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ART. I.—HIS EXCELLENCY AND HIS ACCIDENCY.

BY C. Z. W.

Every man is a Genius.—So the Ancients thought and taught—Greek and Roman; Jew and Barbarian. The etymology of his generic name, MAN, in all cardinal languages like the vision which Saint Peter saw at Joppa, seems to declare: “What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common!” However visible, therefore, the tower of Babel, may stand in the linguistic Heavens, there is no confusion of tongues here—no dispersion of mankind in this regard. Man is man

“For all that and all that”

from the Orient to the Occident. Deny it, and how shall we interpret the faith of ages in the fabled Genii? those fairy spirits, which were supposed to stand as sponsors over every mortal, to guide and govern his birth, life and history. Be they Tutelary Deities, Guardian Angels or Patron Saints, the Creed is all one in the root. What means this hoary theory, but to personify the peculiar structure of mind, which every man receives from his Maker? Does not this conception lie already in the primitive, as well as in its derivative term—*genius*?

Every man is born a genius.—This we may concede without

become a man, reveals the whole fulness of the ideal according to which human nature was originally planned, but which can be realized only imperfectly in each finite individual. If the Divine Logos did not become man, Humanity would be without any real point of unity and without a *Head*. We therefore accept the essentially Christian belief, that the Son of God would have been made man, and would have come into the world,—even if sin had not come into the world—the belief that when God created man after His own image, He created him in the image of His Son, in the image of the Son who was to become incarnate, so that even at the creation of man the image of Christ was present to the mind of the Creator, and was the prototype according to which man was created.

ART. II.—CHRIST AND HIS SPIRIT.

BY J. WILLIAMSON NEVIN, D. D.

WHEN the Bible is spoken of as the formal principle of Christianity, in distinction from its material principle, the language means of course, simply, that the outward form in which divine revelation is presented to us in the sacred text, requires for its own completion the felt presence in it of the actual revelation itself out of which it proceeds.

There is no particular mystery in this. It is nothing more than the universal relation between speech and thought, in virtue of which the outward word must always have in it an inward word at the same time to be at all a true and full word. All spoken or written language is formal over against the inward sense it is designed to express, and this sense then is the matter or substance, without which the form of its utterance would be of no account whatever. And yet the form is not for this reason unimportant. There could be no *utterance* without it. Outward and inward, in the case, go hand in hand together. They are related to each other as soul and body.

All language is intelligible only in the element of the life from which it derives its origin. Interpreted in the element of any other life, it becomes false. The words outwardly taken cannot secure their own meaning. Only a poetic spirit, for example, can do justice to the spoken or written word of a poet; and to all unphilosophical minds, the speculations of Kant or Hegel are as a matter of course irredeemable nonsense.

And how then can it ever be otherwise with the Word of God, communicating itself to men through human forms of speech? Can these forms of themselves be possibly sufficient to convey the sense of divine revelation, into a soul not already in some living *rapport* with what the revelation is in its own nature? Here, most emphatically, the flesh, the letter, the mere outward utterance profiteth nothing. It is the spirit that quickeneth, and all right intelligence must come from within. Not simply from the interior of the human soul, in the exercise of what may be considered its own proper spiritual power of thought and contemplation; but from the illuminating and quickening spirit or life-breath of the Divine revelation itself, from which the utterance flows. The words that I speak unto you, our Saviour says, they are spirit, and they are life. They had then, and have still, their profound meaning and force only in the mystery of His own presence. Outside of that mystery they are no longer intelligible. The outward form is sundered from its inward matter, the necessary complement of its existence; and it is misconstrued at once accordingly into the service of error.

The Bible, in this way, is what it is in its own constitution and office, the sure normative rule of Christian faith in the original sense of Protestantism, only as it is itself comprehended in the presence and power of a deeper and wider supernatural fact—the historically objective and enduring fact of God's Self-revelation completing itself in the fullness of time in Christ—from which it draws its whole animating life, and to which it stands related then as an inspired archival record and attestation for the use of the Church through all ages. In that relation it is intelligible, and serves its true office of making men wise unto eternal life; otherwise not. Otherwise, indeed, it ceases to be the word of light and life. It is turned into the mere outward letter that darkens and kills.

This necessary relation between the formal and the material, the outward and the inward, in the constitution of the Holy Scriptures, is well set forth by the late excellent Dr. Ullmann in the following interesting extract on the subject:

“In what sense, then, is the Bible an outward rule?—is it

in a sense that excludes all reference to an inner rule, to something higher, deeper, broader than the written word? I reply, No! In such a sense the Bible does not itself claim to be an outer rule. That in it which is outward issued forth from what was originally inward, and has the tendency and the design always to become inward again. In thus becoming inward, it is not intended to operate as a mere outward rule, but to bear witness to itself in our inner life, and to secure our free assent. Inward and outward thus act and react on each other. If the Scripture be a rule it is fair to ask whence it came to us? It did not fall from heaven; it was not written immediately by the hand of God; it did not exist prior to Christianity. Christianity, on the contrary existed first, and the Scripture was the organ through which it presented itself to and propagated itself among men. That which existed before Scripture was the complex of saving facts, whose centre is Christ and the Christian life. The function of the Scripture, therefore, was to be the medium of making known the person and work of Christ, where the living message could not reach. For this reason its position and work are not unconditional. Christ it is who conditions Scripture, and gives it its worth. It is not the Scripture that gives authority to Christ, but Christ to Scripture. The proper object of faith is Christ, not the Scripture; the latter is merely the guide and educator unto Christ" (*Stud. u. Krit.* 1852).

Here then we have the full conception of the material principle or "inner rule" of Christian truth, in its difference from the formal principle or "outer rule" presented to us in the Bible. It holds *in the direct union of Christian faith with the one only full object and necessary complement of all such faith, the fullness of God's self-revelation in the person of His Son, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.*

What less than this, in fact, have we in what St. John declares to have been the burden of the teaching of Jesus to the Jews (John xii. 44-46): "He that believeth on Me, believeth not on Me, but on Him that sent Me! And he that seeth Me, seeth Him that sent me! I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on Me should not abide in darkness!"

I. Private Judgment or False Freedom.

However it may have been with any past period or time, it is only too plain that in our age the power of distinguishing clearly between the formal and material sides of Protestant Christianity has been in large measure lost, and that the result is a general substitution now, on all sides, of the formal principle for the material. In other words, the Bible is at once identified with Revelation; the idea of the book is made to be synonymous with the objective supernatural reality, of which it is the record and report; and so the book is taken to be of itself all the principle that is required to sustain the entire structure of the Christian faith in every farther view. To talk of any other ground of faith requiring to be joined with this ground, in order to make it full and firm, is held to be a dishonor put upon the Bible, as making it not to be the one only rule of faith, which the Protestant world has held it to be from the beginning. How can it be such an absolute rule or measure of truth, it is asked, if it must be itself ruled or measured by any normative authority from beyond itself? A regulated regulator is considered to be here a simple contradiction in terms. To be what the case is supposed to require, the Bible must be all or nothing. It must be for Christianity, both formal principle and material principle in one. The whole weight of God's word or revelation to men must rest upon the Divine Book, as its only actual basis. The Bible thus is converted into the very pillar and ground of the truth, and becomes virtually the fundamental "rock" on which Christ's Church is built, and against which He has assured us the gates of hell shall not prevail.

It is not only here and there, that we meet with this confusion of thought and speech in our modern religious life. It has taken possession of it, more or less, in all directions and in all forms. It is the grand staple of our evangelical literature in one direction, and of our openly rationalistic and humanitarian literature in another direction. From both sides hands are joined, and voices united, in singing loud hallelujahs to the Bible, as being in and of itself (under God's Spirit working in

a general way on man's spirit) the source of all necessary illumination and life rectification for our sin-troubled world. Our pulpits are harping continually on this string. For one that preaches Christ as the ever-living, ever-present, ever-working WORD in the Church, there are ten (orthodox and unorthodox alike) that are all the time exalting the Written Word in His place, and using it (a thing to make angels weep!) not to show forth, but rather to eclipse and keep out of sight the ineffable brightness of the Father's glory shining in and through His Person.

So with our religious papers. Where among them generally do we find power to "hold forth the word of life," in the way of which I am now speaking, as something different from the moral and religious teachings of the Bible? Our denominational periodicals on all sides are forever appealing to the Bible, as the sure infallible test of truth, and the end of all controversy; but with little or almost no serious attempt to face God's actual revelation that lies behind the Bible, and to see if there might not be possibly there what is needed to make the Bible a very principle of peace and concord, instead of its being as it is now largely, through wrong use, a principle of interminable confusion and strife. As things stand now, Dr. Bellows and H. W. Beecher, so far as we can see, operate Christianity exactly alike, on one and the same false pivot or hinge, namely, the Bible regarded simply as a heaven-appointed codex of Christian theology and morals. Nor are we able to see at all, that the case is any better, in a comparison of the "New York Observer," for example, with the "Independent," or even with Theodore Tilton's brilliant "Golden Age," published in the same city. They are all great on the Bible, Mr. Tilton in particular, with no belief apparently in its supernatural origin at all, *honors* the New Testament as the best of books; reads it, we are told, diligently; and even patronizes the wisdom of the Jewish Rabbi, Jesus Christ, so far as to accept the Sermon on the Mount for his own Confession of Faith. But why marvel at this? Is it not a notorious fact, that our openly worldly papers, for whom the chief end of man lies only in the things

of this life, are quite able and willing now also to use the Scriptures as the golden norm of morality and religion in the same independent style? The N. Y. "World," "Tribune," and "Herald," for example, find no difficulty in setting themselves up in this way, on occasions to their mind just and fit, as peers in full with the evangelical ministry of the land, in the great business of religious teaching; using the Bible for the purpose, like Blackstone's Commentaries on the Common Law, as it seems to read from their simply secular and mundane standpoint.

And with our religious books it is no better. It is amazing, how-even learned and good men, undertaking to instruct the world on the most important themes, in this way, appear for the most part to lose sight altogether of the difference there is between Divine Revelation and the Bible, and to deal with the whole subject of Christianity, as if it rested on the authority of the Bible simply and no other ground. Take one respectable example only; the volume of the famous "Essays and Reviews," which raised such a commotion a few years ago in the Anglican Church. Occupied throughout with the subject of Christian Evidence, they nevertheless get nowhere beyond points and questions touching the outward constitution of the Holy Scriptures. We do not remember to have found in them from beginning to end, a single recognition of the material principle of Christianity, as holding in the immediate and direct apprehension of the one grand Object of all real Christian faith, our glorious Redeemer Jesus Christ. And although we have not read the learned and pious answers they called forth from high sources, we question much if any one of them has proceeded otherwise than from the same false premises, and toward a like wrong end.

What is here complained of is still a reigning vice of our English and American theology. It is matter for congratulation, however, that in Germany the case is now in some measure different. Both the friends and the foes of Christianity there understand, or are at least coming more and more to understand, that the question of its authority lies deeper than the

Bible. As one has said: "The grand characteristic revolution of religious thought in our modern time, consists in this, that the ground-stone and centre of Christianity are viewed as existing not in a Book, but in a Person, not in a scheme of doctrine, but in actual facts and operations." Let us hope, that our American Protestantism may yet come also, in no great while, to look at the subject in the same way. We need not fear that the Bible will be shorn of any part of its honor, by coming thus in right relation to Christ. Only then can it ever be truly itself, when it is felt to be outwardly the very presence itself of the "inner word," from which originally it drew its breath of life. Then only will it be the Bible in full, when it has become thus "all glorious within."

For, in truth, it is no real dignification of the Holy Scriptures, that they should be made ostensibly to bear the entire weight of Christianity in the bad way, of which we are now speaking. On the contrary by being thus sundered and cut off from their own proper life in the actual objective revelation from which they have sprung, and to which they rightly belong, they must necessarily come under the power of a new foreign life altogether different from their own. For no book can teach independently of a living element in some form beyond itself, in and through which it is read and understood; and if this be not the element of its own life, then must it be for the book a false element, by which its true sense is sure to be misconstrued and wronged. So if the Bible be not complemented by the material principle of a true Christian faith in felt communication with the "powers of the world to come," of which it is the product and exponent throughout, it cannot fail to have forced upon it, in place of this, a spurious complementation in some other form. It will not be, and cannot be, abstractly independent. It will still have its material principle; but this now only as an element of mere human fancy or thought, sure to darken ultimately its true sense, instead of making it clear and plain (1 Cor. ii. 11-14).

This is that bad so-called private judgment, which affects to find in the naked Bible all things necessary to salvation, by

taking it simply as a body of logically intelligible doctrines and rules, open to any good natural understanding, and then gathering out of the whole a sense to suit itself; not seeing or knowing that it is in fact all the time, in this way, making the Bible the reflection merely of its own at best simply humanitarian spirit, instead of entering at all into the true supernatural spirit of the Bible itself.

This may be either with supposed and professed belief in the inspiration of the Scriptures, or without any such belief. But that difference, for the point here in hand, does not amount to much. In either case, the appreciation of what the Bible means and wills is drawn, not from any true faith sense of the general higher life in which it has its actual home, but from the sense simply of what it is directly for a given moral or spiritual experience without this; and the appreciation in that view, of course, can never be otherwise than more or less seriously defective and false.

An interesting and instructive example of such defective estimation of the significance of the Bible, we have in one of Mr. H. W. Beecher's "Plymouth Pulpit" sermons, where we find him not long since undertaking to deal with the great and difficult subject, *The Inspiration of Scripture*, for the benefit of his people and the world at large.

The sermon is of course in Mr. Beecher's usual pulpit style. There are good thoughts in it, points well put, reaches of spirit in the right direction, and genial dashes of thought here and there toward great truths. But he cannot be said to have thrown much light on the dark question he feels himself called upon here to grapple with, unless it be that sort of light only which serves to "make darkness visible."

The times, we are reminded rightly, are rank with the spirit of religious unbelief. Heretofore skepticism was more on the surface of life, more simply outward and occasional, and "required but comparatively little to remove it." There was one agency, in particular, sufficiently potent for that purpose; "for many revivals of religion," we are told, "have been the instruments in the hand of God, by which such unbelief has been

blown away like so much chaff." But we are now beyond that. The devil of modern unbelief is too deeply seated in the reigning spirit of the age to be expelled on any such easy terms. Doubt sits everywhere in the air. We are taking it in all the time unconsciously, in the breath of our daily life. It has poisoned the fountains of our social culture. It is the soul of our reigning literature and education. The scientific and moral consciousness of the world is steeped in it more deeply, it would seem, than ever in any age before. The object of this general doubt is the Word of God; and for Mr. Beecher, the Word of God is at once the Bible. What the age needs above all things, then, especially the young men of the age, (to whom in particular this pastoral enchiridion is directed), is to have confidence well and surely fortified in the Divine origin and Divine authority of the Holy Scriptures.

For, as Mr. Beecher well says, "a state of doubt in respect of the Word of God is, in its practical consequences, just as fatal as unbelief." If the mariner at sea only question the accuracy of his compass, all trust in the course he is steering is gone. And so it is with the Christian's compass, the Bible. "To be of value to you or to me, it must be as implicitly believed in as our own existence; and if there come from any quarter such a degree of disturbance of faith, that we are uncertain about the substantial element of its truth, to us it is blotted out as a power." Hence, then, the vast importance of being fully assured that the Bible is in very truth God's infallible impregnable Word. That must be taken as the ground truth of Christianity, on which all its other truths depend. Faith must start there, first of all, and from this fulcrum, operate throughout in all its apprehensions of the Divine and supernatural under other forms. All Christian theology and religion thus depend on what are called the "Evidences of Christianity," brought to bear on the authenticity and inspiration of the Scriptures, regarded as the necessary text and voucher of revelation in any wider view.

And yet these *evidences* in the usual form are not altogether to Mr. Beecher's taste. He feels that they are after all not

just the thing most needed to uphold Christian faith, and that there ought to be, and must be in some way, a more compendious and comprehensive argument for the truth of God's Word drawn directly from the constitution of the Word itself. Here we have one of those deeper divinations in his thinking, to which I have before referred, that seem to carry him at times beyond his own general stand-point, without, however, setting him free from it in fact. What he is reaching after, is the idea of a material principle of revealed religion, as something different from all questions touching the form of its outward revelation in the Bible; but what he rests in ultimately as such a principle falls painfully short of this idea in its proper truth.

"There is nothing," he says, "that I feel so incompetent to do as to adjudicate on these external questions. And I do not believe, that one young man in a thousand is competent to inquire into them and decide them. But I am competent to know whether the truth is better than a lie; and so are you. I am competent to know what elements go to make true manhood; and so are you. I am competent to know whether it is best that men should have immortality hereafter, or die like beasts; and so are you. I am competent to know, that love is better than hatred; and so are you. Inspirations may be given to you and to me to understand the Bible, just as they were originally given to men who wrote the Bible. Spiritual purity and divine love are the elements which go to constitute the great doctrine of God, whether they be constructed into a theory or not. We have a knowledge of certain great truths, which are beyond peradventure. There is given to all a moral instinct which you cannot throw out; or which, if you do throw it out, will come back like a dove to its window. There is in every man a moral consciousness that interprets truth, that opens up communion between God and man, that lights the candle of the future, and that inspires hope therein. There is in you, and in me, an almost unerring guide—a truly unerring guide, if we be honest with ourselves—in respect to the vital portions of Scripture. The external history of the Bible is beyond our reach, except so far as we, as docile scholars, receive

it, as others bear witness concerning it; but the internal part of the Bible we can know; and it is our fault if we do not know it."

This, and more in the same strain, we have from Mr. Beecher, as the all-sufficient internal evidence for the truth of the Bible, on the strength of which he declares himself "not a particle afraid" of the infidel assaults that are made upon it in our age; though from his way of taking off his hat again to the magisterial claims of modern natural science,* it might almost seem as if his high air were only put on for effect—a sort of "whistling to keep his courage up." Against all doubts and difficulties, rolling in upon him like a flood, he throws forward boldly the mighty bulwark of what the Bible is practically for the moral nature of man. "Its internal elements," as thus related to human life, "are inexpugnable." The book in this way, he assures us, authenticates itself. "My belief in the Bible is founded on actual experience."

Now I have no wish to undervalue this form of internal evidence. It has great value in its proper place. But can it, of itself, demonstrate for faith the divine origin and infallible authority of the Scriptures? Not any more, I reply, than the external evidences of miracles or prophecies. Such assurance of faith can come only through the direct apprehension of the revelation itself, in the bosom of which the book called the Bible stands. That is the material factor in all true Bible faith. It is the *testimonium Spiritus Sancti*, the witness of the Holy Ghost, of which such solemn account was made in the age of the Reformation. Mr. Beecher imagines probably, that his experimental test is that witness. But he is mistaken. The Reformers meant by it something very different and far more grand. *Their* authenticating principle was the Divine Object

* "If Scripture is from God (he says), so the outward world is from the hand of God. And God will not tell lies. He will not contradict in one revelation what He has written in another. And if the Word of God is so construed that it is brought into conflict with the truths that are outside of it, something must give way—human interpretations or divine facts—and facts will not! Go ahead, then, ye men of science. Tell us what the Bible may and must mean; and that for our faith then it shall mean!"

itself, from which the Bible derives all its supernatural evidence and force. *His* authenticating principle is at best the voice of the human soul, singly or collectively taken, responding subjectively to the moral and spiritual teachings of the Bible. In this last case all turns on Man and Humanity; in the other case all turns on God and His Son Jesus Christ.

It should be startling to Mr. Beecher himself, an earnestly thoughtful man as he is, that his "inexpugnable" demonstration of the truth of the Scriptures, for the benefit of the young men of his congregation, should hold entirely outside of the central mystery of all revelation, Jesus Christ. He is barely named once or twice as a circumstance, in the general humanitarian line of proof. And yet, is He not the alpha and omega of both Testaments? Is He not the self-evidencing light of the entire new Christian creation? And how, then, can any Christian evidence, any argument for the *Inspiration of Scripture*, without HIM, end otherwise than in thick darkness?

Beyond all question, Dr. Ullmann is right in affirming that it is not Scripture which gives authority to Christ, but Christ who gives authority to Scripture. We have the same thought from Dr. Ebrard, where he says in his *Christian Theology*: "We cannot first prove from this and that the inspiration of the Bible, and then draw the conclusion that we are to believe in all it contains, and among other things, also in Christ; but we must first have come, by means of the Scripture, to know and love Christ as our Redeemer, and to experience His redemption in ourselves; then we pass through faith in Christ to faith in His Written Word."

II. *Ecclesiasticism or False Authority.*

Rationalists, of course, and all who wish to bring down Christianity to the level of a mere secular morality and culture, see no difficulty in resting the whole weight of Protestantism on the authority of the Bible, taken in that outward and abstract way of which we have now spoken. For this at once puts the word of God, as they call it, into their own hands, and they have it in their power then to make the sacred text mean just what they, with their secular mind and spirit, think it ought to

mean. They are, however, bad Protestants always, and traitors to the true cause of the Reformation, who thus, under cover of the outward Scripture, put forward the natural reason of the world, instead of God's own living revelation, as the true material sense of the Scriptures. And so it is not strange, then, that we find Roman Catholics most ready to fall in from the opposite side with this false view of the Bible principle of Protestantism, and pleased enough to accept it as the great turning point of their controversy with Protestants in regard to the rule of faith. In this way they contrive, in fact, to beg the whole question in their own favor, from the very outset, by the vicious and false form in which the question is put.

Take the following specimen of such unfair assumption with regard to the Protestant rule, from a somewhat elaborate article in a late number of the "Catholic World," on *Authority in Matters of Faith*. "No one can read the Bible," we are told, "without perceiving, that it neither is nor professes to be the original medium of the Christian revelation to man, but from first to last supposes a revelation previously made, the true religion to have been already taught, and instructions in it already received. This is true of the Old Testament, and more especially true of the New Testament; and we know historically, and nobody denies it, that the faith was preached and believed, and particular churches, congregations of believers were gathered and organized, before a word of the New Testament was written. The Protestant, reduced to the sacred text, even supposing he has the genuine and authentic text, and his private judgment, would be reduced to the condition of the lawyer, who should undertake to explain the statutes of any one of our States, in total ignorance of the Common Law, or without reference to it or the decisions of common law courts. Now and then a statute, perhaps, would explain itself, but in most cases he would be wholly at a loss as to the real meaning of the legislature." Again, "The Protestant needs to know the Christian faith in order to interpret the sacred text and ascertain it from the Bible, and this he cannot know by his own private judgment or develop from his own 'inner consciousness,' since

it lies in the supernatural order, and is above the reach of his natural faculties. It is clear, then, that in the Bible interpreted by private judgment, he has, and can have, only a fallible authority. It is not because the Holy Scriptures do not contain, explicitly or implicitly, the whole faith, that, interpreted by private judgment, they give only a fallible rule of faith, but because, to find the faith in its unity and integrity in them, we must know it *aliunde* and beforehand. This difficulty is completely obviated by the Catholic rule."

Now, I repeat, there is unfairness in this. It assumes throughout, that the Protestant rule of faith is the Bible interpreted by simple private judgment, without regard to the supernatural fact of the Christian faith itself, in whose bosom only the Bible has been from the beginning, and still is, really and truly, the Word of God. But it is no better than a caricature of genuine Protestantism, whether on the part of pretended friends or open foes, to represent it in this way. In the name of all sound and right-minded Protestantism, the representation must be pronounced false. It was from no such poor abstract use of the Bible, that the Reformation took its rise in the beginning. Neither Luther, nor Zwingli, nor Melancthon, nor Calvin, professed at all to stand upon the principle of the Bible and private judgment in any such naked view. They had a very clear sense of Christianity as a Divine historical fact, which had come down to them through the general life of the Church along with the Bible, an objective matter of faith in this form, which was for them older and deeper than the text of the Bible; and it was just the assurance of this, first of all, which threw them on the authority of that outward original record, then, over against what they held to be the false outward rule of the Roman Church. The Bible was for them a valid, formal rule of faith only in and through the presence of the material faith itself (something immeasurably different from natural private judgment), which it was felt to enshrine. Of this there is no room for any question or doubt. And what all true Protestantism was thus in the beginning, in opposition to false biblical freedom no less than to false ecclesiastical author-

ity, that all true Protestantism is still, in spite of the fond agreement of Rationalists and Romanists to consider it something else.

So far as the quotation just made from the "Catholic World" goes, then, it means just nothing at all for its own end. There is no reason, why it should not be accepted in full by any sound Protestant as a true declaration of what he himself holds and believes. Certainly we know, so far as we are in our senses, that the Bible, "from first to last, supposes a revelation previously made," in the abiding light and power of which only, it can be rightly interpreted and understood. Certainly we know, that the "Protestant needs to know the Christian faith in order to interpret the sacred text and ascertain it from the Bible;" and we are very sure also, that "this he cannot know by his own private judgment or develop from his own inner consciousness, since it lies in the supernatural order and is above the reach of his natural faculties." All this the genuine Protestant knows and admits as freely as the genuine Catholic. It is not *here* that we are met with the real difference between their respective rules of faith. It is a pure *petitio principii* to put the question which divides them in any such form. The two rules rightly understood, and not libellously misrepresented, rest on the same general idea and have in view the same object. The idea, is that of an infallible supernatural revelation, underlying the fact of Christianity in the world and making itself known through the Bible and the actual life of the Church; the object aimed at, is the sure determination of the sense of this infallible revelation, which all can see to be something quite as needful for its purpose as its own infallibility. An infallible regulation for Christian faith, subjected to a fallible exposition of its meaning, must itself, of course, also cease to be infallible. As to this both sides are agreed; as they are agreed also in holding, that the true sense of revelation "lies in the supernatural order and is therefore above the reach of man's simply natural faculties." The only question is, then: From what quarter, and in what form, is that infallible teaching to be obtained, which all sound Protestants and

Catholics alike consider indispensable for any full and complete faith in the Christian Revelation? Without this necessary complement, no rule of faith, Catholic or Protestant, can be more than a figment of unbelief entitled as such to no regard whatever; but in what way, now, is the complement, the necessary filling out of the otherwise formal rule on either side, to be so reached as to furnish the ground that is needed for an infallible Christian faith? That is the question. Protestantism (genuine and not spurious Protestantism) answers it in one manner; Roman Catholicism answers it in another manner. And just here, not elsewhere, we are confronted in full with the difference which separates the two systems in regard to the Rule of Faith.

The article in the "Catholic World" just noticed and quoted, is very clear on what is to be considered the Roman Catholic doctrine on this subject. Take the following brief and comprehensive statement:

"The Church has in Catholic tradition, which she preserves intact by time or change, the whole revelation, whether written or unwritten, and in this tradition she has the key to the real sense of the sacred Scriptures, and is able to interpret them infallibly. Tradition, authenticated by the Church as the witness and depository of it, supplies the knowledge necessary to the understanding of the sacred text. Read in the light of tradition, what is implicit in the text becomes explicit, what is merely referred to as wholly known becomes expressly and clearly stated, and we are able to understand the written word, because tradition interprets it for us, without any demand for a knowledge or judgment on our part that exceeds our natural powers. Our judgment is no longer private judgment, because we have in tradition a catholic rule by which to judge, and our judgment has not to pass on anything above the province of reason."

There is great convenience in this certainly, and it has the advantage of making faith very simple and easy. But only look now at the details of the scheme, as they are made to pass before us with logical severity, by the writer of the article himself; and see to what at last this infallible authority in matters

of faith comes. It is altogether outward and mechanical, and is simply in the end the abstract Bible rule over again, only metamorphosed for the time into another complexion and phase. All that the rule pretends to do, in fact, is to furnish us a form-principle of faith, which of itself still fails to place us in any felt communion with the ultimate supernatural matter of faith. A very different view of faith, all deeply earnest minds must feel, from that which is presented to us in the writings either of St. Paul or of St. John.

The logic of the case runs succinctly thus:—"Faith or belief agrees with knowledge in the respect that it is intellectual assent, but differs from it in that it is mediate assent, by an authority extrinsic, as authority or evidence, both to the object and to the person. The authority or evidence mediates between the mind and the fact or object, and brings them together in a manner somewhat analogous to that in which the middle term in the syllogism brings together the two extremes and unites them in the conclusion." This middle term for the Christian faith we have in the historical Church, which stands as an outside authority or witness between men and the supernatural truths of Christianity, and authenticates them for their rational belief. All that men need in the case is sufficient evidence to their natural reason, that the Church has been commissioned by God to accredit the mysteries of the Christian religion to the world in this external way. "That evidence, called by theologians *motives of credibility*, found complete, all the rest follows as a logical consequence;" and the believer is not called upon at all to join his finite judgment in any way with the infinite and absolute. "All that one has to believe of the infinite and absolute, after he has established by evidence appropriate in the case the divine institution and commission of the Church, he believes on the authority of the Church herself." God exists; God is truth; God's word, then, is infallibly true. "So far we can go by science or certain knowledge." The highest possible reason for believing is thus God's word itself, in case we are only assured that it is His word. Now for us the word of God is His revelation, a certain body of formal truth published from

heaven for our instruction and use. "Suppose, then, that He made His revelation, and deposited it with the Apostles whom He commanded to go forth and teach it to all men and nations. The Apostles would, on this supposition, be competent and credible witnesses to the fact, that God made and deposited His revelation with them. Suppose farther, that the Apostles transmitted it to their successors, or rather, that the Church is the identical Apostolical body continued without any interruption or break, down to our time, the Church would then be a competent and credible witness to the fact of revelation and to what is revealed. Being the eye-witness of the facts which proved our Lord a teacher come from God and authorized to speak in His name, and the depository of the revelation, her testimony is conclusive." This leaves only one point more to be proved, namely, the historical identity of the modern Roman Catholic Church with the Apostolic body thus made the outward depository of the faith in the beginning; and that is too plain, we are told, to admit of any serious question. So we have the whole question in a nutshell, without any mystery about it. "The points to be proved are in fact exceedingly few, and those not above the reach of private judgment or difficulty. The authority of our Lord as a teacher come from God was proved by miracles. These miracles the Church witnesses and testifies to as facts, and so far her testimony is unimpeachable. Their supernatural and miraculous character we can ourselves judge of. Whether they prove the divine authority of Jesus or not, is also a matter of which we are competent to judge. His divine authority proved, His divinity, and all the mysteries of His person can be rationally accepted on His word, and what His word was, the Church who received it is competent to declare!" Belief in this way is not blind; it acts on a reason.

The Catholic rule here is, indeed, supremely rational, or let us say supranaturalistically rationalistic. "There is no belief," our Catholic friends tell us, "where there is no intellectual conviction. The authority we assert is the *reason* for believing; it is the *medius terminus* that unites the credible object and the creditive subject, and renders the belief possible and an intel-

lectual act, and so far assimilates it to knowledge. Belief without authority is belief without any ground or reason for believing, and is irrational, unfounded, mere credulity, as when one believes a rumor for which there is no authority. When the authority is worthy of credit, the belief is warranted, and when it is infallible, the belief is infallible. In believing what the Church teaches me in the word of God, I have infallible authority for my belief, and cannot be deceived, mistaken or err." The authority to teach having been established on the part of the Church "all the rest follows logically and necessarily, as in the syllogism the conclusion follows from the premises."

This is the so-called Catholic rule of faith, an infallible Church instead of a simply infallible Bible. The two theories are alike in this, that the rule in each case is taken to be an outward middle term, mediating between the fallible judgment of men on the one side, and the objective truth of God's revelation on the other side; and so the question rises, how is such fallible private judgment any better off with the one rule than with the other? In either case its own fallibility in the use of the rule, would seem to neutralize and nullify the merely formal infallibility of the rule itself. This difficulty, it is true the Catholic holds to be completely obviated so far as his rule is concerned, by the consideration that it is a living rule, which can be called in at all times to settle questions of faith and practice as they arise from one age to another; a service like that of a living court of justice in its last resort for our civil and political life. But to what can such infallible teaching amount, however, for fallible private judgment, in the case supposed, when it is found that it has in it after all, no more power than the infallible teaching of the Bible itself to bring the private judgment into any real union with the matter of the Christian faith as it is, in its own supernatural sphere?

For, strange to say, to this it comes in the end with our Catholic infallible rule of faith. Its method of certainty and proof, we are distinctly told, "however sure and however faithfully followed, does not suffice to make one a Catholic, or to give one true Catholic and divine faith, or faith as a theologi

cal virtue; it only removes the obstacles in the way of the intellect in believing, and yields only what theologians call human faith—*fides humana*—which really advances one not a single step towards the kingdom of God, or living union with Christ.”

There is a confusion here which is bewildering for the whole question in debate. The question professedly regards the true rule of Christian faith, which, as such, has to do with supernatural verities in their own order, and so needs to be nothing less than infallible in the same sense with the verities themselves. But it turns out now that the Catholic rule *per se* does not pretend to be sufficient for faith in that sense. It is not divine faith at all that it is ground and authority for, but only human faith, the easy credence of natural reason given to well authenticated human testimony. And yet the talk of “authority in matters of faith” refers itself ostensibly, nevertheless, all the time, to the New Testament idea of faith, as though that were the idea with which it had to do throughout. There is a logomachy in the case, in this way, a playing fast and loose with the term faith, which is neither logical nor edifying.

But take it either way, the theory which puts the Church as an outward authority between Christian faith and its supernatural object, which makes the Church a middle term between Christ and the true believer, external to both, and holding them asunder in the form of such mechanical conjunction, is a theory that cannot possibly be made to harmonize with the New Testament, and that must ever do violence to the inmost sanctuary of the religious consciousness. Religion holds fundamentally and essentially in the union of man with God, and this to be at all real must be in the mode of inward personal life; must be through the free activity of the soul taking hold directly of God Himself. All revelation has for its object to make such union possible. It is God’s drawing near to men, that they may be enabled to draw near to Him. And just that is the meaning and purpose most especially of His last, nearest and fullest possible approach to us in our fallen estate, the “epiphany of the kindness and philanthropy of God, our Sa-

viour," as St. Paul calls it (Tit. iii. 4), which took place when, in the Person of His eternal Son, He became Man for us men, and for our salvation. That epiphany itself, was no outside testimony simply concerning God; in the sense that was uppermost in the mind of Nicodemus, for example, when he said, "No man can do these miracles which thou doest, except God be with him;" which is, in fact, also the sense of rationalistic supernaturalism generally (whether Catholic or Protestant) in its view of the Saviour's mission and commission. The appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ was no middle term of a syllogism, but the direct and full manifestation of God Himself. And as such again, then, it also could not in the beginning, and it cannot now, either require or allow the interposition of any purely outside middle term, between itself and the believer's soul, as the ultimate *ground* and authority of his Christian faith. What are called the Evidences of Christianity in that outside view, may be of force for logical understanding, but they can never in and of themselves, warrant or produce the faith that is spoken of in the 11th Chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews; and so also no authority, either of the Bible or of the Church, in like separate and abstract form, can ever make them sufficient for this purpose. This does not mean that miracles are not evidence, or that the Bible and the Church have no mediating office to serve in conducting our faith to Christ. Miracles, Bible and Church are to Him, what the outflowing light of the day is to the sun. They are a necessary part of His self-revelation. The revelation without them would be gnostically unreal and inconceivable. But just for this reason, what they are as evidence and authority, is not a preliminary outside verification of Christ, a logical middle term bridging the way for faith over to His presence. It is only the actual showing forth of the glory of Christ in them and through them, that makes them to be at all credible witnesses to His glory.

The theory, then, which makes the Church, outwardly and abstractly considered, to be the pillar and ground of Christian truth, the basis of the new creation in Christ Jesus, the fundamental authority for men in matters of faith, is as little ten-

able, as the theory which makes the Bible to be all this under the same outwardly formal and abstract view. We believe in the Bible, and we believe in the Holy Catholic Church, holding its right place in the order of the Creed; but we cannot put either of them into the place which the Creed assigns to Christ. We do not believe in either of them as the principle or ground of Christianity. As it is not Scripture which gives authority to Christ, according to what we have seen before, but Christ who gives authority to Scripture; so neither is it the Church which authenticates Christ, but Christ who authenticates the Church.

III. Ubi Spiritus, Ibi Et Veritas.

The way now lies open before us for the full understanding of what we may call the grand motive power of the Reformation in its original and proper wholeness. The power takes its course between the two extremes of false freedom and false authority (the one self-entrenched in the Bible and the other in the Church, in the one-sided manner we have seen), and does this so as to take up the true force of what each aims to be as a rule of faith into its own higher movement. The ideas of freedom and authority here, as everywhere in our human life, condition each other, and are indeed polar opposites in their very nature that mutually seek and demand one another for their own completion. Thrown asunder, and made to stand apart, they become abstractions, and appear both alike only as hollow and empty forms. Neither Bible nor Church can be the full principle of Christianity by itself; and just as little can they be this together by any merely outward conjunction. Both, in and of themselves, are but formal principles, and need alike to be complemented by the material faith of the Gospel joined to them from another source altogether.

In the case of the *Church*, it is admitted even by Romanists themselves, as we have seen, that its authority as a rule of faith in the view here stated, is defective. It has no power, in and of itself, to "join the finite judgment of man with the infinite and the absolute;" while yet just this, and nothing short of this, as we know, is the necessary character of the

supernatural mystery, with which all true Christian faith is ultimately concerned. The rule can only be taken thus as a natural reason for accepting the truth of the mystery, as this may be put into terms apprehensible for the natural understanding; just as one may believe, on credible human testimony, what he has never himself seen in the remote depths of Asia or Africa. The faith thus reached on the authority of the Church is then, by its own confession, only human faith. It is in no sense divine faith; it has in it no supernatural quality whatever; nothing really and truly correlative, therefore, with the supernatural character of its object. This object it has no power to touch or reach, as it is in its own nature in any way. For as the "Catholic World" with truth says, "reason can construct no bridge over which one can pass from the natural to the supernatural; the bridge must be constructed by grace; faith, the beginning of the Christian life, is the gift of God." How the gift comes is not here the question. It is only certain, that it does not of itself lie in owing the outward formal authority of the Church.

Neither does it lie, however, as has also been sufficiently shown, in owing the outward formal authority of the *Bible*. Taken alone, the Bible can never be more at best than a dead rule, depending for its sense necessarily, on its proper interpretation; and the only key that can interpret it rightly is the Christian faith itself, which then is faith not first and immediately in the authority of the Bible as such, but in the authority of the Divine revelation, to which the Bible secondarily belongs. As an outside witness before this, bearing testimony to divine truth, the utmost to which it can reach can only be of one order with that outside testimony of the Church, which also as we have seen is able at best only to produce natural or human faith without any power whatever to be the ground of true supernatural and saving faith. In this case, as in the other, the outward can form no efficient middle term for a logical transition of the judgment over to the inward. "Reason can construct no bridge" from Bible premises abstractly taken, any more than from Church premises abstractly taken,

“over which one can pass from the natural to the supernatural; the bridge must be constructed by grace; faith, the beginning of the Christian life, is the gift of God.” So all really evangelical Protestants are ready to confess, as freely as all really spiritually-minded Catholics.

In this respect, then, the Bible as a rule of faith, and the Church as a rule of faith, stand in one line. Infallible each in its own order and way, they cannot, either of them, as from themselves, generate infallible faith. For faith, to be infallible, must be the apprehension of the supernatural *as supernatural*, and not an outward notion merely of the supernatural as natural. It is, St. Paul tells us, ἐπιζομένων ὑπόστασις, πραγμάτων ἔλεγχος οὐ βλεπομένων (Heb. xi. 1), the substantiation of things hoped for, the evidence or demonstration of things not seen; a real bridging over, in this way, of the otherwise impassable chasm, that holds between the natural understanding of men and heavenly realities. No simply reason-wrought trust in the Church, however blind and unquestioning, amounts to this; and no simply reason-wrought trust in the inspiration of the Holy Scriptures, however in its own conceit free and independent, amounts to this. What thus begins in natural reason on both sides, ends necessarily in natural reason on both sides. The simply human premises necessitate a simply human conclusion, and have no power whatever to lift themselves up to the height of the divine argument that is required for the production of a truly divine faith.

There is, however, a great truth of course on both sides. Church and Scripture are alike necessary to the full idea of Christianity, and neither can be thrust aside, or absolutely subjected to the separate authority of the other, without serious damage to Christian faith.

The idea of the *Church*, in the first place, lies essentially in the idea of Christianity (and indeed in the idea of religion universally), just as the lower idea of the State lies also in the social nature of man as related simply to the present world. No form of human existence can be complete in an isolated or atomistic view; but only as it holds in organized conjunction

with its own order of existence in a general view, and is comprehended along with this in the continuous flow of human history. This law applied to the highest form of human existence, the fullness of the life of humanity in its union with God (religion brought to its absolute completeness in and by Christ), gives us of itself at once the ideal constitution of the Christian Church, with all its necessary attributes, as it is made to be one of the articles of our "undoubted Christian faith" in the ancient œcumenical Creeds. And it is easy enough surely to see, how the truth of Christianity must be conditioned always for the faith of men, on to the end of the world, by the actual historical continuity of the Christian life itself in this general form, age after age. The Church in such view always has been, and always must be, the necessary witness of Christian truth. In no other way can the presence of Christianity in the world be considered historical; which yet it must be to be really human; for only that which is taken into the actual flow of human life can be regarded as belonging to the true being of human life, and that is just the conception of history.

But the historical character of Christianity requires no less, in the second place, that it should remain bound, through all its course, to the supernatural fountain-head, from which in the beginning it took its rise; and it is just to serve this necessary purpose, that the *Holy Scriptures* have been provided in the wisdom of God, and that they continue indispensable through all ages, along with the Church, for the maintenance and right regulation of true Christian faith. What is wanted for the continuity of a historical existence, is not just outward permanence as of a pyramid, nor mere onward flow as of a river, but together with this the felt sense and consciousness of perennial comprehension in the original power of what the existence has been from the beginning; in such sort that the life and soul of the beginning shall endure as it were, in the whole movement onward to the end. So in the case of Christianity, especially, no simply onflowing witness and tradition through the Church, all important though this be in the way we have

just seen, is enough of itself to secure its historical identity ; the ecclesiastical tradition (if it is to be living and not dead), needs to be kept fresh and green continually through direct contact with the supernatural facts themselves, from which it took its rise in the beginning. In that sense it is, that the Apostolic period of Christianity, the birth-age of the Gospel, is normative for all later ages of Christianity. It is so, not immediately by its doctrinal ideas and teachings, but by its heavenly facts, the inspiring vital air of the new-born mysteries, in the midst of which, eighteen hundred years ago, it breathed and had its being. The chasm between it and the time following, in that view, is very broad and deep, as we are all made to feel in passing from the New Testament to the early Christian fathers. It is not through any after report merely of later times, then, that the birth-age of Christianity can exert its proper normative influence on Christian history ; there must be for this purpose the possibility of its being known and felt continually in the direct power of its own life. And for this there would seem to be only one sufficiently sure way, namely, the transcript of that life into the outward form of the Written Word.

Here it is that the true glory of the Holy Scriptures, accordingly, comes into view. It is not as an outward dictation of thought for the minds of men, or of language for their lips ; not as the mere utterance of divine oracles for the understanding in any way, that the Bible comes before us in its proper character, or reveals to us the full grandeur of its mission. It owes its importance wholly to this, that it is the original record and document, in all its parts, of the divine history to which it owes its existence. Like any other original document in this view, it holds embalmed in itself the spirit of the past life it represents, and has the power of making this live itself over again, beyond all later writings or traditions ; only with the difference, that *here* the life represented is in its own nature supernatural and indestructible, and that the record which tells of it has been itself born forth directly from the same divine element, so as to be in very deed "the word of God which liveth and abideth

forever." The New Testament, in this way, is not the Christian Revelation ; it has never pretended to be that ; and it can never be anything better than superstitious bibliolatry, or book worship, to look upon it, or talk of it, as is too often done, in any such view. The Christian revelation, as we know, was a divine Life and a divine Creed in the Church, long before the production of the New Testament. But what then? Do we make void the honor of the New Testament in this way? God forbid ; yea, we establish it. The holy volume is not the origin of Christianity ; but it is its heaven-born inspiration and product, bearing upon it the fresh dew of its youth thus through all time. It belongs to the life of the original revelation in a way not possible for any later book, and by it we communicate with the very presence of that life, as we can do nowhere else. This is what gives the book its peculiar sanctity and power, a quality that is felt to extend to its words no less than its thoughts ; for all come alike, as it were, from the "holy mount of vision," in which the great things of the Gospel were at first seen and declared. ✓

Church and Scripture thus, we repeat, are alike necessary to the full idea of Christianity ; and yet, as neither of them is the origin or principle of Christianity, so neither of them can be of itself a sufficient and entire rule of Christian faith. They are alike the necessary *form* side only of such a rule, which must be complemented or filled out with the proper *matter* of faith from another side to make it what the case requires. ✓

Whence this complement comes, and how it comes, both in the case of the Church and in the case of the Bible, has been already intimated in a general way, but it is now before us for more direct particular consideration.

It comes universally, we may say first of all, through and by the operation of the *Holy Ghost*. It is, in this view, that "witness of the Spirit," the *TESTIMONIUM SPIRITUS SANCTI*, of which we hear so much in the age of the Reformation, and in the period immediately following, as the ultimate argument of all revealed truth. But just what this means is not at once so clear, and needs here some close attention and careful exposition.

All theories of faith, in which it is not resolved into mere natural reason, involve in them the notion, in some way, that faith is the fruit of God's Spirit, making itself felt in the human spirit. As divine in any sense, faith must come from a divine source, must be the gift of God.

So where the Church, in the Roman or High Episcopalian sense, is made to be the rule of faith. The rule, by its own confession, is in and of itself conclusive at best only for natural human belief; while all real superhuman believing (the only right sense of Christian faith) comes after this outside preparation, and is wholly and entirely God's gift, an "elevation by the grace of God to the supernatural order of life in Christ." True, the Holy Ghost by which this takes place, is regarded here as being so bound to the outward Church, that His agency is made to appear too generally as a sort of magical higher potency tied to the lower so-called natural infallibility of the Church; but it is distinctly recognised, nevertheless, as an altogether separate and independent source of infallible belief (the belief that saves the soul by uniting it through Christ with God), without which that other so-called natural infallibility would be of no account whatever.

And where the Bible, instead of the Church, is taken to be the rule of faith, it is always, as we know (so far as the divine character of the Bible is acknowledged at all), with the same express qualification that the enlightening power of God's Spirit must go along with the written text in some way, to make it in any true sense the medium of infallible divine knowledge. Without this the Protestant rule, no less than the Catholic rule, is found to be only a half rule, and can come at last to nothing more than that natural faith, which, as we have seen, is no evangelical or saving faith at all, but only at best the phantasm of this divine and supernatural grace. Mere natural use of the Scriptures is *not* enough to give men insight into the supernatural sense of the Scriptures; not enough, therefore, to make the Scriptures an infallible rule of faith and practice, in the profoundly foolish way in which this is talked of in certain quarters. There must go along with this the supernatural use

that is possible only through the Holy Ghost, and that is itself faith. "The Spirit breathes upon the word, and brings the truth to sight." So the sacred poet sings, and so all religious sects, pretending to be evangelical, make it a point religiously to believe. Indeed the more unchurchly and sectarian they are, the more loud are they commonly in asserting the distinction of their faith in this God-gifted form.

So far as this goes, therefore, all Protestants who are not infidels, and all Roman Catholics who are not infidels (and there are infidels enough of both sorts), are agreed as to the insufficiency of their respective rules of faith outwardly and formally taken, and acknowledge the necessity of their being complemented by the presence of the truth materially considered in its own proper supernatural form. The material principle of the Holy Ghost at least, must be joined whether with the outward Word or with the outward Church, to make either of them a true and valid "authority in matters of faith."

But now the great question rises upon us: How shall we authenticate the Holy Ghost Himself in this office of complementing what must be otherwise a defective (and at best merely natural) faith in either form? It will not do to say, that there is no occasion for any such question, or, that it answers itself. We are expressly and emphatically told the contrary by the Apostle St. John, where he warns us (1 John iv. 1-3), "not to believe every spirit, but to try the spirits whether they are of God;" and where he gives us at the same time, a simple but grand objective rule for this purpose, which it will come in our way further on to consider. And looking now, moreover, only at the Protestant side of the case, and in the light of actual history, nothing can be more plain as an open palpable fact, than the insecurity of the Bible rule thrown upon the general interpretation of the Holy Ghost, *without a divine voucher for the actual presence of the Holy Ghost*; some evidence that the teaching ascribed to Him is His own teaching, and not something counterfeited simply in His name. Such counterfeiting of the Holy Ghost is a most easy thing, and has been common in the world through all ages. "Spirit, spirit, spirit,"

as Luther says, is the cry of enthusiasts, fanatics, and founders of new sects all the Christian world over. It was so in his time, and it has continued to be so ever since. The Spirit is made to be everywhere the mere slave of sects.

In the case of all such wilful judgment, the illuminating office of the Holy Ghost is taken to be an agency, whereby the human mind is directly acted upon by the Divine Spirit, so as to have from within itself then the power of construing the outward Word of God in its proper heavenly sense. The fact of such special afflatus is supposed to be self-authenticating, as the fact of a man's being awake, is self-authenticating to his waking consciousness. But all resolves itself thus into mere subjective feeling and thought, without any objective support whatever, and in that respect resembles the consciousness of dreams much more than that of broad and open day. There is no real control over faith in this form *from the Word itself*. What is held to be the material principle of faith here (the teaching of the Holy Ghost) flies asunder in truth from its formal principle, and is thus itself dissolved into thin air. The private judgment, that was to be carried beyond itself in this way, is back upon us again in worse form than before; for now it is the human spirit lording it over both Word and Church with the fancied authority of being itself the Divine Spirit.

And so it is that ultimately, sooner or later, such merely subjective exaltation, such direct self-confusion of the human spirit with God's Spirit (without the mediation of the objective Word), is sure to run into sheer rationalism. Beginning in the Spirit, the movement ends in the flesh. First, the historical Christ of the Gospel is lost in the ideal Christ of the soul, the "inward light," which it is held that every man must follow in order to be a true Christian; and then this inward inspiration itself again melts quietly away at last into the common light of reason, and that view of the word in which no serious account is made of the mysteries of religion in any form.

Church history tells us how this false spiritualism wrought mightily in the age of the Reformation toward the overthrow of all true positive and historical Christianity; and how the

Reformers,—Luther, Melancthon, Zwingli, Calvin and others—set themselves as one man, shoulder to shoulder, against the enemy on this side coming in upon them like a flood; and how both the great sister Confessions, Lutheran and Reformed, stood here without difference, in the beginning on one and the same platform of Conservative Protestantism. In doing so, they did not stop in the idea simply of the Spirit, as being the necessary complement of the Word. How in that way could they have faced effectually, as they did, the “armies of the aliens,” the Anabaptists and Socinians, who in their way claimed likewise to have the Spirit? The Protestant principle here went beyond this. It made earnest with the idea of the Word in its supernatural character, as being the necessary complement also of the Spirit. *How* this was done remains now to be shown.

IV. Union of Faith and the Word by the Spirit.

The testimony of the Holy Ghost, of which so much account was made by the Reformers in the sixteenth century as the sure and sufficient authentication of the Word of God, over against the mere outward authority of the Romanists on the one side, and the mere private inspiration of the new “Heavenly Prophets” on the other side, was not an unbound magical influence touching the spirits of men in an abrupt and direct way. It was held to be organically joined to the presence of the Word itself, not just to the outward Bible, but to the objective supernatural revelation that looks forth upon us everywhere through the Bible; and was considered to be of force, therefore, only as it served to bring the minds of those who came under its power, into felt actual contact with this revelation, in its own heavenly form. The testimony in this view was looked upon as being not immediate but mediate. It was held to be conditioned by the intervention of a real supernatural activity on the part of the human soul itself taking hold of the supernatural verity which could only thus be made sure to its apprehension. The power to do this must be itself, in the nature of the case, the gift of God, the product of the Holy Ghost; but it was to be regarded as none the less for that rea-

son, the necessary organ and medium through which the Holy Ghost bears witness to the truth ; in which character, then, it here challenges our attention at once as being itself in form that very witnessing of the Divine Spirit, to the consideration of which we have now come as the deepest authentication of God's word to the human spirit.

The power or organ through which the Holy Ghost thus works, all can see at once, is *Faith*. Not natural human faith, of course ; not such faith as is poised primarily and simply on the logically accredited authority of the Church, or on the supposed infallible inspiration of the Bible. Orthodox Romanists and orthodox Presbyterians, as we have seen, agree in looking upon such natural belief as something which, of itself, never touches really the supernatural verities with which the Christian salvation is concerned. All this, therefore, is not faith at all, either in the true evangelical or in the true ecclesiastical sense of the term ; is not the power to which our attention is here directed ; the power, which is in itself the evidential demonstration, as St. Paul tells us, of the eternal and the unseen, which is wrought in the soul for this purpose by the Holy Ghost, and which thus shares with the Holy Ghost the high office of verifying and attesting the truth of Christianity in the world.

Faith, in the high sense here spoken of, cannot be separated from the supernatural realities with which it has to do ; it depends on them for its own existence ; just as vision in the natural world depends for its existence, as actual seeing, on the visible things it sees. Sunder faith notionally from its invisible objects, and it ceases to be faith. The objects, too, although they do not owe their own existence to faith, can have no reality for our apprehension, except through its means ; as light is no reality for the eyes of the blind. Faith is the only organ by which the invisible and eternal is made to be actual (and not simply notional) for us in our present state ; the only real bridge across the chasm that divides time from eternity, the natural from the supernatural ; the only medium of possible living conjunction, therefore, between the realities of religion in their

own higher spiritual world, and the souls of men in the world of sense and flesh. It is itself in such view the very form, in which God's revelations take upon them substance and felt presence for the human spirit. It is the subjective and objective sides of divine revelation mysteriously blended into one. Faith, as the act of the believer, is subjective; but drawing, as it does, its whole existence and force at the same time from the supernatural realities that call it into exercise, it has part also in their objectivity, and is at once thus the certification of their truth as well as of its own.

Altogether, there is a necessary fundamental correspondence between divine faith and the mysteries of revelation. They are two sides of one fact, two factors in one process. They seek and demand each other. Revelation is for faith; and faith is for revelation. They are correlative ideas, and mutually complementary terms.

So it is with the relation which holds between the facts and truths of divine revelation generally and divine faith. But these facts and truths are not so many different revelations on the part of God, joined together in a loosely outward way. They form together a single inwardly connected and organic whole. They are with God—to whom our whole time-existence is no more than a point—one grand act of self-manifestation, starting in the first promise after the Fall, and coming to its end at last in Christ. In Him we behold the alpha and omega of the universal movement, and are brought also to understand its sense. In the light of His presence, all previous revelations are seen to have been partial and relative only (Heb. 1: 1-4), like the different stages of the morning dawn that herald the approach of day; while He is the full-orbed sun of righteousness itself rising upon the nations, with healing in His beams. At the same time, He is Himself the one glorious centre and fountain also of all that is comprised in His coming into the world. His offices, doctrines, works; His sufferings, death, resurrection and glorification; in one word, the totality of the New Testament dispensation, all that we call Christianity, and the universal economy of the Christian Church, out to the end

of time, and over into eternity—all flow forth from His person and have their perennial force in the power of His indestructible Life. The idea of revelation can go no further. God can come no nearer to man. "He that hath seen Me," we hear Him say to His disciples, "*hath seen the Father.*"

And answerably to this it is now that faith also, the God-awakened capacity in man to perceive and know the things that are freely given to men of God, comes to have its perfect work ultimately only in the Christian form, and here only as it is found to centre upon Christ Himself, the actual centre of the Christian system. Here especially the true nature and power of faith come fully into view, in its character of a supernatural principle which transcends all lower forms of evidence, and sees its object at once in the evidence of its own supernatural light.

Christ as the absolute truth, to be seen and known at all, must be seen and known in this self-evidencing and self-authenticating way. He cannot be known as a conclusion simply from any sort of evidence beyond Himself; for that would imply dependence on other truth deeper than Himself in the world; whereas, He is deeper than all truth besides, and all other truth as related to Him is secondary only and dependent. For, as St. Paul tells us, "He is before all things, and by Him all things consist." He is the Divine Logos, the beginning and the end of all things, clothed in the form of humanity, the eternal idea of the world carried out to its full actualization in time. He is "the way, the truth, and the life." He is "the light of the world," whom if men follow, they shall not walk in darkness. He "hath life in Himself." He is the "resurrection and the life." He is the Son of God, commensurate in mind and will with the Father. He is the "brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of His person."

For truth in such form, it is plain, there can be but one ultimate argument or demonstration, namely, that which flows forth directly from the presence of the truth itself; and the only organ for its apprehension is Christian faith, wrought in the soul for the purpose by the power of the Holy Ghost.

There is a profound reason for such faith, at the same time,

in the constitutional relation of the human soul itself to Christ, since it is only through Him that any soul can ever attain to a feeling of true rest in God. The soul needs Him for the completion of its own being, especially in the way of deliverance from sin. And thus it is that the faith which is God's gift, is as it were born also from the glorious object toward which it is directed. It comes from looking to Christ, and is the result of a divine drawing with which it is met from His person. It is the flowing together of two forms of existence, that seek each other and cannot be held apart. In its very nature, in this way, faith is the free spontaneous movement of the human spirit, by which it goes forth from itself and unites itself with Christ, in acts of apprehension answering to what He is for its own inmost needs. It is thus more than theory or knowledge; it involves the will and the affections; it carries in it the character of self-surrendering, loving trust, and is at once, in and of itself, the consciousness of a new life, the sense, as far as it goes, of a changed existence over against God and the world. ✓

Where the first profound need of the soul is the removal of sin, such faith of course must involve in it repentance, and take its beginning as it were from the idea of the atonement. But we must not think of it, even in that view, as starting with the atonement and the forgiveness of sin abstractly or separately considered. The atonement is no doctrinal abstraction. It has its reality only and wholly in Christ; and to lay hold of it at all, justifying faith, as it is called, must lay hold of it by an act of apprehension that terminates immediately and first of all on the person of Christ Himself.

Faith in the forgiveness of sins, Dr. Dorner tells us, as it was held by Luther, and is finely described especially in his *Freedom of a Christian Man*, is not faith simply in an impersonal merit of Christ, but trustful surrendry to Christ as the living atoner. In Him faith embraces the God-given personal atonement; and is thus joined with the whole Christ, so as to have part at the same time in all His benefits. "It is not immediately a theoretic truth, a doctrine, as for example the inspiration of the Scriptures, that faith makes sure of, nor yet

any inward change brought to pass by itself, nor finally any new *life-relation on our side to God*; on the contrary, it is immediately the perception of being known and loved of God, the assurance of a new *life-relation on God's side to us*, the sense of being personally redeemed through the love of God, directed toward us personally in Christ" (Gesch. d. prot. Theol. p. 221, 223).

What is true of the atonement as thus related to the person of Christ, is in the nature of the case no less true necessarily of all else belonging to the world of Christian faith. That world is not made up, as many seem to think, of outwardly separate verities and facts, having severally more or less their own separate evidence, and capable of standing to some extent by themselves. It is a world derived entirely from Christ, in which all things owe to Him continually their entire truth and being. As objects of faith then, they can be rightly apprehended only under this and no other view. Faith must mirror the objective world of grace as it is, if it is to be at all true faith. Whatever it grasps as Christian supernatural faith, be it promise or doctrine, history or outward institution, it must do it as being explicitly or implicitly faith in the Lord Jesus Christ Himself.

- Such is the relation in which all Christian Evidences, as they are called, stand to Christ. Miracles and Prophecies, for example, had no power, during His ministry on earth, to prove what He was in an outside way. The proof they had in them for any such purpose lay not in themselves separately taken, but only in what they were as the fitting expression of His own inward glory (John ii. 11). In that view they could not be wanting to His presence, the deepest sense and power as He was of the world's life. His presence without them, as thus world central, would not have been cosmically and historically real, but must have been phantasmagorical only and ideal. In this way, however, they are seen to depend on Him altogether for their own force. They are the effluent, but in no sense the influent evidence of His truth. They belong peripherally to the revelation of which He, and He alone, is the one infinitely glo-

rious centre, and they have no light in them really, except as rays shot forth from its brilliant effulgence.

And just so it is again also with the relation of the Church and the Bible to Christ, which is found to be with so many, as we have seen, a source of bewildering confusion. Neither of them can by itself substantiate Christ; and it can only be monstrous to put either of them into the place of Christ, by pretending to make it the corner-stone of Christian truth (Eph. ii. 20) or the first object of Christian faith. Church and Bible are not, either separately or together, the fountain of revelation; they are only streams from that fountain, existing in a higher and different form. The fountain in its ultimate wholeness is Christ; "God hath spoken to us by His Son." In Him is the fullness of the Godhead bodily. "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him." Yet Church and Bible are not by any means, for this reason, shorn of their significance in the Christian system. It is only, indeed, by falling thus into right secondary relation to Christ, that they come at all to their true divine sense and honor. Then they appear as necessary parts of the Christian revelation, and become in that view, like miracles and prophecies, necessary objects of Christian faith. They are not accidental to Christianity; they belong to its inmost constitution. Without them, Christianity could not be historical, in the double sense of flowing onward continuously in time and yet not breaking away from what its own life was in the beginning; and ceasing to be historical, it must at the same time cease also to be real. Both are in this way indispensable modes and forms of manifestation for the truth that is in Christ, but they are so only as this truth shines in them, and through them, so that they are made luminous with its celestial presence.

And so far now as Christian faith is the gift of God, and the work of the Holy Ghost, it must conform throughout also to what is thus found to be the objective constitution of the Christian revelation; starting with the person of Christ Himself first of all, and reaching out from Him as a centre, then, to all peri-

pheral and dependent truths in the order of their relation to His presence. This is the simple criterion furnished us by St. John, for deciding the true character of all pretensions to spiritual illumination and power (1 John iv. 1-3). Only such faith as confesses the coming of Jesus Christ in the flesh, seeing in that mystery the principle, and potentially the all in all of the Christian salvation, is of God. The Spirit who works faith in men, is the Spirit of Christ. How then should He not be bound by the law of Christ's life? How should He not be in full harmony with Himself as He is present in the Word and in the Church? "He shall glorify Me," Christ says. "He shall take of Mine, and shall show it unto you." That is His office; and that is the signature of His work. "Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error."

With this agrees in full the representation we have in the New Testament of what faith is practically, as the principle of righteousness and the power of God unto salvation. The work of God required of men gathers itself up fundamentally into this, that they "*believe on Him whom He hath sent*" (John vi. 29). This is in a profound sense the whole Gospel. This is eternal life; to know God *in the mission or sending of His Son* (John v. 24, xvii. 2, 3). So in that grand Apostolic confession, Matth. xvi. 16, where we meet first of all the living and vivific idea of the Apostles' Creed, and which our Lord Himself declares to have been not of human but of supernatural revelation. "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God!" There objectively Christianity has its basis and beginning; and there subjectively all true Christian faith, the work of God's Spirit in the soul of man, also begins. One is for the other; and the meeting of the two in the one and the same life, is the Rock on which the Church is built beyond all the power of hell to overthrow or destroy.

And this is precisely the meaning of the Apostles' Creed throughout. Objectively, it is the economy of the Christian salvation in its leading fundamental facts, all centering in Christ, and all growing forth from Christ with inward necessity, in the order in which they are there presented. Subjectively, it is

the answer of the soul to these facts, under the same view of their inward and necessary derivation from Christ by the power of divine faith, a power that is called forth in the soul for the purpose by the Holy Ghost.

It is just this direct relation here of divine faith to divine revelation centering in Christ, that makes such faith in a most important sense an independent witness of the truth of revelation; so that we have in it a new testimony to this truth added to the outward testimony of Scripture and the Church, namely, the testimony of the Holy Ghost drawn immediately from the supernatural matter of the Christian revelation itself. Scripture and the Church serve to bring Christ into view in His historical form; but they cannot originate the faith that sees in Him the "Son of the Living God;" this can come only from the light of His own presence through the power of the Holy Ghost. Such faith is then in itself the assurance of the truth of its object, as well as of its own truth. It says to Scripture and the Church: "Now I believe, not because of your saying; for I have heard and seen for myself, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world!" And thus it is that it becomes the key of the Spirit to the outward Word, and the light that makes it radiant with its true interior sense; while it is conditioned and ruled by the same Word in this illuminated form, nevertheless, as the medium through which the things of the Spirit are brought into view.

This is that TESTIMONY OF THE HOLY GHOST, of which, as we have said, so much account was made in the age of the Reformation, as the necessary complement of the Word of God taken for authority in matters of faith, over against the Roman rule of the outward Church. All the Reformers urge it; and we find it distinctly introduced, more or less, into the early Protestant Confessions.* The argument regards, primarily, of

* Nowhere more succinctly and compactly than in the latest of them, the Westminster Confession of 1647. "We may be moved and induced," it is there said, "by the testimony of the Church to a high and reverend esteem of the Holy Scripture; and the heavenliness of the matter, the efficacy of the doctrine, the majesty of the style, the consent of all the parts, the scope of the whole (which is to give all

course, the divine matter of the Word; but with this it refers itself rightly also to the Word in its outward written form; since the outward form by its means is lighted up now with what has been all along its true material sense. The Scriptures, through this inward light, are felt to be divine, independently of any particular theory of their inspiration or canonical authority; independently, we may say, of all scientific criticism or exegesis. And this divinity belongs to their language, no less than to their inward thought and spirit; for all is redolent together of the first fresh life of the divine revelation from which they spring, and of which they are a constantly abiding portion and part.

“Did faith in the divinity of the Scriptures,” says Twisten, “rest on anything other than their directly self-announcing divinity itself, it might be asked if this other must not just for that reason stand higher than the faith derived from it. Hence the objections of Roman Catholic as well as Rationalistic opposers of the system. If, say the first, you receive the Scriptures on the authority of the Church, how can you then afterwards use them against the Church? If, say the latter, you hold the Scriptures for divine on grounds of reason, how can you then refuse to acknowledge reason as the highest judge in matters of faith? To this much else might be said in reply; but our main answer runs thus: It is *not* on the authority of the Church, *nor* yet on any principles of reason, that faith in the Scriptures ultimately rests; it is on the power of the Christian life itself, wrought by God through His word, and carrying with it the immediate assurance of His own truth.”

It is with the written word in this respect, as it was in the beginning with the word preached by Christ and His Apostles—the original living form of what the written word is for us

glory to God), the full discovery it makes of the only way of man's salvation, the many other incomparable excellencies, and the entire perfection thereof, are arguments whereby it doth abundantly evidence itself to be the word of God: yet notwithstanding, our full persuasion and assurance of the infallible truth and divine authority thereof, is from the inward work of the Holy Spirit, bearing witness by and with the word in our hearts.”

now, so far as the New Testament is concerned. The preaching of St. Paul among the Corinthians, he himself tells us (1 Cor. ii. 1-5), as elsewhere also, was not with the persuasion of man's wisdom, but with the demonstration of the Spirit, and as such was effectual then only for divine faith, standing likewise "in the power of God." And so he says to the Thessalonians: "For this cause thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received is not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe" (1 Thess. ii. 13). How should it be otherwise? How else should the light of God in the word be intelligible, except through the light of God in the soul? And that light in the soul is supernatural faith, the gift and work of the Holy Ghost. He that is of God in this way, heareth God's words; others hear them not, understand them not, receive them not (even though spoken to them by the Son of God Himself), just because they are not of God (John viii. 47).

In the terse expression of Zwingli: "*constat verbo nusquam fidem haberi, quam ubi pater traxit, spiritus monuit, unctio docuit.*"