and might be characterized as inspired. The term is not given to us as one of established meaning, with the requirement that we find in the Bible the qualities it designates; but the Bible is given us, and among its many qualities we shall, if we exercise the proper discernment, find inspiration to be one. But how much inspiration means must be learned from the Scriptures themselves. Professor Ladd attempts to establish a doctrine of inspiration, and then to show that a part of the Bible was written under its influence; we believe the Bible is to be examined like any other book, and that its peculiar qualities are to be learned from such an examination.

Before taking up this question, whether God is the author of the Bible, we call attention to the fact that it involves considerations of the utmost importance. On the answer to the question depends not the truthfulness or trustworthiness of the Bible, but its power. If God is so the author of the Bible that it can be demonstrated to an unbelieving world that he has spoken through it, and in it has given commands

that may not be disregarded, instructions the heeding of which leads to the salvation of the soul, then the disciples of Christ can preach the word ; they can speak with authority ; they can appeal to the consciences of their hearers with boldness. But if God is the author of the Bible only in such a way that the believer is able through his regenerate conscience to find some words of God in it, and is obliged to reject much as of no account, then the only way to reach the world is to bring men in contact with the church, in the hope that the leavening power of the word will reach them, and that some time they will attain to the ethico-religious consciousness that can find the word of God in the Scriptures. There is no doubt that many might in this way be brought into the kingdom of God. But if any should be repelled by Christianity instead of being attracted, should learn to consider the superstitions and bigotry and persecutions of some bearing the Christian name as the truthful exhibition of their religion, what hope could there be for them, what possibility of their salvation, what ground for charging them with a guilty rejection of salvation ? If we cannot carry the Bible to unregenerate men, and preach it to them as the word of God, — a word which they ought to recognize as his, — then such men as Edwards and Chalmers and Nettleton are out of place in the ministry.

Our easiest way of attaining to just and adequate views of inspiration is to begin with the views of the Lord Jesus Christ. What did he think of the Old Testament ? We are not shut up to this method ; it was possible, undoubtedly, to prove the inspiration of the Old Testament before Christ came ; it is possible now to prove, without direct reference to Christ, the divine mission of the apostle Paul, and to some extent a divine sanction accorded to his teachings. But we are enabled best to understand and rightly estimate the Bible by starting from the position which Christ took. We are to accept his views as absolutely correct, attribute to the Scriptures the authority he attributed to them, ascribe them, without any hesitancy, to the author — whether human or

divine, whether Moses or the Father — to whom he ascribed them.

Before going further, it will be necessary to give the reasons for according this importance, this unquestioned authority, to the words of Christ. If we can give him his place only on the supposition of the inspiration of the Bible, we are reasoning in a circle in proving inspiration through him. But this we do not do. We ascribe him his place because of the miracles which he wrought. It is not necessary to prove the inspiration of the Bible in order to render it credible as history; and if we can accept the Gospels as we accept other histories we are warranted in believing in him as an attested messenger of God. If we can accept him as God's messenger to men, and combine with this his personal character of clear understanding, balanced emotions, perfect competence to meet any emergency, moral earnestness, and freedom from sin, as they are portrayed by such writers as Professor Greenleaf and Professor Weiss, we can accept his opinion of the Bible without questioning. We are well aware that the advocates of the theory of inspiration which we oppose do not admit the evidential value of miracles which we here attribute to them. They hold that miracles are to be tolerated only as they are seen to have an ethical force of their own, and that their evidential force is subordinate, incidental, and conditional. Here we are obliged to differ with them positively. We do not believe they can hold to a single one of Christ's miracles, if they reject all except those of which they see the ethical value. With them no miracle can be admitted to have occurred which does not form a part of the historical development of redemption as God is working that out in revelations of himself. Now, how can any one know that the time had come, on the occurrence of the marriage at Cana, when water must be turned into wine? Who can see that the ethical condition of the kingdom of God needed it? that the self-revelation of God in redemption would have gone awry if this had not occurred? The advocates of this view of

miracles cannot say, We know the necessity from the fact; for they say they can only believe the fact from the necessity. They maintain that the only tolerable view is, that the miracle—i.e. the specific miracle—is involved as a constituent part of the plan. If they mean that miracle-working belongs to the supernatural order of the divine government, they have no occasion to set their views in contrast with those ordinarily held; but when they say that “the evidence for the miracles of Scripture is inseparably and organically connected with the person of Jesus Christ,” they must mean that each miracle helps make up an organic whole, of which Jesus Christ is a part. They must also mean that no miracle can be accepted as actually occurring which does not presuppose Jesus Christ as the “central miracle of Scripture.” This, of course, makes it impossible for them to use the miracles as evidence of Christ’s divine mission, and requires them to reject those not seen to be necessary in the development of his mission. But how can any one see the necessity of the miracles narrated in such a way as this: “And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people” (Matt. ix. 35)? Especially, how can the healings by the apostles be connected organically with the self-revelations of God?

Some of Professor Ladd’s remarks on miracles are admirable; but we must consider his position, on the whole, a rejection of most of those of which an account is found in the Bible. We believe another view tenable. We grant very readily the position taken by Dr. Channing, that a naked miracle cannot be proved; but none of the miracles of the New Testament fall into this category. A miracle wrought for the sole purpose of proving one’s supernatural power would not be a naked miracle. A miracle wrought for an immediate effect on the minds of a gathered mass of people could be proved. The miracles which Christ wrought, we believe, are fitted to satisfy any candid mind that God was with him. The office of a miracle is to cut short debate—

to carry conviction where a survey of the ordinary reasons for a conclusion would be tedious, and at best would lead but to feeble apprehensions of the truth. The office of a miracle is to compel an assent to a work or to instruction as coming from God. To some this will indeed seem the antiquated idea ; but it is the effective idea, and makes miracles of service. Moreover, this is the biblical idea. " And Israel saw that great work which the Lord did upon the Egyptians ; and the people feared the Lord, and believed the Lord and his servant Moses " (Ex. xiv. 31). Nicodemus said : " Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God ; for no man can do these miracles that thou doest except God be with him " (John iii. 2). " Then came there a voice from heaven, *saying*, I have both glorified *it*, and will glorify *it* again. The people, therefore, that stood by and heard *it*, said that it thundered. Others said, An angel spake to him. Jesus answered and said, This voice came not because of me, but for your sakes " (John xii. 28-30). But citations are not necessary ; there can be no doubt that it is the Bible representation that signs and wonders were given to confirm the word. If, now, we may accept Christ's word as a divinely appointed testimony to the truth, and yet receive him as a witness as we would any other man, without presupposing the Christian system to give him his character as a witness, we may properly receive and hold to his view of the authority of the Bible.

We remark in passing, lest injustice should seem to be done to Professor Ladd, that he accepts the word of Christ as authority not to be questioned, and here we only object to his interpretation of Christ's language concerning the Old Testament. But we do not consider that his appeal to Christ is well founded, nor do we believe it will have any influence with those with whom it is most desirable such an appeal should have influence.

What, then, was Christ's view of the Old Testament ? Christ appeals to the Scriptures as if they confessedly expressed the irreversible will of God. He says " it has been

written (*γέγραπται*)"; the perfect tense is used — it has been written, and still remains written (stands among the Scriptures). He clearly considers that an appeal in this form ends all discussion, and leaves no choice as to the course to be taken. There are in the Gospels as many as twenty recorded instances in which Jesus in this way refers to the Bible as authority. By pointing to the Scriptures he sets aought the temptation of the devil, designates the one to be worshipped, connects John the Baptist with prophecy, connects the betrayal of himself by Judas with the divine purposes, recognizes the hypocrisy of the people as foretold, justifies himself in cleansing the temple, steadies his own spirit and the spirits of his disciples amid the trials of Gethsemane. In the most critical circumstances, on the most solemn occasions, he makes the Scriptures his consolation and the guide of his disciples. Nor does he in any case lay an emphasis upon any particular author who has written, or upon any words quoted; but the fact that there was a *writing* applicable to the case was the prominent thought.

Christ appeals to the entire Old Testament, at least to large portions of it, as if the authority resided not in special texts, but in the whole — in entire sections or the entire book. There can be no doubt that the Jews had the Old Testament essentially as we have it. The Septuagint was certainly in the hands of the Jews in the time of Christ. He directs attention to the Scriptures, to the law and the prophets, and the Psalms, and ordinarily quotes from the Scriptures as if the single passage cited were merely indicative of the spirit of the whole. He declares that he has not come to destroy the law or the prophets, that all that is in them shall be fulfilled, that it is not possible for a tittle of the law to fail, that Moses and the prophets teach the truth as well as any one could that should rise from the dead, that all that is written concerning himself in the prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled; expounds the truth concerning himself, beginning at Moses and all the prophets; charges his hearers with error because they do not know the Scriptures,

with unbelief because they do not know the Scriptures; warns them of danger by referring them to the Scriptures, which tell them of the stone which the builders rejected; appeals to their failure to know him as evidence that they had not become familiar with the word of God. In the passages here referred to Christ must have had in mind the entire Old Testament. He refers to it as if those whom he addressed could find the truth which he would inculcate in various places and in the spirit of the whole. When he refers to the one hundred and tenth Psalm, he does not put his hearers on their guard against the sixty-ninth; when he quotes Isaiah, he does not say, Beware of Esther, but treats the entire body of Scripture as if each part had its place in the one whole. The selection of the single passage quoted as the only one endorsed, fixing on prophecy as inspired above law, making the future more important than the past, prediction than history, are none of them warranted by the general tenor of Christ's teaching. This *vivisection* of the Scriptures, as Rudelbach calls it, does violence to the part separated, as well as to the whole body. The law is often prophecy, or the foundation of prophecy; history is a warning for the future and a conditional prediction of its events. The theocracy was the kingdom of God in symbol.

The importance which our Lord attached to the knowledge of and the acceptance of the Scriptures is obvious from the remarks already made. He believed that they contained the truths on which salvation and perdition depended, that the failure of his countrymen to understand him was due to their misunderstanding of the Scriptures. He ordered his own life, especially his official career, by the Scriptures. He chose Judas that the Scripture might be fulfilled, and Judas was lost that the Scripture might be fulfilled. He declined to resist his enemies in the garden for the same reason. He suffered on the cross because he ought to suffer according to the Scriptures. His disciples saw that the Scriptures were fulfilled in the casting of lots on his garments, in his thirsting, in his dying before a bone was broken, in his being pierced with a spear.

A few expressions from Rudelbach's eloquent statement of this truth are in place here. "He himself set up in the simplest words the great rule, which the apostles afterward applied so forcibly, that nothing can be accomplished except according to the Scriptures, and everything which is foretold in the Scriptures must reach its fulfilment. The Scripture is, as it were, the spiritual hour-hand in the kingdom of God; the striking of the world-clock corresponds with it, or, rather, is controlled by it. When Peter would oppose force to force, the Lord intimated to him how much more easily legions of angels might wait on his command; but the counsel of God, spread out in the Scriptures, indicated another way, another hour. 'But how then shall the Scriptures be fulfilled that thus it must be?' This is the only response, the reason why he now gave himself freely into the hands of his enemies, who so often had sought in vain to seize upon him. This clear consciousness of the necessity of fulfilling the Scriptures in himself and through himself did not forsake our Lord even in the deepest anguish, even in the moment when soul and body were about to separate. All human words are here too feeble. God himself speaks down from the cross of the Redeemer, and lays upon our hearts with the cross of Jesus the scripture which meets its fulfilment at this point. It is as the roaring of the sea of eternity, which we hear, when the Lord, crowned with thorns, spit upon, derided, mocked, emptying the last bitter cup of God's wrath, which smote the entire sinful race, made bare to us his high-priestly heart with the words of the twenty-second Psalm: 'My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?'"¹

From considerations like those now adduced, it is clear that Christ looked upon the Old Testament as the word of God. He must have believed that Moses gave the law to the Israelites, that the prophets spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. He could not have doubted that God had revealed his plans to some extent, and that whatever had been predicted would certainly come to pass. We have no

¹ *Zeitschrift für die Gesamte Lutherische Theologie, etc.* 1841. 4. 24.

intimation that he excepted any part of the Scriptures from the class of sacred, holy, or inspired writings. Indeed, if he criticises or depreciates anything, it is the law; yet he most distinctly sustains it as expressing the will of God. The precept "An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth" had its place, and was once the proper rule to be enforced. Why, then, might not Judges and Chronicles have their places and fulfil an office in the divine revelation?

Our Lord has not told us how the various books of the Old Testament were the work of God, the product of his mind; but the fact he certainly did hold. It would have been a clear inconsistency in him, as Rudelbach has remarked, to attribute it to any human mind. He condemned his own generation for not knowing the Scriptures, yet held that the men of his day were like their fathers, and were filling up the iniquity of those who had gone before them. The fathers had rebelled against God, and the Scriptures were written for their guidance and warning; the children had gone in the same way, and went on to their ruin because they would not regard the Scriptures. There was no mind in all the nation by nature akin to the Scriptures; there was no mind competent to produce them, or of a disposition to produce them, without divine aid.

No one can doubt that this view of Christ was adopted by his apostles. The evangelists in later life, reflecting upon past events, refer certain deeds and sentiments of Christ to the Scriptures. They did not understand at first, but saw afterward. John says: "His disciples remembered that it was written" (see John ii. 17, 22; xii. 16; Acts xi. 16). The multiplied quotations from the Old Testament in the New (Böhl, a professor at Vienna, has commented on more than two hundred and fifty) show that the authors of the latter considered the Old Testament a sure criterion of truth. They felt that they were engaged in works that were a fulfilment of the Old Testament teachings. Paul preached "that Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures, and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day,

according to the Scriptures." The freedom with which Paul quotes from the various parts of the Old Testament, grouping phrases gathered from different portions of the Bible, shows that he did not feel the need of caution lest he should cite some passage outside the range of inspiration. His description of the character of man, in Rom. iii. 13-18, gathers up phrases from seven different places in the Old Testament, found in the Psalms, Jeremiah, Proverbs, and Isaiah. Kautzsch remarks that the passage is constructed of various Old Testament clauses, and refers, for other instances of like citation, to Rom. ix. 25, 27 sq.; x. 5 sq.; xi. 26 sq., 34 sq.; xii. 19 sq.; xiii. 9; 1 Cor. xv. 25 sq.; 2 Cor. vi. 16 sq.; 2 Tim. ii. 19 sq. Sometimes the formula of quotation is found with each passage referred to, as in Rom. xv. 9-12. The thought of avoiding portions of the Old Testament as of evil tendency or as worthless is wholly foreign to the spirit of the New Testament writers. But Paul has given us a clear intimation of the estimate which he put upon the Scriptures. He urges Timothy to continue in the things which he has been assured of, bearing in mind that from a child he had known the Holy Scriptures (*ἱερὰ γράμματα*), which are able to make wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. The Holy Scriptures which he had learned from his mother and grandmother must include anything to be found in the Old Testament; at least, the term "holy" cannot be shown to exclude any part; no one will suppose that Paul intended to say to Timothy that from a child he had had that ethico-religious consciousness that was competent to distinguish in the Scriptures the holy from the not-holy. The apostle also gives the reason for holding that the Scriptures are able to make one wise unto salvation: *Every scripture is inspired and profitable for doctrine, reproof, correction, instruction.* The sentence giving the reason has no verb expressed, and is susceptible of different interpretations. It may mean that every scripture is inspired and profitable; or every scripture, inasmuch as it is inspired, is also profitable; or every scripture which happens to be

inspired is also profitable, i.e. so much of it as is inspired is profitable. The connection, however, makes the last interpretation exceedingly improbable, if not impossible. The "every scripture" (*πάσα γραφή*) must refer to each portion which goes to make up the whole, the Holy Scriptures mentioned in the earlier part of the sentence. It cannot possibly be held that holy is there used as a discriminating word, implying that there were scriptures not holy. The Jews designated the least valued part of the Old Testament "Hagiographa" — holy writings.

There seems to be no difficulty, if we accept the view of Christ and his apostles concerning the Scriptures, in arriving at the conclusion that the Old Testament is inspired, i.e. that the book as a whole conveys to the world the instruction which God designed to convey, and that the book is so composed that all its parts contribute to the fulfilment of the divine plan. We are not, either by Christ or by his apostles, put on our guard against any portions of it; but those who think they have eternal life in it are reproved by our Lord for not finding a more distinct and definite eternal life than they had ever apprehended.

It constitutes no objection to this conclusion that there are narratives of evil deeds in the Bible, or that evil passions are portrayed. The Bible teaches no error; it can be safely followed; its precepts lead no one astray; its information is all useful, or may be on occasions. We are not commanded to imitate any bad man, or any good man in his evil ways; we are not required to make the sixty-ninth Psalm a model of temper, nor Jehu an example of Christian zeal. But whoever reads the Old Testament with the exercise of his common sense will find it not only a safe guide, but a guide possessed of divine wisdom.

It is not to be denied that there are mistakes in the use of numbers in the Bible, but these easily slip in in transcribing. The Bible does not profess to teach science, but attempts to convict it of positive scientific error have not been very successful. The objections to the inspiration of the Old Testa-

ment on account of its immoralities and errors are generally founded on a wrong view of inspiration. If it could be proved that there is no inspiration but that which is produced by the Holy Spirit working in the mind while God is coincidentally making a revelation to the mind, and that the inspiration is simply the intuition which the Spirit produces, then it would be necessary to admit that the inspiration could not be supposed to extend beyond truths and statements approved by the Divine mind. But God might teach his people the evils of sin by the story of Absalom and Jeroboam as a father might teach his children by examples cited as a warning against disobedience. And if God should order any one to put on record, for the guidance of his people or for their encouragement, narratives of deliverances or of punishments, a statement of principles of government developed in the theocracy, or psalms of praise acceptable to him, such record would be inspired.

The evidence for the inspiration of the New Testament is not so direct as for that of the Old. Christ had left the earth before any of the later Scriptures were written. He could not refer to Paul and Mark as he referred to Moses and Isaiah. Yet the inspiration of the New Testament is in general more readily granted than that of the Old. The matter of the New more readily disposes one to this; but the testimony of Christ in favor of the apostolic writings is hardly less convincing than that in favor of the law and the prophets. Christ's word is as authoritative concerning the future as concerning the past. And we have his promises relating to the coming age—the period to follow his death—as clear as any utterance concerning the past could be. It is true that he was in the prophets, and guided the movements of Israel in the days of the theocracy, but he appears to us far more intimately connected with the establishment of the churches during the ministry of Peter and Paul than with the career of Israel under the judges and the kings. The Gospel of Matthew closes with these words: "Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name

of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." Here is intimated to us in few words the method by which the gospel was to be propagated. The disciples were to teach, teach all the world, and be supported by the presence of Christ. Our Lord did not leave, so far as we know, a scrap of writing; the disciples were as yet unlearned men, they did not understand Christ's doctrine, down to the day of his betrayal they had very crude ideas of his going and coming and of his kingdom, and yet they were to teach a religion intended for all mankind. There was an absolute necessity under such circumstances that he should render them some aid in their work. This he promised to do by his own presence, having previously assured them that all power — all authority — in heaven and on earth was given to him. We may, then, assume from this passage that the apostles and their successors were to have in some way the advantage of Christ's authority and wisdom. His care and help would be an inspiration or its equivalent. This promise is valid to the end of the Christian dispensation. Christ is to be with those who teach in his name as long as preaching shall be necessary. This promise may be fulfilled either by his personal presence or by the presence of the Holy Spirit, or by a written teaching bearing his endorsement, or by all these.

There were other more specific promises made to the disciples. When Christ sent out the twelve to preach to the Jews, as narrated in Matthew x., he said: "But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak; for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak. For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you." Here was a limited work to be performed, but while it continued the assistance from God was to be of the most ample kind. The Spirit was to be in them and to speak through them. The inspiration was to be perfect, not corresponding to a revelation, but adapted to the practical exigencies of their labors. The

promise made for this specific work when the twelve were not to go "into the way of the Gentiles" was repeated, apparently more than once. In Luke xii. is recorded a general truth, it would seem, concerning the divine watchfulness over the Christian preachers: "For the Holy Ghost shall teach you in the same hour what ye ought to say." Promises of the same import were given to the disciples when Christ was preparing their minds for the catastrophes coming upon the Jewish nation. In the commotions that were to end in the destruction of Jerusalem the followers of Jesus were to expect persecution, but they were to support themselves with this promise; "Settle it therefore in your hearts not to meditate before what ye shall answer: for I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay nor resist." The method by which the apostles were to be prepared for their work and aided in it is given clearly and with emphatic repetition in the Gospel of John. The disciples were not even to strive to remember the words of the Master, though they had no written documents; they were not to have any anxiety lest they should teach error or be at loss what to teach; they were to be as peaceful in heart and confident in mind as their Lord had been. They were to rest on this promise: "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you" (John xiv. 26). The disciples were even to know more of their Lord after his death than before, for they would see how he was connected with the promises of God and the scheme of salvation. This would result from the teaching of the Comforter, the Spirit of truth, who should proceed from the Father and testify of Christ (John xv. 26). John gives (ii. 22), an instance of their remembering after Jesus rose from the dead, and of their consequent belief of the Scriptures and the word of Christ. The Lord says plainly to his disciples that he has not yet given to them his entire gospel, but that provision will be made for its completion. "I have yet

many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit, when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear that shall he speak; and he will show you things to come. . . . All things that the Father hath are mine; therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall show it unto you" (John xvi. 12-15).

These promises give us a clear intimation of the kind of inspiration which the apostles enjoyed, and enable us to form some opinion of the work which the apostles performed under its influence. The inspiration consisted in a quickening of the memory, or in bringing to mind things before known and forgotten, in an exposition of Christ's character and work, in a reporting to the disciples by the Holy Ghost of that which he had heard, and in his taking the things of Christ and showing them to the disciples. Here is a very definite description of inspiration, but it contains nothing about self-disclosures of the Deity; nothing of revelation contemporaneous with the inspiration, but different from it; nothing about an elevation of the mind that renders it competent to new and higher intuitions.

The material which was the product of this inspiration, i.e. the work which the disciples performed under its influence, must have been their utterances in preaching, teaching, and defending Christian truth, or their thoughts in systematizing and making apprehensible this truth. If we can reach these thoughts and utterances we shall of course have before us material bearing the clearest stamp of inspiration. Christ's promise for the future is as good as his declarations concerning the past. If his promises were fulfilled, the disciples gave out to the world fuller, more adequate instruction concerning the way of salvation than Christ himself gave while on earth. The promise that the Comforter should bring to their remembrance whatsoever he had said is a warrant that the essentials of Christ's teaching should enter into the teachings of the apostles; and we may believe that the things he had yet to say, which they could not bear, but

which the Holy Ghost should make known to them, entered into the teachings of Peter and John and Paul as they went from place to place establishing churches and grew strong in preaching the word. There can be no doubt upon these points if we can rely on the promise of our Lord. But this promise we accept—those whose views of inspiration we here criticise accept—with perfect confidence. The question therefore which demands our attention is this: Are the thoughts and utterances of the apostles accessible to us?

An affirmative answer to this may very readily be given: We have them in the New Testament. No one can seriously doubt that we have the teachings of the apostles in these Scriptures. The fairest criticism decides that the evangelists have reported many of Christ's words. The Sermon on the Mount, the parables, the replies to questions, the condensed, proverb-like utterances ascribed to him, are in substance undoubtedly genuine, and for the most part in the very form in which Christ uttered them. The narratives in which the words of Christ are set as gems are very obviously the words of Christ's immediate disciples. The closest scrutiny of these narratives can do no more than divide them into separate traditions, having their origin nearer to the time of Christ than the Gospels themselves, but never made doubtful as to their authenticity. It is impossible that they should not be mainly correct. The Gospels were composed at so early a date, that traditions already established must have had their origin with the immediate followers of the Lord. If we combine with these facts the assurance that the Holy Spirit quickened the memory of the disciples and told them what to say, we cannot hesitate to admit that the matter of the Gospels is inspired. If we turn now to the Epistles of Paul we shall find it easy to conclude the same thing concerning them. Paul was, if we may take his own word, an independent apostle. Though he was clearly familiar with the life of Christ,— Luke, his companion, prepared a careful report of it,— yet he did not receive the doctrines which he preached from any of the twelve, but by immediate revela-

tion, and the promise of the aid of the Comforter applies to him as truly as to any other teacher. We may therefore hold that his preaching was inspired as fully as that of any of his fellow-laborers. Indeed he was the great preacher of the early church, and the promise of help from the Spirit must have been of more value to him than to any other one. But we have at hand the substance of his preaching. Whoever will take the trouble to compare the Book of Acts with Paul's Epistles, and learn from Luke's records how Paul preached, will easily convince himself that the Epistles are a condensation of sermons, with such additions as were required by the circumstances of the persons or churches addressed. We will not speak of the other Epistles, for our subject is not the canon, but much the same could be said of them as of those of Paul. If then we leave out of account the Apocalypse (we do not at all admit that it is not inspired), we can safely conclude that the New Testament is composed of material that has been spoken, given as instruction, preached over and over, listened to in all the houses of worship from the Euphrates to the Tiber. The material is therefore in the fullest sense inspired.

The question naturally suggests itself, at this point, whether these considerations would not lead to the conclusion that all Christian teaching is inspired. If Christ is with his followers in their evangelizing work unto the end of the world, is not inspiration a constant charism of the church, and is not Professor Ladd's theory to be at once accepted? We have no objection to holding to that charism in the church which our author designates inspiration; but the inspiration of which we have spoken and have seen to be a quality of the apostolic preaching is of a totally different kind. What he calls inspiration does not account for the sacred character of the Scriptures, nor constitute a fulfilment of the large and reiterated promises of Christ to his immediate followers. Professor Ladd himself admits that the inspiration of the apostles was peculiar in degree. If we can hold that the things which the Spirit was to bring to the remembrance of

the disciples, and the additional things to be revealed which they could not bear from Christ's lips, are recorded in the New Testament, then we can hold that the New Testament is an inspired book, and that through it and the ordinary Christian charism by the Spirit Christ is with his disciples throughout the history of the church as adequately as he was with his immediate followers.

The inquiry of interest for us, then, is, Have we an inspired record of the inspired material of apostolic teaching? The reply to this inquiry is virtually given in the remarks already made, especially if we connect them with the antecedent probability that a record of the new revelation would have as much authority as that of the old. A few additional considerations may, however, be briefly noticed.

(1) While we do not know the precise circumstances in which the different books of the New Testament were written, we know they were written by men whom God had called to the ministry of the gospel, and to whom the promise of the Spirit's aid applied. We may fairly infer that they believed they were in the service of the Lord Jesus Christ in their work of writing. This would be true of Mark, as well as of Matthew; of Luke and Paul, as well as of Peter and John.

(2) There were at times requirements to write certain brief passages found in the New Testament, as there were requirements to write and speak the divine messages of the Old Testament.

(3) The writing of the former revelation would render it almost certain that the later and equally important one would be written.

(4) The necessity of writing out the fundamental truths of a religion of universal application, designed for all time, makes it almost certain that the author of the religion would secure a trustworthy record.

(5) The question, in the form in which we now present it, is one on which there is little difference of opinion among those who hold to any kind of inspiration. Tholuck says: "The word of the Lord makes us certain that the apostolical

writers of the New Testament books must have written by the Spirit of God, because, as bearers of this his word and as promoters of his work, they received from him the promise of the Holy Ghost. If this Spirit inspired them during their *oral* report, how could he fail them in their *written* report?" Again he asks, on the ground that the Bible is the most powerful agent in promoting the highest aim of humanity, "Must not far other than ordinary means have been used for the purpose of its record and preservation?" And he asserts: "But that Providence must be eminently active in this respect [securing the Christian records] is an unavoidable supposition to every one to whom the religio-moral significance of this record in history has become manifest."¹ Professor Ladd in many instances recognizes the providential care of God in securing to us the Scriptures as we have them. He finds evidence of a wise and beneficent Providence in the languages in which the Scripture documents were originally written, in the selection of the men who wrote, in the preservation of the records, and in the formation of the canon.

(6) The size of the New Testament is evidence of its divine origin. Its four lives of Christ can be read in a few hours; yet such a theme would in human hands naturally spread out to volumes, to stories the more expanded as they were less authenticated. The narratives relating to Christ's family and birth are brief; of his youth we have nothing; the record of his miracles is brief and uninteresting, compared with that of his parables; the account of his death, on which the Christian scheme turns, is the fullest and most carefully prepared. The authors of the Gospels are as reticent in regard to themselves as the most delicate literary sentiment would require. The New Testament, and indeed the whole Bible, is of practical form and structure; it is portable; it is readable; it does not make unreasonable demands upon one's time; it does not require comments or any cumbersome apparatus for its interpretation.

(7) The language of the Bible indicates that there was a

¹ Theological Essays, pp. 108, 109.

divine guardianship exercised in the composition of the book. It is remarkably free from extravagance and venturesome assertions. If we except narratives which are professedly those of miraculous events, the statements of the Bible are not such as to waken suspicion or to invite attack. On the other hand, the language of the Scriptures is generally found to be easily reconcilable with facts — facts unknown to the men who wrote the Scriptures. There are at least plausible ways of reconciling the cosmogony of Moses with the facts of geology. Professor E. P. Humphrey read before the Presbyterian Alliance, convened at Philadelphia in 1880, a paper containing the following: "What they [the sacred writers] knew or did not know, of their own private knowledge, about geology or history or the Copernican system, is nothing to us. They made no mistakes in regard to any of these subjects in their inspired writings, and that is enough for us. . . . Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians; what withheld him from adopting into the Pentateuch Manetho's scheme of chronology? . . . Paul was educated in the best learning of his time: why do we find nothing in his speeches or epistles 'like Augustine's scornful denial of the existence of the antipodes? nothing like the opinion of Ambrose, that the sun draws up water to cool and refresh himself in his extreme heat?'"¹ Rev. Dr. Mitchell of Edinburgh, commenting on Professor Humphrey's paper, said: "My life has been spent mainly in the East, and it has been my duty to study, with the best care I could, the religious books of the greatest heathen nations. . . . Even in the matter of scientific error, I confess it looks to me the most remarkable thing that every book of the heathen overflows with scientific blunders. The Koran of Mohammed has them in every page. Take the New Testament, from beginning to end, there is not one solitary scientific blunder, so far as I have been able to see."²

The different views of inspiration are probably due to different tendencies of thought, more than to different inter-

¹ Report of the Council of the Alliance, p. 107.

² *Ibid.*, p. 142.

pretations of the Scriptures. Fichte said, no one can *think* the ordinary view of creation. It seems to be the sentiment of those who try to adjust inspiration to revelation that no one can *think* the ordinary view of inspiration. We do not deny that the composition, style, and some of the statements of the Bible of themselves refute the mechanical idea of inspiration held by Quenstedt and Witsius; but this mechanical theory has very few advocates now, and is not at all the necessary form of the orthodox theory. Moreover, those who form theories in opposition to the common Protestant theory go far beyond a criticism of the latter; they construct schemes fundamentally opposed to it. The theory advocated by Professor Ladd is one evolved from a scheme of philosophy and of divine government at variance with that which has been prevalent in the Protestant churches. It assumes that man is not by nature religious, that he has no endowments of mind which by development put him in possession of religious principles and religious emotions. He only knows God and duty and responsibility through the self-revelations of God and a consciousness of God. He is to learn how to conduct himself toward God, as he learns to deal with water, air, and earth, by coming in contact with him.

There is something satisfying, at least fascinating, in monistic schemes of philosophy. The evolution of all that is, spiritual and material, from the idea of God seems at first to give the thinker a comprehension of the universe; the evolution of God, as known to us, with all spiritual and material existence, from an idea, or, perhaps we should say, the capacity to have an idea, is assumed to be an insight into the primal elements of being. We have no objections to speculations of this kind; let those who have time to indulge in them evolve their schemes to their heart's content. But we do object to adjusting practical religion to such methods of thought. There is not the slightest occasion for *thinking* a scheme of religion, or redemption, or inspiration in this sense of the word thinking. The Christian's duty is to *know* what God has revealed, and he is under no obligation

to arrive by *a priori* thinking at what God must do. When a scheme of inspiration is commended as the only rational one, the only one tolerable to the thinking man, the only one worthy of consideration if we would not surrender our intellects to prejudice, it is in place to ask what kind of thinking the advocates of the theory have in mind. If it is based on the assumption that all knowledge is merely that which has been wrought into experience by an historical development, that all religious knowledge consists of the amount of self-revelation which God has made of himself and succeeded in impressing upon men, and that inspiration is simply the wakening of the intellect to those self-revelations, then we demur; we believe there is a better view of the intercourse between God and man. The proper view of inspiration does not make it synonymous with religious perception; philosophically, such a scheme lacks a starting-point, morally, it relieves man of responsibility; and brought to the test of facts, it is at complete variance with the Scriptures and Christian experience. A covenant theology presents more easily the relation existing between God and man than any other scheme. Without asking how or why man came into existence, — this we may leave to those who make the test of truth susceptibility of *being thought*, — we may begin our inquiries concerning man by a study of his moral nature. He has endowments that enable him to know God and his duty and his responsibility. Hence God by creating him has laid himself under obligation to his creature. The creature is endowed with rights which his Ruler must regard, and the two parties, God and man, stand so related to each other that each has definite claims. There is a platform on which they stand. God's moral sovereignty is not unrestricted. It is true he bestowed on man his rights, but having bestowed them he may not disregard them. A theology standing on such a basis may be called a covenant theology. It is not necessary to hold the view as it has sometimes been drawn out by its advocates, but it is, as a general scheme, a genial system, honorable both to God and man. It presents a ground of communica-

tion between them so that there may be address and response on either side. There may be claims, requests, and promises. Under such circumstances communications from God that are prophecy, assurance, threat, may be inspired; truths pertaining to sin and righteousness, atonement and pardon, may be made known by inspiration. Such a theory of inspiration accords with the Scriptures and common sense far more than that which makes inspiration a necessary result of evolution. A covenant theology, as it seems to us, accords to man a position of far more dignity, and opens to him a Christian philosophy of far broader reach, than the theology that consists of the historical deposits accumulated through the development of a God-consciousness.

ARTICLE V.

THE DIALECTIC METHOD OF JESUS.

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It is possible that the title selected for this paper may seem more ambitious than is the purpose of the writer. That purpose, as a brief explanation will show, is not scholastic, but simple and somewhat practical.

The attentive reader of the Gospels is often impressed with Jesus' wonderful skill in meeting men; and in no variety of circumstances is this skill more evident than in those personal interviews, discussions, or controversies in which conversation, mutual question and answer, forms the substance of the narrative. Our Lord displayed surprising readiness in his dialectics, as well as in his didactics. He was a marvellous disputant, as well as the first of teachers. And yet our study in Jesus' dialectic will not restrict the view to Christ's polemic discussions, or to any protracted logical processes. When two persons took counsel together for the purpose of intellectual or moral inquiry, and sought to separate and analyze themes according to their kinds, it