

THE
REFORMED QUARTERLY REVIEW.

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ART. I.—INTRODUCTORY ARTICLE.

WITH the present number, this REVIEW appears under a new name and with a new prospectus. The meaning and purpose of this change are briefly stated in the prospectus. It seems proper, however, in addition to that necessarily brief statement that a somewhat more extended explanation of the changes made, and of the new position of the REVIEW, should be given in this introductory article.

The name of the "Mercersburg Review" was taken from the place in which the first, and for a time the only, regularly established literary and theological institutions of the Reformed Church in this country were located. The Theological Seminary had, indeed, an existence previously at Carlisle and York, Pa., in connection with a high-school. It was not until the removal of these institutions to Mercersburg, however, that a regular college was established. From that time these institutions became a leading and controlling power in the church. The teachings at Mercersburg, by their originality and force, enlisted special attention. It was natural that in establishing a REVIEW that was to be an organ for the system of thought taught in the College and Seminary, it should bear the name of the place in which these institutions were located. Hence the name *Mercersburg Review*.

Although these institutions were subsequently removed from Mercersburg to Lancaster, the name had become familiar both within the church and outside of it; hence it has been retained to the present time. It has been felt for some time, however,

VIEW invites a friendly meeting in its pages, believing that such fellowship will gradually bring about the desired unity, at least so far as theological agreement may be necessary for unity.

With these remarks we send forth this first number of the REFORMED QUARTERLY REVIEW, with the prayer that it may be the first of a series in the new age of hallowed peace, and love for our Reformed Church.

ART. II.—THE BREAD OF LIFE.

A COMMUNION SERMON.*

From the text: "Give us this day our daily bread."—*Matt.* vi. 11.

THE life of man in the present world consists of different orders of existence. In broad view it may be distinguished into simple bodily life, natural life, and spiritual life; in other words, into the life of the body, the life of the natural mind, and the life of the rational mind or the spirit. These form totally distinct spheres; while they are joined together necessarily at the same time in the true wholeness of our human being. Such conjunction, it is easy to see, can be only in the way of inward organization; which implies superiority in one direction and subordination in another; and what the normal and only right order for this is, admits of no question. The life of the body appears first in time, and the life of the spirit last; but that is not the order of our actual substantive being. Here, as in general, the law prevails, the first last and the last first. The bodily life, holding in and by the senses, is in order to the life of the natural mind; and this holding in mere natural knowledges of every sort, is in order to the life of the spirit or

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soul, the truly rational mind, irradiated by the light of heaven, flowing into it from a yet higher sphere. The whole life of man in this view is as a scale of ascending degrees, the bottom of which is his corporeal existence and the summit his spiritual existence; or say rather it is like a palace or temple, where the real meaning and worth of the exterior depend throughout on the significance of the interior—the spiritual forming here the inmost, the very *adytum* or sanctuary of man's proper being, to which his merely natural mind stands related then as immediate vestibule, while his body surrounds all as outward court.

With this general distinction now in the unity of our proper human life corresponds in full, a like distinction in the idea of the nutriment or food by which the life needs to be supported and maintained. The law or necessity of such nutriment lies in the very conception of all so-called finite life; this can never be in animal, man, or angel, as any separate possession, but only as something continuously received from God; and the order of the universe shows this to be everywhere through divinely appointed *media* or means, in which the vivific presence of his word or spirit is embodied for this purpose. That is the fundamental sense of bread or food; as is signified indeed by the Old Testament declaration, "Man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord doth man live" (Deut. viii. 3); the pregnant scripture which was quoted with such grand effect by our Saviour in the wilderness, when the devil would have persuaded him to a magical inversion of the divine order of the world, by reaching through natural potency after what could be effectually gained only in the way of spiritual power descending from God (Matth. iv. 4). That was the temptation; and here was the victory of the great captain of our salvation. An image of which we have in the life of every truly regenerated man. For whether we will lay it to heart or not, the question on which all regeneration turns for every one of us in the present world resolves itself just into this: Shall we try to live by bread only, holding ourselves to the energies which go to make up for us here the

conception of food for our material and merely natural existence; or will we allow the Lord of life and glory to enter into us as the principle of life above and *beyond* all this, so that the divine word proceeding out of his mouth, (not dead, but living and life-giving), shall be in us the food of our true spiritual existence, "the bread which cometh down from heaven that a man may eat thereof and not die" (John vi. 50). Of one sense with which is the word going before in the same chapter "Labor not for the meat (or food) which perisheth, but for that food which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you; for him hath God the Father sealed"; that is, the Divine in him hath made the human in him participant of all its own celestial life in order that the glorified humanity of the Lord might be thus the fountain head of life for all flesh to the end of time (John xvii. 1-5).

All this goes to show what we have here immediately in view, namely, not only that there are different sorts of food for the different spheres of life we have in us, but also that these different sorts of food are inwardly graduated and correlated one with another, in a way that answers exactly to what we have just seen to be the mysterious conjunction of the several lives they are appointed to feed and nourish. The body has its food of one kind; the natural understanding has its food of another kind; the rational spirit has its food again essentially different from both. But the several foods like the several lives, belong to one constitution and regard one end; and the order which binds them together, and determines their legitimate functions and use, is the same precisely that reigns in the organism of the several lives. The food of the body lowest or outmost; the food of the spirit highest or inmost. The outmost here again first in appearance, and the inmost last. But the inmost thus seemingly last, in true essentiality really first; and thus, of course, the veritable principle and true energizing power of all going before. This means necessarily, that whatever of potency there may be in material food to nourish the body, or in intellectual food (terrestrial science and knowledge of every sort) to

nourish the natural mind, all such energy and force can be in these subordinate forms of nutrition only by direct derivation from the potency which belongs to food in its highest spiritual view—which, in its supreme sense, our Lord in the plainest terms declares to be himself. Man liveth by bread in any degree of his existence, only because of the word of God which is in it for this purpose. But who, with any thought, may not see that this of itself means that such word or law can be truly thus resident in a lower ordinance or appointment, only by the word in its highest view (the divine *logos*) reaching down to such lower range of existence with the full power of its own life? In this view Jesus Christ is the beginning of the creation of God, and therefore also its end. He is before all things, and by him, or literally in him, all things consist (Col. i. 17).

That, therefore, which makes bread life-sustaining in its lowest form, and which causes it thus to *be* bread really and truly, is ever the benediction of the Lord, not resting upon it merely as an outward *power*, but entering into it from above in the most real and living way. So it is said of the Israelites, that in the use of the manna, which in itself was material though miraculous bread, “man did eat angels’ food” (Ps. lxxviii. 25). Not that the angels actually do eat manna; but because the spiritual food by which the angels live, was bound by inward living correspondence to that lower terrestrial food; so that if there had been any spiritual sensibility on the part of the Jewish people (which as a general thing there was not), the use of this lower food would of itself have put them in real communication with the very bread of heaven which is here spoken of as angels’ food. There is in this way, we may easily see, something sacramental in all natural bread.* It is univer-

* That our bodily food admits of easy comparison with what serves in a higher view to nourish the mind and soul, is universally acknowledged. But why it should be so is not so readily seen. With most persons, who ever think on the subject at all, it is taken to be something arbitrary, or the result at most of merely outside observation, fixing itself on certain points of resemblance in the comparison more fanciful than real. But it needs only small

sally the visible sign of an invisible grace. It is what it is as food not in virtue of its outward matter, but wholly and entirely in virtue only of the divine blessing which is in it mystically, the word proceeding out of the mouth of the Lord, which coming down from heaven lives in it perpetually and makes it to be bread indeed, having in it power to "strengthen man's heart." So much is signified at once in our Christian practice of asking the blessing of God on our daily meals. They are thus *sanctified*, raised from mere nature to the region of the spirit, by the word of God and prayer. The natural in no form or shape can be what it is required to be for even natural ends, except through conjunction with the spiritual; and the spiritual is nothing again except by direct living derivation from the divine. That is what all sanctification means. All blessing, whether in eternity or time, means that. It is the benediction of the Lord, proceeding from the fullness of life in the Lord himself, and descending from him, as the very power of his own

reflection to see that the case involves in it far more than this. Where minds of every order, young and old, rude and educated, savage and civilized, come together, as they do all the world over and through all ages of the world, in such a conception as this, so as not to be even aware generally of any comparison or metaphor whatever in speaking of the mind or soul as nourished by inward food—what can it possibly mean less than the living sense of a true interior communication between the two orders of existence thus correlated, which goes immensely deeper than the notion of any mere outward resemblance such as is implied by comparison or metaphor in the common view?

Indeed the more we look into the matter, the more we shall find that the force of all true comparison and figure of speech, resolves itself in the end into such under-sense of the world's life, as the only sufficient key for what comes into view on its surface. Thus every genuine comparison carries in itself a latent parable. This is eminently the case with all the tropical language of the Bible; as how indeed should it not be, if the mind of God, comprehensive of all truth in its universality and not merely in its particulars, be actually that which makes the inspiration of the Bible as we profess to believe it? But all genuine poetry, also, in its lower degree, addresses itself mainly to the interior inner sense of the world in the same way; and here is just the difference, between poets who have the true *poietic* or creative faculty, and poets who have no such faculty, but only in place of it the poor art of garnishing the outside of things with their own conceits and fancies.

life, through all heavens, down to the uttermost parts of the earth.

What has now been said may enable us to understand the petition, *Give us this day our daily bread.* It has been made a question, whether the prayer should be taken as referring altogether to mere natural food, or as meaning also something higher; and every such higher regard, in any case, has been commonly held to be a sort of secondary sense at best, derived from the other in the way of metaphor or ordinary figure of speech. But the relation of spiritual to natural is never any such mere metaphor or trope. The trope always inverts the true order of natural and spiritual, by making the natural to be first and the spiritual second; and is thus in truth nothing but a turning of the natural in one form into the natural in another form, which as such never reaches the sense of the real spiritual at all. The actual relation between the two orders of existence, nature and spirit, is always and at every point just the reverse of this; the spiritual first, inmost, primordially substantial and real; the natural secondary, outmost, phenomenally transient, and universally dependent on the spiritual every moment for any shadow of existence it may seem to have in its own right. The case being so, we may see what a madness it is with our natural science to make all of nature, as it commonly does, and nothing of spirit, or to dream of mastering the mystery of spirit by the outside dissection of nature in the study of God's universe. A task, desperate as the passing of a camel through a needle's eye! But must we not count it then a still greater insanity, to apply any such inversion of order to the interpretation of God's word, which by general confession is held to be the very presence of the divine itself under cover of human speech? Can the natural here be primary anywhere, and the spiritual only secondary and subordinate? Must not any imagination of that sort subvert effectually the very idea of sacred Scripture, the whole doctrine of inspiration? *

* Inspiration means the mind or word of the living God. That can never be something dead. It lives and abides for ever. The living presence and

Apply this now to the point before us; and we may readily see what is the necessary sense of the prayer, Give us this day our daily bread. It does not exclude the thought of bodily food. The spiritual in a man never shuts out the natural in that mechanical way. On the contrary it needs and demands the natural; but then always only under the view of subordinate living coherence with the proper pre-eminence of the spiritual, whereby the natural shall be found to have in it the life of the spiritual as its own life. Nothing less than this, we have already seen to be the wide scriptural idea of bread or food. It is comprehensive of natural food, intellectual food, and spiritual celestial food—the bread of angels; but of these in the order of the several lives, which are thus supported in man, that he may be a true image of God unto everlasting life. In this order, spiritual bread is prior and natural bread posterior; as the soul is first, and the body second in our common human constitution. So the angels of course see the case in the light of

power of the Lord are in it perpetually. It is so in nature. By the word of the Lord were the heavens made, and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth. Were they thus made in the beginning, and then left to exist afterwards of and from themselves? Nay verily; such a thought is the very madness of atheism. The word is still in them at every point as their living soul; so that all visible and material things are not only outward signs and tokens of things invisible and eternal, but the actual expression of such things, just as a man's bodily face is the express image of his soul. And what shall we say then of the mind of God in his word, as we have this not only once spoken but enduringly present in the Bible? Is that to be considered living or dead—a transient breath only of common human speech, or a divine "word forever settled in heaven"? On the answer of our inmost heart to that crucial question turns the whole worth of our profession of faith in the doctrine of inspiration. And if the outward side of nature be for its spiritual side what we have just seen, not a dead monumental remembrancer of this simply in any way, but its living, speaking mirror, as the body is of the soul, who believing in the Bible, will dare to say that the relation between outward and inward here can be any less vital and vivific? And in that case, from which side of the composite creation, body or soul, outward natural letter or inward living spirit, must the interpretation of God's Word proceed, if it is to be ever rational or truly sane? In the light of this solemn thought, we think of our modern vaunted science of biblical hermeneutics, and cannot help feeling with deep sadness, "*Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting!*"

heaven; and so must it be regarded then everywhere by the Bible also, if this be indeed descended from the very light of heaven (which inspiration means), and be not a mere *ignis fatuus* of earth dancing before the distempered vision of men in the name of such light.

And most of all, we may say, is it rationally unthinkable, that the Lord's Prayer, that wonderful synopsis of the kingdom of God, the NEW CREATION in broad distinction from the old, should be guilty of any such anachronism, as would be implied by allowing the merely natural to appear in it anywhere, under any other view than as something wholly subservient to the true idea of this kingdom in its proper supernatural character and form.

No one can stand in the bosom of the Prayer itself, having in him any sense of the living inspiration which breathes in it still from the Incarnate Word by which it was first spoken, without feeling it to be from beginning to end, the living testimony of Jesus Christ, the very presence of the kingdom of heaven itself, moving in perpetual progress from its *alpha* in the Lord to its *omega* in the Lord. All starts in himself as the manifestation of the Father, in whom only God is knowable or approachable for men. The address, therefore, *Our Father who art in heaven*, can have properly no other object than his own glorified humanity. Outside of that, God can be for men only an abstraction, an unreality, a mere mental figment, and so of course an idolatry. Hence it follows, *Hallowed be thy Name*. No earnest student of the Bible needs to be told what this name means. A thousand passages show it to have but one sense. It is God revealed or made known in Christ. Not through any outward revelation simply; for that would mean nothing. But through a real letting down of the Divine into the human in Christ, whereby this should become a living transcript and mirror of the Divine (as the old church fathers were fond of putting it), into which men gazing then by the vision of faith might be changed into the same image, from glory to glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord. All which is signified in-

deed in those words of our blessed Lord where he says: "I have glorified thee on the earth; I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was. I have manifested THY NAME unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world" (John xvii. 4-6). Here, as we can plainly see, the glorification of Christ's humanity is the manifesting or showing forth of the Father's name; which is declared to be, at the same time, the "finishing of the work" for which Christ came into the world. And thus it is that the continuous glorification or hallowing of this name in heaven and on earth becomes of itself the highest conception we can form of the new creation, or universal reign of righteousness and salvation, of which Jesus Christ is at once both the origin and the end.

Hence accordingly the next petition, *Thy kingdom come*; and then immediately, in descending order, *Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven*. The will of God thus done in heaven is itself the very substance of heaven, and so then of course the very substance of the same kingdom among men on the earth. And this can mean nothing less than life from the Lord in such doing of his will; since his will can have no substance that is not life in its inmost essence. In and by that life the angels live; it is for them evermore the very bread of heaven, not figuratively but most really and truly, as we have it symbolized in the manna with which the Israelites were fed of old in the wilderness.

And who now, with any sense of this in his mind, can help seeing that the petition next following in the Lord's Prayer, *Give us this day our daily bread*, must have for its object immediately and directly only the same celestial sense. It regards food, not in its ultimate mundane degree, but in its highest spiritual degree; from whence only any true vitalizing force can descend into what is mundane. The petition means: Give us continually the aliment by which the angels live, that we may do thy will as they do it, and thus have the kingdom of

God brought into us more and more as righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. Let no one say that this is to resolve the idea of food into sheer abstraction. The will of God in the angels, as we have just seen, is no abstraction, no notion of their own simply in regard to divine truth and right; but positive living substance, of such sort that through the doing of the same it can be incorporated into their very inmost being, and so nourish them unto everlasting life. But we have a still higher example here than that of the angels, to lift us above the gross carnality of our common human thinking on this subject. Our blessed Lord himself, in the days of his flesh, found real substantial sustenance by appropriating to himself the divine will in the same way. "I have meat to eat," we hear him saying on one occasion, "that ye know not of. My meat is to DO THE WILL of him that sent me, and to finish his work" (John iv. 32-34). And so he tells us again: "I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of the Father that sent me" (John vi. 38). This means no such miserable outside office work as our commentators too commonly make of it; but a progressive growing of the human side of his life into the divine side, so that these became at last, in and by his glorification, fully of one constitution and measure; according to the clause in the Athanasian Creed, "As the reasonable soul and flesh is one man, so God and man is one Christ." Not two Christs, as in the Nestorian heresy.*

* Among the various, we will not say absolutely false, but deplorably inadequate conceptions of the gospel, which narrow and lame the full sense of it with our different churches at this time, none is more melancholy perhaps than the general shade which is cast upon the significance of his GLORIFICATION. If anything in the world is clear, it would seem to be this plain testimony of the Holy Scriptures, extending from Genesis to the Apocalypse, that our Lord's human life in the world, his glorious incarnation, was not a stationary wonder at any point, but a real progression, (like all real human life), by which, through successive stages, he wrought out, by and of himself, the full union of the human with the divine in his own person; all this, only through measureless temptation, conflict, sorrow, and victory, ending in his passion on the cross; and thus only by his glorification "finished the work" which he had come into the world to do, and so made it possible for men to

And this celestial food now, the bread of angels, the bread of life, which our Saviour calls his "flesh given for the life of the world," and of which he says, "he that cometh to me shall never hunger, and he that believeth on me shall never thirst"; this self-same food it is, we say, and no other, which is signified and sealed for our use in the holy sacrament of the Lord's supper under its simple symbols of bread and wine.

These symbols were not something new in the institution of the Lord's supper. They had been in use for the same general purpose long before; and it is only by considering this previous use, that we can at all rightly appreciate their full spiritual significance in the Christian sacrament. We find them brought prominently into view in the solemn religious service performed by Melchizedek, king of Salem, on the occasion of Abram's return from the slaughter of the kings as narrated in the 14th chapter of Genesis. This "priest of the most high God," it is written, representing in its decadence an older and far better dispensation of revealed religion than the Jewish, "brought

be saved in the sense of his own declaration: "Thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him; and this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." What does such language mean, if not that the whole Gospel is comprehended in the manifestation of God, brought to pass in the accomplished glorification of Christ's humanity as it could be in no other way? This was the supreme object of his incarnation. "To this end was I born" he says, "and for this cause came I into the world, that I might bear witness to the truth." Whatever may be said of other doctrines then, they can have no real worth or force except by comprehension in what he himself makes to be the sum of all when he says, "Father, glorify thy Son that thy Son also may glorify thee." This is the doctrine of all doctrines; the article, we may truly say, of a standing or falling church. But how little, alas, we hear of it in our evangelical pulpits and schools at this time. Our Christianity is weak for the want of it; and can have no strength against the "armies of the aliens" (infidel science and Roman superstition), so long as this want endures. That is the *revival* the church now needs; and it can come only from the Lord, as a new epiphany through his Word; as the prophet of old prays: "Oh that thou wouldest rend the heavens, that thou wouldest come down, that the mountains might flow down at thy presence, as when the melting fire burneth;—to make thy name known to thine adversaries, that the nations may tremble at thy presence!"

forth BREAD AND WINE," and made them the medium of a holy spiritual intercommunication between the patriarch and the God whose minister he was; using for the solemnity such grand eucharistic words, as in their supreme sense can be understood most assuredly only of the great captain of our salvation, Jesus Christ. "He blessed him," we are told, "and said, Blessed be Abram of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth: and blessed be the most high God, which hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand." And Abram, it is added, "gave him tithes of all." Who, with any faith in God's Word, can help feeling, under the effulgent light especially of the 110th Psalm, and the use which is made of it in the 7th chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews, how all this looks from that remote antiquity directly to the communion between the glorified Christ (possessor of all power in heaven and in earth, Matth. xxviii. 18), and his redeemed people to the end of time! And who then in the sense of that, can help feeling also the profound parable which lies in the elements of bread and wine, as they go here to make up together the idea of that divine food, by which alone through Christ communion of men with God in the way of life can be maintained? The parable does not start with Judaism. It belongs to the *origines sacræ* of all heaven-descended religion, far back of that heavily beclouded dispensation. And that vast antiquity of itself shows the sign here as related to the thing signified, to be more than a mere arbitrary hieroglyphic. No *genuine* parable is ever that only. The significance of all parables rests in a real, and not simply imaginary or notional correspondence between the natural and the spiritual, as they are made to come together always in their constitution.

Coming down to the Jewish economy, we find ourselves confronted with the old idea of celestial food, under cover of material food, in all manner of ways. The Passover of course, in this view, is of central significance; out of which, as we know, springs immediately the institution of the Lord's supper, summing up finally the sense of the entire Jewish worship, and

thus bringing it to its full end in Christ. Here the flesh and blood of the paschal lamb occupy the foreground in the sacred picture; but it included, we know, both bread and wine also, the germs of the coming Christian sacrament. And the soul of the entire service, as it is also of this Christian sacrament, was the idea of living fellowship with God through spiritual food derived from himself for that purpose, and here symbolized by the material elements of the paschal feast.

And what other than this evangelical sense is it that looks out upon us from heaven, through the universal sacrificial system of the Old Testament. The altar of burnt offering and the altar of incense, the daily morning and evening sacrifice, the holocausts and endless other offerings, were they not all one vast scheme of pictorial worship, significant of incorporation with the life of God, the substance of heaven, by and through the bread of God which in the fulness of time was to come down from heaven in his Son Jesus Christ (John vi. 33, 51). And here again, it must not be forgotten, we have in addition to these offerings of flesh and blood, another class of offerings consisting of bread and wine, and going as it were hand in hand with them, to make their sense whole and complete. So ultimately, the system culminates in the table of the shew bread in the holy place, with its frankincense and wine, and its twelve loaves answering to the twelve tribes of Israel, which the priests in behalf of the tribes were to eat in the holy place every week as an offering "most holy unto the Lord."

It would carry us too far, to go here into any particular consideration of the manna, provided miraculously for the sustentation of the natural life of the Israelites in the wilderness. What it signified mystically is set forth so plainly in the New Testament, and with such emphasis especially by our Lord himself in the 6th chapter of St. John's Gospel, that there can be no room for question or doubt in regard to its meaning. And what is thus true of the manna, is no less true of its companion miracle, the water from the rock in Horeb. Here we have the element of water in place of the element of wine;

but the general mystical meaning is the same, though not without a particular difference which it is not necessary here to notice. "Baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea," the Israelites, we are told, "did all eat the same spiritual meat, and did all drink the same spiritual drink, for they drank of that spiritual rock that followed them, and that rock was Christ" (1 Cor. x. 2-4.)

So universally throughout the Old Testament, we have this two-fold representation of meat and drink brought into view, to signify the aliment of the soul, the true spiritual bread of life, which is always represented, at the same time as being nothing less than a real communication of life to men from the Lord himself. Of which it may be sufficient to quote here that one classic example: "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labor for that which satisfieth not? hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness" (Is. lv. 1, 2).

And to all this prefiguration and prophecy, the "testimony of Jesus," in the interior sense of the Old Testament, comes responsively then the open voice of the "faithful and true witness" himself in the New Testament: "I am the bread of life; he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst." "As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father, so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me." "If any man thirst let him come unto me, and drink." "Let him that is athirst come; and whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely" (John vi. 35, 57; vii. 37; Rev. xxii. 17).

In the Lord's supper, as already intimated, the Old Testament ritualism passes away as a scroll through the finished work of our Lord Jesus Christ. But not one jot or tittle of its interior sense, as he himself assures us, has been allowed to fail. All is fulfilled, and made of perennial force, in his kingdom;

and thus it is, that in this simple institution, all the rays of heavenly light which we have found bearing on the great subject before us, from the earliest time, converge at last, as with a blaze of glory, in what is felt at once to be here their true focus. The universal sense of all meets us in the words: "As they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; for this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom" (Matth. xxvi. 26-29).

The meaning of the holy sacrament, then, is sufficiently plain. It is intended to actualize, or make real, for the disciples of Christ, the idea of that spiritual nourishment or food (both as meat and drink), which according to the universal testimony of the Bible can be nothing less ever than real participation in the life of the Lord himself. The life, we say, is spiritual; not natural, and still less corporeal; and therefore not to be thought of for a moment as bound in any way in the material elements employed for its sacramental representation. But still not for this reason any less substantial, but only far more substantial, far more objectively real, than all natural or material existence. For it is the *word of God* divinely joined with the elements which makes the sacrament, according to the ancient Christian fathers; and this word, proceeding out of the mouth of the Lord, wherever it is found, hath that life in it by which only it is possible for men to live.*

* "*Accedit verbum ad elementum et fit sacramentum.*" For the right understanding of the holy sacraments, no key is more useful than the patristic aphorism here quoted; only all depends in the case on our being able to enter into the patristic sense of the *word of God*, then, as distinguished from the far lower sense in which this is too commonly understood by our modern exegesis. The word of God in the general modern view is looked upon as only a human word, that is, as the divine let down into human thought and human speech, these having the power of the divine in them at best in the way only of out-

The food, in one word, which is thus set before us on the Lord's table (whether we say *table* or altar here does not come to much), is the love and wisdom of the Lord, which together constitute the being of God, and which in the measure of his capacity for their conjunct reception constitute the being of man also, so that without them there can be no true human being for any man. Made in the image of God, men have in them two fundamental faculties or possibilities for such double reception, namely, will and intelligence; will for the admission of the divine love, which is essentially what good means, and intelligence for the admission of the divine wisdom, which is essentially what truth means. These are related as essence and form, inward and outward; the will as love always governing the understanding as truth; while in their union they form the only positive substance of every man; which is determined then wholly by what of life, in such double form, he is found to have in him from the Lord. And thus it is that his mind and soul live only and always, not from himself, but from what thus flows into him from the Lord, in such spiritual form, just as

ward fiat, breathed over them rather than into them as a real inspiration from heaven. Thought of in that way, the word of God joined to a sacrament can mean no more than its supposed divine appointment; which leaves the elements to their own nature; and then we have either fetichism or cold abstract intellectualism. But in the mind of the early Christians the word of God was immeasurably more than that. Its procession from the mouth of the Lord, was for them a continuous going forth of life from the Lord; and when it was thought of in this view as joined by the Lord himself to his holy sacraments, it was thought of as the living soul of these sacraments through all time. In our past controversies with regard to baptism and the Lord's supper, we may not have done justice always to what must be considered in this way the true and real pre-eminence of the Word above all sacraments. In contending for the faith delivered to the saints in regard to the sacraments, we may have failed to intone properly what the presence of the Lord in his WORD means, without which there is no room to conceive of his presence among men in any other form. Should this have been so, let us trust that it may be so no longer; while we unite mind and heart in seeking an understanding of divine inspiration better than that which now too commonly prevails, and join one and all, on bended knee, in the daily prayer, "Open thou mine eyes, O Lord, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law."

really as his body is fed and nourished by food similarly received and appropriated in natural form. This also, as we know, only from the Lord, whose word perennially present in the food gives it such natural force. For in him, corporeally, naturally, and spiritually, in like degree and measure, we all live, move, and have our being.

We find it hard to conceive of our intellectual and spiritual life in this way; but only because the spiritual world has for us commonly no objective substantiality, answering at all to our sense of reality in the outward natural world. To speak of love and wisdom, of the good and true, as positive substances, having in them the very essence of life itself, in God first, and then from God in angels and in men, strikes our mundane thought as absurd. True, the Bible is full of just such utterances; and our Christian creeds echo more or less distinctly the same mystical voice; and in our better moments we may seem to respond to it with some faint inward amen. But as a general thing, we do not believe a word of it. When our Saviour says, "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life;" that is, they have in them the very substance of eternal life; our impulse is at once to reply: "Oh, no; they cannot possibly be that; they are only abstractions, voices in the air, figures of speech, to be got rid of by the science of hermeneutics; this is an hard saying, who can hear it?"

For all this, however, the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. Of all things real in the universe, the most absolutely real and substantial is the Word of God; which means the love of God dwelling in his will, and the wisdom or intelligence of God going forth from his love as truth, thought, speech, order, law; by which only, and in which, all things consist, and are what they are. And how is it to be imagined then for a moment, that angels or men should ever have in them any real being and life, except through comprehension in these ground factors of creation, the Divine love and the Divine wisdom, whose perfect union in the glorified Christ offers to our faith the full concep-

tion of the Christian redemption. That redemption holds supremely in the incarnate Word, thus glorified through the boundless sorrows of our Lord going before; and in this view it is the veritable spiritual food of which our Lord speaks, when he calls himself the bread of life; which he teaches us to pray for in the petition, Give us this day our daily bread; and which he offers to us continually in his holy sacrament, under the cover of bread and wine, through the affecting words: "*Take, eat, this is my body; Drink ye; this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.*"

And how is it now that we are to approach the table of the Lord in his holy supper, so as to prove in ourselves what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God, which is here brought near to us for such heavenly use? In other words, how are we to draw nigh to God through the outer court of the sacrament, in such sort that he shall draw nigh to us from its interior sanctuary (the holy of holies), inspiring into our souls from beyond the veil, and through the invisible presence of his holy angels, something of the very life of heaven itself, as the angels know it and find in it their eternal joy?

We answer, in the first place: Not by any activity from ourselves thrown into the sacrament, in the sense of that old Jewish question, "What shall we do that we might work the works of God?" which means simply, How shall we handle God's power and agency instrumentally, like electricity or steam, for our own service and benefit? Alas, how much of our Christian creed and worship resolves itself at last into what we thus dream of putting into divine things from our own intelligence and will, instead of yielding ourselves to the actual power of divine things as they are in themselves. So the Israelites must operate the manna to suit themselves (Ex. xvi. 20, 27, 28). And so even Moses must sin along with the people at large, when he smote the rock in Kadesh, with that impetuous speech, Hear now, ye rebels, must *we* fetch you water out of this rock? That was the temptation of which God says:

I proved thee at the waters of Meribah (Numb. xx. 7-13; Ps. lxxxi. 7).

But to the question, How shall we come before the Lord in this sacrament? we answer again in the second place: Not by virtue of any magical efficacy supposed to be lodged in the outward form of the sacrament itself. There can be no such power of the natural over the spiritual anywhere, that the natural may be said to rule the spiritual in its own right. The spiritual can never be thus imprisoned, or *banned*, in the bosom of the mere natural. That is the conception of a fetisch; and all worship turned to such an object is idolatry, and as the sin of witchcraft. The water in baptism can never be in this way the principle or efficient of regeneration; and just as little can the bread and wine in the Lord's supper be ever in themselves what they sacramentally represent, namely, the glorified life of the Lord, which he calls the bread of heaven, and also the living bread brought down from heaven in his own person, "that a man may eat thereof and not die."

How then, we repeat the question, are we to "come before the Lord and bow ourselves before the high God" in this holy sacrament; so as to avoid both of the two errors now mentioned—the self-activity of mere will-worship on the one side, and the stock-passivity of mere blind superstition on the other side—and thus find in the sacrament what our Lord himself makes it to be, the communion of his own body and blood unto everlasting life?

The general answer is simple enough. We are to come by repentance and faith. But, alas, both these ideas are wonderfully mystified for most of us by our reigning worldliness and false theology. What is repentance? It is knowing, acknowledging, and inwardly feeling, that we are involved in spiritual evils or sins; in earnestly desiring to be delivered from them; and in seriously proposing to obtain such deliverance by ceasing to do evil and learning to do good, with our eyes turned steadily toward the Lord, from whom only we can ever have truly any such expectation. And who may not see that such looking to the

Lord is then just what is to be understood by faith, which is thus the indispensable accompaniment and complement of repentance? For in truth they go ever hand in hand together. There can be no true repentance without faith; and so neither can there be any true faith without repentance. And what both together mean in the case of the holy sacrament now before us, is sufficiently plain. It is nothing less, indeed, than the living reconciliation of those seemingly contradictory alternatives, which we have just seen to be in their dead abstraction alike fatal to the true idea of the sacrament from opposite sides. Repentance sinks into nothing the thought of all self-operation on our part in the Christian mystery; and faith owns the supernatural operation of the Lord in it as strictly all in all; while this is recognized at the same time, however, in its only rational view, as being not outwardly magical in any sense, but an actual coming down of the divine from its higher sphere into the real life-sphere of the human.

It is not our theoretical doctrine of the holy sacrament, therefore, our notion of the manner of Christ's living presence in its outward symbols, that can in any case bring us into the actual experience of its quickening power. This may be more orthodox with some and with others less orthodox intellectually; but that difference need not affect at all the acceptable and effectual use of the sacrament; just because in the end, it is not doctrine intellectually considered, but the life of doctrine, as this reigns in the will, which can ever bring with it any real appropriation of the love of the Lord. And that love of the Lord thus flowing into the soul, is itself real conjunction with the divine life, which IS LOVE (1 John iv. 8), and therefore the inmost conception we can possibly have of the substantial spiritual food by which only men or angels can be nourished unto everlasting life. Our speculative orthodoxy can never bring us to that. On the contrary, there is the greatest danger always that it may lead us in the full contrary direction. It is on the pure in heart, and not on the strong in theological speculation, that the benediction is pronounced, They shall see God. Unto

babes in the kingdom of God things are revealed, which are hidden from the wise and prudent. It was the children who welcomed the Lord into his temple, with their glad Hosanna to the Son of David; when the chief priests and scribes saw in the occasion only matter for sore offence, and drew upon themselves that withering castigation, "Have ye never read, Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise?" (Matt. xxi. 15, 16; Ps. viii. 2).

Let us take all this properly to heart. "Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child," it is said, "shall in nowise enter therein" (Luke xviii. 17). If that be true of Christian life and worship generally, it should be considered most especially true of our central worship in the sacrament of the Lord's supper, the key-stone that binds all else together, the holy of holies, where we come most directly before the Lord enthroned on the mercy-seat, and between the wings of the cherubim. Here, if ever, the innocence, the simplicity, the charity, the self-oblivion, of little children, is the only attitude that can comport at all with the solemnity of the transaction with which we are engaged. For what does the transaction mean? Heaven open; the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man in the sacrament of his own living presence. Himself the supreme sense of all, and the fulness of eternal life for his universal kingdom. His worshipping church on earth in the posture of purely and wholly passive reception, with only the sense of spiritual hunger and thirst, opening the soul for the food of angels thus proffered for its use without money and without price. Coming thus to the holy sacrament, with full apprehension of our own ignorance, weakness, misery, and sin, and looking with faith to the Lord of the sacrament, who fulfils the internal sense of it in heaven, we place ourselves in real communication with the heavenly side of the transaction. We partake of the elements as natural food, with faith directed toward what they represent, and correspond with, as spiritual food; and so far as we do that, in childlike trust and simplicity, we may be very sure

that the Lord will not fail to actualize within our souls (in a way transcending all natural perception or thought), the mystery of his own words: "He that eateth me, even he shall live by me. Because I live, ye shall live also. I am the vine, ye are the branches: abide in me, and I in you; as the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine, no more can ye except ye abide in me."

Even so, come, Lord Jesus. Amen.

APPENDIX.

In the way of general note to the foregoing discourse, we add here some loosely connected observations on certain doctrinal topics, having relation, not so much to separate points in the discourse, as to the subject of it in its whole view.

I. The GLORIFICATION of our Lord's humanity has been spoken of as the cardinal truth of the gospel. It is so set forth in the Old Testament and in the New. We may safely say that neither the Jewish ritual, nor the Jewish history, nor the psalms, nor the prophecies, are at all intelligible, without it; and it is thus emphatically what is to be understood by the language of our Lord, when he says: "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets; I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled" (Matt. v. 17, 18). So again: "O fools and slow of heart, to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to ENTER INTO HIS GLORY?—Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures, and said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer and to RISE FROM THE DEAD the third day; and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem" (Luke xxiv. 25, 26, 45, 46, 47). This is plain, and it can have but one meaning; namely, that the Old Testament and the New Testament

have inwardly one and the same sense, and that this one and universal sense comes to its whole completion in the glorification of the humanity of our Lord into full oneness with his divinity; by which his "coming out from the Father" became for both in this view a full "returning again to the Father," according to the mystery of his own prayer, "Now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was" (John xvi. 28; xvii. 5). Other things come in also of course for their verification in the light of the gospel thus thrown back upon the Old Testament, to the extent even of such apparently unmeaning outward incidentals, as "Out of Egypt have I called my son"—"He shall be called a Nazarene"—and other particulars of like sort, on which so much silly commentary has been wasted;* but all else is plainly part only of the general movement, by which the life of Christ in the world was steadily determined throughout to his coming glorification, as the one great scope and purpose of his manifestation in the flesh. So the mystery of godliness is made to run its course by St. Paul: "God manifest in the flesh, justified in the spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the gentiles, believed on in the world, RECEIVED UP INTO GLORY." (1 Tim. iii. 16).

II. The whole power of the Christian faith resolves itself, in that way, into the ability of seeing and owning the glorification of the Lord Jesus Christ; as he himself says after his resurrection in the soul-stirring words: "ALL POWER IS GIVEN UNTO ME IN HEAVEN AND IN EARTH. Go ye therefore and teach all nations; and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." His kingdom starts there. All the realities and verities of his kingdom reveal themselves there, first of all, in himself, as head over all things to the Church; so that they cannot be seen and inwardly acknowledged at all as objects of faith, except in the light of what he has thus become as the

* And which might almost seem, indeed, to be in the sacred text, for the very purpose of stultifying the false view of inspiration, which underlies all such merely naturalistic trifling with the word of God.

alpha and omega of the new creation. It belongs to the very nature of Christian faith, accordingly, that it should draw its life directly from the living Christ himself, thus seen in his glory, according to what is said, "In thy light we shall see light;" and again, "I am the light of the world; he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." So that Peter's faith (Matt. xvi. 16, 17) is signalized just for this, that it was an overpowering sense of the divine majesty of Christ, revealed in him from the presence of the Lord himself without any outside teaching or reflection. His faith might take in much of knowledge and doctrine afterwards which was not then in his mind; but only by virtue of this first central confession; which thus became necessarily the rock, whereon all else must be built, that should go to make up in him the full structure of the Christian life. And so it is with every true Christian still. The soul of all doctrines is found only in the power of believing in the everlasting, glorified Christ.

Only by virtue of this faith can we believe for example, the being of God, his tri-unity, the creation of the world by God, divine providence, the atonement, regeneration, the inspiration of holy scripture. We may indeed receive these and other truths of revelation intellectually, and seem to ourselves to hold them on rational evidence. They may be in us scientifically, systematically, rationally, and even sentimentally. We may preach them, contend for them, and think that we do well to be angry with all who refuse to see them as we ourselves do. But with all this, if they be not seen in the celestial light of our Lord's glorification, they will not be seen by us really at all. They will not be in us as actual truths, but only as imperfect phantoms of truth; for the simple reason that they will have no life in them. That is the necessary character of all that belongs to the mere understanding, before this comes to be vitalized and energized by love and affection infused into it from the will, felt as a force determined toward action. It was to such mental *believers* that our Saviour said, "If ye continue

in my word,* then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John viii. 31, 32). So in another place: "My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me. If any man will do his will"—literally, will to do his will—"he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself" (John vii. 16, 17). It is not outward knowing then, nor yet outward willing merely, as it may be called—that is, willing from interest or motive other than God's will itself—which can ever make divine doctrine or truth real and living for any man; but only WILLING TO DO God's will, out of regard to this will itself, as made known by his spoken word. Short of this truth or doctrine in a man's understanding is not in him properly at all; it is not appropriated to him as any part of his life, but is in him at best only as food from without capable of such appropriation, but waiting for the law of life from within to convert it really to any such use. Only the will of the Lord as love, abiding always in his word, and meeting from within the otherwise only outward faith which a man may have in the truths of the word, can ever quicken this faith into true heavenly vitality, and at the same time glorify the word into the full light of its own divine inspiration.

III. It is an old controversy whether faith or charity should be regarded as first in religion; and outside of religion, it has been similarly debated whether truth or good should be allowed such primacy in man's life. At bottom it is the question,

* Literally, if ye *abide* in my word; the same term that is used John xv. 4, 5, 6, 7; where the sense is fixed by the analogy of the union between the vine and its branches; and where also it is plain that the *word* or *words* of Christ can only mean himself living in his own speech or spoken will. Why in John xv. 9, again, should our version substitute "continue" for "abide," as used in the context both before and after? when it is clear that the love of God there spoken of as the bond of his union with Christ and his people, is nothing less than the living active power of his WILL in his commandments or word. "If ye keep my commandments," it is said, "ye shall abide in my love, even as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love." Altogether, the substitution of *continuing* for *abiding*, in the case of this whole mystery, is unfortunate; it has the effect of externalizing it, and thus hiding its true inward sense.

which of the two ground factors of the human mind, the understanding or the will, is to be considered chief or central in its constitution. All sound psychology assigns this distinction to the will. But it is wonderful how, nevertheless, the opposite view is all the time ready to assert itself practically, making the intellectual side of our life to be first and its voluntary or affectional side second, both in the secular view and in the religious. Science and learning, in this way, are held to be all-sufficient for the world's affairs; and education in our schools is made to resolve itself entirely into what is merely intellectual culture; under the notion that the knowledge of truth so taken into the mind, is all that the young need to make them good, and virtuous, and wise, and to qualify them for acting their part properly in their generation. The madness of this in the secular order beggars all description. But what less is it in the sphere of religion, when faith as bare intelligence is allowed to exalt itself in the same way, over charity or love as the source of good works in the will? Justification by faith involves a great truth over against justification by works, considered as of man himself, and carrying in them the notion of self-merit. Such works are dead; just because they proceed from the love of self and the world, which is directly antipodal to the love of the Lord, the only source of any life for the human spirit. But faith, as the mere intellectual apprehension of divine truth in no conjunction with this heavenly life—that is, *faith without works*, as St. James puts it—is also dead; and therefore of no worth. It is in reality no faith, and the divine truth it lays hold of in that way is in reality no truth. Only “faith which works by love” (Gal. v. 6), can be living faith, and then the life is not from the faith as such, but from the love of God which is in it through the will. “Now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three,” it is said; “but the greatest of these is charity” (1 Cor. xiii. 13). It might seem as if faith must be the original principle of the Christian life, because it is here mentioned first, and actually appears first in the process of our regeneration. But the end, here as everywhere, is in fact the

beginning. It is like the progressive development of leaf, flower, and fruit, in all plant life, where foliage and efflorescence are but stages, through which the life of the fruit works from the beginning to bring itself to pass. So faith in the mere understanding first, by virtue of the divine force of the truth which is in it as the word of God, finds itself gradually lifted more and more into positive communion with the interior light-sphere of the word, as this proceeds from the Lord of life and glory himself; brightens thus into Christian hope; and through this comes to full fruitage finally, in that which has been all along the inward scope and power of the movement, "charity out of a pure heart and of a good conscience and of faith unfeigned" (1 Tim. i. 5).

IV. The glorification of Christ, making him to be head over all things to the Church, is not only the power of all righteousness and salvation in his kingdom, but becomes in that view necessarily the prototypal pattern also of all that enters into the constitution of this kingdom, both in the Church at large and in individual believers. "Behold, I make all things new," it is said. "I create new heavens and a new earth; and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind" (Rev. xxi. 5; Is. lxvi. 17). A new spiritual creation of course, that means; transcending the whole order of things going before, and proceeding, not as doctrine but as living reality, from him who is the alpha and omega of the whole, by virtue of the all-power in heaven and in earth to which he has been advanced through his human glorification. The new order of life thus brought into the world is what is expressed comprehensively by the term regeneration, in the sense of our Saviour's discourse with Nicodemus. It is not just of one sense with our Lord's glorification; for there must ever be an infinite distance between what belongs to him, and what belongs to angels or men. But there is a real correspondence, nevertheless, between the work which he wrought in himself, that "being made perfect he might become the author of eternal salvation unto all that obey him" (Heb. v. 9), and the work by which then such

as obey him are made to have part in this salvation. Their spiritual new birth, running all through their life, is an image and counterpart of his quickening or vivification in the spirit—in virtue of which he says, “I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me.” Hence it is that the glorification of Christ becomes the necessary key, for the right understanding of man’s regeneration; as this throws light back also again on the mystery of the glorification. So that it must ever be a very poor theology, as well as a very poor practical Christianity, which has not yet been awakened to any lively interest in the study of the two mysteries under this reciprocal view.

V. And what shall we say then of that theology and Christianity, which can find no room for the glorified Christ in the Holy Scriptures, the inmost sense of which, we are told, he came into the world to fulfil? Must all things that enter into his kingdom undergo spiritual change; so that the very truths of heaven itself may be said to need regeneration in men before they can enter as living stones (and not as dead) into the structure of the New Jerusalem; and yet the Word of God itself, from which all these truths are derived be held to the ceremonies of its merely natural sense, as if the living should be sought forever among the dead, and the Lord were not himself the inspiration of his own Word in any real way whatever!

Those who remember our article on *Sacred Hermeneutics*, published in the MERCERSBURG REVIEW for January, 1878, will understand the meaning of this general interrogation; though it is quite possible all may not be prepared to appreciate fully the significance of it in the present connection. The importance of this subject, however, is so great, that we offer no apology for bringing it here again under notice; especially as we feel deeply, whether others see it or not, that so long as the *idolon* of naturalism continues to reign in our doctrine of inspiration, and to sway its sceptre from thence over our biblical exegesis and theology, the spiritualities of religion, on which we have been insisting in our present article, are not likely to find much serious consideration.

Just at the present time a good opportunity is offered for fixing attention intelligently on the low view of the Scriptures to which we refer, by the proceedings of the late so-called *Prophetic Conference* in New York; which were all based, as we learn, on a carefully prepared digest of first principles, bearing directly on this very subject. The meeting was highly respectable; and the object which drew it together deserves to be spoken of only with commendation. We, too, believe in the second coming of Christ, and look for it as the great hope of Israel in the gathering tribulation of these last times. Our business now, however, is not with the meeting or its doings; but only with its openly professed theory of biblical interpretation; for the popular trial of which, as we have said, it presents so favorable an occasion.

The Conference in its proceedings, affirms and assumes three fundamental propositions, as being of what it holds to be axiomatic force for all its discussions. *First*: The authority of Holy Scripture is the basis of all knowledge that Christ will in any way return to this earth; *Secondly*: The language of Holy Scripture is the source of all information concerning both the matter and the manner of his return; *Thirdly*: The ordinary laws of language are the instruments by which we are to construe for this purpose what God speaks in the Bible. Allowing the first two of these propositions to pass now unchallenged, although we *feel* very distinctly that they also are not free from latent error—we join issue here openly and boldly with the third, and pronounce it wholly irreconcilable with the idea of any true celestial inspiration in the Word of God.

To show that this is no rash or inconsiderate charge, we quote from the document in question the following passage, in which the mere human character of the Bible is made to overshadow its divine character altogether; showing how easy it is for pietism to join hands with rationalism, as has often been remarked, even while ostensibly making war upon it.

Speaking of the last of the three postulates just mentioned, the paper says: "But for the mystical, spiritualizing school of

expositors we should have no need to do more than state this proposition. It would seem to be involved in the popular character of our Bible. Not in cipher, hieroglyphic, or cabalistic signs; but in the language and dialect of living men, with which grammar, rhetoric, and logic can closely deal, has God made known his purposes to us. There is no esoteric sense between the lines and beneath the letter. Spiritual discernment is a knowledge by experience and does not imply a superior intellectualism. Even the symbolic books have their glossary in other and plainer Scriptures. Similes, metaphors, and parables, indeed, abound; but these are all subject to the rules of interpretation which control in secular literature. We affirm, then, the law of Bishop Newton, that a literal rendering is always to be given in the reading of Scripture, unless the context makes it absurd. To vindicate this law from all cavil and establish the proposition which it expresses, one need only appeal to the common sense of any casual stranger to scholastic theology. Is it honest to argue with infidels on the basis of the literal fulfilment of prophecies relating to our Lord's first coming, and allegorize the predictions connected with these, in chapter, verse, and often clause, because they refer to his second appearing? What reason have we for holding in opposition to the Jew, that it was foretold where Christ should be born, where he should begin to preach, how he should enter Jerusalem, what varied sufferings he should endure, that he should hang upon the tree, that not a bone of his body should be broken, that his garments should be parted and his vesture be transferred by lot, that with transgressors he should die, and yet with the rich make his grave—what possible basis have we for asserting the historical fulfilment of all these prophecies which the Jews symbolize, if we, in our turn, spiritualize the plain and closely joined predictions of the glorious Messiah, which they interpret literally? Surely as a key tied by a string close to a lock are the scriptural interpretations of fulfilled prophecy. With these at hand, it is not difficult for the serious student to open the secret things of God."

According to this, the mind of God is in his Word no otherwise than as the mind of a man is in his ordinary speech. It is there at best only as a translation of the divine into what is thus purely and exclusively human. And let it be noted, it is not even the human renovated by divine grace which is supposed necessary to serve as an organ for this purpose. It is simply the general "dialect of living men with which grammar, rhetoric, and logic can closely deal." What becomes then, in all seriousness we ask, of St. Paul's high talk about the impracticability of bringing down the "things of the Spirit of God" to the plane of the mere natural understanding of man? What becomes of the old evangelical idea, that only regenerate men, in distinction from such as are unregenerate, can have any power at all to know, or to teach, God's truth as we have it revealed in the Scriptures? Are we done with all that? Has the modern theology turned it at last into full obsolescence?

Not so, we may be told; it remains still true, that only the spiritual mind can discern the things of the Spirit. But that is an office for the spiritual mind *outside* of the written Word. The word itself has in its bosom no such distinction. It is for all alike, purely human thought in purely human speech. But the spiritual mind sees into it from itself divine things, while the natural mind sees in it what alone in fact is there, namely, human and terrestrial things! This is called "spiritual discernment." And yet "there is no esoteric sense," we are told, "between the lines and beneath the letter." Of course not; what the "spiritual discernment" thus foists into the sacred text is not *esoteric* in the smallest degree. It is all supremely *exoteric*. The sense is not in the text at all, except as it is put there by the serene self-complacency of the supposed spiritual man.

For those who think in this way there is, of course, no really spiritual or internal sense whatever in the Bible itself, as distinguished from its outward, natural, and merely literal sense. To think of *more* there than the bare human words express, an actual *under-sense* from the mind of the Lord himself, involved in the words by a divine logic, far beyond the logic of all

merely human speech, is something which this class of logicians can only stigmatize as mystical extravagance. And yet the Bible itself is full of this very idea; and some sense of it has been present in the mind of the Church through all ages. Here again, however, our literalists manage to keep themselves in some sort of countenance, by resolving the old notion of such an *inspired* under-sense into the character of a simply outward metathesis or transposition of the natural sense in one view over to the same sort of sense again in another view. "Similitudes," they tell us, "metaphors, and parables, abound in the Bible; but these are all subject to the rules of interpretation which control in secular literature." True enough, we reply; and just for that reason all such flashes of light from cloud to cloud in the sphere of mere nature fall utterly short of the true idea of an interior sense in the Bible. For if any such sense be there at all, being as it must be directly of God and not of man, it can be nothing less than real light from the spiritual world falling from within upon the word, in its natural form, and thus for the soul of the believer causing this to glow with new celestial meaning and power.

And why should it not be so, if the mind of God be really and truly in the Bible, as a present and not simply past inspiration? Even our common human speech has a great deal more in it always, than we can see or take note of when we speak. It is common to say, indeed, that our thought and word in speaking are exactly the same; and that is true as regards the thought coming immediately before the word and next back of it. But such immediately next thought, all that we can see by direct consciousness at the time, belongs only to our external natural mind which forms but a small part here of our full inward existence. Behind this again, or rather within it, is the sphere of our mind proper, our rational mind, opening still more interiorly right into the spiritual world itself; and there it is, that the real complex forces, which enter as innumerable fibres into the constitution of our outward conscious thought and speech, are all the time at work for this end—

though we know it not. And thus it is, that the hidden unknown of our daily mental life, whether as thought or speech, is always immeasurably more than the open and known side of it which it turns to our common waking consciousness. There is in this way in a man's words, especially in the words of a man who thinks earnestly, much more than he himself sees at the time; for back of his words is this interior ocean of things invisible, immaterial, and eternal—the region of the universal in distinction from the single and particular, the region of ends and causes in distinction from mere effects—which is continually pressing, as it were, to come to some utterance in his outward thought and speech; and there only, all the time, reigns accordingly the true internal life of the man, in distinction from his relatively superficial external life.

How grandly this comes out in the internal sense of the 139th Psalm, where the omniscient providence of the Lord is made to regard especially just these depths of the human spirit, so unfathomable for the human spirit itself. "Thou understandest MY THOUGHT afar off," it is said; away back in the ten thousand rills, which are flowing toward it continually from the ends of the universe, before it has become actually mine. "For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me. It is HIGH, I cannot attain unto it. Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence?" "Thou hast possessed my reins; thou hast covered me in my mother's womb." The conception and birth of the outward body simply, in this view, is a stupendous wonder; but how much more the bringing forth of the spirit, the soul, the true inward man in the outward man. "I will praise thee! for I am fearfully and wonderfully made! marvelous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well. My SUBSTANCE"—not my material protoplasm, O thou foolish scientist! but my spiritual substantial being from God—"was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth;" that is, deep down in the swaddling-bands

of nature, where all created spiritual being must begin. THERE "thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members (literally, all things of it) were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them!"

Apply all this now to the Word of God, the mind, thought, speech of the living Lord, as we profess to have this in the Bible; there, not by transient inspiration merely, speaking it from heaven in the beginning, and then committing it to the custody of ordinary human speech and thought for all subsequent time; not by this only, but by constant and abiding inspiration, as it is in truth with the word of God in all his natural works; where, as we know, it is only through the ceaseless emission of this word, "running very swiftly" all the time, that even such inanimate things as snow, and hoar-frost, and ice, and winds, and waters, are all the time coming and going (Ps. cxlviii. 15-18): apply all this, we say, to the Bible in such view, and what patience then can we have with any theory for the interpretation of Holy Scripture, which sends us to Ernesti as a master in Israel, or tells us coldly with Bishop Newton "that a literal rendering is always to be given in the reading of scripture unless the context makes it absurd!" Who should not see that there must ever be *infinitely* more here, than thought or speech can ever compass in their natural human form. God's word, in heaven and from heaven, can never be thus bound on earth. There can be no such exhaustion, either of the glorified Christ himself, or of the Word which lives and abides forever in the indwelling presence of his glorification. On the contrary, it seems to us *exhausting*, even to the extent of spiritual deliquium, only to think of such a thing.

Not without some sense of such fainting in our own spirit, therefore, we leave the subject here for the present. And we will add also, not without some inward resonance of that mournful complaint of the ancient Jewish prophet, "Ah Lord God! they say of me, DOTH HE NOT SPEAK PARABLES?"

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