

THE
PRESBYTERIAN REVIEW.

No. 7.—July, 1881.

I.

THE PLAN OF THE NEW BIBLE REVISION.

WITHIN a few weeks past there has appeared a volume which has for some time been looked for with great and growing interest. This is the New Testament as revised by a number of British and American scholars, which is now given to the world without waiting for the Old Testament, the completion of which is not expected for two or three years to come. In the next number of this REVIEW there will be a careful critical estimate of the characteristic features of this interesting and important volume. What is now proposed is to give some account of the origin and progress of the whole movement for revision, and to consider the plan upon which it has been and is to be conducted.

In regard to the authorized version there has been for a long time a substantial agreement among all the learned upon two points: first, that in point of fidelity and elegance, the English Bible, as a whole, is equal if not superior to any other version, ancient or modern; but, secondly, that in particular places it is defective, owing to the progress made in grammar, lexicography, exegesis, criticism, and archæology since the days of King James, and also to the inevitable changes in the meaning and use of many English words and phrases. Attempts, therefore, at a new version in whole or in

V.

CRITICAL THEORIES OF THE SACRED SCRIPTURES
IN RELATION TO THEIR INSPIRATION.

I. THE RIGHT, DUTY AND LIMITS OF BIBLICAL CRITICISM.

DRS. Arch. A. Hodge and B. B. Warfield, in their joint article on Inspiration in the April Number of this REVIEW, the first of the series on the subject, alluding to the theme, reserved for this and the following articles, state: "This is at present the most momentous question which agitates the believing world" (p. 243).

We believe, that this statement expresses the exact truth, and therefore enter upon the discussion of the problem with no little hesitation, and indeed reluctance; for, while we feel that it is a plain duty to face the issue, and therefore cannot decline the task that is urged upon us from so many quarters to push out into these most difficult and dangerous waters; we yet cannot but fear, lest in the present state of the question we may be unable to satisfy extreme men on either side, and thus be caught in a place where two seas of intensely hostile and prejudiced elements meet. We embark upon the enterprise, therefore, as a voyage of exploration, not expecting to solve all difficulties or to escape dangerous issues or to avoid mistakes or even blunders, but to do what we may be enabled to do, honestly and faithfully to contribute to the solution of the problem, with an assurance of the absolute authority of the Word of God, a conviction that Truth is mighty and will prevail over our prejudices, a trust that the currents of Criticism since the Reformation have not flowed up to the present crisis in vain, and at the same time with a sincere desire to be corrected by our brethren in those matters in which we may unconsciously drift astray. Our subject naturally divides itself

into two parts: (1). *The right, duty, and limits of Biblical Criticism*; and (2). *The critical interpretation of Biblical Literature, History, and Religion*.

I. THE RIGHT, DUTY, AND LIMITS OF BIBLICAL CRITICISM.

Drs. Hodge and Warfield, in their preliminary reference to our subject, state :

“ While they admit freely that the traditional belief as to the dates and origin of the several books may be brought in question without involving any doubt as to their inspiration, yet confidently affirm that any theories of the origin or authorship of any book of either Testament which ascribes to them a purely naturalistic genesis, or dates or authors inconsistent with either their own natural claims or the assertions of other Scripture, are plainly inconsistent with the doctrine of Inspiration taught by the Church.”—PRESB. REV., II. p. 244.

We entirely agree with this statement, and propose to show the right of criticism within these limits. The doctrine of Inspiration itself has been so well stated in their article, with such moderation, calmness, and firmness, that we do not propose to traverse its ground, but rather build on it in the main as the established faith of the Christian Church. At the same time we are compelled to make the distinction between the doctrine of Inspiration as stated by them, which is the doctrine of a large number of eminent theologians; and the church doctrine of Inspiration as stated in the symbols, lest any one should suppose that we recognized the church doctrine of Inspiration as responsible for their elaboration of it into the scholastic theory of *verbal* Inspiration, or that we accepted the position that “ a proved error in Scripture contradicts not only our doctrine, but the Scripture claims, and therefore its Inspiration in making those claims ” (PRES. REVIEW, II., p. 245). We hold with our revered instructor, the late Henry B. Smith, to *plenary* Inspiration rather than verbal. It may be as the article states: “ It (Plenary) is in itself indefinite, and its use contributes nothing, either to the precision or the emphasis of the definition ” (p. 232); but this is as far as the Scriptures or the symbols of faith warrant us in going: it is as far as it is at all safe in the present juncture to advance in definition. *Verbal* Inspiration is doubtless a more precise and emphatic definition, than *plenary* Inspiration; but this very emphasis and precision imperil the doctrine of Inspiration itself by bringing it into conflict with a vast array of objections along the whole line of Scripture and History, which must be

met and overcome in incessant warfare, where both sides may count on doubtful victories, but where the weak, ignorant, and hesitating stumble and fall into divers temptations, and may make shipwreck of their faith. From the point of view of Biblical Criticism, we are not prepared to admit errors in the Scripture in the original autographs, until they shall be proven. The most of those alleged have already received sufficient or plausible explanation; others are in dispute between truth-seeking scholars and satisfactory explanations may hereafter be given. New difficulties are constantly arising and being overcome. It is difficult on the one side to demonstrate an error, as it is on the other side to demonstrate that the Scriptures must be absolutely errorless. It is a question of fact to which all theories and doctrines must yield. It cannot be determined by *a priori* definitions and statements on either side. In the meanwhile we confidently affirm that the doctrine of Inspiration as stated in the symbols of faith will maintain its integrity in spite of any circumstantial errors that may be admitted or proved in the Scriptures, so long as these errors do not directly or indirectly disturb the infallibility of its matters, of faith or of the historic events and institutions with which they are inseparably united.

We are convinced, therefore, that Richard Baxter more correctly states the church doctrine when he says :

“And here I must tell you a great and needful truth, which . . . Christians fearing to confess, by overdoing tempt men to Infidelity. The Scripture is like a man's body, where some parts are but for the preservation of the rest, and may be maimed without death : The sense is the soul of the Scripture ; and the letters but the body, or vehicle. The doctrine of the creed, Lord's Prayer and Decalogue, Baptism and the Lord's Supper, is the vital part, and Christianity itself. The Old Testament letter (written as we have it about Ezra's time) is that vehicle which is as imperfect as the Revelation of these times was : But as after Christ's incarnation and ascension, the Spirit was more abundantly given, and the Revelation more perfect and sealed, so the doctrine is more full and the vehicle or body, that is, the words are less imperfect and more sure to us ; so that he that doubteth of the truth of some words in the Old Testament, or of some circumstances in the New, hath no reason therefore to doubt of the Christian religion, of which these writings are but the vehicle or body, sufficient to ascertain us of the truth of the History and Doctrine.”—“The catechizing of Families,” 1683. P. 36.

We must, therefore, distinguish very carefully the various ways of stating the doctrine of Inspiration. The doctrine of Inspiration may be constructed (1) by a careful, painstaking study of the Sacred Scriptures themselves, gathering together

their testimony as to their own origin, character, design, value, and authority. This gives us the Biblical Doctrine of the Scriptures and the doctrine of Inspiration as a part of Biblical Theology. (2). The doctrine of Inspiration may be constructed from a study of the symbolical books of the Church which express the faith of the Church as attained in the great crises of its history in the study of the Scriptures in the experiences and life of men. This gives us the symbolical or orthodox or Church doctrine of Inspiration. (3). The doctrine of Inspiration may be constructed by a study of Scripture and symbol, and the logical unfolding of the results of a more extended study of the whole subject in accordance with the dominant philosophical and theological principles of the times. This gives us the *dogmatic*, or *school*, or *traditional* doctrine of Inspiration as it has been established in particular schools of theology, and has become traditional in the long-continued teaching of the Church and the pulpit in the various particular theories of Inspiration that have been formulated.

Now, as we rise in the doctrinal process from the simple Biblical statements, unformulated as they lie in the sacred writings or formulated in Biblical Theology, to the more complex and abstract statements of the symbols expressing the formulated consensus of the leaders of the Church in the formative periods of history, and then to the more theoretical and scholastic statements of the doctrinal treatises of the theologians, while the doctrine becomes more and more complex, massive, consistent, and imposing, and seems therefore to become more authoritative and binding; in reality the authority diminishes in this relative advance in systematization, so that what is gained in extension is lost in intension; for the construction is a construction of sacred materials by human and fallible minds, with defective logic, failing sometimes to justify promises, and leaping to conclusions that cannot always be defended, and in a line and direction determined by the temporary and provisional conditions and necessities of the times, neglecting modifying circumstances and conditions. The concrete that the Bible gives us is for all time, as it is the living and eternal substance; though changeable, it reproduces and so perpetuates itself in a wonderful variety of forms of beauty, yet all blending and harmonizing as the colors of the clouds

and skies under the painting of the sunbeams; but the abstract is the formal and the perishable, as it is broken through and shattered by the pulsations and struggles of the living and developing truth of God, ever striving for expression and adaptation to every different condition of mankind, in the different epochs and among the various races of the world.

The course of religious history has clearly established the principle that there is a constant tendency in all religions, and especially in the Christian religion, in the systematic or dogmatic statement to constrain the symbol as well as the Scriptures into the requirements of the particular formative principle and the needs of the particular epoch. The dogmatic scheme is too often the mould into which the gold of the Scriptures and the silver of the creed are poured to coin a series of definitions, and fashion a system of theology which not only breaks up the concrete and harmonious whole of the Scriptures into fragments, stamping them with the imprint of the particular conception of the theologian in order to their reconstruction; but not infrequently the constructed system becomes an idol of the theologian and his pupils, as if it were the orthodox, the divine truth, whilst a mass of valuable scriptural and symbolical material is cast aside in the process, and lies neglected in the workshop. In course of time the symbol as well as the Scriptures are overlaid with glosses and perplexing explanations so that they become either dark, obscure, and uncertain to the ordinary reader, or else have their meanings deflected and perverted, until they are once more grasped by a living, energetical faith in a revived state of the Church, and burst forth from their scholastic fetters, that Scripture, creed, and life may once more correspond. While Traditionalism and Scholasticism have not prevailed in the Protestant Church to the same extent as in the Greek and Roman churches, for the right of private judgment and the universal priesthood of believers have maintained their ground with increasing vigor in Western Europe and America since the Reformation; yet it is no less true that the *principle* of traditionalism is ever at work in the chairs of theology and in the pulpits of the Church; so that in seeking for *truth* and in estimating what is *binding* on faith and conscience, even Protestants must distinctly sepa-

rate the three things: Bible, Symbol, and Tradition; the Bible, the sole *infallible* norm; the symbol, binding those who hold to the body of which it is the *banner*; whilst tradition demands at the most our respect, and reverence, and careful consideration, and the presumption in its favor, but must be tried and criticised by every thinking man, and every living, energetic Christian.

It is of vast importance that we should make these distinctions on the threshold of the study of the Critical Theories; for there is no field in which tradition has been more hasty in its conclusions, more busy in their formation, more dogmatic and sensitive to criticism, more reluctant and stubborn to give way to the truth, than in the sacred fields of the Divine Word. Thus Criticism is confronted at the outset now as ever with two *à priori* objections.

1st. There are those who maintain that their traditional views of the Sacred Scriptures are inseparably bound up with the Church doctrine of Inspiration, so that even if they should be in some respects doubtful or erroneous, they can no more be separated than tares from a growing grain-field, and that they must be left alone for fear of the destruction of the doctrine of Inspiration itself. We grant that this is true of those traditional theories of Inspiration which in some quarters have expanded so as to cover a large part of the ground of Exegetical Theology, and commit themselves to theories of text and author, date, style, and integrity of writings, in accordance with a common, but in our judgment an injudicious method, of discussing the whole Bible under the head of Bibliology in the Prolegomena of the dogmatic system; but we deny that this is true of the symbolical doctrine of Inspiration, still less of the scriptural doctrine. The most that this objection can require of the critics, is that they should be careful and cautious of giving offence, or of needlessly shocking prejudices; that they should be respectful and reverent of the faith of the people, and of revered theologians; but it should not make them recreant to their trust of seeking earnestly, patiently, persistently, and prayerfully for the truth of God.

2d. There are those who claim that their traditional theory is the logical unfolding of the doctrine of the Symbol and the Scriptures. But this is the very question at issue which will

not be yielded. For while there are many critics who have no respect for either Bible or Creed, there are a large and increasing number of critics who are evangelical Christians and orthodox men. Indeed, this arbitrary claim for deductions and consequences is one that no true critic or historian ought to concede; for by so doing he abandons at once the right and ground of Criticism, and the inductive methods of historical and scientific investigation, and sacrifices his material to the dogmatist and scholastic, surrendering the concrete for the abstract.

Traditional theories cannot overcome critical theories with either of these *à priori* objections of apprehended peril to faith or logical inconsistencies, but must submit to the test of the symbol and the Scriptures to which the critics appeal as the arbiters against Tradition.

"God alone is Lord of the Conscience, and hath left it free from the doctrines and commandments of men, which are in anything contrary to His Word or beside it in matters of faith and worship; so that, to believe such doctrine, or to obey such commandments out of conscience, is to betray true liberty of conscience; and the requiring an implicit faith, and an absolute and blind obedience, is to destroy liberty of conscience, and reason also."—"Conf. of Faith," xx., 2.

Biblical Criticism bases its right on the principles of the Reformation over against the Roman Catholic principle of the supremacy of Tradition and Dogma. On this basis the symbols have been accepted and subscribed by honest and faithful men for their *face-value* for all that is fairly contained therein and not for certain unknown and undiscovered consequences which may have a chance majority or the most authoritative teachers. Symbols of faith are the expression of the faith of those who constructed them, and of those who subsequently adopted them, as far as they give expression to Christian doctrine; but with regard to those questions not covered by their statements, which they may have held in abeyance, or purposely omitted on account of disagreement, and in order to liberty, or because they were not suited for a *national* confession or a *child's* catechism, or because they had not yet arisen on the field of controversy,—to bring these in by the plea of logical deduction, is to elaborate and enlarge the creed against the judgment of those who framed it, is to usurp the constitutional methods of revision, is to dogmatize and obstruct those active, energetic scholars, who, having accepted them

for their face-value as a genuine expression of their faith, push forth into the unexplored fields of theology, in order, by the inductive method and the generalization of facts, rather than by deductions from symbolic or scholastic statements, to win new triumphs for their Divine Master. These preliminary observations are necessary in order to clear the ground and make the distinction evident between the symbolical, the Church, the truly orthodox doctrine of Inspiration from which true Criticism has nothing to fear, and any traditional, scholastic, or professedly orthodox doctrine of Inspiration, such as those that have waged war with Criticism so often since the Reformation.

Recent critical theories arise and work as did their predecessors, in the various departments of exegetical theology. Here is their strength, that they antagonize scholastic dogma with the Bible itself, and appeal from *school* theology to *Biblical* theology. Unless traditional theories of Inspiration can vindicate themselves on Bible-grounds, meet the critics, and overcome them in fair conflict, in the sacred fields of the Divine Word, sooner or later traditional theories will be driven from the field. It will not do to antagonize Critical theories of the Bible with Traditional theories of the Bible, for the critic appeals to history against tradition, to an array of facts against so-called inferences, to the Divine Spirit speaking in the Scripture against external authority. History, facts, truth, are all Divine products, and must prevail.

~ It is significant that the great majority of professional Biblical scholars in the various Universities and Theological Halls of the world, embracing those of the greatest learning, industry, and piety, demand a revision of traditional theories of the Bible, on account of a large induction of new facts from the Bible and history. These critics must be met with argument and candid reasoning as to these facts and their interpretation, and cannot be overcome by mere cries of alarm for the Church and the Bible which in their last analysis usually amount to nothing more than peril to certain favorite views. What peril can come to the Scriptures from a more profound critical study of them? The peril is to scholastic dogmas and to tradition. But what then are we contending for as evangelical men, for the faith of the Scriptures, the faith of Geneva and West-

minster, or for the faith of the Reformed scholastics? We must recognize in order to meet this issue, upon which everything depends, that Biblical critics cannot afford to carry the load of the school theology into the conflicts of the 19th century, but must strip to the symbols for a conflict with rationalism and materialism; and we should not fear as evangelical Biblical scholars to accept the challenge of our adversaries and go forth from the breastworks of our symbols to meet them in fair and honorable warfare in open field with the Biblical material itself on the principles of Scientific Induction. The Sword of the Spirit alone will conquer in this warfare. Are Christian men afraid to put it to the test? For this is a conflict after all between true criticism and false criticism; between the criticism which is the product of the evangelical spirit of the Reformation, and critical principles that are the product of deism and rationalism. Evangelical criticism has been marching from conquest to conquest though far too often at a sad disadvantage, like a storming party who have sallied forth from their breastworks to attack the trenches of the enemy, finding in the hot encounter that the severest fire and gravest peril is from the misdirected batteries of their own line. Shall evangelical criticism be permitted to struggle unhindered with rationalistic criticism or must it protect itself also from scholastic dogmatism? We do not deny the right of dogmatism and the *a priori* method, nor the worth of tradition, but we maintain the equal right of criticism and the inductive method. If criticism and dogmatism are harnessed together, a span of twin steeds, they will draw the car of theology rapidly towards its highest ideal, but pulling in opposite directions, especially in the present crisis, they will tear it to pieces.

Biblical criticism in its larger sense embracing the various departments of exegetical theology, after its early activity in the Christian schools of Origen, Ephraim, and Jerome, and in the Jewish schools of Tiberias and Babylon, gave place to a long supremacy of dogma and tradition. The Septuagint version had become the inspired text of the Greek Church; * the Massoretic pointed text of the Hebrew Scriptures to the Jews,

* In accordance with the legend in the so-called letter of Aristeas, already known to Josephus, *Antiq.* xii 2; *Apion.* ii.4; and *Philo vita Mosis* II. § 5-7, which gradually grew into the theory of the inspiration of the LXX.

and at last the Vulgate version to the Church of Rome. All these were interpreted by the body of tradition that had become solidified in the Talmud among the Jews and in the Fathers and Schoolmen in the various Christian Churches. The Protestant Reformation was a great *critical* revival, due largely to the new birth of learning which, starting from Italy, where the emigration of the fugitive Greeks from Constantinople after its capture by the Turks, had planted a young Greek culture, poured like a quickening flood strong and deep over all Europe. The Greek New Testament was studied with avidity by a series of scholars, among whom Erasmus was pre-eminent, who published the first Greek Testament in 1516. Elias Levita, in whom Jewish learning culminated, had introduced Christians into a knowledge of the Hebrew Scriptures, and Reuchlin laid the foundation for Hebrew scholarship among Christians, publishing the first Hebrew Grammar and Lexicon combined in 1506 (Gesenius *Gesch. d. hebr. Sprach.* p. 106, *sq.*). This return to the original text of the Old and New Testaments aroused the suspicions of the scholastics and monks, and the new learning was assailed with bitterness. But the Reformers took their stand as one man for the critical study of the Sacred Scriptures and investigated the original texts under the lead of Erasmus, Elias Levita, and Reuchlin, and laid down what must be regarded as the fundamental principle of *Biblical Criticism*. This is best expressed in the 2d Helvetic Confession, the most honored in the Reformed Church :

“We believe and confess the Canonical Scriptures of the holy Prophets to be the very true Word of God and to have sufficient authority of themselves, not of men.” (Chap. I). “Therefore in controversies of religion or matters of faith we cannot admit any other judge than God himself, pronouncing by the holy Scriptures what is true and what is false ; what is to be followed, or what is to be avoided.” (Chap II).

The Gallican confession gives a similar statement :

“We acknowledge these books to be canonical, that is, we account them as the rule and square of our faith, and that not only for the common consent of the Church, but also much more for the testimony and inward persuasion of the Holy Ghost, by whose inspiration we are taught to discern them from other Ecclesiastical books.”

Thus while other testimony is valuable and important, yet, the evangelical test of the canonicity and interpretation of the Scriptures was, God Himself speaking in and through them to His people. This alone gave the *fides divina*. This was the so-called formal principle of the Reformation, no less

important than the so-called material principle of justification by faith.*

The reformers applied this critical test to the traditional theories of the Bible and eliminated the Apocryphal books from the Canon. They also revived the ancient doubts as to Esther, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs, Epistle of James, 2d Peter, Jude, and the Apocalypse. The Reformed symbols elaborated the formal principle further than the Lutheran and ordinarily specified the books that they regarded as canonical. In this they rejected the traditions of the Church, which with but occasional dissenting voices accepted the Apocryphal books and were uncertain as to the pseudepigraphical. The Church of Rome determined the Apocryphal books to be canonical at the Council of Trent. That the reformers accepted only the present Canon of our symbols excluding the Apocryphal books was due not to the Jewish Tradition which they did not hesitate to dispute as they did that of the church itself; not even to the authority of Jerome, but to the fact that they went further back than Jerome to the evangelical Christian and genuine Hebrew principle, of the common consent of the believing children of God which in course of time eliminated the sacred canonical books from those of a merely national and temporary character, because they approved themselves to their souls as the very word of God. This evangelical critical test did not solve all questions. It left in doubt several writings already mentioned.†

[* Dorner *Gesch. Prot. Theo.*, p. 234 *sq.*, 379 *sq.* Julius Müller, *Das Verhältniss zwischen der Wirksamkeit des heil. Geistes und dem Gnadennittel des gottlichen Wortes*, in his *Dogmat. Abhandlungen*, 1871, p. 139 *sq.*]

† It is all the more necessary to apply the critical test now that we are better acquainted with the facts of the relation of the ancient Jews to the Canon, than were the Reformers. The ancient tradition of the determination of the Canon of the Old Testament by a gathering of the so-called great Synagogue is no less a fable than the legend of the translation of the Septuagint version as told by Aristeas and the ancients. The traditional view of the collection of the Canon by Ezra, rests on no better authority than the statement of the pseudepigraphical writing called the Apocalypse of Ezra (iv Ezra), Chap. xiv, the first to mention it, and in connection with statements as to the restoration of the writings that had been destroyed, which no one would now think of believing (*Comp. Strack. Kanon des alt. Test. in Herzog. Encycl.*, VI, 414 *sq.*). There is doubtless truth at the bottom of both of these traditions. Authoritative action was probably taken in the time of Ezra and Nehemiah and subsequently as to the earlier collections of the Canon, such as the law and the prophets; but the Canon in its present extent including all the other writings, was not, so far as we can learn, officially determined among the Jews until subsequent to the composition of all the Books of the

As Ed. Calamy ("Inspiration of the Holy Writings," Lond. 1710, p. 42) properly states:

"Suppose we were not able to give positive proof of the divine inspiration of every particular Book that is contained in the Sacred Records, it does not therefore follow that it was not inspired; and yet much less does it follow that our religion is without foundation. Which I therefore add, because it is well known there are some particular Books in our Bible that have at some times been doubted of in the church, whether they were inspired or no. But I cannot conceive that doubt concerning such Books, where persons have suspended their assent, without casting any unbecoming reflections, have been a hindrance to their salvation, while what they have owned and acknowledged for truly divine, has had sanctifying effect upon their hearts and lives."

This is the true Protestant position. For unless these books have given us their own testimony that they are divine and therefore Canonical, we do not receive them with our hearts; we do not rest our faith and life upon them as the very Word of God; we give mere intellectual assent, we receive them on authority, tacitly and without opposition, and possibly with the dogmatism which not unfrequently accompanies incipient doubt, but also without true interest and true faith and assurance of their divine contents. We believe that the Canon of Scripture established by the Reformed Symbols can be suc-

New Testament (Davidson's Canon of the Bible, 3d Ed., 1880, p. 56 *sq.*). Doubtless the Canon of the Palestinian Jews received its last addition by common consent not later than the time of Judas Maccabeus; as Ewald (*Gesch. Israels* 475-482) and Strack (*l. c.* p. 426) state, and no books of later composition were subsequently added, yet the schools of Hillel and Shammai debated whether the Song of Songs and Koheleth were to be regarded as Canonical. The three parts of the sacred writings were known to the book of Sirach as Thora, Prophets and Writings, and in II Maccabeus; and Josephus mentions the number of the writings as 22, yet many of them receive no reference or endorsement in the New Testament, whilst other Jewish writings, such as the Book of Enoch and Assumption of Moses, are cited with the approval of the citations. There was a fluctuation of opinion with regard to the extent of the third section of the Old Testament "the writings." We can no more rely upon the determination of the Canon of the Old Testament by the authority of Rabbi Akiba, the supporter of Bai Khokba, the false Messiah, and his coadjutors than we can accept their dicta with regard to the person of Christ, the observance of the Sabbath and the faith of ancient Israel. The sacred writings of the Hellenistic Jews were more extensive than those commonly received in Palestine, and although these were determined by a different theory of revelation, yet in point of fact the early Christian Church followed the Hellenistic rather than the Palestinian Jews, and in their use of the Sepuagint version used also the Apocryphal writings and did not sharply separate them from the Canonical; indeed with the exception of a few critics, such as Origen and Jerome, they cited without discrimination the many Jewish Apocalypses and Sibylline oracles which sprang up in the first and second centuries of our era as well as in the first and second centuries B.C. (Sanday, *Value of the Patristic Writings for the Criticism and Exegesis of the Bible*. Expositor, Feb. 1880; Davidson Canon, p. 101 f). It is doubtless true as Roberston Smith says (*Old Testament in the Jewish Church*, 1881, p. 41), that the Reformers fell back on the authority of Jerome in their determination of the Canon as they did largely upon Augustine for the doctrine of grace, but this was in both cases for support against Rome in authority which Rome recognized, rather than as a basis on which to rest their faith and criticism.

cessfully vindicated on Protestant critical principles. We are convinced that the Church has not been deceived with regard to its inspiration. Esther, Ecclesiastes, the Song of Songs, the Apocalypse will more and more establish themselves in the hearts of those who study them. But we claim that it is illegitimate to first attempt to prove their *canonicity* and then their *inspiration*, or to rely upon Jewish Rabbinical tradition any more than Roman Catholic tradition, or to anathematize all who doubt some of them in the spirit of Rabbi Akiba and the Council of Trent. The only legitimate method is that of our fathers, the Reformers and Puritans: first prove their inspiration from their own internal divine testimony, and then accept them as Canonical because our souls rest upon them as the veritable divine word.

“For he that believes that God saith, without evidence that God saith it; doth not believe God, while he believes the thing that is from God, et eadem ratione, si contingeret Alcorano Turcico credidisset, [Whichcote, 3d letter to Tuckney, p. 111].”

The same critical principle was applied by the Reformers to the text of Scripture. They rejected the inspiration of the ancient versions, the Greek and the Vulgate, and against the Greek and Roman Churches resorted to the *original text*. They also rejected the inspiration of the Massoretic traditional pointing and only accepted the unpointed text. Luther does not hesitate to speak of the points as new human inventions about which he does not trouble himself (Com. on Gen. xlvii. 31), though he goes to work with the best text he can find to give the Word of God to the people. So Calvin on Zech. xi. 7, acknowledged that they were the result of great diligence and sound tradition, yet to be used with care and selection. Zwingle gave greater value to the LXX and the version of Jerome and disputed the Massoretic signs (opera. ed. Schult. V. p. 556 ff).

With regard to questions of authorship and date Luther denied the Apocalypse to John and Ecclesiastes to Solomon (Vorred. zum Heb. and Apocalyp.) Calvin denied the Pauline authorship of Hebrews, and doubted the Petrine authorship of II. Peter (see Com. in Loco). Zwingle, Oecolampadius and others were equally free from traditional bias.

But these questions of text and author troubled the Reformers but little; they had to battle against the Vulgate for both the original text and popular revisions and for a simple

grammatical exegesis against traditional authority and the manifold sense. They laid down the hermeneutical rule that the *Spirit of God, speaking* in His Word, alone could decide the meaning of the text; that difficult passages must be interpreted by plain ones. In the various departments of exegesis, they went diligently to work. Hebrew and Greek grammars and lexicons, texts, versions, and commentaries poured from the press. If the Reformers were great dogmatic theologians, they were greater Biblical scholars, and their theology was fresh, warm, and vigorous, because derived from a critical study of Scripture. The greatest dogmatic writer of the Reformation, John Calvin, was also its greatest exegete.*

Though searching for the nearest grammatical and logical sense, they were not anxious as to the inspiration of the grammar or the logic of the authors. Luther does not hesitate to dispute the validity of Paul's argument in Galatians iv. 22, sq.; Calvin does not meet the objection that Paul violently and inaptly wrested the words of Moses and David, by showing that he gives the meaning, syllable by syllable, but represents the apostle as polishing and embellishing and applying their words to his own purposes (Com. on Rom., x. 6; Heb. iv. 4). He is not anxious about the error of Matthew xxvii. 9, in the citation of Jeremiah instead of Zechariah, but admits it. So Luther points out two errors or slips of memory in the discourse of Stephen, Acts vii. The Reformers laid down no theory of Inspiration, such as would cover accent and letter, word, logic, and grammar. They regarded the external word as the *instrument*; they sought the sense, the infallible Divine Word contained in the Scriptures applied by the Divine Spirit to their souls.† So long as the controversy with Rome was active and energetic, and ere the counter-reformation set in, the Protestant critical principle maintained itself; but as the internal conflicts of Protestant churches began to absorb more and more attention, and the polemic with Rome became less and less vigorous, the polemic against brethren more and more violent, the Reformed system of

* Tholuck (Vermischte Schriften, II., 341), correctly describes him as distinguished alike for dogmatic impartiality, exegetical tact, many-sided scholarship, and deep Christian spirit.

† Compare Tholuck, Art. "Inspiration," in Herzog Ency., VI., 696, *sq.*

faith was built up by a series of scholastics over against Lutheranism, and Calvinistic orthodoxy over against Arminianism. The elaboration of the Protestant Reformed system by *à priori* deduction carried with it the pushing of the peculiar principles of Protestantism more and more into the background. The authority of the Reformed faith and tradition assumed the place of a Roman faith and tradition, and the Biblical scholarship of Protestant churches, cut off from the line of Roman tradition, worked its way along the line of Jewish Rabbinical tradition, especially in the school of Buxtorf, at Basle. But the Protestant critical principle reasserted itself mightily through Ludwig Capellus, of the French school of Saumur, where a freer type of theology had maintained itself. A new impulse to Hebrew scholarship had been given by Amira, Gabriel Sionita, and other Maronites who brought a wealth of Oriental learning to the attention of Christian scholars. Pococke journeyed to the East, and returned with rich spoils of Arabic literature. France, Holland, and England vied with one another in their use of these literary treasures, and pushed them for the study of the Hebrew Scriptures over against the Rabbinical tradition. Erpenius in Holland, the great Arabist, was the teacher of Capellus, and first introduced his work to the public. Capellus fell back on the views of Elias Levita, the teacher of the Reformers, and the Reformers themselves, and denied the inspiration of the Hebrew vowel-points and accents, and the common Massoretic text, and insisted upon its revision, through the comparison of MSS. and ancient versions. His work was published anonymously in 1624, at Leyden, under the title, "*Arcaenum punctationis revelatum*," though completed in 1621. Capellus was sustained by the French theologians generally, even by Rivetus, also by Cocceius, the father of the Federal school in Holland, who first gave the author's name to the public, and the body of English critics (Comp. Schnedermann's *Die Controverse des Lud. Capellus mit den Buxtorfen*, Leipzig, 1879).

In this connection a series of great Polyglotts appeared, beginning with the Amsterdam of Arias Montanus (1569-72), followed by the Paris Polyglott of Michael de Jay, (1629-45), and culminating in the London Polyglott of Brian

Walton, in which he was aided by Ed. Castle, Poccoke, Hyde, Lightfoot, and others, 1659, the greatest critical achievement of the 17th century, which remains as the classic basis for the comparative study of versions until the present day.

The work of Capellus remained unanswered, and worked powerfully until 1648. In the meantime the Roman Catholic Frenchman, J. Morinus, taking the same position as Capellus, pressed it in order to show the need of Church authority and tradition, in his work, *Exercitationes biblicæ*, 1633. This greatly complicated the discussion by making the view a basis for an attack on the Protestant position. The younger Buxtorf was stirred up to maintain the scholastic position against Capellus in his *Tract. de punct. vocal. et accent. in libr. V., T., heb. origine antiq.* The three universities of Sedan, Geneva, and Leyden were so aroused against Capellus that they refused to allow the publication of his great work *Critica Sacra*, which, however, appeared in 1650, the first of a series of corresponding productions [see Tholuck, *Akadem. Leben*, II., p. 332]. Heidegger and Turretine rallied the universities of Zurich, Geneva, and Basle to the Zurich Consensus, which was adopted in 1675, against all the distinguishing doctrines of the school of Saumur, and the more literal type of Calvinism, asserting for the first and only time in the symbols of the Church the doctrine of *verbal* inspiration, together with the inspiration of accents and points.

Thus the formal principle of Protestantism was straitened, and its vital power destroyed by the erection of dogmatic barriers against Biblical criticism.

“They forgot, that they by this standpoint again made Christian faith entirely dependent on church tradition; yes, with respect to the Old Testament on the synagogue.” —Dorner, “Gesch. Prot. Theologie,” p. 451.*

* Lutheran theology had undergone the same essential development through internal struggles. The school of Calixtus, at Helmstädt, had struggled with the scholastic spirit, until the latter had sharpened itself into the most radical antagonism to the Reformed Church and the Melancthon type of Lutheran theology. Carlov stated the doctrine of verbal inspiration in the same essential terms as the Swiss scholastics, and was followed therein by the Lutheran scholastics generally.

“It treated Holy Scripture as the revelation itself, instead of as the memorial of the originally revealed, ideal, actual truth; the consequence being that Holy Scripture was transformed into God’s exclusive work, the human element was explained away, and the original living power thrust away behind the writing contained in letters. Faith ever draws its strength and decisive certainty from the original eternally living power to which Scripture is designed to lead. But when Scripture was regarded as the goal,

The controversy between Brian Walton and John Owen, is instructive just here. John Owen had prepared a tract entitled : "*The Divine Original, Authority, and Self-evidencing Light and Purity of the Scriptures,*" in which he takes the scholastic ground :

"Nor is it enough to satisfy us, that the doctrines mentioned are preserved entire ; every tittle and iota in the word of God must come under our consideration, as being as such from God."—(Works, xvi., p. 303).

Before the tract was issued, he was confronted by the Prolegomena to Walton's *Biblia Polyglotta*, which he perceives undermines his theory of Inspiration, and therefore adds an appendix, entitled : "*Of the integrity and purity of the Hebrew Text of the Scriptures, with considerations of the Prolegomena and Appendix to the late 'Biblia Polyglotta,'*" Oxford, 1659, in which he maintains that :

"The Scriptures of the Old and New Testament were immediately and entirely given out by God himself, His mind being in them represented unto us without the least interviency of such mediums and ways as were capable of giving change or alteration to the least iota or syllable."

Brian Walton admirably replies to him in "*The Considerator Considered,*" Lond., 1659, p. 220, sq., as follows :

"For when at the beginning of the Reformation, divers questions arose about the Scriptures and the Church ; the Romanists observing that the punctuation of the Hebrew text was an invention of the Masorites, they thereupon inferred that the text without the points might be taken in divers senses, and that none was tyed to the reading of the Rabbins, and therefore concluded that the Scripture is ambiguous and doubtful without the interpretation and testimony of the Church, so that all must flee to the authority of the Church and depend upon her for the true sense and meaning of the Scriptures. On the other side, some Protestants, fearing that some advantage might be given to the *Romanists* by this *concession*, and not considering how the *certainty* of the *Scriptures* might well be maintained though the Text were *unpointed*, instead of denying the *consequence*, which they might well have done, thought fit rather to deny the *assumption*, and to maintain that the *points* were of *Divine original*, whereby they involved themselves in extreme labyrinths, engaging themselves in defence of that which might be easily proved to be false, and thereby wronged the cause which they seemed to defend. Others, therefore, of more *learning* and *judgment* knowing that this *position* of the *divine original* of the *points* could not be made good ; and that the truth needed not the patronage of an *untruth*, would not engage themselves therein, but granted it to be true, that the *points* were invented by the *Rabbins*, yet denied the *consequence*, maintaining, notwithstanding, that the reading and sense of the text might be *certain* without *punctuation*, and that therefore the *Scriptures* did not at all depend upon the authority of the *Church* : and of this judgment were the chief *Protestant Divines*, and greatest

and attestation was sought elsewhere than in the experience of faith through the presence of truth in the Spirit, then the Reformation standpoint was abandoned, its so-called material principle violated, and it became easy for Rationalism to expose the contradictions in which the inquirers had thus involved themselves."—Dorner's "System of Christian Doctrine," Vol. II. p. 186.

linguists that then were, or have been since in the *Christian world*, such as I named before ; Luther, Zwinglius, Calvin, Beza, Musculus, Brentius, Pellicane, Oecolampadius, Mercer, Piscator, P. Phagius, Drusius, Schindler, Martinius, Scaliger, De Dieu, Casaubon, Erpenius, Sixt. Amana, Jac, and Ludov. Capellus, Grotius, etc.—among ourselves, Archbishop Ussher, Bishop Prideaux, Mr. Mead, Mr. Selden, and innumerable others, whom I forbear to name, who conceived it, would nothing disadvantage the cause, to yield that proposition, for that they could still make it good, that the Scripture was in itself a *sufficient* and *certain* rule for faith and life, not depending upon any human authority to support it.”

We have quoted this extract at length for the light it casts upon the struggle of Criticism at the time. John Owen, a man noble in conduct and honored as a preacher and dogmatic writer, had spun a theory of Inspiration after the *a priori* scholastic method, and with it did battle against the great Polyglott. It was a Quixotic attempt, and resulted only in ridiculous failure. His dogma is crushed as a shell in the grasp of a giant. The indignation of Walton burns hot against this wanton and unreasoning attack. But he consoles himself with the opening reflection that Origen's Hexapla ; Jerome's Vulgate ; the Complutensian Polyglott ; Erasmus' Greek Testament ; the Amsterdam and Parisian Polyglotts have all in turn been assailed by those whose theories and dogmas have been threatened or overturned by a scholarly induction of facts.

The Westminster divines still maintained the true Reformation point of view. This is clear from a simple comparison of the symbols of the Reformation with it on the one side, and the Zurich Consensus on the other. Verbal Inspiration is not stated. It is as free from a theory of Inspiration as the creeds of the Reformation. As Prof. Mitchell properly says :

“Any one who will take the trouble to compare their list of the canonical books with that given in the Belgian Confession, or in the Irish Articles, may satisfy himself that they held with Dr. Jameson, that the authority of these books does not depend on the fact whether this prophet or that wrote a particular book or parts of a book ; whether a certain portion was derived from the Elohist or the Jehovist ; whether Moses wrote the close of Deuteronomy, Solomon was the author of Ecclesiastes, or Paul of the epistle to the Hebrews ; but in the fact that a prophet, an inspired man wrote them, and that they bear the stamp and impress of a divine origin.”

The Westminster divines were not as a body scholastics, though there were scholastics among them ; but preachers, catechists, and expositors of the Scriptures, with a true evangelical spirit. They were called from the active work of the ministry, and from stubborn resistance to dogmatic authority, to the active work of reforming the Church of England into

closer conformity with the Reformed Churches of the Continent. The various views that prevailed in the Reformed Churches, especially of France and Holland, were represented among them; but their interests were in the reform of the Church and the Liturgy, and the life rather than of doctrine.

Chas. Herle, the Prolocutor, admirably states the Protestant position over against the Romish:

"They (the Papists) being asked, why they believe the *Scripture* to be the *Word of God*? Answer, because the *Church* says 'tis so; and being asked againe, why they beleeve the *Church*? They answer, because the *Scripture* saies it *shall be guided into truth*; and being asked againe, why they beleeve that very *Scripture* that says so? They answer, because the *Church* says 'tis *Scripture*, and so (with those in the Psalm xii. 8), they walk in a *circle* or on *every side*. They charge the like on us (but wrongfully) that we beleeve the *Word*, because it sayes it self that it is so; but we do not so resolve our *Faith*; we *believe unto salvation*, not the *Word* barely, because it witnesses to itself, but because the *Spirit* speaking in it to our *consciences* witnesses to them that it is the *Word* indeed; we resolve not our *Faith* barely either into the *Word*, or *Spirit* as its single ultimate *principle*, but into the testimony of the *Spirit* speaking to our *consciences* in the *Word*."—"Detur Sapienti," pp. 152-3. London, 1655).

The theory of the scholastics prevailed but for a brief period in Switzerland, where it was overthrown by the reaction under the leadership of the younger Turretine. The theory of John Owen did not influence the Westminster men. As Prof. Mitchell correctly states:

"In fact, it was not till several years after the Confession was completed, and the star of Owen was in the ascendant, that under the spell of a genius and learning only second to Calvin, English Puritanism so generally identified itself with what is termed his less liberal view."—[Mitchell's Minutes of Westminster Assembly, p. xx].

We do not rate Owen so highly as this, but it is the fact, that his scholastic type of theology worked in the doctrine of Inspiration, as well as in other dogmas, to the detriment of the simpler and more evangelical Westminster Theology; and in the latter part of the 17th century gave Puritan Theology a scholastic type which it did not possess before. But it did not prevent such representative Presbyterians as Matthew Poole, Edmund Calamy, and the Cambridge men, with Baxter, from taking the more evangelical Westminster position. The critics of the Reformed Church produced master-pieces of Biblical learning, which have been the pride and boast of the churches, and the foundation of Biblical learning to the present. Like Capellus, they delighted in the name *critical*, and were not afraid of it. The Critici Sacri of John Pearson, Anton Scatergood, Henry Gouldman, and Rich. Pearson, followed up

Walton's Polyglott in 1660, 9 vols. folio; and this was followed by Matthew Poole's "Synopsis Criticorum," 5 vols. folio, Lond., 1669; and on this basis Poole and his Presbyterian associates gave forth annotations for the benefit of the people. The views of the *critics* prevailed over those of the scholastics, and no one would now venture to dispute their conclusions. It has become more and more evident that the Hebrew vowel-points and accents were not attached to the original MSS. of their authors, but that they have been the product of a long historical development.*

Still further the square Aramaic characters used in our Bible were exchanged for earlier Hebrew letters, such as we see upon ancient coins, in the Samaritan MS. of the Pentateuch and on the Messa stone. This change was made not earlier than the 4th century B.C. [Dillmann, *Bibeltext. d. A. T. Herzog. ii. p. 384*], and upon it the Massoretic pointing depends. It is true that the present Consonant text was fixed before the Talmudic era by the Jewish school of Tiberias, and the differences in reading since that time are few and comparatively unimportant in the MSS. thus far collated [Strack. *Proleg. Critica Leip. 1873, p. 66f*], but the ancient Syriac and especially the LXX version and the Samaritan copies go back of the labors of the Massoretic period and the work of the school of Tiberias, and give testimony to an earlier text than that presented to us in the present Hebrew text.†

* The Arabic Koran gives us doubtless the simplest system, the Syriac gives us a double system, the Greek and the Syrian proper standing between the Arabic and the Hebrew, and the Hebrew has also two systems, the Palestinian and the Babylonian, the latter preserved in the oldest MSS, the Codex Petropol., 916 A.D., which was unknown until recent times. These two evidently developed side by side and go back on an earlier, simpler system, somewhat like the Arabic, which has been lost (Gesenius, *Hebr. Gram. ed. Rödiger and Kautzsch 22, Aufl. p. 31*). The system did not reach its present condition until the 7th century at Babylon and the middle of the 8th century of our era, in Palestine (Dillmann, *Bibeltext. A. T. in Herzog, Ency. ii. p. 394-6*). It was the work of the Massoretic Jewish critics, of a particular line of tradition. The same is still more the case with the accents which serve for a guide in the cantillation of the synagogues even more than for division of the sentences and the determination of the tone. Hence the double tradition as to the place of the accent, the German and Polish Jews placing it after the Aramaic on the penult, whereas the Spanish and Italian Jews followed by Christians place it on the ultimate. Bickell has again raised the question to decide it against the present accepted method.

† It is characteristic of scholastics that they underrate these versions. Even Keil, in his anxiety to maintain the present Massoretic text, charges the LXX version with the carelessness and caprice of transcribers and an uncritical and wanton passion for emendation. But this is in face of the fact that the LXX version was the authorized text of

There can be no doubt, as Roberston Smith states: "It has gradually become clear to the vast majority of conscientious students that the Septuagint is really of the greatest value as a witness to the early state of the text," p. 86. Bishop Lowth already in his preliminary Dissert. to Isaiah (2d Edit. Lond. 1779, p. lv.) calls the Massoretic text

"The Jews' interpretation of the Old Testament." "We do not deny the usefulness of this interpretation, nor would we be thought to detract from its merits by setting it in this light; it is perhaps, upon the whole, preferable to any one of the ancient versions; it has probably the great advantage of having been formed upon a traditionary explanation of the text and of being generally agreeable to that sense of Scripture which passed current and was commonly received by the Jewish nation in ancient times; and it has certainly been of great service to the moderns in leading them into the knowledge of the Hebrew tongue. But they would have made a much better use of it, and a greater progress in the explication of the Scriptures of the Old Testament, had they consulted it, without absolutely submitting to its authority; had they considered it as an assistant, not as an infallible guide."

Probably few scholars would go as far as this, yet there is a strong tendency in that direction. It is a most significant fact that the New Testament does not base its citations upon the original *Hebrew* text in literal quotation, but uses the LXX and Hebrew and possibly ancient Aramaic Targums side by side with the utmost freedom. This question of citation has ever given trouble to the Apologist. Richard Baxter meets it in this way:

"But one instance I more doubt of myself, which is, when Christ and his apostles do oft use the Septuagint in their citations out of the Old Testament, whether it be always their meaning to justify each *translation and particle of sense*, as the Word of God and rightly done; or only to use that as tolerable and containing the main truth intended which was then in use among the Jews, and therefore understood by them; and so best to the auditors. And also whether every citation of number or genealogies from the Septuagint, intended an approbation of it in the very points it differeth from the Hebrew copies."—(More Reasons, 1672, p. 49, see also p. 45).

But we must go still further back than the versions to the parallel passages and duplicate psalms, prophecies, and narratives of the Old Testament in our study of the original text.

the ancient Church, that the New Testament citations are generally supposed to be largely from it, and that its testimony is centuries earlier than that of the Jewish school of Tiberias. The Pharisaical authority was directed to destroy the confidence of the Hellenistic Jews in it, and the version of Aquila was made to supplant it and rally the Jews of the world around an official and universally received text. But whether a deliberate attempt was made to suppress and destroy all varying copies, as W. Robertson Smith following Noeldeke supposes (Old Test. in Jewish Church, p. 74), is questionable. We doubt not that those zealots, who under the lead of Rabbi Akiba brought about the destruction of their country and the universal hatred of their race, were capable of this wickedness, but we have not learned that there is any historical evidence of it.

No one can study attentively the text of Pss. xiv. and liii., Ps. xviii. and 1 Chron. xvi., Micah iv. and Isa. ii., not to speak of many others, without being impressed with the liberty that has been taken in making *intentional* changes, showing :

“With what freedom later authors worked over ancient documents, and also that they were not accustomed to regard the preservation of every word and letter as necessary.”—(Dillmann, *Bibeltext*. A. T. Hertzog. II. 383).

Thus so far as the Old Testament is concerned, the theory of Buxtorf, Heidegger, Turretine, Voetius, Owen, and the Zurich Consensus, as to vowel-points and accents, has been so utterly disproved that no Biblical scholar of the present day would venture to defend them. But can their theory of *Verbal* Inspiration stand without these supports? Looking at the doctrine of Inspiration from the point of view of Textual Criticism we see at once that there can be no *inspiration* of the *written letters* or *uttered sounds* of our present Hebrew text, for these are *transliterations* of the originals which have been lost and the sounds are uncertain, and whilst there is a general correspondence of these letters and sounds so that they give us *essentially* the original, they do not give us *exactly* the original. The inspiration must therefore lie back of the *written letters* and the *uttered sounds* and be sought in that which is *common* to the old characters and the new, the *utterance* of the voice and the constructions of the *pen*, namely, in the *concepts*, the sense and meaning that they convey.

As Lyford, a distinguished Presbyterian divine invited to sit in the Westminster Assembly, says :

“All language or writing is but the vessel, the symbol, or declaration of the rule, not the rule itself. It is a certain form or means by which the divine truth cometh unto us, as things are contained in words, and because the doctrine and matter of the text is not made unto one but by words and a language which I understand ; therefore I say, the Scripture in English is the rule and ground of my faith, and where upon I relying have not a humane, but a divine authority for my faith.”—(“Plain Man's Sense Exercised,” etc., p. 49).

For the divine word was not meant for the Hebrew and Greek nations alone, or for Hebrew and Greek scholars, but for all nations and the common people, and must be given to the world in a great variety of languages with a great variety of letters and sounds, so that the sacred truth approaches each one in his native tongue in an appropriate relation to his understanding, just as at Pentecost the same Divine Spirit dis-

tributed himself in cloven tongues of fire upon a large number of different persons, so that every faithful translation conveys as an instrument the divine word to those who read or hear it, as Matthew Poole :

“For it is not the shell of the words, but the kernel of the matter which commends itself to the consciences of men, and that is the same in all languages. The Scriptures in English, no less than in Hebrew or Greek, display its lustre and exert its power and discover the character of its divine original.”—(“Blow at the Root,” London, 1679, p. 234).

This is shown by the process of translation itself. The translator does not transliterate the letters and syllables, transmute sounds, give word for word, transfer foreign words and idioms, but he ascertains the *sense*, the *idea*, and then gives expression to the *idea*, the sense in the most appropriate way. It is admitted that close, literal translations are bad, misleading, worse than paraphrases. The *Midrash* method of Ezra is far preferable, to give the *sense* to the people without the *pedantry* and subtleties of scholarship. Hence the inspiration cannot be confined to particular words and phrases and grammatical, logical, or rhetorical constructions; for the same divine truth may be presented in a variety of synonymous words and phrases and sentences. In point of fact this is the method of divine revelation, giving the same laws, doctrines, narratives, expressions of emotion, and prophesies in great variety of forms, none of which are adequate to convey the divine idea, but in their combination presenting it from all those varied points of view that a rich, natural language affords, in order that the mind and heart may grasp the idea itself, appropriate and reproduce it in other forms of language, and in the motives, principles, and habits of every-day life. The external word, written or spoken, is purely *instrumental*, conveying divine truth to the soul of man, as the eye and the ear are instrumental senses for its appropriation by the soul. It does not work *ex opere operato* by any mechanical or magical power. As the Lutherans tend to lay the stress upon the sacraments, in their external operation, and the Anglicans upon the external organization of the Church, so the Reformed Church has ever been in peril of laying the stress on the letter, the external operation of the Word of God. The Protestant principle struggles against this confounding of the means of grace with the divine

grace itself, this identification of the instrument and the divine agent, in order therefore to their proper discrimination. This is the problem left unsolved by the Reformation, in which the separate churches of Protestantism have been working, and which demands a solution from the Church of the nineteenth century. Here the most radical question is, that of the divine Word and its relation to the work of the Holy Spirit. This solved, all the other questions will be solved. Hence the Churches of the Reformation may be harmonized, and the Reformed Church has a peculiar call to grapple bravely with this problem. Its solution can come only from a further working out of the critical principles of the Reformation and Puritan Revolution, not by logical deduction from the creeds and scholastic dogmas alone, but by a careful induction of the facts from the Scriptures themselves, a comparison of these results with those obtained by the dogmatic process, in order that the dogmatic and critical methods may act and react upon one another, to that most desired conclusion. But both must maintain the fundamental distinction between the external and the internal word, so well stated by John Wallis, one of the clerks of the Westminster Assembly :

“The Scriptures in themselves are a Lanthorn rather than a Light; they shine, indeed, but it is *alieno lumine*; it is not their own, but a borrowed light. It is God which is the true Light, that shines to us in the Scriptures; and they have no other light in them, but as they represent to us somewhat of God, and as they exhibit and hold forth God to us, who is the true light that ‘enlighteneth every man that comes into the world.’ It is a light then as it represents God unto us, who is the original light. It transmits some rays; some beams of the divine nature; but they are refracted, or else we should not be able to behold them. They lose much of their original lustre by passing through this medium, and appear not so glorious to us as they are in themselves. They represent God’s simplicity obliquated and refracted, by reason of many inadequate conceptions; God condescending to the weakness of our capacity to speak to us in our own dialect.”—(“Sermons,” Lond., 1791, pp. 127–8).

The Scriptures are lamps, vessels of the most holy character, but no less vessels of the divine grace than were the apostles and prophets who spake and wrote them. As vessels they have come into material contact with the forces of this world, with human weakness, ignorance, prejudice, and folly; their forms have been modified in the course of the generations, but their divine contents remain unchanged. We will never be able to attain the sacred writings as they gladdened the eyes of those who first saw them, and rejoiced the hearts of

those who first heard them. If the external words of the original were inspired, it does not profit us. We are cut off from them forever. Interposed between us and them is the tradition of centuries and even millenniums. Doubtless by God's "singular care and Providence they have been kept pure in all ages, and are therefore authentic." (Conf. of Faith, I. viii.) Doubtless throughout the whole work of the authors "the Holy Spirit was present, causing His energies to flow into the spontaneous exercises of the writers' faculties, elevating and directing where need be, and everywhere securing the errorless expression in language of the thought designed by God" (Art. "Inspiration," PRES. REV. II. 231), but we cannot in the symbolical or historical use of the term call this providential care of His word or superintendence over its external production—Inspiration. Such providential care and superintendence is not different in kind with regard to the Word of God, the visible Church of God or the forms of the sacraments. Inspiration lies back of the external letter, it is that which gives the word its efficacy, it is the divine afflatus which enlightened and guided holy men to apprehend the truth of God in its appropriate forms; assured them of their possession of it, and called and enabled them to make it known to the Church by voice and pen. This made their persons holy, their utterances holy, their writings holy, but only as the instruments, not as the holy thing itself. The divine Logos that is the sum and substance of the Scripture, the holy of holies, from whence the Spirit of God goes forth through the holy place of the circumstantial sense of type and symbol, and literary representation into the outer court of the words and sentences, through them to enter by the ear and eye, the hearts of men with enlightening, sanctifying, and saving power :

"Inspiration is more than superintending guidance, for that expresses but an external relation between the Spirit and writer. But Inspiration is an influence within the soul, divine and supernatural, working through all the writers in one organizing method, making of the many one, by all one book, the Book of God, the Book for man, divine and human in all its parts; having the same relation to all other books that the Person of the Son of God has to all other men, and that the church of the living God has to all other institutions."—(H. B. Smith, Sermon on Inspiration, 1855, p. 27).

True Criticism never disregards the letter, but reverently and tenderly handles every letter and syllable of the Word of God, striving to purify it from all dross, brushing away the dust of tradition and guarding it from the ignorant and pro-

fane. But it is with no superstitious dread of magical virtue or virus in it, or anxious fears lest it should dissolve in their hands, but with an assured trust that it is the tabernacle of God, through whose external courts there is an approach to the Lord Jesus himself. "Bibliolatry clings to the letter; spirituality in the letter finds the spirit and does not disown the letter which guided to the spirit." (H. B. Smith, *Serm. on Inspiration*, p. 36). Such Criticism has accomplished great things for the New Testament text. It will do even more for the Old Testament so soon as the old superstitious reverence for Massoretic tradition and servitude to the Jews has been laid aside by Christian scholars. Critical Theories first come into conflict with the Church doctrine of Inspiration when they deny the inspiration of the truth and facts of Scripture; when they superadd another authoritative and predominant test, whether as the Reason, the Conscience, or the Religious Feeling. But this is to go beyond the sphere of Evangelical Criticism and enter to the fields of Rationalistic, Ethical, or Mystical Criticism. Evangelical Criticism conflicts only with false views of Inspiration. It disturbs the inspiration of versions, the inspiration of the Massoretic text, the inspiration of particular letters, syllables, and external words and expressions, and truly all those who rest upon these external things ought to be disturbed and driven from the letter to the spirit, from clinging to the outer walls, to seek him who is the sum and substance, the Master and the King of Scriptures.

"Our full persuasion and assurance of the infallible truth and divine authority thereof, is from the inward work of the Holy Spirit bearing witness by and with the word in our hearts."—("Conf. of Faith," I., 5).

And here the people and critics are agreed, who can doubt it?

"As if the vast multitude of Christian souls who really used it did not believe in a Bible, which in its parts is vital and saving as well as in the whole, which is superior in its central lessons to all the errors of editors and translators, and which can even convey eternal life by its reproduction in sermons, however weak, that are faithful to its spirit, though they do not literally give back one of its sentences."—(Prin. Cairns, "Unbelief in 18th Cent.," p. 152).

And as Tyndale, our great English Reformer, says:

"The Scriptures spring out of God and flow unto Christ, and were given to lead us to Christ. Thou must therefore go along by the Scripture, as by a line, until thou come to Christ who is the ways end and resting-place." (Works, Parker Series, I., 317). "For though the Scripture be an outward instrument and the preacher also to move men to believe. Yet the chief and principal cause why a man believeth, or believeth not, is within; that is, the Spirit of God leadeth His children to believe."—("Works," III., 139).

The conflicts of Conformists and non-Conformists, and the struggle between evangelical faith and Deism in Great Britain and of Scholasticism with Pietism on the Continent, caused the scholastics to antagonize more and more the human element in the Scriptures and their Inspiration, and to assert their external authority over the Reason, the Conscience, and the Religious Feeling, whilst the Apologists, following the Deists into the field of the external arguments for and against the religion and doctrines of the Bible, built up a series of external evidence which are strong and powerful, and which did, in fact, overcome Deism intellectually, or rather drive them into Atheism and Pantheism; but at the expense of vital piety in the Church—the true Puritan inheritance; for they neglected the stronger *internal* evidence. They forgot the caution of Calvin: “Those persons betray great folly who wish it to be demonstrated to infidels, that the Scripture is the Word of God, which cannot be known without faith” (“Calvin Institutes,” VIII., 13); and exposed the Church to the severe criticism of Dodwell:

“To give all men Liberty to judge for themselves and to expect at the same time that they shall be of the preacher’s mind, is such a scheme for unanimity as one would scarce imagine anyone would be weak enough to devise in speculation, and much less that any could ever prove hardy enough to avow and propose to practice.”—(“Religion not founded on Argument,” p. 90, *sq.*);

and to lead to the conclusion that there was an “irreconcilable repugnance in their natures betwixt Reason and Belief,” (p. 80).

The efforts of the more evangelical type of thought which passed over from the Puritans into the Cambridge men, and the Presbyterians of the type of Baxter and Calamy, to construct an evangelical doctrine of the Reason and the Religious Feeling in accordance with Protestant principles, failed for the time, and the movement died away, or passed over into the merely liberal and comprehensive scheme, or assumed an attitude of indifference between the contending parties. The Protestant rule of faith was sharpened more and more, especially among the Independents, and the separating Presbyterian Churches of Scotland, after the fashion of John Owen, rather than the Westminster divines; whilst the apologists pressed more and more the dogmatic method of demonstration over against criticism. [Lechler, *Gesch. d. Deismus*, p. 411, 1841, *sq.*] The cause of Biblical Criticism still maintained its ground at

Oxford and Cambridge, in a few patient and laborious scholars, working in the line of Walton, Castle, Poolc, and Cudworth; Mill gave forth his *Critical New Testament* in 1707, the fruit of great industry, and was assailed by unthinking men, who preferred pious ignorance to the perils of a correct New Testament. [Schrivener's Introduction to the Criticism of the N. T., 2d Ed., p. 400]. But Bentley espoused the cause of his friend with invincible arguments, and himself spent many years in the collation of MSS. in the preparation of a still better text, and though he died leaving his magnificent enterprise unpublished, he opened the way for a new era in literary criticism. Nath. Lardner, though a Unitarian, issued his monumental work on the Credibility of the Gospel History, 1727-'57. But these paved the way to a revival of Biblical Criticism, which accompanied the Methodist Revival. The Religious Feeling burst forth in Methodism; the critical spirit of the Reformation in Bishop Lowth and his associates. Here again, as in the previous revivals of Criticism, the study of the original texts exerted a great influence. Bentley's school enlarged the Greek learning, especially in a literary direction. So, Albert Schultens "rendered the first extensive work composed with deep insight into the structure of the Semitic languages, especially the Arabic, together with a correct philosophy of the language" (Gesenius, *Gesch. Heb. Sprach.*, p. 127). Bishop Lowth opened up the literary features of the Bible in his work, *De Sacra Poesi Hebraeorum*, 1753, and *Prelim. Diss.* to his translation of Isaiah, 1779, which lies at the basis of all subsequent studies. J. D. Michaelis, in 1758, translated his work and introduced it into Germany, being himself the father of the new revival there. At the same time, Astruc, the French physician, discovered that most striking feature of the Pentateuch, the Jehovist and Elohist documents, and their wonderful combination (*Conjectures sur les Mémoires originaux, dont il paroît, que Moÿse s'est servi pour composer le livre de la Genèse.* Bruxelles, 1751). Kennicott published his monumental work, on "*The State of the Printed Text of the Old Testament*," 2 vols. 8vo, 1753-59. J. C. Wetstein, in England (1751-2), and J. A. Bengel in Germany (1734), gave forth critical texts of the New Testament, based on Mills. Soon after, Gabler originated the Discipline of Biblical Theology, and Herder "reconquered, so to say, the Old Testament for German Litera-

ture" (Dorner's German Theology in Johnson's Encyclopædia, II., p. 528).

These critics devoted their attention to the study of the Scriptures as *Sacred Literature*. Lowth, more to the æsthetic side, Michaelis to the historic side, Kennicott to the text, and Astruc to the *structure* of the writings. They were believing, God-fearing men. The Literary side of the Scriptures had previously received little attention. The historical and literary side of Exegesis remained undeveloped. Attention once called to this subject, it started in a long-continued development, extending to the present day. Starting in the churches of England and France, it was not developed in the lands of its birth, but passed over into Lutheran Germany and Reformed Switzerland to the headwaters of the Reformation, to attach itself to the Reformation principles after a hard and long struggle with Rationalism, Atheism, and Pantheism. We do not propose to deny that the traditional views of the Jews as to the Literature, Religion, and History of the O. T. Scriptures, and of the Mediæval Church as to the N. T. Books, prevailed in the Protestant churches since the Reformation. But as we have already shown, the original Reformers, Calvin, Luther, and Zwingle, did not trouble themselves about these matters, but where they incidentally touched them, are remarkably free in their criticisms. But the question had not come into the field of Theological discussion. None of the symbols of the Reformed or Lutheran churches express any opinion on these subjects. These questions arose as new questions in the latter half of the eighteenth century, after the Creeds had all been constructed, and they originated in evangelical men. It remained to be determined therefore whether these critical theories entered into conflict with the Protestant doctrine of the Scriptures as expressed in the Creeds. In their historic unfolding in Germany and Switzerland in the nineteenth century, we observe that Biblical Criticism is represented by two antagonistic parties: *evangelical critics* and *rationalistic critics*. That the discussion has until recently been chiefly confined to the Continent of Europe and foreign tongues, may account for the long-continued prejudice against Criticism in Great Britain and America during the long neglect of Biblical studies and the almost exclusive attention to the discussion of dogmas. But the renewed attention to Biblical studies in

Great Britain and America has brought us face to face with the Critical Theories of Germany, Holland, and Switzerland, and the question arises how to meet them. Shall it be with dogmatic opposition to Criticism altogether? This would be unreasonable, unhistoric, and unprotestant. Or shall we not rather take our stand with the evangelical critics of Europe against the Rationalistic critics, and conquer the latter by a more profound critical interpretation of the Literature, the History, and the Religion of the Bible? The Reason, the Conscience, and the Religious Feeling, all which have arisen during these discussions into a light and vigor unknown and unanticipated at the Reformation — must not be antagonized, the one with the other, or with the Spirit of God, but must all be included in that act and habit of faith by which we apprehend the Word of God; and these cannot be satisfied with the external letter, the word, or the sentence, or the figure of speech, or the particular style and expression, but will ascend through these as the external media to the presence of the Divine Master, who reigns in and by the word, making it holy and divine in so far and to that extent that it evidently sets Him forth.

The study of the critical interpretation of the Literature, Religion, and History of the sacred Scriptures in the various modern theories, how far they are legitimate to the Protestant principle, how far they are in antagonism thereto, must be reserved for other articles. This much we may say here, that we are prepared to maintain that while the traditional teachings of the schools will have to be modified to a considerable extent in the various departments of Biblical study, there has nothing been ascertained and established as facts and truths by modern critical theories, that will at all disturb the statements of the symbols of the Reformation or the Westminster standards, as to the Word of God. It is furthermore our conviction that upon a reaction from the scholastic theology of the Zurich Consensus and the Puritanism of John Owen, and a revival of the evangelical life and unfettered thought of the Reformation and the Puritans of the first half of the 17th century, depends a revival of true evangelical religion, and a successful progress of the theology of our Reformed churches in the working out of the principles inherited from the Reformation.

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