

THE B. B. WARFIELD COLLECTION

THE
WESTMINSTER
ASSEMBLY
AND
ITS WORK



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by B. B. Warfield

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PREFATORY NOTE

REV. BENJAMIN BRECKINRIDGE WARFIELD, D.D., LL.D., Professor of Didactic and Polemic Theology in the Theological Seminary of the Presbyterian Church at Princeton, New Jersey, provided in his will for the collection and publication of the numerous articles on theological subjects which he contributed to encyclopaedias, reviews, and other periodicals, and appointed a committee to edit and publish these papers. In pursuance of his instructions, this, the sixth volume, containing his articles on the Westminster Assembly and its Work, has been prepared under the editorial direction of this committee.

The clerical preparation of this volume has been done by Mr. John E. Meeter, to whom the thanks of the committee are hereby expressed.

ETHELBERT D. WARFIELD

WILLIAM PARK ARMSTRONG

CASPAR WISTAR HODGE

Committee.

THE WESTMINSTER ASSEMBLY AND ITS WORK

FIRST ARTICLE

THE "Westminster Assembly of Divines" derives its name from the ancient conventual church of Westminster Abbey, situated in the western district of the county of London. It was convened in the most ornate portion of this noble fabric, the Chapel of Henry VII, on the first day of July, 1643; but, as the cold weather of autumn came on, it was transferred (October 2, 1643) to a more comfortable room (the so-called "Jerusalem Chamber") in the adjoining Deanery. In that room it thereafter sat, not merely to the end of the 1163 numbered sessions, during which its important labors were transacted (up to February 22, 1649), but through some three years more of irregular life, acting as a committee for the examination of appointees to charges and applicants for licensure to preach. It ultimately vanished with the famous "Long Parliament" to which it owed its being. The last entry in its Minutes is dated March 25, 1652.

The summoning of the Westminster Assembly was an important incident in the conflict between the Parliament and the King, which was the form taken on English soil by the ecclesiastico-political struggle by which all Europe was convulsed during the seventeenth century. It was the difficult task of that century to work out to its legitimate issue what had been auspiciously begun in the great revolution of the preceding period; to secure from disintegration what had been won in that revolution; to protect it from reaction; and to repel the destructive forces set in motion against it by the counter-reformation. The new Protestantism was, during this its second age, cast into a crucible in the heats of which it everywhere suffered serious losses, even though it emerged from them, wherever it survived, in greater compactness and purity. The form which the struggle took in England was determined by the peculiar course the Reformation movement had followed in that country. There, on its

official side, the Reformation was fundamentally a contest between the King and the Pope. The purpose which Henry VIII set before himself was to free the State from foreign influences exerted by the Pope through the Church; and his efforts were directed, with great singleness of aim, to the establishment of his own authority in ecclesiastical matters to the exclusion of that of the Pope. In these efforts he had the support of Parliament, always jealous of foreign interference; and was not merely sustained but urged on by the whole force of the religious and doctrinal reform gradually spreading among the people, which, however, he made it his business rather to curb than to encourage. The removal of this curb during the reign of Edward VI concealed for a time the evils inherent in the new powers assumed by the throne. But with the accession of Elizabeth, who had no sympathy whatever with religious enthusiasm, they began to appear; and they grew ever more flagrant under her successors. The authority in ecclesiastical matters which had been vindicated to the throne over against the Pope, was increasingly employed to establish the general authority of the throne over against the Parliament. The Church thus became the instrument of the crown in compacting its absolutism; and the interests of civil liberty soon rendered it as imperative to break the absolutism of the King in ecclesiastical affairs as it had ever been to eliminate the papacy from the control of the English Church.

The controversy was thus shifted from a contest between Pope and King to a contest between King and Parliament. And as the cause of the King had ever more intimately allied itself with that of the prelatical party in the Church, which had grown more and more reactionary until under the leading of Laud (1573–1645) it had become aggressively and revolutionarily so, the cause of Puritanism, that is of pure Protestantism, became ever more identical with that of the Parliament. When the parties were ultimately lined up for the final struggle, therefore, it was King and prelate on the one side, against Parliament and Puritan on the other.⁴ The main issue which was raised was a secular one, the issue of representative government over against royal absolutism. This issue was fought to a finish, with

the ultimate result that there were established in England a constitutional monarchy and a responsible government. There was complicated with this issue, however, also the issue, no doubt, at bottom, of religious freedom over against ecclesiastical tyranny, for it was impatience with ecclesiastical tyranny which gave its vigor to the movement. But the form which was openly taken by the ecclesiastical issue was rather that of a contest between a pure Protestantism and Catholicizing reaction. It was in the mind of neither of the immediate contestants in the main conflict to free the Church from the domination of the State: they differed only as to the seat of the civil authority to which the Church should be subject—whether King or Parliament. This fundamental controversy lay behind the conflict over the organization of the subject Church and the ordering of its forms of worship—matters which quickly lost their importance, therefore, when the main question was settled. It can occasion little surprise, accordingly, that, when the heats of conflict were over and exhaustion succeeded effort, the English people were able to content themselves, as the ultimate result on the ecclesiastical side, with so slight a gain as a mere act of toleration (May 24, 1689).

This struggle had reached its acutest stage when "the Long Parliament" met, on the third of November, 1640. Profoundly distrustful of the King's sincerity, and determined on its own behalf to be trifled with no longer, Parliament was in no mood for compromises with respect whether to civil or to ecclesiastical affairs. On the ecclesiastical side it was without concern, indeed, for doctrine. It was under no illusions, to be sure, as to the doctrinal significance of the Catholic reaction, and it was fully sensible of the spread of Arminianism in high places. But although there were not lacking hints of such a thing, Tract No. 90 had not yet been written,⁶ and the soundly Reformed character of the Church of England as well in its official Articles of Religion as in its general conviction was not in dispute. John Milton accurately reflects the common sentiment of the day when he declares that "in purity of Doctrine" English Churchmen "agreed with their Brethren," that is, of the other Reformed Churches, while yet in discipline, which is "the execution

and applying of Doctrine home," they were "no better than a Schisme, from all the Reformation, and a sore scandall to them." What the nation in Commons assembled was determined to be rid of in its Church establishment was, therefore, briefly, "bishopricks" and "ceremonies"—what Milton calls "the irreligious pride and hateful tyranny of Prelates" and the "sencelesse ceremonies" which were only "a dangerous earnest of sliding back to Rome." The Convocation of 1640, continuing illegally to sit after the dissolution of the "Short Parliament," had indeed endeavored to protect the established organization of the Church. It had framed a canon, requiring from the whole body of the clergy the famous "et cetera oath," a sort of echo and counterblast to the "National Covenant" which had been subscribed in Scotland two years before (February 28, 1638). By this oath every clergyman was to bind himself never to give his consent "to alter the government of this Church by archbishops, bishops, deans, and archdeacons, etc., as it stands now established, and as by right it ought to stand."⁸ It was even thought worth while to prepare a number of petitions for Parliament with the design of counteracting the effect of this act of convocation. The most important of these, the so-called "London" or "Root and Branch" petition, bore no fewer than 15,000 signatures; and the personal attendance of some 1500 gentlemen of quality when it was presented to Parliament lent weight to its prayer. This was to the effect that "the government of archbishops and lord bishops, deans, and archdeacons, etc." (the same enumeration, observe, as in the "et cetera oath") "with all its dependencies, roots and branches, may be abolished, and all laws in their behalf made void, and the government according to God's word may be rightly placed amongst us." Parliament, however, was in no need of prodding for this work, though it was for various reasons disposed to proceed leisurely in it. The obnoxious Act of Convocation was at once taken up and rebuked. But even the Root and Branch Petition, which was apparently ready from the beginning of the session, was not presented until December 11, and after its presentation was not taken into formal consideration by the House until the following February. As was natural, differences of opinion also began to manifest themselves, as to

precisely what should be done with the bishops, and as to the precise form of government which should be set up in the Church after they had been dealt with. There is no reason to doubt the exactness of Baillie's information¹¹ that the Commons were by a large majority of their membership for erecting some "kind of Presbyteries," and "for bringing down the Bishop in all things, spiritual and temporal, so low as can be with any subsistence." In Parliament as out of it the great majority of leading men had become Presbyterian in their tendencies, and the Independents were for the present prepared to act with them. But there was very little knowledge abroad among the members of Parliament of what Presbytery really was, and even the most convinced Presbyterians doubted the feasibility of setting up the whole Presbyterian system at once, while an influential party still advocated what Baillie calls¹³ a "calked Episcopacie." It still hung in the balance, therefore, whether bishops should be utterly abolished; and any hesitation which may have existed in the Commons was more than matched in the House of Lords. Above all it never entered the thought of Parliament to set up in the Church any manner of government whatever over which it did not itself retain control. The result was that actual legislation dragged. Abortive bill after abortive bill was brought in; now simply to deprive the prelates of secular functions, and again to abolish the whole Episcopal system. It was not until the autumn of 1641 (October 21), that at length a bill excluding the bishops from secular activities was passed by the Commons to which the assent of the Lords was obtained (February 5, 1642); and not until another year had slipped away that, under Scotch influence (August, 1642), a bill was finally passed (January 26, 1643) abolishing prelacy altogether.

Alongside of these slowly maturing efforts at negative legislation there naturally ran a parallel series of attempts to provide a positive constitution for the Church after the bishops had been minished or done away. It was recognized from the beginning that for this positive legislation the advice of approved divines would be requisite. Preparation for it took, therefore, much the form of proposals for securing such advice. From all sides, within Parliament and without

it alike, the suggestion was pressed that a formal Synod of Divines should be convened to which Parliament should statedly appeal for counsel in all questions which should occasionally arise in the process of the settlement of the Church. And from the beginning it was at least hinted that, in framing its advice, such a Synod might well bear in mind wider interests than merely the internal peace of the Church of England; that it might, for example, consider the advantage of securing along with that a greater harmony with the other Reformed Churches, particularly the neighboring Church of Scotland. It was accordingly with this wider outlook in mind that the proposition was given explicit shape in "the Grand Remonstrance" which was drawn up in the Commons on November 8, 1641, and, having been passed on November 22, was presented to the King on December 1. This document began by avowing the intention of Parliament to "reduce within bounds that exorbitant power which the prelates had assumed unto themselves," and to set up a juster "discipline and government in the Church." It proceeded thus (§ 186): "And the better to effect the intended reformation, we desire there may be a general synod of the most grave, pious, learned, and judicious divines of this island; assisted with some from foreign parts, professing the same religion with us, who may consider of all things necessary for the peace and good government of the Church, and represent the results of their consultations unto the Parliament, to be there allowed of and confirmed, and receive the stamp of authority, thereby to find passage and obedience throughout the kingdom." In pursuance of this design, the Commons engaged themselves desultorily from the ensuing February (1642) in preparations for convening such a Synod. The names of suitable ministers to sit in it were canvassed; selection was made of two divines from each English and one from each Welsh county, two from the Channel Islands and from each University, and four from London;¹⁹ and a bill was passed through both Houses (May 9 to June 30, 1642) commanding the Assembly so constituted to convene on July 1, 1642. The King's assent failing, however, this bill lapsed, and was superseded by another to the same general effect, and that by yet another, and yet another, which went the same way, until

finally a sixth bill was prepared, read in the Commons as an ordinance on May 13, 1643, and having been agreed to by the Lords on June 12, 1643, was put into effect without the King's assent. By this ordinance, the Divines, in number 121, supplemented by ten peers and twenty members of the House of Commons (forty being a quorum) were required "to meet and assemble themselves at Westminster, in the Chapel called King Henry the VII's Chapel, on the first day of July, in the year of our Lord One thousand six hundred and forty-three," and thereafter "from time to time [to] sit, and be removed from place to place" and to "confer and treat among themselves of such matters and things, touching and concerning the Liturgy, Discipline, and Government of the Church of England, or the vindicating and clearing of the doctrine of the same from all false aspersions and misconstructions, as shall be proposed unto them by both or either of the said Houses of Parliament, and no other; and to deliver their opinions and advices of, or touching the matters aforesaid, as shall be most agreeable to the word of God, to both or either of the said Houses, from time to time, in such manner and sort as by both or either of the said Houses of Parliament shall be required; and the same not to divulge, by printing, writing, or otherwise, without the consent of both or either House of Parliament."

The prominence given in this ordinance to the reorganization of the government of the Church of England as the primary matter upon which the Assembly thus instituted should be consulted was inherent in the nature of the case, but should not pass without specific notice. And, we should further note, next to the reorganization of the government of the Church the reform of its liturgy was, as was natural in the circumstances, to be the Assembly's care. Doctrinal matters lay wholly in the background. In the heading of the ordinance it is described with exactness as an ordinance "for the calling of an Assembly of learned and godly Divines, and others, to be consulted with by the Parliament, for the settling of the Government and Liturgy of the Church of England"; while it is only added as something clearly secondary in importance that its labors

may be directed also to the "vindicating and clearing of the doctrine of the said Church from false aspersions and interpretations." In the body of the ordinance the occasion of calling such an Assembly is detailed. It was because "many things remain in the Liturgy, Discipline, and Government of the Church, which do necessarily require a further and more perfect reformation than as yet hath been attained"; and more specifically because Parliament had arrived at the determination that the existing prelatical government should be taken away as evil, "a great impediment to reformation and growth of religion, and very prejudicial to the state and government of this kingdom." The prime purpose for calling the Assembly is therefore declared to be "to consult and advise" with Parliament, as it may be required to do, in the Parliament's efforts to substitute for the existing prelatical government of the Church, such a government "as may be most agreeable to God's holy word, and most apt to procure and preserve the peace of the Church at home, and nearer agreement with the Church of Scotland, and other Reformed Churches abroad." It is a clearly secondary duty laid on it also "to vindicate and clear the doctrine of the Church of England from all false calumnies and aspersions." It has already been pointed out, that this emphasis on the reformation first of the government and next of the liturgy of the Church, merely reflects the actual situation of affairs. The doctrine of the Church of England was everywhere recognized as in itself soundly Reformed, and needing only to be protected from corrupting misinterpretations; its government and worship, on the other hand, were conceived to be themselves sadly in need of reformation, in the interests of adjustment to the will of God as declared in Scripture, and of harmonizing with the practice of the sister Reformed Churches. Of these sister Reformed Churches, that of Scotland is particularly singled out for mention as the one into "a nearer agreement" with the government of which it were especially desirable that the new government of the Church of England should be brought. But this appears on the face of the ordinance merely as a measure of general prudence and propriety—there is nothing to indicate that any formal uniformity in religion with Scotland was to be sought. It was with the reorganization of the Church of England

alone that Parliament was at this time concerned; and the Assembly called "to consult and advise" with it in this work, had no function beyond the bounds of that Church.

What is of most importance to observe in this ordinance, however, is the care that is taken to withhold all independent powers from the Assembly it convened and to confine it to a purely advisory function. Parliament had no intention whatever of erecting by its own side an ecclesiastical legislature to which might be committed the work of reorganizing the Church, leaving Parliament free to give itself to the civil affairs of the nation. What it proposed to do, was simply to create a permanent Committee of Divines which should be continuously accessible to it, and to which it could resort from time to time for counsel in its prosecution of the task of reconstituting the government, discipline, and worship of the Church of England. Parliament was determined to hold the entire power, civil and ecclesiastical alike, in its own hands; and it took the most extreme pains to deny all initiation and all jurisdiction to the Assembly of Divines it was erecting,²³ and to limit it strictly to supplying Parliament with advice upon specific propositions occasionally submitted to it. The ordinance is described in its heading as an ordinance for the calling of an Assembly "to be consulted with by the Parliament." And in the body of the ordinance the function of the Divines is described as "to consult and advise of such matters and things, touching the premises"—that is to say, the Liturgy, Discipline, and Government of the Church, together with the clearing and vindicating of its doctrine—"as shall be proposed unto them by both or either of the Houses of Parliament, and to give their advice and counsel therein to both or either of the said Houses, when, and as often as they shall be thereunto required." And again, with perhaps superfluous but certainly significant emphasis, in the empowering clauses, the assembled Divines are given "power and authority, and are hereby likewise enjoined, from time to time during this present Parliament, or until further order be taken by both the said Houses, to confer and treat among themselves of such matters and things, touching and concerning the Liturgy, Discipline, and Government of

the Church of England, or the vindicating and clearing of the doctrine of the same from all false aspersions and misconstructions, as shall be proposed unto them by both or either of the said Houses of Parliament, and no other"; and are further enjoined "to deliver their opinions and advices of, or touching the matters aforesaid, as shall be most agreeable to the word of God, to both or either of the said Houses, from time to time, in such manner and sort as by both or either of the said Houses of Parliament shall be required; and the same not to divulge, by printing, writing, or otherwise, without the consent of both or either House of Parliament." To make assurance trebly certain the ordinance closes with this blanket clause: "Provided always, That this Ordinance, or any thing therein contained, shall not give unto the persons aforesaid, or any of them, nor shall they in this Assembly assume to exercise any jurisdiction, power, or authority ecclesiastical whatsoever, or any other power than is herein particularly expressed." The effect of these regulations was of course to make the Westminster Assembly merely the creature of Parliament. They reflect the Erastian temper of Parliament, which, intent though it was upon vindicating the civil liberty of the subject, never caught sight of the vision of a free Church in a free State, but not unnaturally identified the cause of freedom with itself and would have felt it a betrayal of liberty not to have retained all authority, civil and ecclesiastical alike, in its own hands as the representatives of the nation. With it, the great conflict in progress was that between King and Parliament; and what it was chiefly concerned with was the establishment of Parliamentary government. In its regulations with respect to the Westminster Assembly, however, it did not go one step beyond what it had been accustomed to see practised in England with regard to the civil control of ecclesiastical assemblies. The effect of these regulations was, in fact, merely to place this Assembly with respect to its independence of action, in the same position relatively to Parliament, which had been previously occupied by the Convocations of the Church of England relatively to the crown, as regulated by 25 Henry VIII (1533/4), c. 19, revived by 1 Eliz. (1558/9), c. 1. s. z., and expounded by Coke, "Reports," xiii. p. 72. And it must be borne in

mind that stringent as these regulations were, they denied to the Assembly only initiation and authority: they left it perfectly free in its deliberations and conclusions.²⁵ The limitation of its discussions to topics committed to it by Parliament, moreover, proved no grievance, in the face of the very broad commitments which were ultimately made to it; and its incapacity to give legal effect to its determinations—which it could present only as "humble advices" to Parliament—deprived them of none of their intrinsic value, and has in no way lessened their ultimate influence.

In pursuance of this ordinance, and in defiance of an inhibitory proclamation from the King, the Assembly duly met on July 1, 1643. It was constituted in the Chapel of Henry VII after there had been preached to its members in the Abbey by Dr. William Twisse, who had been named by Parliament prolocutor to the Assembly, a sermon which was listened to by a great concourse, including both Houses of Parliament. Sixty-nine members were in attendance on the first day; and that seems to have thereafter been the average daily attendance. No business was transacted on this day, however, but adjournment was taken until July 6: and it was not until July 8 that work was begun, after each member had made a solemn protestation "to maintain nothing in point of doctrine but what 'he believed' to be most agreeable to the Word of God, nor in point of discipline, but what may make most for God's glory and the peace and good of his church." The first task committed to the Assembly was the revision of the Thirty-nine Articles, and it was engaged upon this labor intermittently until October 12, at which date it had reached the sixteenth Article.²⁷ That the Assembly was thus put for its first work upon the least pressing of the tasks which were expected of it—"the vindicating and clearing of the doctrine of the Church of England from all false aspersions and misconstructions"—may have been due to the concurrence of many causes. It may have been that in its engrossment with far more immediately pressing duties than even the settlement of the future government of the Church of England, Parliament had had no opportunity to prepare work for the Assembly. Beyond question, however, the main cause was the

premonition of that change in the posture of affairs by which the work of the Assembly was given a new significance and a much wider range than were contemplated when it was called, and an international rather than a merely national bearing. It was natural that Parliament should hold it back from its more important labors until the arrangements already in progress for this change in the scope of its work were perfected. It is not necessary to suppose that the determinations of the Assembly were essentially altered—or that Parliament supposed they would be—by the change in the bearing of its work to which we allude. It is quite true that in the course of the debates which were subsequently held, sufficient confusion of mind was occasionally exhibited on the part of many in the Assembly to make us thankful that these debates were actually regulated by the firm guidance of men of experience in the matters under discussion. But the known convictions of the members of the Assembly, evidenced in their printed works no less than in the debates of the Assembly, render it altogether unlikely that had they been called upon, as it was at first contemplated they should be, to advise Parliament unassisted and merely with respect to the settlement of the Church of England, they would have failed to fight their way to conclusions quite similar to those they actually reached. Nevertheless the alteration of the bearing of their work from a merely national to international significance, obviously not only gave it a far wider compass than was at first contemplated, but quite revolutionized its spirit and threw it into such changed relations as to give it a totally different character.

This great change in the function which the Assembly was to serve, was brought about by the stage reached by the civil conflict in the summer of 1643. The Parliamentary cause had sunk to its lowest ebb; and it had become imperative to obtain the assistance of the Scots. But the assistance of the Scots could be had only at the price of a distinctively ecclesiastical alliance. The Scotch had been far greater sufferers than even the English from the absolutism which had been practised by the Stuart Kings in ecclesiastical matters. Not content with asserting and exercising original authority in the ecclesiastical

affairs of England, these monarchs had asserted and were ever increasingly exercising the same absolutism in the ecclesiastical affairs of Scotland also; and had freely employed the ecclesiastical instruments at their service in England in order to secure their ends in Scotland. But the relations of Church and State in Scotland were not quite the same as those which obtained in England. In the northern kingdom, from the beginning of the Reformation, the ideal of a free Church in a free State had been sedulously cherished and repeatedly given effect; and the government of the Church was in representative courts which asserted and exercised their own independent spiritual jurisdiction. The interference of the King with the working of this ecclesiastical machinery was, therefore, widely resented as mere tyranny. And as it was employed precisely for the purpose of destroying the ecclesiastical organization which had been established in the Church of Scotland, and of assimilating the Scottish Church in government and mode of worship (doctrine was not in question³¹) to the model of the Church of England, which was considered by the Scots far less pure and Scriptural than their own, it took the form also of religious persecution. No claim could be put in here, as was put in in England, that the royal prerogative was exercised only for conserving the ancient settlement of the Church. It was employed precisely for pulling down what had been built up, and was, therefore, not only tyrannical in form but revolutionary in its entire effect. Add that it was understood that the instrument, if not the instigator, of this persecuting tyranny had come in late years to be a foreign prelate aggressively bent even in England on a violently reactionary policy, to which that nation was unalterably averse, and in Scotland balking apparently at nothing which promised to reduce the Church there to the same Catholicizing model which he had set himself to establish and perpetuate in England, and it will be apparent how galling the situation had become. Chafing under such wrongs, Scotland needed only a spark to be set on fire. The spark was provided in the spring of 1637, by the imposition upon the Church of Scotland by the mere proclamation of the King—"without warrant from our Kirk," as say the Scottish Commissioners—of a complete new service-book designed to assimilate the worship of the Scottish

Church as closely as possible to that of England, or, as Milton expresses it from the English Puritan point of sight, "to force upon their Fellow-Subjects, that which themselves are weary of, the Skeleton of a Masse-Booke."³³ When the book was read in the Cathedral Church of St. Giles, Edinburgh, July 23, 1637, however "incontinent," says Baillie, "the serving-maids began such a tumult, as was never heard of since the Reformation in our nation"; and thus "the serving-maids in Edinburgh"—symbolized in the picturesque legend of Jennie Geddes and her stool, which has almost attained the dignity of history—"began to draw down the Bishop's pride, when it was at the highest." The movement thus inaugurated ran rapidly forward: as Archbishop Spottiswoode is said to have exclaimed, "all that they had been doing these thirty years past was thrown down at once." The Scots immediately reclaimed their ecclesiastical, and, in doing that, also their civil liberties; eradicated at once every trace of the prelacy which had been imposed on them, and restored their Presbyterian government; secured the simplicity of their worship and reinstated the strictness of their discipline; and withal bound themselves by a great oath—"the National Covenant"³⁶—to the perpetual preservation of their religious settlement in its purity.

The Scots to whom the English Parliament made its appeal for aid in the summer of 1643, were, then, "a covenanted nation." They were profoundly convinced that the root of all the ills they had been made to suffer through two reigns, culminating in the insufferable tyranny of the Laudian domination, was to be found in the restless ambition of the English prelates; and they had once for all determined to make it their primary end to secure themselves in the permanent peaceful possession of their own religious establishment. The Parliamentary Commissioners came to them, indeed, seeking aid in their political struggle and with their minds set on a civil compact: they found the Scots, however, equally determined that any bond into which they entered should deal primarily with the ecclesiastical situation and should be fundamentally a religious engagement. "The English," says Baillie, "were for a civill League, we for a religious Covenant." The Scots, indeed, had nothing to gain from the alliance which was

offered them, unless they gained security for their Church from future English interference; while on the other hand by entering into it they risked everything which they had at such great cost recovered for themselves. Their own liberties were already regained; the cause of Parliament in England, on the contrary, hung in the gravest doubt. It really was an act of high chivalry, to call it by no more sacred name, for them to cast in their lot at this crisis with the Parliament; and more than one Scot must have cried to himself during the ensuing years, "Surelie it was a great act of faith in God, and hudge courage and unheard of compassion, that moved our nation to hazard their own peace, and venture their lives and all, for to save a people so irrecoverable ruined both in their owne and all the world's eyes." On the other hand, the Scots demanded nothing more than that the Parliament should explicitly bind itself to the course it was on its own account loudly professing to be following, and had already declared, in the ordinance (for example) by which it had called to its aid an advisory council of Divines,³⁹ to be the object it was setting before itself in the reconstruction of the English Church. All that was asked of the Parliament, in point of fact, was, thus, that it should give greater precision, and binding force under the sanction of a solemn covenant, to its repeatedly declared purpose. That the Parliamentary Commissioners boggled over this demand, especially if it were in the effort to keep "a doore open in England to Independence," was scarcely worthy of them, and boded ill for the future. That they yielded in the end and the Scots had their way may have been, no doubt, the index of their necessities; but it would seem to have been already given in the logic of the situation. To hold out on this issue were to stultify the whole course of the Long Parliament hereto fore. The result was, accordingly, "the Solemn League and Covenant."

By this pact, the two nations bound themselves to each other in a solemn league and covenant, the two terms being employed apparently as designating the pact respectively from the civil and the religious sides. This "league and covenant" was sworn to in England by both Houses of Parliament, as also by their servant-body, the Assembly of Divines and in Scotland by both the civil and religious

authorities: and then was sent out into the two countries to be subscribed by the whole population. By the terms of the engagement made in it, the difference in the actual ecclesiastical situations of the contracting parties was clearly recognized, and that in such terms as to make the actual situation in Scotland the model of the establishment agreed upon for both countries. The contracting parties bound themselves to "the preservation of the reformed religion in the Church of Scotland, in doctrine, worship, discipline, and government, against our common enemies," on the one hand; and on the other to "the reformation of religion in the kingdoms of England and Ireland, in doctrine, worship, discipline, and government, according to the word of God and the example of the best reformed Churches"; to the end that thereby "the Churches of God in the three kingdoms" might be brought "to the nearest conjunction and uniformity in religion, confession of faith, form of Church government, directory for worship and catechizing."⁴² According to the terms of this engagement, therefore, the Parliament undertook, in the settlement of the Church of England on which it was engaged, to study to bring that Church to the nearest possible "conjunction and uniformity" with the existing settlement of the Church of Scotland, and that in the four items of Confession of Faith, Form of Church Government, Directory for Worship, and Catechizing; and these four items were accordingly currently spoken of thereafter as "the four points or parts of uniformity." By this engagement there was given obviously not only a wholly new bearing to the work of the Assembly of Divines which had been convened as a standing body of counsellors to the Parliament in ecclesiastical affairs, and that one of largely increased significance and heightened dignity; but also a wholly new definiteness to the work which should be required of it, with respect both to its compass and its aim. Whatever else Parliament might call on the Assembly to advise it in, it would now necessarily call on it to propose to it a new Form of Church Government, a new Directory for Worship, a new Confession of Faith, and a new Catechetical Manual. And in framing these formularies the aim of the Assembly would now necessarily be to prepare forms which might be acceptable not merely to the Church of

England, as promising to secure her internal peace, and efficiency, but also to the Church of Scotland as preserving the doctrines, worship, discipline, government already established in that Church. The significance of the Solemn League and Covenant was, therefore, that it pledged the two nations to uniformity in their religious establishments and pledged them to a uniformity on the model of the establishment already existing in the Church of Scotland.

The taking of the Solemn League and Covenant by the two nations, on the one side marked the completeness of the failure of the ecclesiastical policy of the King, and on the other seemed to promise to the Scots the accomplishment of a dream which had long been cherished by them. The broader ecclesiastical policy consistently pursued by the throne throughout the whole Stuart period had been directed to the reduction of the religion of the three kingdoms to uniformity. The model of this uniformity, however, was naturally derived from the prelatical constitution of the Church of England, to which the Stuart monarchs had taken so violent a predilection; and that, in the later years of their administration when the policy of "thorough" was being pushed forward, as interpreted in an extremely reactionary spirit. No one could doubt that important advantages would accrue from uniformity in the religious establishment of the three kingdoms; and the Scots, taking a leaf out of their adversaries' book, began early to press for its institution in the reconstructed Church, on the basis, however, of their own Presbyterianism. Their motive for this was not merely zeal for the extension of their particular church order, which they sincerely believed to be *jure divino*; but a conviction that only so could they secure themselves from future interference in their own religious establishment from the side of the stronger sister-nation. They had no sooner recovered their Presbyterian organization, and simplicity of worship, therefore, than they began to urge the reformation of the sister-church on their model. The Scottish peace-commissioners, for example, took up to London with them, in the closing months of 1640, a paper drawn up by Alexander Henderson, in which they set forth their "desires concerning unity in religion," and "uniformity of Church government

as a special mean to conserve peace in his majesty's dominion."46 In this paper they declared that it is "to be wished that there were one Confession of Faith, one form of Catechism, one Directory for all the parts of the public worship of God, and for prayer, preaching, administration of sacraments, etc., and one form of Church government, in all the Churches of his majesty's dominions." Here we see enumerated the precise schedule of uniformity which was afterwards undertaken under the sanction of the Solemn League and Covenant, the items being arranged climactically in the order of ascending immediate importance. For the Commissioners recognized that it was uniformity of Church Government which was most imperatively required; and equally frankly urged that this uniformity of Church Government should be sought by the common adoption by both nations of the Presbyterian system. The propriety of such a demand they argued on the grounds that the Presbyterian system was the system in use in all other Reformed Churches; that the English prelatical system had been the source of much evil; that the Reformed Churches were clear that their system is *jure divino*, while the *jus divinum* was not commonly claimed for Episcopacy; and above all, that the Scotch were bound by oath, not lately taken in wilfulness but of ancient obligation, to the Presbyterian system, while the English were free to recast their system, and indeed were already bent on recasting it. This paper was handed in to the Lords of the Treaty on March 10, 1641, with little apparent immediate effect. Indeed, there seems to have been even a disposition to resent its suggestions. The whole matter was put to one side by the Parliament with a somewhat grudging word of thanks to Scotland for wishing uniformity of Church Government with England, and a somewhat dry intimation that Parliament had already taken into consideration the reformation of Church Government and would proceed in it in due time as should "best conduce to the glory of God and peace of the Church."48 This response was accordingly embodied in the treaty of August 7, 1641, to the effect that the desire expressed for "a conformity of Church Government between the two Nations" was commendable; "and as the Parliament hath already taken into consideration the reformation of Church Government, so they will

proceed therein in due time as shall best conduce to the glory of God and peace of the Church and of both Kingdomes."

Nevertheless the suggestion ultimately bore fruit. It was repeated by Henderson to the Scottish Assembly, meeting at the end of July next ensuing, in a proposition that the Scotch Church, by way of holding out the olive branch, should itself draw up a new "Confession of Faith, a Catechisme, a Directorie for all the parts of the publick worship, and a Platforme of Government, wherein possiblie England and we might agree." This proposal met so far with favor that Henderson was himself appointed to take the labor in hand, with such help as he should choose to call to his side. On further consideration, however, he himself judged it best to await the issue of affairs in England;⁵¹ fully recognizing that the adoption of purely Scottish forms by both nations was not to be hoped for, but if uniformity was ever to be attained, "a new Forme must be sett downe for us all, and in my opinion some men sett apairt sometime for that worke." Accordingly, when, as the outbreak of open war between the Parliament and the King became imminent in the midsummer of 1642, Parliament addressed a letter to the Scottish Assembly declaring "their earnest desyre to have their Church reformed according to the word of God,"⁵³ and their well-grounded hope of accomplishing this task if war could be averted—all of which was interpreted, and was intended to be interpreted, by an accompanying letter "from a number of English ministers at London" in which it was asserted that "the desire of the most godly and considerable part" among them was for the establishment in England of the Presbyterian Government, "which hath just and evident foundation both in the Word of God and religious reason"; and, referring directly to the Scottish proposal, "that (according to your intimation) we may agree in one Confession of Faith, one Directorie of Worship, one publike Catechisme, and form of Government"—the Assembly naturally responded by reiterating its desire for this unifying settlement and renewing "the Proposition made by" its Commissioners in 1641 "for beginning the work of Reformation at the Uniformity of Kirk-Government." "For what hope," the Assembly

argues, "can there be of Unity in Religion, of one Confession of Faith, one Form of Worship, and one Catechism, till there be first one Form of Ecclesiastical Government?" The response of Parliament,⁵⁶ satisfactory if a little reserved, intimated the expected meeting of the reforming Synod on November 5, and asked the appointment of some Scottish delegates "to assist at" it; a request which was immediately complied with, and the Commissioners named, who, a year later, after the adoption of the Solemn League and Covenant, went up in somewhat different circumstances, and with a somewhat different commission.⁵⁸ Meanwhile the Scots assiduously kept their proposals for the institution of uniformity of religious constitution in the two nations forward, and the course of events finally threw the game into their hands, when the Commissioners of Parliament appeared in Edinburgh in August, 1643, seeking Scottish aid in their extremity, and swore the Solemn League and Covenant as its price. By this compact the two nations bound themselves precisely to the punctual carrying out of the program proposed by the Scottish Commissioners in 1640–1641.

The Solemn League and Covenant, it must be borne in mind, was no loose agreement between two Churches, but a solemnly ratified treaty between two nations. The Commissioners who went up to London from Scotland under its provisions, went up not as delegates from the Scottish Church to lend their hand to the work of the Assembly of Divines, but as the accredited representatives of the Scottish people, to treat with the English Parliament in the settlement of the details of that religious uniformity which the two nations had agreed with one another to institute. They might on the invitation of the English Parliament be present at the sessions of the advisory Assembly it had convened, and give it their advice throughout all the processes of its deliberations. And it is obvious that their presence there would much advance the business in hand, by tending to prevent proposals of a hopelessly one-sided character from being formulated. It would seem obvious also that it was eminently fitting that Scotch counsels should be heard in the deliberations of a body to which, under whatever safeguards, was in

point of fact committed the task of preparing the drafts of formularies which it was hoped might prove acceptable to both Churches—especially when thirty members of the English Parliament, the party of the other part to this treaty, were members of the body. But the proper task of the Scotch Commissioners lay not in the Assembly of Divines, but outside of it. It was their function, speaking broadly, to see that such formularies were proposed to the two contracting nations for the reducing of their church establishments to uniformity, as would be acceptable to the Church of Scotland which they represented, and would fulfil the provisions of the Solemn League and Covenant under the sanction of which they were acting. And if the Assembly of Divines were utilized, as it in point of fact was utilized, to draw up these draft formularies, it was the business of the Scottish Commissioners to see that the Divines did their work in full view of the Scottish desires and point of view, and that the documents issued from their hands in a form in which the Church of Scotland could adopt them. In the prosecution of these their functions as Treaty Commissioners, their immediate relations were not with the Assembly of Divines but with the Parliament or with whatever commissioners the Parliament might appoint to represent it in conference with them. They could treat with or act directly upon the Assembly of Divines only at the request of Parliament, to treat with which they were really commissioned; and only to the extent which Parliament might judge useful for the common end in view. A disposition manifested itself; it is true, on their appearing in London, to look upon them merely as Scotch members of the Assembly of Divines, appointed to sit with the Divines in response to a request from the English Parliament. This view of their functions they vigorously repudiated. They were perfectly willing, they said,⁶¹ to sit in the Assembly as individuals and to lend the Divines in their deliberations all the aid in their power, if the Parliament invited them to do so. But as Commissioners for their National Church, they were Treaty Commissioners, empowered to treat with the Parliament itself. Accordingly a committee of Parliament was appointed (October 17–20, 1643) to meet statedly with them and consult with them, to

which was added a committee from the Divines; and it was through this "Grand Committee" that the work of the Assembly on the points of uniformity was directed. As they were requested by Parliament also "as private men" to sit in the Assembly of Divines they occupied a sort of dual position relatively to the Assembly,⁶³ and this has been the occasion of some misunderstanding and even criticism of their varied lines of activity. The matter is, however, perfectly simple. In all its work looking to the preparation of a basis for the proposed uniformity, the Assembly really did its work under the direction proximately not of the Parliament but of "the Grand Committee," and the results of its labors were presented, therefore, not merely to Parliament, but, also, through its Commissioners, to the Scottish Assembly. The Scotch Commissioners as members of "the Grand Committee" had therefore an important part in preparing the work of the Divines for them in all that concerned the uniformity; and as present at the deliberations of the Divines were naturally concerned to secure for their own proposals favorable consideration, and did their best endeavors to obtain such results as they might as Commissioners of the Scotch Church recommend to its approval. Throughout everything they acted consistently as the Commissioners of the Scotch Church, seeking the ends which they were as such charged with securing. They were not members of the Assembly of Divines, were present at its meetings and took part in its deliberations only by express invitation and frankly as the agents of the Scotch Church, and possessed and exercised no voice in the determinations of the body.

By the Solemn League and Covenant, therefore, the work of the Assembly of Divines was revolutionized, and not only directed to a new end but put upon a wholly new basis. Its proceedings up to the arrival of the first of the Scottish Commissioners in London, on September 15, 1643, and the taking of the Covenant on September 25th, must be regarded simply as "marking time." The Parliament perfectly understood before the first of July, what was before it; and it could never have imagined that the revision of the Thirty-nine Articles upon which it had set the Assembly could prove an

acceptable Confession of Faith for the two Churches. The employment of the Assembly in that labor was but an expedient to occupy it innocuously until its real work under the new conditions could be begun. With the coming of the Scotch Commissioners, however, the real work of the Assembly became possible, and was at once committed to it. Already on September 18, there was referred to it from the Commons the consideration of a discipline and government apt to procure nearer agreement with the Church of Scotland and of a new liturgical form, and from the 12th of the October following, when the Lords had concurred, the Assembly was engaged, with many interruptions, no doubt, but in a true sense continuously, and even strenuously, upon the "four things mentioned in the Covenant, viz.: the Directory for Worship, the Confession of Faith, Form of Church Government, and Catechism."⁶⁶ And when "the debating and perfecting" of these four things were over, the real work of the Divines was done, and the last of the Scotch Commissioners accordingly, having caused a formal Minute to that effect to be entered on the records of the Assembly, felt able to take leave of the Assembly and return home. As an advisory committee to the Parliament of England, many other tasks were laid on the Assembly, some of which had their close connection with its work on the points of uniformity, and some of which had no connection with it at all. And the life of the Assembly was prolonged as such a committee for many months after its whole work on "the uniformity" had been completed. But its significant work lies decidedly in its preparation of a complete set of formularies—Confession, Catechisms, Platform of Government, Directory for Worship—which it proposed to the contracting nations as a suitable basis for a uniform church establishment in the three kingdoms.

In the Second Article some account will be given of the work of the Divines in the preparation of these formularies.

SECOND ARTICLE

IN THE First Article some account was given of the calling of the Westminster Assembly and of its historical meaning. It was pointed out that its really significant work was the preparation of formularies designed to serve the Churches of the three kingdoms as a basis for uniform establishments. Some account of its work on these so-called "four parts of uniformity" is now to be given.

Of these "four parts of uniformity" the one which was at once the most pressing and the most difficult for the Assembly was the preparation of a platform of government for the Churches. Both Parliament and Assembly were, indeed, fairly committed to the Presbyterian system under solemn sanction; and the majority of the members of both bodies were sincerely Presbyterian in conviction. But sincerity and consistency are very different matters; and so soon as the details of church organization were brought under discussion, a bewildering variety of judgments was revealed. The Scots, though prepared to yield in the interest of harmony all that it was possible to yield, perhaps more than it was altogether wise to yield, were yet peremptory for a really Presbyterian establishment, as they were bound to be under the engagements of the National Covenant and were fully entitled to be under those of the Solemn League and Covenant. In this they were supported by the overwhelming majority of the Assembly. It fell, indeed, to the lot of the Scots to hold back the English Presbyterians from precipitate and aggressive action. It was their policy to obtain if possible a settlement not so much imposed by a majority as at least acceptable to all. They therefore gave themselves not merely to conciliate the minor differences which emerged in the debate—on the part of those, for example, who preferred a mixed Presbyterian and Episcopal system (Twisser, Gataker, Gouge, Palmer, Temple)—but even "to satisfy" the small but able band of Independents in the Assembly (Goodwin, Nye, Burroughs, Bridge, Carter, Caryl, Phillips, Sterry), who wished all authoritative government in the Church to stop with the congregation. The Independents, on their part, adopted an obstructive policy, and set themselves not only to obtain every concession it was possible to wring from the majority, but to delay

the adoption of its scheme of Presbyterian government, and if possible, to defeat its establishment altogether. They were supported in this policy by the Erastians who, though not largely represented in the Assembly (Lightfoot, Coleman, Selden), were dominant in Parliament,⁷² which accordingly showed itself ultimately averse to establishing any church government possessed of independent or final jurisdiction even in spiritual matters. In the vain hope of escaping the schism threatened by the Independents and of avoiding an open breach with the Erastian Parliament, the Presbyterian majority in the Assembly proceeded slowly with their platform of government, contenting itself meanwhile with debating and voting a series of detached propositions, which were moreover couched in the simplest and most comprehensive language, while they postponed for the present framing a systematic statement. This delay was, however, itself as great an evil as could have been encountered; and as the differences it was hoped to conciliate were such as in their nature were not subject to "accommodation," the Assembly was compelled in the end to report its scheme of government, which it had thus reduced to its lowest terms and in so doing shorn of much of its strength and attractiveness, in the face of the protest of the Independents and to a determinedly Erastian Parliament.⁷⁴

The first portion of the Assembly's work presented to Parliament was the "Directory for Ordination" which was sent up on April 20, 1644. This was followed the ensuing autumn (November 8 and December 11, 1644) by certain "Propositions concerning Church Government," compacted out of the several separate declarations upon points of government which had from time to time been voted by the Assembly in the course of its debates, now gathered together and thrown into some semblance of order. It must be confessed that the work of collecting and ordering these propositions was somewhat carelessly done. Now and then, for example, in transferring them from the Minutes clauses are retained which have no proper meaning in their new setting. We are told, for instance, that "the pastor is an ordinary and perpetual officer in the church, prophesying of the time of the Gospel"; and it is only from the

vidimus of the votes of the Assembly preserved by Gillespie that we learn that the clause "prophesying of the time of the Gospel," here sheer nonsense, was a comment on Jer. 3:15–17 which was on this ground adduced as a proof-text for the proposition "that there is such an ordinary and perpetual officer in the church as a pastor." Again there is enumerated among the offices of a pastor as if it were an independent function, "to dispense other divine mysteries"; and we have to go to Gillespie's vidimus to learn that the Assembly meant just the Sacraments (along with the benediction) and no "other divine mysteries" by this phrase. The document nevertheless contains a firm enough, though cautiously worded, presentation of the essentials of the Presbyterian system; and was therefore followed, of course, by a protest from the Independent members of the Assembly, which naturally occasioned a reply from the Assembly itself. These documents were later (1648) published together under the title, "The Reasons Presented by the Dissenting Brethren Against Certain Propositions Concerning Church Government, together with the Answers of the Assembly of Divines to these Reasons of Dissent"; and republished in 1652 under the new title, "The Grand Debate concerning Presbytery and Independency by the Assembly of Divines convened at Westminster by authority of Parliament."

The "Propositions" themselves, to which the "Directory for Ordination" was adjoined, so as to form a single document, were dealt with very freely by Parliament. Intent only on the practical settlement of the Church while it preserved to itself all ecclesiastical as well as civil authority, Parliament on the one hand, undertook to extract from "The Propositions" only so much of a practical directory as would enable the Church to go on; and on the other, precipitated the Assembly of Divines into what threatened to become endless debates on the jus divinum of the details of the Presbyterian system and the autonomy of the Church and particularly the right of the Church in the exercise of its own spiritual jurisdiction to exclude the scandalous from participation in the Lord's Supper. In these debates, and in the whole conduct of its negotiations with Parliament during this dispute, the Assembly manifested the highest dignity, firmness,

and courage. If Parliament utterly refused to set up a series of ecclesiastical courts with independent jurisdiction even in purely spiritual matters, and insisted on reserving to itself, or to secular committees established by and directly responsible to it, the review of even such spiritual functions as the determination of fitness to receive the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, the Assembly on its part respectfully but firmly protested against such an intrusion of the secular arm into spiritual things, and refused to be a party to any ecclesiastical arrangement which denied to the Church what it deemed its divinely prescribed rights and responsibilities. It took for its motto the ringing phrase, "The Crown rights of Jesus Christ," and declared that on His shoulders the government is, and that all power in heaven and earth has been given Him, and, ascended far above all heavens, He has received gifts for His Church and has given to it officers necessary for its edification and the perfecting of His saints. It showed itself, in the noble words of Warriston, "tender, zealous and carefull to assert Christ and his Church their priviledge and right ... that Christ lives and reigns alone over and in his Church, and will have all done therein according to his Word and will, and that he is given no supreme headship over his Church to any Pope, King, or Parliament whatsoever." On the matter of the spiritual jurisdiction of the Church, the Assembly remained unmoved and insisted that Christ has instituted in the Church a government and governors ecclesiastical distinct from the civil magistrates. Meanwhile, realizing that it was of the first importance to get the framework of the Presbyterian government established and in operation, the Divines under the leadership of Alexander Henderson, passing by these doctrinal matters for the moment, had drawn up a "Practical Directory for Church Government," which they had presented to Parliament July 7, 1645. In this document, which avoided as far as possible all questions of principle, very full and definite expositions were given of the actual framework of Presbyterian government. It commended itself in this aspect of it to Parliament and was ultimately in large part adopted by it in an ordinance passed on August 29, 1648, and was published in this somewhat diluted shape

as "The Form of Church Government to be used in the Church of England and Ireland."

In Scotland this document was never formally approved, as the earlier "Propositions," which were approved by the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, were never ratified by the English Parliament. Thus neither became of authority in both Churches. The modified Presbyterianism set up by the Long Parliament in England, under the direction of the one document, moreover, was soon swept away; while the other document, approved indeed by the Scottish General Assembly but never ratified by the Estates of the Scottish Parliament, though it has held its place among the formularies of the Scottish churches until to-day, has been largely superseded in the churches deriving their descent from them. The permanent influence of the labors of the Westminster Assembly in the great matter of church organization—supposed at the time, as they were, to be its most important, as they certainly were its most pressing and its most difficult labors—has been largely unofficial and somewhat indirect. It has doubtless been exerted nearly as powerfully, indeed, through such treatises as "The Grand Debate," already mentioned, or the "Jus Divinum Regiminis Ecclesiastici," published by some of the ministers of London at the end of 1646, but supposed to incorporate the Assembly's answers to the jus divinum queries propounded to it by Parliament, as through their formal advices to Parliament. Indeed, it is questionable whether the really great works of individual members of the Assembly on these topics, such as Gillespie's "An Assertion of the Government of the Church of Scotland" (1641) and "Aaron's Rod Blossoming" (1646), Rutherford's "Due Right of Presbytery" (1644), and Henderson's "The Government and Order of the Church of Scotland" (1641, and again 1690), must not be conceived the chief vehicles of this influence. The most that can be said for the formal work of the Assembly in this field is that it gave ungrudgingly an immense amount of self-denying labor to preparing advices for the use of Parliament in settling the government of the Church of England on a Presbyterian model, but was prevented by the circumstances in

which it did its work from doing full justice in these documents either to its own clear and strong convictions or to the system with which it was dealing.

Next to the elaboration of a new scheme of government for the Church of England which should bring it into harmony with the established government of the Church of Scotland, the most pressing task committed to the Assembly of Divines was the preparation of a new form of worship to take the place of "The Book of Common Prayer" now to be abolished, by which the modes of worship in the Church of England should be conformed "to the example of the best Reformed Churches." The prosecution of this task was attended with no such difficulties as beset the formulation of the scheme of government. There existed no doubt differences enough in usage and preference among the several parties in the Assembly in this region of church life also; and these differences ranged all the way from a distaste among the Independents to all prescriptions in worship to a predilection in the case of some of the English churchmen for a complete liturgy. But they were less deeply rooted and more easily conciliated in a middle way than the differences by which they were divided in the matter of church government. The work of formulating forms of worship acceptable to all was, therefore, pushed through comparatively rapidly, and the whole "Directory for the Publique Worship of God throughout the Three Kingdoms of England, Scotland, and Ireland" was sent up to Parliament by the end of 1644. By an ordinance of Parliament, dated January 3d, [4th], 1645, it was established in England and Wales to "be henceforth used, pursued, and observed, ... in all Exercises of the Publique Worship of God, in every Congregation, Church, Chappell, and place of Publique Worship"; and a month later it was approved and established in Scotland by Acts of Assembly (February 3d) and the Estates of Parliament (February 6th). After some slight adjustments it was printed and put into circulation in both countries during the ensuing spring (the English edition bears on its title-page the date 1644, but that is "old style"). As is indicated by the title, the book is not "a straight liturgy," but a body of agenda and paradigms. Some of these

paradigms, to be sure, are so full that they are capable of being transmuted into liturgical forms by a mere transposition of their clauses into the mode of direct address, but they were not intended to be so employed and are too compressed to lend themselves readily to such use.

The first draft of the document was prepared by a subcommittee of the Great Treaty Committee, and, as in the case of the "Practical Directory for Church Government," it was largely the work of the Scots. The suggestions for the prayers of the Sabbath-day service, and for the administration of the Sacraments, were in the first instance their work;⁸⁵ and they ultimately had the drawing up also of the suggestions for preaching and for catechizing. Naturally, therefore, there is much in the book which is derived from Scottish usage. The Sabbath service, for example, is in its general structure practically identical with that of the "Book of Common Order" (commonly called "Knox's Liturgy"), and the materials for the consecration prayer in the directory for celebrating the Lord's Supper are mainly derived from the same source. But, on the other hand, the latter part of this same prayer and the concluding thanksgiving are more reminiscent of the English "Book of Common Prayer."⁸⁷ The book as a whole, in fact, does not so much follow Scottish as offer a compromise between Scottish and Puritan usage. Acquiescence in this compromise must have cost the Scots a great effort, as it was, in effect, a reversal of a deliberate policy which had been adopted by the Scottish Church. After the recovery of its purity of worship consequent upon the outbreak of 1637, the Scottish Church was considerably disturbed by the intrusion of certain "novations" into its worship, which were really Puritan customs, seeping in, no doubt, in part, from England, but mainly brought in by returning Scottish emigrants to Ulster. These "novations" were made the subject of earnest conference at the General Assembly of 1641, and again at that of 1643; and, in order to meet the peril which they appeared to threaten, it was determined at the latter Assembly that "a Directorie for the worship of God" should "be framed and made ready, in all the parts thereof, against the next General Assembly" (that of 1644),

Henderson, Calderwood, and Dickson being charged with the drafting of it. This whole undertaking was naturally superseded, however, by the inauguration of the broader attempt to introduce, through the mediation of the Westminster Assembly, a common Directory for the three kingdoms. But the odd effect of this supersession was that the "novations" for the exclusion of which from the Church of Scotland the first undertaking was set on foot, were in large measure constituted the official usage of the Church by the new Directory. By the very conditions of its formulation this Directory became a compromise between the Scottish and the Puritan modes of worship rather than a bar to the introduction into Scotland of Puritan modes of worship.

By these "novations" the use of "read prayers," and even of the Lord's Prayer, in public worship, was discountenanced, as was also the use of the Gloria Patri, and of the Apostles' Creed in the administration of the Sacraments, and the habit of the minister to bow in silent prayer upon entering the pulpit. No one of these usages, on which the Scots laid much stress, except the use of the Lord's Prayer, is proscribed by the Directory; but as none of them are proscribed either, the Scots were able to "save their face" by attaching to the Act by which the Assembly adopted the Directory the proviso: "That this shall be no prejudice to the order and practice of this Kirk, in such particulars as are appointed by the Books of Discipline and Acts of General Assemblies, and are not otherwise ordered and appointed in the Directory." By a supplementary Act of the same Assembly, however, they voluntarily laid aside—"for satisfaction of the desires of the reverend Divines in the Synod of England, and for uniformity with that Kirk, so much endeared to us"—the "lawful custom" of "the Minister's bowing in the pulpit." Of more importance than any of these usages, at least for the conduct of the public services, was the loss by the Scots, through the Westminster Directory, of the office of "Reader." From the Reformation down, the former or liturgical portion of the Scottish Sabbath service—the opening prayer, the lessons from Scripture, and the singing of a Psalm—had been conducted by a "Reader," the Minister taking charge of the services,

and indeed commonly entering the church, only when he ascended the pulpit to preach. The Westminster Divines found no Scriptural warrant for the office of "Reader," and, much against the wishes of the Scots, enacted that the Minister should conduct the entire service. "Reading of the Word in the Congregation," they set down in their Directory, "being part of the Public Worship of God (wherein we acknowledge our dependence upon Him, and subjection to Him), and one means sanctified by Him for the edifying of His people, is to be performed by the Pastors and Teachers." The only exception they would allow was that they permitted candidates for the ministry occasionally to perform the office of reading, as also that of preaching, on permission of their Presbyteries.

On the other hand, besides the general structure of the services, as already noted, Scottish usage was followed in the Directory in many important points. This was particularly true in the regulations for the celebration of the Sacraments. The Baptismal service, for example—although the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and godparents were omitted—yet followed in general the Scotch order; and it was thought a great gain for the Scots when, in opposition to practically the universal English custom, they got it ordained that Baptism was never to be administered in private, but always in "the place of Public Worship, and in the face of the Congregation." It was over the mode of celebrating the Lord's Supper, however, that the most strenuous debates were held. The manner of celebrating that rite prevalent among the Independents, seemed to the Scots to be bald even to irreverence; while many of the details of the Scottish service were utterly distasteful to the extremer Puritans. In the end, things were ordered fairly to the satisfaction of the Scots, although in one matter which they thought of very great importance, they were ultimately compelled to content themselves with an ambiguous rubric. This concerned the place and manner of the reception of the elements. The Scots were insistent for their own custom, in which the communicants arranged themselves at the table and served one another with the elements as at an actual meal. This usage was, after strenuous debate, at last ordered: but the rubric was subsequently so

changed that it ultimately read, merely: "The Table ... being so conveniently placed, that the Communicants may orderly sit about it, or at it." Accordingly the Scotch Assembly, in adopting the Directory, added this proviso: "That the clause in the Directory of the Administration of the Lord's Supper, which mentioneth the Communicants sitting about the Table, or at it, be not interpreted as if, in the judgment of this Kirk, it were indifferent, and free for any of the Communicants not to come to, and receive at the Table; or as if we did approve the distributing of the Elements by the Minister to each Communicant, and not by the Communicants among themselves." In a supplementary Act the Assembly further laid down a series of details for the administration of this Sacrament. It was in accordance with the Scottish usage, also, that in a concluding section, the Directory abolished all Festival days, and affirmed that "there is no day commanded in Scripture to be kept holy under the Gospel but the Lord's Day, which is the Christian Sabbath."

A document formed as this was by a series of compromises was not very likely to command the hearty loyalty of any section of its framers. We are not surprised, therefore, that it was much neglected in England, though in Scotland it gradually made its way against ancient custom and ultimately very much molded the usages of the churches. Even in Scotland, however, this gradually perfected assimilation to the Directory has of late suffered from some reaction; and in some of the churches deriving their formularies from the Scottish Church, the Directory was early superseded by new models of their own. At this distance of time we may look upon it dispassionately; and, so viewed, it can scarcely fail to commend itself as an admirable set of agenda, in spirit and matter alike well fitted to direct the public services of a great Church. It is notable for its freedom from petty prescriptions and "superfluities" and for the emphasis it places upon what is specifically commanded in the Scriptures. Its general tone is lofty and spiritual; its conception of acceptable worship is sober and restrained and at the same time profound and rich; the paradigms of prayers which it offers are notably full and yet free from overelaboration, compressed and yet

enriched by many reminiscences of the best models which had preceded them; and it is singular among agenda for the dominant place it gives in the public worship of the Church to the offices of reading and preaching the Word. To both of these offices it vindicates a place, and a prominent place, among the parts of public worship, specifically so called, claiming for them distinctively a function in inducing and expressing that sense of dependence on God and of subjection to Him in which all religion is rooted and which is the purest expression of worship; and thus justifying in the ordering of the public services of the churches the recognition of the Word as a means, perhaps we should say the means, of grace. It expends as much care upon the minister's proper performance of the offices of reading and preaching the Word, therefore, as upon his successful performance of the duty of leading the congregation in prayer and acceptably administering to it the Sacraments. The paragraph on the Preaching of the Word is in effect, indeed, a complete homiletical treatise, remarkable at once for its sober practical sense and its profound spiritual wisdom, and suffused with a tone of sincere piety, and of zeal at once for the truth and for the souls which are to be bought with the truth.

One of the sections of the Directory is given to the Singing of Psalms, and declares it "the duty of Christians to praise God publicly, by Singing of Psalms together in the Congregation, and also privately in the family." This rubric manifestly implied the provision of a Psalm Book, and it was made part of the function of the Assembly in preparing a basis for uniformity of worship in the Churches of the three kingdoms, to supply them with a common Psalm Book. The way was prepared for this by the submitment to the Assembly by the House of Commons on November 20, 1643, of the query whether "it may not be useful and profitable to the Church, that the Psalms set forth by Mr. Rouse, be permitted to be publicly sung." The result of the Assembly's examination of Mr. Rouse's version (first printed in 1643) was to recommend it, after it had been subjected to a thorough revision at its own hands, to Parliament as a suitable Psalm Book for the Church (autumn of 1645). The Commons accordingly ordered the

book printed in this revised form (it appeared in 1646, i.e. February, 1647), and (April 15, 1646) issued an order establishing it as the sole Psalm Book to be used in the Churches of England and Wales, though the House of Lords never concurred in this order. The Scotch Assembly subjected the book to a still further and more searching revision, and by an act passed in 1649 (ratified by the Estates of Parliament in 1650) approved it in this new form for use in the Scottish churches. It is in this Scottish revision alone (printed in 1650), in which they can only by courtesy continue to bear the name of Francis Rouse as their author, that these Psalms have passed into wide use.

To the punctual completion of "the third part of uniformity," that is to say, the preparation of a new Confession of Faith for the contracting Churches, the Divines were urged by no immediately pressing necessity in the situation of the Church of England. The existing Thirty-nine Articles were recognized by them as a soundly Reformed Creed, the doctrine of which required only to be vindicated and cleared from the false interpretations which the reactionary party was already endeavoring to foist upon it. With the internal needs of the Church of England alone in view, they might possibly have felt contented with a simple revision of these Articles, somewhat more thorough than that they had been engaged upon early in their labors. The duty of preparing an entirely new Creed was imposed on them solely by the Solemn League and Covenant, by which a common Confession of Faith was made one of the bases of the uniformity in religion which the contracting nations had bound themselves to institute. It was not supposable that either Church would be content simply to accept and make its own the existing Creed of the other. Indeed, neither Church possessed a Creed which it could seriously propose to the other as suitable to the purpose or adequate to the needs of the times. The old Scotch Confession of 1560, breathing as it does the fervor of the Reformation era and full of noble expressions as it is, is too much of an occasional document, too disproportionate in its development of its topics, and too little complete in its scope or precise in its phraseology to serve as the

permanent expression of the faith of a great and comprehensive Church; and the new Confession brought forward by the prelatical party in 1616, though sound in doctrine and in parts finely wrought out, suffered from the same defects. The Scots themselves recognized that they had no Creed which they could ask the English to adopt as the common Confession of the unified Churches, and therefore, when contemplating seeking such unification had it in mind to undertake the preparation of a new Creed for the purpose. There was greater reason for the English to feel similarly with regard to their own formularies. The Thirty-nine Articles had, in their past experience, proved an inadequate protection against the most dangerous doctrinal reactions. It was therefore that the ecclesiastical authorities had been compelled to put forth, a half-century earlier, those "orthodoxal assertions" which have come down to us under the name of the Lambeth Articles (1595). It had long been the desire of the Puritans that these Articles should be set alongside of the Thirty-nine Articles, as an authoritative exposition of their real meaning. This desire had been given expression at the Hampton Court Conference (1604), and had been met in the Church of Ireland by the incorporation of the Lambeth Articles along with the Thirty-nine Articles into those Irish Articles of 1615, to which we may be sure the Westminster Divines would have turned rather than to the Thirty-nine Articles, had they thought of recommending the simple adoption of an existing Creed as the doctrinal standard of the unified Churches, and which indeed they did make the basis of their own new Creed. Since the necessity of a new Creed was a result of the new conditions brought about by the Solemn League and Covenant, therefore, these conditions imposed an absolute necessity for the preparation of such a document; and as time passed on the demand for the accomplishment of the task became ever more urgent. The "woeful longsomeness" of the Assembly in all its work was bringing the fulfilment of the engagements into which the nations had entered into jeopardy, and the Scots, who had paid the price of the Covenant on the faith of the fulfilment of its provisions, not unnaturally began uneasily to urge their more speedy fulfilment. It was accordingly

under pressure from Scotland that the Divines at length entered actively upon the accomplishment of this "third part of uniformity."

It must not be inferred, however, from their slowness in entering upon it, that the work of drawing up a Confession of Faith was one uncongenial to the Assembly of Divines; or one for which its members possessed little native fitness or had made little direct preparation; or one which presented for them special difficulties. On the contrary, there was no work committed to them for which they were more eminently qualified, or in which they acquitted themselves with more distinguished success; nor was there any work committed to them in the prosecution of which they were less impeded by differences among themselves. The deep-seated antagonisms which divided them into irreconcilable parties, lay in the region of church organization and government. Doctrinally they were in complete fundamental harmony, and in giving expression to their common faith needed only to concern themselves to state it truly, purely, and with its polemic edges well-turned out towards the chief assailants of Reformed doctrine, in order to satisfy the minds of all. There were indeed differences among them in doctrine, too; but these lay for the most part within the recognized limits of the Reformed system, and there was little disposition to press them to extremes or to narrow their Creed to a party document. To the Amyraldians, of whom there was a small but very active and well-esteemed party in the Assembly (Calamy, Seaman, Marshall, Vines), there was denied, to be sure, the right to modify the statement of the *ordo decretorum* so as to make room for their "hypothetical universalism" in the saving work of Christ (cf. the Confession, iii. 6, viii. 5, 8). But the wise plan was adopted with respect to the points of difference between the Supralapsarians, who were represented by a number of the ablest thinkers in the Assembly (Twisser, Rutherford), and the Infralapsarians, to which party the great mass of the members adhered, to set down in the Confession only what was common ground to both, leaving the whole region which was in dispute between them entirely untouched. This procedure gives to the Confession a peculiar comprehensiveness, while yet it permits to

its statements of the generic doctrine of the Reformed Churches a directness, a definiteness, a crisp precision, and an unambiguous clarity which are attained by few Confessional documents of any age or creed. In its third chapter, for example, in which the thorny subject of "God's Eternal Decree" falls for treatment, the Westminster Confession has attained, by this simple method, the culmination of the Confessional statement of this high mystery. Everything merely individual and as well everything upon which parties in the Reformed Churches are divided with respect to this deep doctrine, is carefully avoided, while the whole ground common to all recognized Reformed parties is given, if prudent, yet full and uncompromising statement.

The architectonic principle of the Westminster Confession is supplied by the schematization of the Federal theology, which had obtained by this time in Britain, as on the Continent, a dominant position as the most commodious mode of presenting the corpus of Reformed doctrine (so e.g. Rollock, Howie, Cartwright, Preston, Perkins, Ames, Ball, and cf. Dickson's "Sum of Saving Knowledge" and Fisher's "Marrow of Modern Divinity," both of which emanated from this period and were destined to a career of great influence in the Scottish theology). The matter is distributed into thirty-three comprehensive chapters. After an opening chapter "Of the Holy Scripture" as the source of divine truth—which is probably the finest single chapter in any Protestant Confession and is rivalled in ability only by the chapter on Justification in the Tridentine Decrees—there are successively taken up the topics of God and the Trinity, the Divine Decree, Creation, Providence, the Fall and Sin, and then God's Covenant with Man, and Christ the Mediator of the Covenant, while subsequent treatment is given to the stages in the *ordo salutis* in the order first of the benefits conferred under the Covenant (Vocation, Justification, Adoption, Sanctification) and then of the duties required under the Covenant (Faith, Repentance, Good Works, Perseverance, Assurance). Then come chapters on the Law, Christian Liberty, Religious Worship, Oaths and Vows, followed by others on the relations of Church and State, the Church and the

Sacraments, and the rubrics of Eschatology. All the topics of this comprehensive outline are treated with notable fulness, with the avowed object not merely of setting forth the doctrine of the Churches with such clearness and in such detail as to make it plain to all that they held to the Reformed faith in its entirety, but also to meet and exclude the whole mob of errors which vexed the time.⁹⁹ In the prosecution of their work as practical pastors protecting and indoctrinating their flocks, the Divines had acquired an intimate acquaintance with the prevailing errors and a remarkable facility in the formulation of the Reformed doctrine in opposition to them, which bore rich fruit in their Confessional labors. The main source of their Confessional statements was, thus, just the Reformed theology as it had framed itself in their minds during their long experience in teaching it, and had worked itself out into expression in the prosecution of their task as teachers of religion in an age of almost unexampled religious unrest and controversy. This work, however, had not been done by them in isolation. It had been done, on the contrary, in the full light of the whole body of Reformed thought. It is idle, therefore, to inquire whether they depended for guidance in the scholastic statement of their doctrine on British or on Continental masters. The distinction was not present to their minds; intercourse between the British and the Continental Reformed was constant, and the solidarity of their consciousness was complete. The vital statement of Reformed thought ripened everywhere simultaneously in the perfect interaction which leaves open no question of relative dependence. The Federal mode of statement, for example, came forward and gradually became dominant throughout the Reformed world at about the same time; and the Westminster Confession owes its preëminence among Reformed Confessions, not only in fulness but also in exactitude and richness of statement, merely to the fact that it is the ripest fruit of Reformed creed-making, the simple transcript of Reformed thought as it was everywhere expounded by its best representatives in the middle of the seventeenth century. So representative is it of Reformed theology at its best, that often one might easily gain the illusion as he read over its compressed sections

that he was reading a condensed abstract of some such compend as Heppe's "Dogmatik der evangelisch-reformirten Kirche."

In giving form and order to their statement of the Reformed faith, however, it was but natural for the Westminster Divines to take their starting point from the formularies in most familiar use among themselves. The whole series of Reformed Confessions, as well as all the best Reformed dogmaticians, were drawn upon to aid them in their definitions, and it is possible to note here and there traces of their use. But it was particularly the Irish Articles of 1615, which are believed to have been prepared by Usher, to which they especially turned. From these Articles they derived the general arrangement of their Confession, the consecution of topics through at least its first half, and a large part of the detailed treatment of such capital Articles as those on the Holy Scripture, God's Eternal Decree, Christ the Mediator, the Covenant of Grace, and the Lord's Supper. These chapters might almost be spoken of as only greatly enriched revisions of the corresponding sections of the Irish Articles. Nothing, however, is taken from the Irish Articles without much revision and enrichment, for which every available source was diligently sought out and utilized. There are traces, minute but not therefore the less convincing or significant, for example, of the use for the perfecting of the statements of the Confession, of even the Aberdeen Articles of 1616 and of the Assembly's own revision of the Thirty-nine Articles. So minutely was every phrase scrutinized and every aid within reach invoked.

The work of formulating the Confession of Faith was begun in Committee as early as the midsummer of 1644 (August 20). But it was not until the following spring (April 25, 1645)¹⁰¹ that any of it came before the Assembly; and not until the next midsummer (July 7, 1645) that the debates upon it in the Assembly began. Time and pains were lavishly expended on it as the work slowly progressed. By the middle of 1646 the whole was substantially finished in first-draft, and the review of it begun. The first nineteen chapters were sent up to the House of Commons on September 25, 1646, and the entire

work on December 4. Proof-texts from Scripture were subsequently added, and the book supplied with them was placed in the hands of Parliament on April 29, 1647. Immediately on its completion the book was carried to Scotland, and by an Act of the General Assembly of 1647, ratified by the Estates of Parliament February 7, 1649, it was constituted the official Creed of the Church of Scotland. Meanwhile action on it dragged in the English Parliament. It was not until June 20, 1648, that, curtailed of chapters xxx. and xxxi., on "Church Censures" and "Synods and Councils," and certain passages in chapters xx. ("of Christian Liberty and Liberty of Conscience"), xxiii. ("of the Civil Magistrate"), and xxiv. ("of Marriage and Divorce"), it was approved by Parliament and printed under the title of "Articles of the Christian Religion"; and not until March 5, 1660, after the interval of the Protectorate, that it was declared by the so-called "Rump Parliament" to be "the public Confession of the Church of England," only to pass, of course, out of sight so far as the Church of England was concerned in the immediately succeeding Restoration.

The book was not one, however, which could easily be relegated to oblivion. Thrust aside by the established Church of England, it nevertheless had an important career before it even in England, where it became the Creed of the Non-Conformists. The Independents, at their Synod, met in 1658 at the Savoy, adopted it in the form in which it had been published by Parliament (1648), after subjecting it to a revision which in no way affected its substance; and the Baptists, having still further revised it and adjusted it to fit their particular views on Baptism, adopted it in 1677. By both of the bodies it was transmitted to their affiliated co-religionists in America, where it worked out for itself an important history. It was of course also transmitted, in its original form, by the Scotch Church to the Churches, on both sides of the sea, deriving their tradition from it, and thus it has become the Confession of Faith of the Presbyterian Churches of the British dependencies and of America. In the latter it has been adapted to their free position relatively to the State by means of certain alterations in the relevant chapters, and in some of the Churches it has been subjected to some other revisions. It has

thus come about that the Westminster Confession has occupied a position of very widespread influence. It has been issued in something like 200 editions in Great Britain and in about 100 more in America.¹⁰³ It was rendered into German as early as 1648 (reprinted, somewhat modified, in Böckel's "Bekenntnis-schriften der evangelisch-reformirten Kirche," 1847); and into Latin in 1656 (often reprinted, e.g. Niemeyer's "Collectio Confessionum," Appendix, 1840, and Schaff, "Creeds of Christendom," 1878); and into Gaelic in 1725 (often reprinted). More recently it has been translated into Hindustani (1842), Urdu (1848), German (1858), Siamese (1873), Portuguese (1876), Spanish (1880 and again 1896–1897), Japanese (1880), Chinese (1881), Arabic (1883), Gujurati (1888), French (1891), as well as into Benga, Persian, and Korean (as yet in MS.). It thus exists to-day in some seventeen languages and is professed by perhaps a more numerous body than any other Protestant creed.¹⁰⁵

The labors of the Divines upon the "fourth part of uniformity," that is to say, in the preparation of a Catechism for the unified Churches, reached a similarly felicitous result. The Westminster Assembly was eminently an assembly of catechists, trained and practised in the art. Not only were its members pupils of masters in this work, but not fewer than a dozen of themselves had published Catechisms which were in wide use in the churches (Twisse, White, Gataker, Gouge, Wilkinson, Wilson, Walker, Palmer, Cawdrey, Sedgewick, Byfield, and possibly Newcomen, Lyford, Hodges, Foxcroft). A beginning was made at a comparatively early date towards drawing up their Catechism; but this labor was successfully completed only after all the other work of the Assembly had been accomplished. In the earlier notices of work on the Catechism it is not always easy to distinguish between references to the preparation of the Directory for Catechisms or the Directory for Worship and references to the preparation of the Catechism itself. But as early as November 21, 1644, Baillie speaks of "the Catechise" as already drawn up; and on the 26th of December following, as nearly agreed on in private in its first draft. And we learn from the "Minutes" (p. 13) that on December

2, 1644, a committee was appointed "for hastening the Catechism," and that this committee was augmented on February 7th following (p. 48). On August 5, 1645, the material of this Catechism was under debate in the Assembly itself; and by August 20 it would seem to have been so far nearing completion that a committee was appointed to "draw up the whole draught" of it. Nothing, however, came of this work. It appears, in effect, that one or two false starts were made upon the Catechism before the Divines got down to their really productive work upon it. After midsummer of 1645 we hear nothing about the Catechism for a year, when, writing July 14, 1646, Baillie tells us that all that had been hitherto accomplished was set aside and a new beginning made. "We made, long agoe," he writes, "a prettie progress in the Catechise; but falling on rubbes and long debates, it wes laid aside till the Confession wes ended, with resolution to have no matter in it but what wes expressed in the Confession, which should not be debated over againe in the Catechise."

Accordingly, the Confession being now finished and in process of review, the new Catechism was taken up (September 11), and from September 14, 1646, to January 4, 1647, was rapidly passed through the Assembly up to the questions which dealt with the Fourth Commandment. This, however, was only another false start. In the prosecution of this work, the Assembly became convinced that it was attempting an impossible feat; as the Scottish Commissioners express it,¹⁰⁸ it was essaying "to dress up milk and meat both in one dish." It therefore again called a halt and "recommitted the work, that tuo formes of Catechisme may be prepared, one more exact and comprehensive, another more easie and short for new beginners." Recommencing on this new basis, the "Larger Catechism" began to be debated on April 15, 1647, and was finished on the 15th of the following October, and sent up to Parliament on October 22. The "Shorter Catechism" was taken up on August 5, 1647, seriously taken in hand October 19, began to come into the Assembly on October 21, and was finished November 22 and sent up to Parliament November 25, 1647. The proof-texts for both Catechisms occupied the Assembly

from November 30, 1647, to April 12, 1648, and were presented to Parliament April 14, 1648. The "Shorter Catechism" was approved by Parliament on September 22–25, 1648, and issued under the title, "The Grounds and Principles of Religion, contained in a Shorter Catechism (according to the Advice of the Assembly of Divines sitting at Westminster), to be used throughout the Kingdom of England and Dominion of Wales." The "Larger Catechism," however, although passed by the Commons on July 24, 1648, stuck in the House of Lords and never received its authorization. In Scotland, both were approved by acts of the General Assembly of 1648, ratified by the Estates of Parliament, February 7, 1649; but no mention is made of them in the reestablishment of Presbytery after the Revolution. In the later history of the Westminster formularies, the "Larger Catechism" has taken a somewhat secondary place; but no product of the Divines has been more widely diffused or has exercised a deeper influence than their "Shorter Catechism." It at once became in Scotland the textbook in religion in the schools, and has held that position up to to-day; and for a long period it was scarcely less popular in Non-Conformist England than in Scotland. From both sources it was transmitted to their affiliated Churches in America; and in the extension of the mission work of the several Presbyterian Churches in the nineteenth century its use has been diffused throughout the world.

The tracing of the sources of the Westminster Catechisms is rendered exceptionally difficult not merely by the amazing fecundity in catechetical manuals of the British Churches of the immediately preceding and contemporary periods, but also by the obvious independence of the Westminster Divines in giving form to their catechetical formularies, and their express determination to derive the materials for them, as far as possible, from their own Confession of Faith. The contents of the first Catechism taken in hand by them—the Catechism of 1644–1645—have not been transmitted to us. We may infer, however, from the meager details which have found record, that it was probably based on the Catechism of Herbert Palmer, published in 1640 under the title of "An Endeavour of

Making Christian Religion Easie" (5th edition, 1645). The matter of the second Catechism prepared by the Assembly—that of the autumn of 1646—is preserved for us in the Minutes, so far as it was debated and passed by the Assembly. It professedly derives its material as far as possible from the Assembly's Confession of Faith, but as it covers in large part ground not gone over in the Confession, much of its material must have an independent origin. Palmer's Catechism still seems to underlie it, but supplies no material for its exposition of the Commandments; and the influence of the manuals of Usher seems discernible. Much the same must be said of the sources of the Catechisms which the Assembly completed, "Larger" and "Shorter." The doctrinal portion of the "Larger Catechism" is very much a catechetical recension of the Assembly's Confession of Faith; while in its ethical portion (its exposition of the Ten Commandments) it seems to derive most from Usher's "Body of Divinity" and Nicholl's and Ball's "Catechisms"; and in its exposition of the Lord's Prayer to go back ultimately through intermediary manuals to William Perkins' treatise on the Lord's Prayer. The "Shorter Catechism" is so original and individual in its form, that the question of its sources seems insoluble, if not impertinent. It in the main follows the outline of the "Larger Catechism"; but in its modes of statement it now and again varies from it and in some of these variations reverts to the Catechism of the autumn of 1646. In their striking opening questions both Catechisms go back ultimately to the model introduced by Calvin, possibly but certainly not probably through the intermediation of Leo Judae. Perhaps of all earlier Catechisms the little manual of Ezekiel Rogers most closely resembles the "Shorter Catechism" in its general plan and order; but there is little detailed resemblance between the two. After all said, the "Shorter Catechism" is a new creation, and must be considered in structure and contents alike the contribution to the catechetical art of the Westminster Divines themselves. No other Catechism can be compared with it in its concise, nervous, terse exactitude of definition, or in its severely logical elaboration; and it gains these admirable qualities at no expense to its freshness or fervor, though perhaps it can scarcely be spoken of as marked by childlike simplicity. Although set forth as

"milk for babes" and designed to stand by the side of the "Larger Catechism" as an "easie and short" manual of religion "for new beginners," it is nevertheless governed by the principle (as one of its authors—Seaman—phrased it), "that the greatest care should be taken to frame the answer not according to the model of the knowledge the child hath, but according to that the child ought to have." Its peculiarity, in contrast with the "Larger Catechism" (and the Confession of Faith), is the strictness with which its contents are confined to the very quintessence of religion and morals, to the positive truths and facts which must be known for their own behoof by all who would fain be instructed in right belief and practice. All purely historical matter, and much more, all controversial matter—everything which can minister merely to curiosity, however chastened—is rigidly excluded. Only that is given which, in the judgment of its framers, is directly required for the Christian's instruction in what he is to believe concerning God and what God requires of him. It is a pure manual of personal religion and practical morality.

To whom among the Westminster Divines we more especially owe these Catechetical manuals—and particularly the "Shorter Catechism"—we have no means of determining. It is, of course, easy to draw out from the records of the Assembly the names of the members of the committees to which the preparation of the materials for them was entrusted. But this seems to carry us a very little way into the problem. On the whole, Herbert Palmer, who bore the reputation, as Baillie tells us, of being "the best catechist in England," appears to have been the leading spirit in the Assembly in all matters concerned with catechetics: and he apparently served on all important committees busied with the Catechisms up to his death, which occurred, however (August 13, 1647), before the "Shorter Catechism" seems to have been seriously taken in hand. We have no direct evidence to connect him with the authorship of this Catechism, only the first—evidently a purely preliminary—report upon which he was privileged to be the medium of making, and the contents of which certainly show much less resemblance to those of his own

manual than there is reason to believe was exhibited by the earliest Catechism undertaken by the Assembly. There is still less reason, of course, to connect with its composition the name of Dr. John Wallis, Palmer's pupil and friend, who attended the committee charged with its review as its secretary (from November 9, 1647), and whose mathematical genius has been thought to express itself in the clear and logical definitions which characterize the document. Dr. Wallis' close connection with the "Shorter Catechism," in the minds of the contemporary and following generations, appears to be mainly due to the publication by him at once on its appearance (1648) of an edition of it broken up into subordinate questions according to the model of the treatise of his friend and patron, Palmer. Still less have we evidence to connect the Scotch Commissioners directly with the composition of the "Shorter Catechism." The record may give us reason to infer that the earliest Catechism undertaken by the Assembly may have been in the first instance drafted by the Scots. But we lack even such faint suggestions in the case of the Catechisms which were ultimately prepared. Indeed, these Catechisms, and especially the "Shorter," are precisely the portion of the Assembly's constructive work, in the composition of which the Scotch Commissioners appear to have had the least prominent part. Henderson had died before the Confession of Faith was finished; Baillie left immediately after its completion; Gillespie in the midst of the work on the "Larger Catechism"; while Rutherford, who alone remained until the "Shorter Catechism" was under way, judged that his presence until the completion of the "Larger Catechism" justified the declaration that the Scots had lent their aid to the accomplishment of all "the 4 things mentioned in the Covenant," which is as much as to say that he looked upon the completion of the "Shorter Catechism" as largely a matter of routine work unessential to the main task of the Assembly.¹¹⁵ It does not follow, of course, that the Scots had nothing to do with the composition of the "Shorter Catechism." We do not know how fully its text had been worked out before any of it was brought before the Assembly, or how hard it rested on previous work done in committee or in the Assembly, or to whom the first essays in its composition were due. Of course, the

Scots served with all committees up to the moment of their departure, and may have had much to do with the framing of the drafts of documents with which we have no explicit evidence to connect their names. But they appear to have had less to do with giving the Catechisms their final form than was the case with the other documents prepared by the Divines for the use of the united Churches. The Catechisms come to us preëminently as the work of the Assembly, and we are without data to enable us to point to any individual or individuals to whom we can confidently assign their characteristic features.

With the completion of the Catechisms, the work of the Assembly under the engagement of the Solemn League and Covenant was done. The Scots, as we have seen, caused a Minute to this effect to be entered upon the records of the Assembly (October 15, 1647), reciting that some of them had given assistance to the Divines throughout the whole of their labors looking to uniformity. And on the return to Scotland of Rutherford, the last of the Scots to leave London, the Commission of the General Assembly dispatched a letter to the Assembly of Divines (November 26, 1647)—with whom it joins in the address "the Ministers of London, and all the other well-affected brethren of the Ministrie in England"—which accurately reflects the state of affairs relatively to the work of the Divines at the end of the year 1647. In this letter the Scots express their unwavering purpose to abide by the Covenant they had sworn, and exhort their English brethren to do the same, noting at the same time the difficulties they saw besetting the way, and recommending in view of them diligence in the fear of God. In pursuance of its covenant engagement, the letter goes on to declare, the Scottish Church had approved and ratified the "Directory for Worship" "being about tuo yeares ago agreed upon by the Assemblies and Parliaments of both kingdomes," and the "Doctrinal Part of Church Government"—that is, the "Propositions for Church Government" of 1644—"agreed upon by the reverend and learned Assemblie of Divines"; and had also approved the "Confession of Faith" "as sound and orthodox for the matter, and agreed unto on their part that it be a part of the Uniformity, and a

Confession of Faith for the Churches of Christ in the three kingdoms"; while it purposed to consider and expected to approve the "Directory of Church Government," the "Catechism," and the new "Paraphrase of the Psalms" at the next Assembly, to meet in the summer of 1648. From this statement we perceive how far Scotland had outrun England in fulfilling the terms of their mutual engagement, and how uneasy the northern kingdom was becoming over the ever growing prospect that they would never be fully met in England. Meanwhile all the work of the Divines for uniformity was done; there remained only the completion of the proof-texts for the Catechisms, with the completion of which their entire function, as enlarged and given international significance by the provisions of the Solemn League and Covenant, was performed. We find the Assembly, therefore, on the day on which Rutherford took his leave of it, appointing a committee "to consider of what is fit to be done when the Catechism is finished" (November 9, 1647). For a time the Assembly turned back to the controversies of the great days of its past, with the Independents and the Erastians; to its responses to the jus divinum queries; and especially to its answers to the reasons of the Dissenting brethren against the Presbyterian system of government, which it now prepared for publication (1648, and again 1652). It had ceased to have any further function, however, than that of a standing advisory board to Parliament; and as the significance of Parliament decreased ("Pride's purge," December 6, 1648, was the precursor of the end, which came in 1653) its own importance necessarily fell with it. It became increasingly difficult to get a quorum together; and its work dwindled into the mere task of an examining committee for vacant charges, until it passed out of existence with the Parliament from which it derived its being.

What the Divines could do for the institution of the proposed uniformity of religion in the three kingdoms, we see, then, had been done and well done, by the beginning of 1648. The institution of uniformity on the basis formulated by them did not lie within their powers. That was a matter of treaty engagement between the two nations. We have seen that the Scotch were in no way backward in

the fulfilment of their part of the engagement. The same cannot be said for England. The political situation was very different at the opening of 1648 from what it had been in midsummer of 1643; and Parliament was now perhaps little inclined, and, to do it justice, was certainly little able, to carry out all it had felt constrained to promise five years before. The rise of Independency to political power and the usurpation of the army were the supersession of the Covenant and all its solemn obligations: and after the usurpation came ultimately, not the restoration of Parliamentary government and Presbyterianism, but the restoration of monarchy and prelacy. The dream of an enforced uniformity of religion in the three kingdoms on a Presbyterian basis, under the inspiration of which the Divines had done their constructive work, had vanished; and so far as the successful issue of their labors depended on alliance with a friendly state, their work, as regards England at least, had failed. But this alliance was not the strength of the Assembly, but its weakness. Its work was not in character political, but religious; and its product needed no imposition by the civil power to give it vitality. Whatever real authority the formularies it had framed possessed, was inherent in them as sound presentations of truth, not derived from extraneous sources. And by the inherent power of their truth they have held sway and won a way for themselves to the real triumph of the voluntary adhesion of multitudes of Christian men. It is honor enough for the Westminster Assembly that it has provided this multitude of voluntary adherents with a practicable platform of representative government on Scriptural lines, and a sober and sane directory of worship eminently spiritual in tone; and above all, with the culminating Reformed Confession of Faith, and a Catechism preëminent for the exactness of its definitions of faith and the faithfulness of its ethical precepts.

II

THE MAKING OF THE WESTMINSTER CONFESSION, AND ESPECIALLY OF ITS CHAPTER ON THE DECREE OF GOD

IT IS the purpose of this article to give as clear a view as possible of the process by which the Westminster Confession was made. In prosecuting this purpose two tasks present themselves. One concerns the modes of procedure of the Assembly in framing the Confession; the other the course of the debates by which it was beaten out. We shall attempt to give some account of both matters. The latter offers so wide a field, however, that we shall be constrained to deal with it by sample—and, for reasons which will readily suggest themselves at the present juncture, we shall select the third chapter of the Confession as the sample to be dealt with. We shall therefore try first to trace the formal procedure of the Assembly in framing the whole Confession, and to obtain some adequate conception of the labor and time that was expended on it; and then, taking up the third chapter, we shall essay to reconstruct as fully as may be a picture of the actual work of the Assembly in producing it.

I. HOW THE CONFESSION WAS MADE

The amount of time consumed directly on the preparation of the Confession of Faith was certainly very great. But even this does not completely represent the pains expended on this task. To estimate that fairly, there should also be taken into account the time and care given formally to other subjects, which yet necessarily conducted indirectly to the perfecting of the final statement of doctrine. Nearly all the labors of the body, from its coming together on July 1, 1643 till the completion of the Shorter Catechism on April 12, 1648, may without exaggeration be said to have had a doctrinal side; and much

time was spent in direct doctrinal discussion. None of this discussion that was precedent to or contemporary with the formulation of the propositions incorporated into the Confession was lost labor with respect to it. There were in particular three or four of the tasks of the Assembly, however, which bore so immediately on its preparation for framing the Confession that they deserve especial mention in this connection.

Among these the first in time to occupy its attention was the revision of the Thirty-nine Articles to which it was set on first coming together. This was the main work of the Assembly from the 8th of July to the 12th of October, 1643, and it necessarily led to a somewhat thorough review, at the very outset of its labors, of the doctrines of God and the Trinity, the Person and Work of Christ, the Scriptures and Rule of Faith, Original Sin and the Freedom of the Will, Justification and Sanctification—the main topics on which the first sixteen Articles touch. Lightfoot's "Journal" contains very little record of the debates that were held in the course of this revision, and we should perhaps be in danger of underestimating their reach and thoroughness, had not some fuller intimation of them been preserved in the manuscript Minutes and some specimens of their nature in the published speeches of Dr. Featley. It is evident that very careful and thoroughgoing work was done, of which the text of the revised Articles themselves gives but meager suggestion. All this told afterward on the formulation of these same topics in the Confession of Faith. "The keen and lengthened debates," remarks Dr. Mitchell, "which occurred in the discussions on these Articles could not fail to prepare the way for a more summary mode of procedure in connection with the Confession of Faith. The proceedings then were more summary, or at least more summarily recorded, just because the previous discussions on the more important doctrines of the Protestant system, and especially on that of Justification by Faith, had been thorough and exhaustive, and pretty fully recorded."⁵ There does not even lack evidence that in framing the very language of the Confession, regard was had to the minutiae of the work done on this former occasion. Now and again little points of phraseology,

for example, are taken over into the Confessional statements from the revised Articles, such as serve to show that the Divines kept their former labors fully in mind in the prosecution of their later, and were perfecting their work in full view of all that had previously been done.⁷

Of far less importance, but perhaps worth mentioning in this connection, was the work done by the Assembly in the spring of 1645, in defining for the House of Commons "the particulars of that ignorance and scandal for which persons should be excluded from the sacrament." At this time, also, though in a more summary manner, the Assembly had occasion, prior to its entrance on the actual preparation of the Confession, to review in a systematic exhibit all the chief topics of a dogmatic system.⁹

Many topics which touched on the subjects treated in parallel portions of the Confession were also debated in the preparation of the Form of Government; and, we may be sure, this was not without consciousness on the part of the debaters that their investigations would bear double fruit. We meet, for example, on May 6, 1645, before any part of the Confession had come before the Assembly, a note like this: "Debate whether to bring this under the head of government or a Confession of Faith." And accordingly the proposition thus debated was in substance actually incorporated into the subsequently framed Confession. Similarly the long debates on the *jus divinum* cannot fail to have borne fruit both for the Government and for such chapters of the Confession as that on "The Church and Church Censures," then in process of framing.

Finally the labors of the Assembly in preparing its Catechism, so far as they were carried on before the Confession left its hands, were of course of use to it in preparing the Confession also. In some sense, these labors began indeed as early as December, 1643: but the matter incorporated into the Catechism does not seem to have come before the Assembly itself earlier than September 14, 1646, from which date until January 4, 1647, the substance of the original Catechism was

reported as far as that project was prosecuted by the Assembly. During this period the Assembly was in the process of its review of the text of the Confession, and had reached a portion of it for which the debates upon the Catechism could afford little or no aid.¹² The scrutiny of the substance of doctrine for the Catechism therefore could serve as a help in the formulation of the Confession only in so far as the members of the Committee at work on the Catechism were moulding their opinions by it. In the general Assembly the influence was the other way about. In fact, Baillie tells us that on the reporting of the first matter for the Catechism, the Assembly fell on such "rubbes and long debates" that it was purposely "laid aside till the Confession was ended, with resolution to have no matter in it but what was expressed in the Confession, which should not be debated over againe in the Catechise." The subject is nevertheless worth mentioning here as indicating afresh how repeatedly the Divines were, in committee or in full house, led to go over the whole series of doctrinal statements either prior to or parallel with their work in formulating the Confession: all of which repeated reviews of the matter to be placed in the Confession of course were of use in its formulation for that purpose.

If there ever was a document, therefore, whose contents might be expected to exhibit that genius, the essence of which consists, we are told, in taking pains, it assuredly is the Westminster Confession of Faith. And when we read its exquisitely balanced phrases, and are moved with admiration for the perfection of the guarding which it gives to its doctrinal propositions on this side and that, we are reaping the benefit of these repeated reviews which the Assembly was forced to give the whole matter, perhaps even more than of the minute scrutiny it lavished on the formulation of it on the final occasion of its actual incorporation into the Confession. And when, after this, and in the light of all the experience gained by such repeated reviews of the material, first the Larger Catechism and then the Shorter Catechism were elaborated, it is not at all strange that a precision of definition was attained which has called forth such

praises as these documents, and especially the Shorter Catechism, have received from the most varied quarters.

The framing of a new Confession of Faith was a portion of the task that devolved on the Westminster Assembly through the provisions of the Solemn League and Covenant, by which an engagement was entered into for bringing "the Churches of God in the three kingdoms to the nearest conjunction and uniformity in religion, confession of faith, form of Church government, directory for worship and catechising." The prosecution of the work of uniting the two Churches in a common Confession of course involved the substitution of a new Confession, agreed upon by both Churches, for those previously in use, whether in Scotland or in England; it accordingly rendered the revision of the Thirty-nine Articles, on which the Assembly had been engaged during the first months of its labors, no longer ad rem. No doubt the persistency of the Commons in securing the insertion into the "Ordinance" calling the Assembly of a clause setting forth as one of the objects in view the procuring of a "nearer agreement with the Church of Scotland," although more particularly referring to the point of "Government," affected in some degree the whole work of the Assembly and bore fruit even in its revision of the Thirty-nine Articles. But the particular instructions given regarding the revision of these Articles limited the Assembly to "vindicating and clearing" them "from all false calumnies and aspersions," and the Assembly itself looked upon this work accordingly as "relating only to the Church of England."¹⁶ When now, on the 25th of September, 1643, the Solemn League and Covenant was taken, the whole situation was changed. Parliament was now committed to that policy of uniformity in religion for the whole country for which the Scots had been unwearingly pressing ever since their Peace Commissioners had gone up to London early in 1641, and the Assembly considered its work on the Articles as entirely set aside by the subsequent order, as it itself expresses it, "to employ us in framing a Confession of Faith for the three kingdoms, according to our Solemn League and Covenant." It was only with great reluctance and with protestations of their insufficiency that it

placed in the hands of the Parliament, when subsequently required to do so, the Articles so far as they had been revised by it.¹⁸

Nevertheless, the severer task of forming a new Confession of Faith for the whole kingdom was not at once entered upon. A still more severe and, in the judgment of all alike, a still more pressing task required attention first—the framing of a unifying "Government" for the Churches of the whole kingdom. This great labor was begun on October 12, 1643, and consumed the energies and time of the Assembly for many months. The first motion toward undertaking the new Confession was made apparently on Tuesday morning, August 20, 1644. Sir Archibald Johnston of Warriston, lately arrived from Scotland, appeared in the Assembly on August 14, bringing letters from the General Assembly; and in presenting them he emphasized "the general desire of all the nation of Scotland for the hastening of the work in hand"—that is, the work of completing the uniformity in all its parts in accordance with the Solemn League and Covenant. In his response Dr. Burgess added his voice to Warriston's: and "Mr. Henderson also spake to the same purpose, of forwarding and hastening our work. Whereupon it was ordered, that the grand committee should meet to-morrow." The report from the Grand Committee came in on August 20, and contained five resolutions designed for expediting the work. The second of these proposed "a committee to join with the commissioners of Scotland, to draw up a confession of faith." No order, however, was as yet come from Parliament "to enable us to such a thing," and the proposition, therefore, caused some debate; but it was at last determined upon, and a committee of nine, consisting of Drs. Temple, Gouge and Hoyle, Messrs. Gataker, Arrowsmith, Burroughs, Burgess, Vines and Goodwin, was appointed to take the work in hand.²¹ Two weeks later, Lightfoot tells us further, "Dr. Temple, chairman of the committee for the drawing up of a confession of faith, desired, that that committee might be augmented." This also was done, and there were added the names of Dr. Smith and Messrs. Palmer, Newcomen, Herle, Reynolds, Wilson, Tuckney, Young, Ley, and Sedgewick. Baillie congratulates himself that thus the preparation of the

Confession had been "put in severall the best hands that are here," and that "the heads of it being distribute among many able hands, it may in a short time be so drawn up, as the debates of it may cost little time."

It was not until the next summer, nevertheless, that any portion of the Confession came before the Assembly. In the spring it seems to have been taken up in earnest, but progress was still slow.²⁵ Baillie informs us under date of April 25, 1645, that some reports had already been made to the Assembly. We hear of it in the Minutes for the first time, however, on Monday, April 21,²⁷ and then after a fashion that hints of pressure brought on the Assembly for completing the work. The Scotch Commissioners, returning on April 9 from their visit to the Assembly of the Kirk of Scotland, had had presented by the Grand Committee to the Houses of Parliament and the Assembly of Divines alike a paper setting out the satisfaction of their Kirk with the parts of the Uniformity already prepared, and urging that "it is with no less zeal and earnestness desired and expected by that whole Kirk and kingdom, that the remanent parts of Uniformity be expedited." Stress was especially laid in this paper on the completion of the Form of Government; but when the paper came before the Commons (on April 14) it found that body engaged on matters of doctrine,³⁰ and its immediate fruit was accordingly an action to hasten on the preparation of the "Confession of Faith." A paper had been sent up from the Divines to both Houses on March 6 looking to the "preserving the sacraments pure," and both Houses had taken up the matter at once. The debate in the Commons from March 25 took the form of determining the particulars of ignorance and scandal which should exclude from the Lord's Supper. Several communications were passed between the House, sitting in committee, and the Divines by means of which it was determined what should be defined as "a competent measure of understanding"—"concerning God the Father, Son and Holy Ghost," "concerning the state of man by the creation, and by his fall," "the redemption of Jesus Christ, etc.," "the ways and means to apply Christ, etc.," "the nature and necessity of faith, etc.," "repentance,

etc.," "the nature and use of the Sacraments, etc.," "the condition of man after this life, etc." The report of the Grand Committee embodying these findings was made to the Commons on the 17th of April, and on the same day a Committee was appointed to draft an ordinance in the terms of the findings.³² Simultaneously the House voted to desire the Assembly with all convenient speed to resolve upon a Confession of Faith for the Church of England and present it to the House. In this we may doubtless see the combined effects of the pressure brought to bear on the House by the letter from Scotland and its own sense of need arising from its labors in defining censurable ignorance. There are entries in the Minutes of the Assembly for April 18 which may be taken as indicating the reception of this order by that body.³⁴ In this case it would seem that Messrs. Seaman, Tuckney, Burroughs, Young, Whitaker, Rayner, Vines, and Delamarch were appointed "to consider of this order," and were instructed to meet that afternoon and report at the next meeting. In any event the order was already in process of being obeyed at this next meeting, Monday, April 21. Apparently the Committee appointed on April 18 then reported that the best way to meet the immediate needs of Parliament would be to place in its hands a revised edition of the Thirty-nine Articles, to serve until a Confession of Faith could be prepared. Accordingly it was ordered that the Committee in whose charge the revision of the Thirty-nine Articles had formerly been, or perhaps the new Committee of April 18, should "consider how far they or any of them may be useful to be recommended to both Houses of Parliament for the present, till a Confession of Faith can be drawn up by this Assembly"; and further, that "the Committee for Confession of Faith do meet on Wednesday, in the afternoon."

Nothing further appears until Friday, May 9, when, a new order having meanwhile been received from Parliament for dispatch, it was ordered "that the Assembly consider on Monday morning the best way to expedite the Confession of Faith, ... and that the two Committees for the Confession of Faith be put into one." What two Committees were here united we have no means of ascertaining. We

have heard hitherto of only one Committee to which the "preparing matter" for a Confession of Faith was committed (August 20, 1644), and which was subsequently (September 4) augmented; and even on April 21, as we have just seen, "the Committee for Confession of Faith" is spoken of quite simply as if there were but one, and between that entry and the present one there is no allusion in the Minutes to the matter.³⁸ But Baillie, though in the previous autumn speaking of "a Committee" to which the Confession of Faith had been referred, under date of April 25, says, "The Catechise and Confession of Faith are put in the hands of severall committees." It is probably easiest to suppose that in the meanwhile another Committee, additional to that of August 20–September 4, 1644, had been appointed.⁴⁰ At all events, in accordance with the provision of May 9, the Assembly on Monday, May 12, proceeded to make further arrangements for "expediting the Confession of Faith." The report in the Minutes of what was done is somewhat obscure. But it appears that besides reading and debating "the report of the Confession of Faith," there was an additional "debate about the Committee for drawing up the Confession"; and it was determined that "the first draught of the Confession of Faith shall be drawn up by a Committee of a few"; which Committee was then constituted—apparently of the following members: Drs. Temple and Hoyle, Messrs. Gataker, Harris, Burgess, Reynolds and Herle. This Committee is then instructed to meet that same afternoon; and the Scotch Commissioners "are desired to be assisting to this Committee."

The question arises whether this Committee was additional to the former Committee or Committees (of August 20, September 4, 1644, and May 9, 1645), or was a substitute for it or them. Dr. Mitchell supposes the former, and looks upon this new Committee as erected in order to receive the material collected by the already existing Committee, or Committees, and to digest it into more formal shape before it was finally submitted to the Assembly. There are certain serious difficulties, however, in the way of this supposition. And these are greatly increased by a subsequent act of the Assembly's. On Friday, July 11, 1645, it was ordered—"Monday morning to divide the

body of the Confession of Faith to the three Committees." Accordingly on the next Monday—July 14—we hear of a "debate about dividing of heads of confession": but the matter was not concluded on that day. On the following Wednesday—July 16, 1645—we read of a "report made from the Committee of the heads of Confession," and it was ordered: "The first Committee to prepare the Confession of Faith upon these heads: God and the Holy Trinity; God's decrees, Predestination, Election, etc.; the works of Creation and Providence; Man's Fall"; "The Second Committee: Sin, and the punishment thereof; Free will; the Covenant of Grace; Christ our Mediator"; "The Third Committee: Effectual Vocation; Justification; Adoption; Sanctification"; "Those three Committees to meet tomorrow in the afternoon"; "If they think fit to leave out any of those heads, or add any other, they are to make report to the Assembly." Dr. Mitchell supposes with obvious justice that the three large Committees into which the Assembly was permanently divided for the preparing of its business⁴² are referred to in these orders; and that "the material prepared by the previous small committee" was "handed over to these larger committees, and further discussed and elaborated by them before being brought into the Assembly." This seems altogether reasonable in itself, and is fully borne out by the subsequent proceedings. But certainly, under this supposition, it becomes very unlikely that the earlier Committee or Committees (of August 20, September 4, 1644, and May 9, 1645) still continued in existence—if for no other reason than the complicated process which would in that case be involved in getting the several parts of the Confession before the Assembly. First the Committee of August 20–September 4, 1644, would collect the material; then the Committee of May 12, 1645, with the aid of the Scotch Commissioners, would digest it; then the large Committee required thereto on July 16, would further digest it; and only then would it reach the Assembly. Surely this complication of process throws something in the scale to justify us in looking on the Committee of May 12 as a substitute for that of August 20–September 4, rather than additional to it. In that case we must suppose that the Assembly had sought at first to get along with only one Committee, which should prepare the matter of

the Confession for its discussion; that that first appointed (August 20, 1644), augmented on September 4, 1644, and again perhaps on May 9, 1645, had proved too large and unwieldy for rapid work, and was superseded by a smaller one, May 12, 1645—the members of which were, however (with one exception, viz., Mr. Harris), taken from the earlier Committees. Subsequently, for the better digesting of the material, it was ordered (July 11 and 16, 1645) that the reports of the Committee should in the first instance be submitted to one or the other of the three great Committees into which the Assembly was divided for the preparation of its business, and be by them actually brought before the whole body.

There are, to be sure, not lacking some difficulties in the way of the supposition of even this very natural and workable arrangement. Among them the chief are that in the action of May 9 we read (as we have seen) of its being ordered, "that the two Committees for the Confession of Faith be put into one"; and in the action of July 4 we read of "the sub-Committee for the Confession of Faith," as if there were still divisions in the Committee; and again on July 18 we read of a "report concerning God, by Dr. Temple" being put in—although Dr. Temple was not a member of the First great Committee to which this topic was assigned, but of the Third great Committee, while, on the other hand, he was a member of the Committee of May 12, and as representing it had "made report of that part of the Confession of Faith touching the Scriptures" on July 7—i.e., before the distribution of the heads to the three great Committees had been made. These difficulties do not, however, seem to be insuperable. We have already offered a suggestion in explanation of the mention of two Committees on May 9. The term "Sub-Committee" in the action of July 4 need not be pressed: it may be, and probably is, only a designation of the Committee of May 12, called Sub-Committee possibly because of its small size in comparison with the three great Committees; or it may be thought not impossible that the work on the topics of God and the Scriptures may actually have been done by a Sub-Committee of that Committee. It seems further, on closer examination, that Dr. Temple made the report of July 18 on "God,"

as well as that of July 7 on "The Scriptures," in consequence of the order of July 4 "that the sub-Committee for the Confession of Faith shall make report to the Assembly on Monday morning of what is in their hands concerning God and concerning the Scriptures"—so that these two topics were accounted as in that manner already before the Assembly, though in the interval between this and July 18, when the "report concerning God, by Dr. Temple," was—not made, but—"read and debated," provision had been made for another course to be subsequently pursued. It is not an insuperable objection to this solution of the difficulty that in the distribution of the heads of the Confession to the three Committees on July 16, the head on "Scripture" is not assigned to the first Committee—doubtless as already fully before the house—while the head on "God and the Holy Trinity" is so assigned, as if it were not yet—at least in full—before the house. There are so many things we do not know about the precise course of action that a plausible supposition such as we have suggested may be allowed to be probable, even though we cannot explain all the details. And it is to be observed that when the report on this topic came from the first Committee on July 23, it was not of "God and the Holy Trinity," but "of the article of the Trinity." It may be taken as likely then that the original Committee of May 12 reported as required on the two topics, "The Scriptures" and "God," and that the first report from the great Committee was on "the Trinity" only.

This construction receives further support from other circumstances. We hear nothing of "Committees," but only of a "Committee" on the Confession between the dates May 9, when the "two Committees" were "put into one," and July 16, when the three great Committees were charged with the Confession, while afterwards this is no longer so—as e.g. on August 20 we read of "the Committees for the Confession of Faith." We hear no more of reports from Dr. Temple on the Confession after those on the "Scriptures" of July 7 and on "God" of July 18. At the very next session—July 23—we read rather: "Report made from the Committee of the article of the Trinity," and afterwards, on August 29: "Report from the first Committee

concerning God's decrees"; "Report made by the second Committee of Christ the Mediator"; "Debate on the report of the first Committee of God's decree"; on September 3, "Report from the first Committee about adding the word 'absolutely' "; "Debate about the 2d Committee's report of Christ the Mediator," and so on. This mode of reference varied only to such forms as the following. On September 8, "Dr. Gouge offered a report of an addition, though the Committee was not a full number, but 7"—Dr. Gouge being a member of the First Committee, and possibly at this time its chairman. On September 9, "Dr. Stanton made report additional of Christ the Mediator.⁴⁶ Mr. Prophet made report of Effectual Calling"—Dr. Stanton having been from the first chairman of the Second Committee and Mr. Prophet being a member of the Third, the several Committees to which these topics had been assigned on July 16. A note in the proceedings for November 18 (sess. 537) gives the whole state of the case very clearly: "Dr. Gouge [made] report from First Committee of Creation. Mr. Whitakers from the Second Committee, of the Fall of Man, of Sin, and the Punishment thereof. The Third Committee made no report." In the presence of such clear declarations, supported by a number of incidental references accordant with them (such as have been set down in the footnotes), we need not hesitate to say that the several heads of the Confession were obviously reported directly to the Assembly by the three great Committees, even though there remain a few instances where a reference occurs not easily explicable.

The most striking of these are those instances in which we read of a topic of the Confession being reported by a member who does not seem to have been a member of the great Committee to which this topic was assigned. On one occasion, for example, Dr. Gouge is spoken of as reporting on a topic not belonging to the First, but to the Second Committee: December 15, 1645, "Dr. Gouge made report about Free-will." Dr. Gouge may have been acting here, however, as representing not the original Committee which reported this subject to the Assembly, but a special Committee to which it or some part of it had been recommitted. Color is lent to this suggestion by three

facts. First, the recommitment of special points to special Committees was not uncommon with the Assembly; instances may be noted on pp. 183, 184, 187, 208, 217, 218, 219 of the "Minutes." Secondly, the note here is made in immediate conjunction with a case of recommitment. The Minutes proceed: "Mr. Arrowsmith made report of that committed concerning the Sacraments." The Sacraments constituted a topic belonging to the Second Committee, indeed, of which Mr. Arrowsmith was a member, and so this case may be only partially parallel. More clearly similar is the instance of November 7, when we read: "Report made by Mr. Reynolds about Reprobation"—evidently in pursuance of the order of November 6: "The paragraph concerning Reprobation referred to the Committee, to make report tomorrow morning." Mr. Reynolds was not, however, a member of the First Committee to which this topic belonged, but of the Second: and thus this would seem to be a case of reference to a special Committee. The matter is plainer still in another instance. We read in the Minutes for March 10, 1646: "Mr. Seaman made report of Christian Liberty and Liberty of Conscience"—a topic belonging to the First Committee while Mr. Seaman was a member of the Second. The original report on Christian Liberty, however, was made on January 29, and not by Mr. Seaman but by Mr. Coleman—a member of the First Committee. The subject was debated on that day, and again on February 10, 12, 16, when it was resolved: "That this whole head of Christian Liberty shall be recommitted"; and further, "This shall be recommitted to a select Committee"—whose members are then named with Mr. Seaman at their head (p. 187). It is, of course, from this Committee that Mr. Seaman reported on March 10. It should, however, be borne in mind that we cannot implicitly trust the lists of names given in the schedule which Dr. Mitchell prints of the members of the three great Committees at the date nearest to the time when the Assembly was busied with the Confession. For example, we read in the Minutes of January 29, 1646: "Mr. Dury made report from the Second Committee of Church Offices and Censures." But the name of Mr. Dury does not occur on the roll of the members of the Second Committee, nor indeed on any of the three rolls. A similar instance is found in this same note of January 29:

"Mr. Newcomen, Mr. Dury, Mr. Delmy, Dr. Temple, Dr. Gouge, added to the Committee for report about the Law; to report tomorrow morning." The reference is not to the original Third Committee, which had reported the chapter on the Law at least as early as January 7, but to a special Committee appointed January 12 to consider the propositions under debate concerning the meaning of the terms "ceremonial" and "judicial." Of the names given in this additional list, two—Messrs. Dury and Delmy—have no place in Dr. Mitchell's lists of the three Committees. Thirdly, it may be added that it does not appear likely that Dr. Gouge's report on December 15, 1645, represents the first report to the Assembly on the topic of Free Will. A month before (on November 18) it had been represented to the Assembly that the Second Committee had finished all the heads of the Confession that had been committed to it; and this representation was made the occasion of a new distribution of heads to the three Committees. In the interval, before December 15, topics from this second distribution had been reported from the Second Committee (e.g., December 1, on the Lord's Supper; December 5, "Of the Sacraments in general"). It does not seem likely that these would be reported before report had been made of material lying ready for report before these topics were undertaken.

In the light of the facts, therefore, it seems certain that the several heads of the Confession were reported immediately from the three great Committees to the Assembly, and that therefore there was no Committee for further digesting their material intermediating between them and the Assembly. It is not safe to differ on such a matter from Dr. Mitchell, but, on the whole, it appears to us likely also that the small Committee appointed on the 12th May, 1645, was substituted for the earlier Committee or Committees (of August 20–September 4, 1644, and perhaps again in the ensuing winter), and that the mode of procedure was that the small Committee of May 12, 1645—consisting of seven, a quorum of which was five—first drew up the heads of the Confession with the aid of the Commissioners of the Church of Scotland: and that these were then distributed by the Assembly among the three great Committees for thorough digesting:

whence they came back finally to the Assembly for discussion and ordering.

The first two of these "heads" had, to be sure, according to our supposition, already been reported to the Assembly by the small Committee, before it had been determined to distribute the heads between the three great Committees. In the Minutes of the session for Friday, July 4, 1645, we read: "Debate about the Confession of Faith. That the sub-Committee for the Confession of Faith shall make report to the Assembly on Monday morning of what is in their hands concerning God and concerning the Scriptures." Accordingly on Monday, July 7, we read: "Dr. Temple made report of that part of the Confession of Faith touching the Scriptures. It was read, debated." We hear no more of the report on the head "God," to be sure, until July 18—before which date the distribution to the great Committees had been made. But what we read there is not that Dr. Temple made report on this topic, but: "Report concerning God, by Dr. Temple, read and debated"; while subsequently we read (July 23): "Report made from the Committee of the article of the Trinity." Whatever may be the right explanation of these phrases, the reports of the subsequent heads of the Confession were not made by Dr. Temple, but as we have seen from the First, Second, or Third Committee, or some one of their representatives. This series begins, if not on July 23, at least on August 29, with a notice of a report from the First Committee on God's decrees and from the Second Committee on Christ the Mediator. Thereafter the heads were reported one by one from the several Committees to which their digesting had been from time to time committed.

The consideration given in the Assembly itself to the several heads was very careful and the scrutiny of every clause and word searching. Recommitments, ordinarily at least to special Committees, were frequent: final dissent on the part of individuals was sometimes entered. In a word, time, pains, and scrupulous care were not spared for perfecting the instrument. Thus the work went slowly on, until near the middle of 1646, at which time, though the work was not yet

completed, the attention of the Assembly was withdrawn by the Parliament to other matters. During the course of these long-continued and searching debates, it was inevitable that many alterations should be entered in the drafts of the several heads as they were first laid before the Assembly. It was felt by the Assembly from the first that provision should be made to have the text and alterations properly adjusted. As early as July 8, 1645, therefore, we find this order: "That Mr. Reynolds, Mr. Herle, Mr. Newcomen be desired to take care of the wording of the Confession of Faith, as it is voted in the Assembly from time to time, and to report to the Assembly when they think fit there should be any alteration in the words. They are first to consult with the Commissioners from the Church of Scotland, or one of them, before they report to the Assembly." Of this Committee we hear nothing more: it doubtless did the work committed to it and saw to it that the amendments made were fitted properly into their places and that all went smoothly. As the work advanced, another Committee of similar but apparently somewhat enlarged powers was appointed. This was done on December 8, 1645: "Ordered—Mr. Tuckney, Mr. Reynolds, Mr. Newcomen, Mr. Whitakers, a Committee to review the Confession of Faith as it is finished in the Assembly." Apparently it was not contemplated that reports should be made from this Committee in the meantime; but rather that it should quietly prepare matter for the further consideration of the Assembly in a final review of its work. At all events, after the stress of interruption was over and the Confession was completed (at least substantially), we find this Committee reporting (June 17, 1646). The note runs: "Report was made from the Committee about 'the perfecting of the Confession of Faith' "—and at once it is "Ordered—That Mr. Arrowsmith be added to the Committee for [perfecting] the Confession of Faith. Upon a debate about the 'reading of the Report again,' it was Resolved upon the Q., 'Not to be read again entire, but in parts.' It was debated, and the Assembly began with the Scriptures; and part of that head was ordered." From this it would seem that the report of the Committee on "the perfecting of the Confession of Faith" consisted of the presentation of a perfected copy; that this was read first entire; and

then ordered to be again read in parts. On June 19, 1646, it is further ordered, "That the Committee for wording and methodizing of the Confession of Faith shall have liberty, as they see things imperfect, to complete them; and to make report unto the Assembly."

Under the guidance of this Committee the Assembly thus went again over the whole Confession. This work was not done perfunctorily. It was begun on June 17, 1646: immediately after determining, as has been already mentioned, to review the Confession in parts, it is noted: "The Assembly began with the Scriptures; and part of that head was ordered. Ordered—To proceed in the debate where we left." Accordingly in the Minutes of the next day (June 18) we read: "The Assembly proceeded in the debate of the Confession of Faith concerning 'the Scriptures'; and upon debate the whole head concerning the Scriptures was ordered; and it is as followeth.... The Assembly proceeded in the debate of the Article concerning 'God and the Holy Trinity'; and upon debate that head also was ordered; and it is as followeth.... The Assembly proceeded in debate of the Article 'Of God's Eternal Decree'; and upon debate part of it was ordered. Upon debate about the last clause of it, concerning the handling of this doctrine, it was Resolved upon the Q., To refer this till to-morrow morning." The next day accordingly: "The Assembly proceeded in the debate of the Confession of Faith; and upon debate, that head 'of God's Eternal Decree' was ordered and is as followeth...." Similarly chapters iv. and v. were passed on the same day; part of chapter vi. on June 22, and the remainder of chapter vi., and chapters vii. and viii. on June 25. Chapter ix., "of Free Will," gave apparently more trouble. We read in the Minutes of June 29: "Report was made by Mr. Tuckney 'of Free Will.' It was read, and also some additional to the Article 'of the Fall of Man.' The additional were debated, and ordered to be added. The Assembly debated the Report 'of Free Will'; and upon debate about the first branch of it concerning 'the natural liberty in the Will,' it was Resolved upon the Q., To be recommitted." In the Minutes of the next day (June 30) accordingly we read: "Report was made from the Committee of the proposition concerning Free Will recommitted. It was read and debated, and the whole

Article assented to. It is as followeth..." On the same day chapter x. was passed upon. After this, work on the Confession was intermitted for nearly a month, and was not resumed until a message was received from Parliament desiring the early completion of the Confession (July 22). On July 23 chapters xi. and xii. were passed: and on the next day, July 24, the interrupted work of framing the first draft of the Confession was also resumed, the Second Committee bringing in its reports on chapters xviii. and xxxii. The time of the Assembly was thereafter largely absorbed in framing the remainder of the first draft: and it is not until September 14 that we meet with the next note bearing on the review: on that date chapter xvii. was passed upon in its perfected form, and on September 15 chapter xviii., while on this latter date also: "Report was made from the Committee for perfecting the Confession of Faith 'of the Law.' It was read and debated, and upon debate much of it was assented to, the rest referred to the Committee." On September 16, chapters xiii. and xiv. were passed upon; on the 17th the rest of chapter xix.; on September 18, chapter xv. On September 21, chapter xvi. was passed; an addition was proposed to it on the 22d by Mr. Prophet, concerning which the Assembly—"Resolved upon the Q., Not to take this paper now read into debate"; nevertheless on September 23 its consideration was pressed on the attention of the Assembly again, whereupon it was "Resolved upon the Q., This proposition shall not be added." On the same day chapter xiii., on Sanctification, was taken up renewedly and certain alterations proposed by a Committee appointed for the purpose were entered into it. The same afternoon Mr. Whitaker sought to secure a similar review of a clause in chapter iii., but unsuccessfully.

Thus the framing of the first draft of the latter portion of the Confession and the perfecting of that portion of it already drawn up went on side by side. The House of Commons was meanwhile still pressing for its completion and in response to an order received September 18, chapters xv.–xix. were completed and passed upon September 25, and the first nineteen chapters sent up to Parliament. Chapters xx. and xxi. were passed October 30; chapter xxii.

November 6; chapter xxiii. November 9; xxvii. and xxviii. November 10; xxix. November 16; xxv. November 17; xxvi. November 20; xxx. xxxi. xxxii. and xxxiii. November 26. On November 26, 1646, the following note was spread on the Minutes: "The Confession of Faith was finished this day, and by order of the Assembly the Prolocutor gave thanks, in the name of the Assembly, to the Committee that had taken so good [or "great"] pains in the perfecting of the Confession of Faith."

Even this exhibition of the work done in bringing the Confession to its present form is not, however, a complete account of the pains expended on it. On September 18, 1646, there seems to have been made an unsuccessful effort to establish yet another Committee for the reviewing of the whole Confession, after this second passage of it through the Assembly. We read: "Upon a motion to appoint a Committee to consider of the Confession of Faith, what errors are not obviated in it, and to that end that there be a review of the Articles of England and Ireland, it was Resolved upon the Q., There shall be no Committee to consider of the reviewing of the Articles what errors are not obviated in them." The meaning of this is perhaps elucidated by the form in which it stands in the other draft of the Minutes, lapping here with the printed copy and called Fascicle iii. by the editors: "A new Committee to consider of all the errors unobviated in several Confessions of England, Ireland and Scotland, to give in the catalogue of these errors to the Committee for the wording. R.—No Committee to consider of the reviewing Articles what errors are not obviated in them." That is to say, apparently, what was proposed was a Committee to see that all that was erroneous in earlier Confessions had been fitly dealt with in the new Confession: the anxiety seems to have been that no erroneous expressions, however slight and intrenched in the earlier Confessions, should escape correction in this new one.

Though this effort failed, there was, however, a new reviewing made of the text of the Confession that bore fruit for its perfecting. This was accomplished in the process of its transcription. Over this

transcription Dr. Burgess had the oversight. He made report September 21, 1646, "of the Confession of Faith transcribed, so much of it as the Assembly had perfected. It was read, and upon debate it was Resolved upon the Q., 'The several heads of the Confession of Faith shall be called by the name of Chapters.' Resolved upon the Q., That the several sections be distinguished by figures only." Thus was inaugurated what was really a second revision of the Confession—a passage of it through the Assembly for the third time. By September 25, as we have seen, nineteen chapters had passed through this third scrutiny, and were ordered sent up to the Parliament. Subsequently to that we find repeated instances in which Dr. Burgess moves certain alterations or additions to the already completed chapters—which do or do not commend themselves to the Assembly: e.g. on November 20 he moves certain additions to chapter xxi., which had been passed on October 30; on November 23, to chapter xxii., which had been passed on November 6; and an addition was made to chapter xxi. on that same day, doubtless on his motion. This process of improvement continues even after the entry made on November 26, celebrating the completion of the Confession, i.e. during the whole process of its official transcription. Thus on November 27 we read: "Dr. Burges moved for some alterations in the Confession of Faith in some words, which were assented to." And again on December 1, "Upon a motion for an alteration in the chapter of Censures in the Confession of Faith, it was Resolved upon the Q., There shall be no alteration." Indeed, the onerousness of Dr. Burgess' work of overseeing the transcription was recognized at this session by the order: "That the brethren that drew up the Confession of Faith"—that is, as we should conjecture, either the Committee appointed May 12, 1645, to frame the first draft (Messrs. Gataker, Harris, Temple, Burgess, Reynolds, Hoyle, Herle) or else the perfecting Committee (Messrs. Tuckney, Reynolds, Newcomen, Whitaker, Arrowsmith and Cawdry) appointed December 8, 1645, and augmented June 17, 1646, and September 1, 1646—"do assist Dr. Burges in reading over the Confession of Faith with one of the scribes." On December 3 a number of changes in chapters xix. xxi. xxii. xxix. xxxi. were proposed by Dr. Burgess, and either accepted or

rejected, and the Committee was required further to "consider of that which is propounded concerning the chapter of the Civil Magistrate." Other changes were debated on December 4, and Dr. Burgess' final report was made, whereupon it was "Ordered—That thanks be returned to the Assessor, Dr. Burges, for his great pains in transcribing the Confession of Faith, which was done by the Prolocutor. Resolved upon the Q., This" [i.e. the transcribed and finally adjusted copy of the Confession of Faith] "shall be presented to both Houses of Parliament by the whole Assembly. The Confession of Faith as it was presented is as followeth...." Here we reach the really final act in the Assembly's preparation of the text of the Confession. Nothing remained now but the printing of it, and on receiving from Parliament an order to that effect, it was (December 10) "Ordered—That the Scribes take care of the exact printing of the Confession of Faith."

The work of preparing proof-texts for the Confession was undertaken somewhat reluctantly by the Assembly, as a consequence of an order from the House of Commons of October 9, 1646, and reported in the Assembly on October 12. It was felt that the demand for proof-texts was only an expedient of "the retarding partie" in Parliament (as Baillie calls it) to delay the completion of the business: and it was feared that the attempt to add the texts would (as Baillie expressed it) "prove a very long business, if not dexterously managed," though, no doubt, it would be "for the advantage and strength of the work." A Committee was, however, at once appointed to advise the Assembly "how obedience may be yielded" to this order, and their report, adopted October 13, set forth that to append full proofs to so large a Confession would require a volume, and could scarcely be necessary, inasmuch as what was set forth in the Confession was for its substance "received truths among all churches," and the only question about it concerned "the manner of expression or the fitness to have it put into the Confession." What the Assembly explicitly asked, however, was only time, not absolute reprieve for the task. Parliament was inexorable, and the work was fairly begun on January 6, 1647 (Wednesday). We read: "Ordered—That Mr. Wilson,

Mr. Byfield, Mr. Gower, be a Committee to prepare Scriptures for the Confession of Faith." On the very next day the Scriptures for the first chapter were reported, and those for the first paragraph were debated. The work was continued steadily thereafter. The proof-texts of the first chapter were completed on January 15: and meanwhile those for the other chapters were being reported—those for chapter ii. having been brought in on January 8, and for chapter iii. on January 13. On Friday, March 5, 1647, the texts for the final chapters were reported, and the Assembly "Ordered—That thanks be returned to the Committee for the Scriptures, for their great pains and diligence in that business; which was accordingly done by the Prolocutor. Ordered—That Mr. Burges, Dr. Smith, Mr. Calamy, Mr. Palmer, Mr. Seaman, Mr. Strickland, Mr. Spurstow, Mr. Case, Mr. Scudder, and Dr. Hoyle, or any three of them, shall be a Committee to join with the Committee for the Scriptures, to review the Scriptures. They are to meet on Thursday next in the afternoon. The care of this Committee is referred to Mr. Scudder." These resolutions mark the completion of the proof-texts, however, only in the Committee. At this time the Assembly's consideration of them had reached no further than the twentieth chapter. It was not until April 5, 1647, that the work was completed by the Assembly. On that date the note is entered in the Minutes: "The Confession was finished."

It was not even then "finished," however, except in first draft; and it was ordered that the report of the reviewing Committee should now go through the three large Committees, and so come to the Assembly—the work to be begun on the next day. There was an effort made at the same time to have some explanatory declaration added with reference to the proper use of the proof-texts, but this was unsuccessful. The action in full was as follows: "Upon a motion by Mr. Seaman that something be annexed by way of caution to show how the proofs are to be applied, it was Resolved upon the Q., There shall be no further debate about cautions to be added about the proofs of Scripture. Resolved upon the Q., That the Review of the Confession of Faith be considered of by the three Committees of the Assembly. Ordered—That the Committees appointed for the Review

of the Confession make report to-morrow morning what they have done about it." It would seem that it was impracticable for the three Committees to report the next day, however, and the expedient appears to have been adopted—in this approximating to the manner in which the text of the Confession itself was first taken up—of having the Committee of Review report the first portion of the texts directly to the Assembly, while the remainder should come to it only through the large Committees. This is at least what appears to be implied by the entry for April 6: "Mr. Scudder made report of the Review of the proofs of the Confession of Faith for the seven first chapters and part of the 8th; and upon debate of it, it was assented to as the proofs are entered in the margin of the Confession of Faith. Ordered—That the rest of the 8th chapter, and chapters 9th to the 17th be referred to the First Committee to review; and from chapter 8th to the 25th to the Second Committee, and from chapter 26th to the end of the Confession to the Third Committee." On the succeeding days, April 7, 8, 9, 12, 13, the reports of these Committees for the several sections were brought in and the proof-texts passed by the Assembly. On the 15th April it was "Ordered—That Mr. Wilson, Mr. Gower, and Mr. Wallis do draw up, in the margin of two books of the Confession of Faith, the Scriptures, to be presented to the Parliament." An order having been received from Parliament to send up the texts (April 22), this was done on April 26, 1647, and they were presented to both Houses on April 29.

Thus the Confession of Faith passed in its completed form out of the hands of the Assembly, and the history of the attempt to create a common Confession of Faith for Great Britain properly closes. All the world knows the subsequent fortunes of the product of such long-continued labors. The text of the first nineteen chapters, it will be remembered, was sent up preliminarily to the two Houses of Parliament: they were presented to the House of Commons September 25, 1646, and to the House of Lords, October 1. On December 4 the completed text went to the Commons, and on the 7th of that month to the Lords. Already by November 4, 1646, the first nineteen chapters had passed the House of Lords in the exact form in

which they had been sent up by the Assembly: the remainder was passed by them February 16, 1647. In the Commons, however, the matter dragged. The first nineteen chapters were passed perfunctorily on October 6, 1646, and taken up for debate in the Grand Committee on October 9: and then things stopped. Despite prodding from the Lords, the Commons awaited the reception of the proof-texts before they would do anything. On the 29th April, 1647, "the Scriptures" were handed to them, but the commencement of the debate was still postponed until May 19, and their review of the whole was not completed until March 17, 1648. On the 22d of that month a conference was held with the Lords concerning the changes introduced by the Commons, all of which the Lords assented to except that on "Marriage," and this being made known on June 3 to the Commons, the amended Confession was ordered printed on June 20, 1648. This edition omits the whole of chapters xxx. and xxxi., and also the fourth paragraph of chapter xx. and part of the fourth and the whole of the fifth and sixth paragraphs of chapter xxiv., together with the last clause of the fourth paragraph of chapter xxiii., besides making some unimportant alterations in that paragraph. "Further than this," remarks Mr. Shaw, "the Long Parliament never got in its review of the celebrated Confession." It was indeed taken up again by "the Rump" in 1560, and on March 2 agreed to as reported from the Assembly "in all the chapters except the 30th and 31st," and by an Act passed March 5 declared to be "the public Confession of Faith of the Church of England." But, as Mr. Shaw remarks, "needless to say that the enactment was perfectly futile and unregarded."

Meanwhile, the Confession as presented to Parliament and printed without proofs in January, 1647, was carried at once to Scotland by Baillie, and presented to the Commission of the General Assembly; and doubtless the edition of the same with proofs, printed in the spring, reached Scotland before the meeting of the Assembly. At all events, it was in this form that, having been carefully considered in the Assembly of that year, it was passed by an approving Act, *nemine contradicente*, at its twenty-third session. This Act was ratified by the Scottish Parliament, February 7, 1649: and after the evil days of 1661,

again in 1690. Thus it comes about that the Confession of Faith of the Church of Scotland is in all respects the Confession as framed by the Assembly of Divines, and that the real history of the creation of the Confession closes with its labors, and may neglect all that was done in Parliament.

For the better apprehension of the progress of the various chapters of the Confession through the hands of the Assembly of Divines we append a tabular statement of the work done upon each:

Chapter I.—"The sub-Committee for the Confession of Faith" was instructed on Friday, July 4, 1645, to "make report to the Assembly on Monday morning of what is in their hands concerning ... the Scriptures." Accordingly on Monday, July 7, "Dr. Temple made report of that part of the Confession of Faith touching the Scriptures. It was read, debated." It was debated on July 7, 11, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18. It was debated in review June 17, 18, 1646. The Scriptural proofs were reported January 7, 1647, and debated January 7, 8, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15: and reviewed April 6, 1647. It was debated in the House of Commons on the 19th and 28th May, 1647 ("Journals of the House of Commons," v. pp. 177, 189); and the respited § 8 again debated and accepted, 17th March, 1648 (*ibid.*, v. p. 502).

Chapter II.—"The sub-Committee for the Confession of Faith" was instructed on Friday, July 4, 1645, to "make report to the Assembly on Monday morning of what is in their hands concerning God..." Meanwhile on July 16, it was "Ordered—The first Committee to prepare the Confession of Faith upon these heads: God and the Holy Trinity..." Nevertheless on July 18, the "report concerning God" was made by Dr. Temple, the chairman of "the sub-Committee." This was debated July 18 and 23, and on the latter date it is noted that a report was "made from the Committee," i.e. obviously the First Great Committee, "of the article of the Trinity." Clearly "the propositions concerning God" were reported in accordance with the order of July 4 from the

"sub-Committee for the Confession of Faith," and the "article of the Trinity," in accordance with the disposition of the heads made on July 16, by the First Committee. The whole "Article concerning 'God and the Holy Trinity' " was reviewed June 18, 1646. The Scriptural proofs were reported on January 8, 1647, and debated and ordered on the 18th: and reviewed April 6. It was debated in the House of Commons, May 28, 1647 ("Journals, etc.," v. p. 189).

Chapter III.—On July 16, 1645, it was "Ordered—The first Committee to prepare the Confession of Faith upon ... God's decrees, Predestination, Election, etc." On August 29—"Report from the first Committee concerning God's decrees"—and debate at once began. Debates were held on August 29, September 2, 3, [8], 9, 11, October 3, 17, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, [30?], 31, November 3, 6, 7, 11. It was debated in review June 18, 19, 1646, and an additional debate was held on September 23, 1646. The Scriptural proofs were reported January 13, 1647, and debated and ordered January 19, 20, 21: they were reviewed April 6. The chapter was debated in the House of Commons, May 28, 1647 ("Journals," v. p. 189).

Chapter IV.—On July 16, 1645, it was "Ordered—The first Committee to prepare the Confession of Faith upon ... the works of Creation and Providence." On November 17, there was made a "report from the first Committee concerning Creation." It was debated on November 18, 19, 20, on the latter date the note running: "The Assembly proceeded in the debate of the report of Creation, and finished." It was reviewed June 19, 1646. The Scriptural proofs were reported on January 15, 1647, and debated and ordered on January 21 and 28; they were reviewed April 6. The chapter was debated in the House of Commons, October 2, 1647 ("Journals," v. p. 323).

Chapter V.—On July 16, 1645, it was "Ordered—The first Committee to prepare the Confession of Faith upon ... the works

of Creation and Providence." On November 27, there was "report made from the First Committee about Providence." It was debated November 28, December 2 and 4: and reviewed and ordered June 19, 1646. The Scriptural proofs were debated on January 28, 29, and February 1; and they were reviewed April 6, 1647. The chapter was debated in the House of Commons, October 2, 1647 ("Journals," v. p. 323).

Chapter VI.—On July 16, 1645, it was "Ordered—The first Committee to prepare the Confession of Faith upon ... Man's Fall": and again, "The second Committee: Sin, and the punishment thereof." How the two topics were got together we are not informed. On November 17, 1645, there was made a "report concerning Fall of Man, Sin, and the Punishment thereof." This was debated November 20, 21. The review was introduced June 19, 1646, and debated and ordered June 22 and 25: and additions were made June 29. The Scriptural proofs were debated and ordered February 2, 1647: and reviewed April 6.

Chapter VII.—On July 16, 1645, it was "Ordered—The second Committee [to prepare the Confession of Faith upon] ... the Covenant of Grace." It was reported before October 9, at which date "the Assembly proceeded in the debate of the report concerning the Covenant[s]." It was debated further October 10, 17, November 6, 14, 17, December 23, 1645; and reviewed and ordered June 25, 1646. The Scriptural proofs were reported January 21, 1647, and debated and ordered February 3 and 5.

Chapter VIII.—On July 16, 1645, it was "Ordered—The second Committee [to prepare the Confession of Faith upon] ... Christ our Mediator." On August 29 following, there was "report made by the second Committee of Christ the Mediator." It was debated September 2, 3, 4, 8, 9, 11, 12, 15, 16, and November 14, 1645: and reviewed June 25, 1646. The Scriptural proofs were debated and ordered February 8, 1647, and reviewed April 6 and 7, 1647.

Chapter IX.—On July 16, 1645, it was "Ordered—The second Committee [to prepare the Confession of Faith upon] ... Free-will." On December 15 next, "Dr. Gouge made report about Free-will," and on the 17th this report was debated. It was reviewed and ordered June 29, 30, 1646. The Scriptural proofs were reported February 2, 1647, and debated and ordered on February 9: they were reviewed April 8.

Chapter X.—On July 16, 1645, it was "Ordered—The third Committee [to prepare the Confession of Faith upon] Effectual Vocation." On September 9 following, "Mr. Prophet made report of Effectual Calling." It was debated September 17, 25, 29 (30), November 6, 13: and reviewed and ordered June 30, 1646. The Scriptural proofs were reported February 3, 1647, and debated and ordered February 9: they were reviewed April 8.

Chapter XI.—On July 16, 1645, it was "Ordered—The third Committee [to prepare the Confession of Faith upon] ... Justification." On December 2 next, there was made "report from Mr. Cheynell of Justification." It was debated December 3, (5), 8, 9, 10, (11), 16; and reviewed and ordered July 23, 1646. The Scriptural proofs were reported February 4, 1647, and debated and ordered February 10, 11: they were reviewed April 8.

Chapter XII.—On July 16, 1645, it was "Ordered—The third Committee [to prepare the Confession of Faith upon] ... Adoption." On November 20 next, "Mr. Prophet brought in a report from the Third Committee about Adoption." It was reviewed and ordered July 23, 1646. The Scriptural proofs were reported February 5, 1647: debated and ordered February 11; and reviewed April 8.

Chapter XIII.—On July 16, 1645, it was "Ordered—The third Committee [to prepare the Confession of Faith upon] ... Sanctification." On November 20 following, "Mr. Prophet

brought in a report from the Third Committee ... about Sanctification." It was debated November 24: and reviewed and ordered September 16 and 23, 1646. The Scriptural proofs were reported February 5, 1647, and debated February 12: they were reviewed April 8.

Chapter XIV.—On the 19th August, 1646, it was "Resolved upon the Q., These heads of Faith, Repentance, and Good Works shall be referred to the three Committees in their order to prepare something upon them for the Confession of Faith." From August 21 to August 31 inclusive the Assembly sat only as a Grand Committee, lacking a quorum for a formal meeting: during this time the report on Saving Faith was reviewed. This report was formally called up in the Assembly, September 4. It was debated September 9, and reviewed and ordered September 16. The Scriptural proofs were reported February 12, 1647: they were reviewed April 8.

Chapter XV.—This chapter also was ordered to be prepared (by the Second Committee) August 19, 1646 (see under chapter xiv. ad init.). On September 9, "Dr. Stanton made Report of the Article concerning Repentance." It was debated September 10, 17, 18, at the last of which sessions it was ordered: on September 25, it was finally passed. The Scriptural proofs were debated February 12, 1647: and reviewed April 8.

Chapter XVI.—This chapter also was ordered to be prepared (by the Third Committee) August 19, 1646 (see under chapter xiv. ad init.). On September 3, 1646, "Report was made by Dr. Temple 'of Good Works.' " It was debated September 9, 18, 21, and ordered: the matter was reopened September 22, 23; and the perfected chapter passed September 25. The Scriptural proofs were debated and ordered February 15, 1647: and reviewed April 8.

Chapter XVII.—On November 18, 1645, there was referred "to the First Committee, Perseverance..." On December 19 following, there was made "Report from the First Committee of Perseverance." It was debated December 29, 1645; and reviewed September 14, 1646, and finally passed September 25. The Scriptural proofs were debated and ordered February 17, 1647, and reviewed April 8.

Chapter XVIII.—On February 23, 1646, it was "Ordered ... To the Second Committee,—Certainty of Salvation..." It was reported from the Second Committee July 24, 1646, and "Ordered—This to be the title—'Of the Certainty of Salvation.' " It was debated July 24 and 30, and September 14, 15, and assented to under the title, "Of Assurance of Grace and Salvation"; and finally passed September 25. The Scriptural proofs were debated on February 17 and 18, and reviewed April 7, 1647.

Chapter XIX.—On November 18, 1645, there was referred "to the Third Committee, the Law..." On January 1, 1646, "Dr. Wincop made report from the Third Committee about the Law of God." It was debated on January 7, 9, 12, 13, 29, February 2 and 9, 1646; also in the Grand Committee during the interval in the Assembly's meetings August 21–31, and in the Assembly September 1, 2, 3, 4, 15, 17, and finally passed September 25, 1646. A slight alteration was further made on December 3. The Scriptural proofs were debated and ordered on February 19 and 22, 1647.

Chapter XX.—On November 18, 1645, there was referred "to the First Committee, ... Christian Liberty..." It was debated January 29, 1646, February 9, 10, 11, 12, 16, (23), March (4), 10, 26, 66 27, 30, 31, 68 and again September 23, 24, 25, October 1, 7, 8, 9, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 20, 21, 30. The Scriptural proofs were debated and ordered February 25, 26, 1647, March 2, 3, 4, 5, 11, 12. This chapter was debated in the House of Commons on the 4th

February, 1648, and § 4 respited until chapter xxx. was under consideration ("Journals," v. p. 455).

Chapter XXI.—On November 18, 1645, there was referred "to the Third Committee, ... Religion, Worship...." And on February 23, 1646, it was "Ordered—To the First Committee, in chief heads,—Christian Sabbath...." On March 5, 1646, "Mr. Prophet made report of Religion and Worship," and on March 9, there was made "Report of the Sabbath." "Religion and Worship" was debated March 9, 10 (when the title was changed to "of Religious Worship"),⁷⁰ 20, 26,⁷² when the subject is recorded as finished. The topic "Of the Sabbath" was debated April 6 (when the title was set as "Of the Sabbath day"). On October 12 the two heads reappeared together: "Mr. Tuckney made report 'of Religious Worship and Sabbath-day' "; but it does not appear further that they constituted a single chapter. On October 30, "the Assembly debated the Chapter 'of Religious Worship'; and upon debate it was assented to ..."; and there were further debates on November 20 and 23, and a slight correction was ordered on December 3. Report of Scriptural proofs for the 21st chapter was made February 18, 1647. The process by which the two chapters were reduced to one is obscure. It was debated in the House of Commons on February 4, 1648 ("Journals," v. p. 455).

Chapter XXII.—On January 8, 1646, there was made a "Report of a Lawful Oath by Mr. Prophet." Mr. Prophet was chairman of the Third Committee, but no such "head" had been recorded among the "heads" distributed to this Committee: perhaps it had emerged into a separate topic in the discussions of the head of "worship" assigned to the Third Committee on November 18, 1645. It was debated January 13, 15, 16, 19, 20, 21, 1646: and in review, October 12 ("of Lawful Oaths and Vows"), November 3, 6: while on November 23 and December 3 additional adjustments were made. The Scriptural proofs were reported February 18 and reviewed April 12, 1647. It was debated in the House of Commons, 4th February, 1648 ("Journals," v. p. 455).

Chapter XXIII.—On February 23, 1646, it was "Ordered—To the First Committee, in chief heads ... the Civil Magistrate." It was reported to the Assembly, March 26, 1646, and debated April (23), 24, 27, [and possibly again October (12), 13, 14, 15, 20, although these debates probably belong to chapter xx.]. It was passed November 9, while further adjustments were made on December 3, 4. The Scriptural proofs were debated on March 3, and reviewed April 12, 1647. It was debated in the House of Commons, 4th February, 1648 ("Journals," v. p. 456).

Chapter XXIV.—On February 23, 1646, it was "Ordered—To the First Committee, in chief heads,—... Marriage and Divorce." On June 17 next, "Report was made 'of Marriage' ": and the report was taken up July 23, and debated August 3 and 4—apparently under the simple title "Of Marriage." Accordingly on August 10, "Dr. Gouge made Report 'of Divorce,' " which under the title "Of Divorce" was taken up and debated September 10, 11. The two were, however, reported on October 12 as constituting one "head," and were so debated November 9, 10, 11, and so passed. The Scriptural proofs were reported on March 3, 1647. The chapter was debated in the House of Commons, February 4, 11, and March 3, 1648 ("Journals," v. pp. 456, 461, 478).

Chapter XXV.—On November 18, 1645, there was referred "to the First Committee ... the Church...." When we next hear of it, it is already in process of debate, February 16, 1646: the debate continues February 23, 26, 27, March 2, (3, 4), 5 [6, 9, 13, 75 16, 17, 18, 19, (20), (26), April 3, 7, 8, 10, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17], 20, 21, 22.⁷⁷ It was taken up in review November 13, 1646, and ordered on the 17th. The Scriptural proofs were reported March 3, 1647. The chapter was debated in the House of Commons, March 10, 1648 ("Journals," v. p. 489).

Chapter XXVI.—On November 18, 1645, there was referred "to the First Committee ... the Communion of Saints." On February 17, 1646, there was made a "Report of the Committee of the

Communion of Sacraments" (sic): and debate was entered upon on it March 3, and continued March 4, 5. It was resumed for review November 13, 17, 19, 20. The Scriptural proofs were reported March 3, 1647, and reviewed April 7. It was debated in the House of Commons, March 10, 1648 ("Journals," v. p. 490).

Chapter XXVII.—On November 18, 1645, there was referred "to the Second Committee ... Sacraments..." The report was called for December 2, 1645, and given in December 5. It was debated December 11, 12, 15, 16, 24, 25, and recalled for review November 10, 1646. The Scriptural proofs are not referred to in the Minutes. It was debated in the House of Commons, March 10, 1648 ("Journals," v. p. 490).

Chapter XXVIII.—On November 18, 1645, there was referred "to the Second Committee ... Baptism..." On December 29 following, "Mr. Calamy made report of Baptism." Debate was held on the chapter, January 1, 2, 5, 6, 8, 9, 16, (19), 21, 26, 1646; and again September 11; and on November 10 it was reviewed and ordered. No record of the adding of the Scriptural proofs. It was debated in the House of Commons, March 10, 1648 ("Journals," v. p. 490).

Chapter XXIX.—On November 18, 1645, there was referred "to the Second Committee ... the Lord's Supper." On December 1 following, there was made a "Report from the Second Committee of the Lord's Supper": debate was "proceeded in" December 26: again it was taken up November 11, 12, 13, 1646, and on November 16 ordered. On December 3 some slight adjustments of language were made. The Scriptural proofs were reported March 5, 1647. The chapter was debated in the House of Commons, March 10, 1648 ("Journals," v. p. 491).

Chapter XXX.—On November 18, 1645, there was referred "to the Second Committee, Officers and Censures of the Church..." On January 29, 1646, "Mr. Dury made report from the Second

Committee of Church Officers and Censures." It was debated April 23, and recalled for review November 13, 23, 26, and at this last date ordered. An alteration was again proposed December 1. The Scriptural proofs were reported March 5, 1647, and voted April 2, 1647 ("Minutes," p. 345, note 1).

Chapter XXXI.—On November 18, 1645, there was referred "to the Second Committee ... Councils or Synods...." It was reported to the Assembly, August 4, 1646, and debated August 5, 6, 7, 10, 11, 13, 14, 17, 19, 20: and again in review November 13 and 26, when it was ordered. On December 3 alterations were debated. The Scriptural proofs were reported March 5, 1647, debated and ordered April 2 (p. 345, note 1), and reviewed April 13.

Chapter XXXII.—On February 23, 1646, it was "Ordered—... To the Second Committee, ... the State of the Soul after death. To the Third Committee,—The Resurrection...." The former was reported July 24, 1646, and debated July 31. The latter was reported August 4, and debated September 4. On November 26, 1646, "the Assembly debated 'of the State of Man after death': and upon debate it was assented to...." How or when the two were united does not appear. The Scriptural proofs for the chapter were reported March 5, 1647, and voted April 5 (p. 345, note 2.) It was debated in the House of Commons, March 10, 1648 ("Journals," v. p. 491).

Chapter XXXIII.—On February 23, 1646, it was "Ordered—... To the Third Committee, ... the Last Judgment, Life Eternal." The topic was debated in the Grand Committee during the interval in the meetings of the Assembly, August 21–31, 1646, and was debated in the Assembly September 4, and again on review November 26, when it was ordered. The Scriptural proofs were reported March 5, 1647, and voted April 5 (p. 345, note 2). It was debated in the House of Commons, March 10, 1648 ("Journals," v. p. 491).

N. B.—In the third distribution of the "heads," made February 23, 1646, the topic "Lies and Equivocations" was assigned to the Second Committee. This topic does not emerge again by report to the Assembly, and there is no such chapter in the completed Confession. Possibly it was found that the material to be dealt with in it was sufficiently covered in chapter xxii., "Of Lawful Oaths and Vows" (see above, chapter xxii., note 73).⁷⁹

To this statement we append the chief references to the work of the Assembly on the Confession made in Baillie's "Letters":

Under date of August 18, 1644 (ii. 1841, p. 220), Baillie recounts the coming of Warriston and the efforts for expedition (see the text above, note 19, p. 82), and under date of August 28 (p. 224) he recounts the progress thus far made in the work of "the Covenanted Uniformitie." Direct mention of the Confession begins in the Publick Letter of October, 1644: "The Confession of Faith is referred to a committee to be put in severall the best hands that are here" (p. 232). Under date of November 21 he writes: "What remains of the Directorie ... will soon be dispatched. The Catechise is drawn up, and, I think, shall not take up much tyme. I feare the Confession of Faith may stick longer" (p. 242). Under date of December 26: "If the Directorie and Government were once out of our hands, as a few days will put them, then we will fall on our great question of Excommunication, the Catechise, and Confession. There is here matter to hold us long enough, if the wrangling humour which long predomined in many here did continue; but, thanks be to God, that is much abated, and all inclines toward a conclusion.... I think we must either passe the Confession to another season, or, if God will help us, the heads of it being distribute among many able hands, it may in a short time be so drawn up, as the debates of it may cost little time" (p. 248). Under date of April 25, 1645: "The Catechise and Confession of Faith are put in the hands of severall committees, and some reports are made to the Assemblie concerning both. We expect not so much debate upon these, as we have had in the Directorie and Government" (p. 266). Under date of May 4, 1645: "Our next work

will be the Confession and Catechisme, upon both which we have allreadie made some entrance" (p. 272). In an undated letter printed immediately after the one just quoted from: "We are at a point with the Government; and beginning to take the Confession of Faith and Catechise to our consideration" (p. 275). Under date of July 8, 1645: "Mr. Henderson ... and Mr. Rutherford are gone this day to Epsom waters: so long as anything is to doe here, he cannot be away. I hope the rest of us may ere long be well spared, if once we had through the Catechise and a part of the Confession" (p. 296). Under date of July 8: "Since my last, with our former post, July 1st, we have, thanks be to God, at last finished the whole body of Government.... Since, we have entered on the Confession of Faith; as yet I cannot pronounce of the length or shortness of our proceedings therein" (p. 300). In an undated public letter belonging doubtless to August, 1645: "In the Assemblie we have gone through a part of the Catechisme, and a part of the Confession of Faith; but ... many [hindrances,] when least we expect them, comes in our way ..." (p. 306). Under date of September 5: "In the Assemblie we are going on languidlie with the Confession of Faith and Catechisme" (p. 315). Under date of November 25: "In the Assemblie, we are going on with the Confession of Faith. We had long and tough debates about the Decrees of election; yet thanks to God all is gone right according to our mind" (p. 325). "We go on daily in some proposition of the Confession of Faith: till this be ended we will not take in any more of the Catechise" (p. 326). In an undated letter belonging to January 15, 1646: "We are going on in the Assemblie with the Confession, and could, if need were, shortly end it" (p. 336). In an undated letter ascribed by Dr. Laing to about January 20, 1646, he says: "We goe on in the Assemblie with prettie speed now in our Confession of Faith. We have past the heads of Scripture, God, Trinity, Decrees, Providence, Redemption, Covenant, Justification, Sanctification, Free-will, Sacraments in generall, a part of Perseverance, and of the Lord's Supper" (p. 344). Under date of January 31, 1646: "We proceed but slowlie in the Confession of Faith" (p. 348). In February, 1646: "However we wait daylie on the Assemblie, yet our progresse in the Confession of Faith is but slow ... yet we hope, by God's grace, ere long to end the Confession" (p. 349).

Cf. March 17, 1646 (p. 360). Under date of June 26, 1646: "The Parliament's questions have retarded us much: without them we had ended the Confession of Faith" (p. 377). Under date of July 14, 1646: "I have put some of my good friends, leading men in the House of Commons, to move the Assemblie to lay aside our questions" ["some very captious questions of the Parliament, about the clear scripturall warrant for all the punctilioes of the Government," sent in, as Baillie thinks, just "to keep all things from any conclusion" (p. 378)] "for a time, and labour that which is most necessar, and all are crying for, the perfecting of the Confession of Faith and Catechise. If this motion take, I hope we shall end shortly our Confession, for there is but a few articles now to goe through: it will be a very gracious and satisfactorie Confession when yow see it" (p. 379). Under date of August 13, 1646: "In the Assemblie we were like to have stucken many moneths on the questions; and the Independents were in a way to gett all their differences debated over againe. I dealt so with Mr. Rous and Mr. Tate, that they brought us ane order from the House to lay aside the questions till the Confession and Catechise were ended. Many took it for a trick of the Independents and Erastians for our hurt; but I knew it wes nothing less. We are now near an end of our Confession: we stick in the article of Synods, upon the proposition of their coercive power, or their power to excommunicat. If this were over, we apprehend no more long debates on the Confession" (p. 388). Under the date of August 18, 1646: "In the Assemblie we are returned to the Confession of Faith, and are drawing towards the end of it" (p. 390). Under date of September 22, 1646: "We have ended the Confession of Faith for the matter, and have perfyted the most half of it, nyneteen chapters; the other seventeen, I hope, in ten or twelve days will be perfyted, and so all be sent up to the Houses. It will be, I hope, a very sweet and orthodoxe peice, much better than any Confession yet extant, if the House of Commons mangle it not to us" (p. 397). Under date of October 2, 1646: "The Assemblie obleidged themselves by promise to sitt before and after noon for some tyme; but now, thinking they have satisfied the Houses, by sending up the half of the Confession, the first nineteen heads, they are relapsed into their former negligence. So we will be able few days

in a week to make ane Assemblie; for if there be ane fewer than forty, it is no meeting; and though the rest of the heads be also past, yet, in the review, the alteration of words, and the methodizeing, takes up so much time, that we know not when we shall end. Besides that we have some additionalls, especially one proposition, about libertie of conscience, wherein the Independents offer to keep us long and tough debates; for long agoe they have laid downe in this their maske, and pleads for a libertie weell near universall" (pp. 400, 401). Under date of October 13, 1646: "Our Assemblie for one twenty dayes posted hard; bot since hes gotten into its old pace. The first halfe, and more, of the Confession we sent up to the House; the end of these who called for it, wes the shuffling out the Ordinance against Errors; yet our friends hes carried to goe on with that; but others hes carried the putting of Scriptures to the margin of the Confession, which may prove a very long business, if not dexterouslie managed. It will yet be a fortnight before the other halfe of it be ready; for sundry necessar but scabrous propositions were added in the review" (p. 403). Under date of October 27, 1646: "... before the Assemblie end the Confession; for that long I purpose to stay, though my permission to goe were come" (p. 406). Under date of December 1, 1646: "With much adoe we have gone through, at last, the rest of our Confession: the first part I sent, to yow three only, in Mr. David's letter, long agoe; the whole will goe up to the House one of these dayes, and so to the presse. It's generally taken here for a very gracious and brave peece of worke" (p. 411). About Christmas, 1646: "Our Assemblie, with much adoe, at last have wrestled through the whole Confession, and all is now printed. The House of Commons requires to put Scripture to it before they take it to consideration; and what time that will take up, who knows?" (p. 415). Under date of January 26, 1647: "The third point [of Uniformity], the Confession of Faith, I brought it with me [to Scotland], now in print, as it was offered to the Houses by the Assemblie, without considerable dissent of any. It's much cryed up by all, even many of our greatest opposites, as the best Confession yet extant; it's expected the Houses shall pass it, as they did the Directorie, without much debate. Howbeit the retarding partie hes put the Assemblie to add Scriptures

to it, which they omitted only to eschew the offence of the House, whose practice hitherto has been, to enact nothing of religion on divine right or scripturall grounds, but upon their owne authoritie alone. This innovation of our opposites may weell cost the Assemblie some time, who cannot doe the most easie things with any expedition; but it will be for the advantage and strength of the work" (iii. p. 2). Cf. June 2, 1647 (pp. 5, 6). Speech in the General Assembly at Edinburgh, August 6, 1647: "Right Honourable and Reverend, yow remember, that all your ecclesiastick desyres from your brethren of England, that all the commissions and instructions laid upon us your servants, were only for the obtaining of Uniformitie in four particulars,—in the Worship of God, in the Government of the Church, in a Confession of Faith, and Catechisme.... In your third desyre, the Lord made our successe no less prosperous; a large Confession of Faith is perfyted with farr greater unanimitie than any living could have hoped for, among so many learned divines, in so distempered a place and distracted a season. I am confident, if the judgment of many my wiser do not deceave, this piece of work is so fine and excellent, that whenever yow shall be pleased to look upon it, the sight of it shall draw from the most censorius eye, a good acceptation" (p. 11; cf. p. 12). Under date of September 1, 1647, giving account of the Scotch General Assembly: "We agreed ... after much debate in the Committee, to the Confession of Faith" (p. 20).

A word in conclusion as to the title of the volume thus prepared is perhaps not out of place. The Assembly of Divines quite constantly speak of it in their Minutes, from the beginning, as "a Confession of Faith," or, after it was begun, "the Confession of Faith." The term was doubtless derived from the Solemn League and Covenant, which enumerates, among the items in which uniformity should be sought between the two nations, "Confession of Faith." Meanwhile, however, the work of its preparation was prosecuted without formally setting upon a title for the completed book. On the 3d of September, 1646, as it was approaching completion, it was "Ordered—The Committee for the perfecting of the Confession of Faith do prepare a title for it"; and on September 24 this duty was apparently laid specifically on Dr.

Burgess. On September 25 the report upon the title came in, "and it was Ordered—This to be the title: 'To the Honble the House of Commons assembled in Parliament, The humble Advice of the Assembly of Divines, now by authority of Parliament sitting at Westminster, concerning part of a Confession of Faith.' " To the completed Confession also a like title was assigned: and it was under this title that the Confession was printed in the first instance. The title thus suggested, however, did not meet with the approval of the House of Commons. It seemed to it, as Rushworth tells us, that nothing was practically a Confession which did not take the form of "I confess" at the beginning of each section, and, moreover, that it were well to keep up the usage established by the Thirty-nine Articles; and so they altered the title to "Articles of Faith agreed upon by both Houses of Parliament," or rather to "Articles of Christian religion approved and passed by both Houses of Parliament after advice had with the Assembly of Divines"—under which latter title they published the Confession with the slight alterations they had made in it, in the summer of 1648. The adoption of the earlier title by the Church of Scotland in its previous action, together with the failure of the whole movement in England, has secured that the work has lived under the simple title of "The Confession of Faith": and it is as such that it is known among all the Churches which still adhere to it.

II. THE FORMULATION OF THE THIRD CHAPTER

The third chapter of the Confession of Faith, having been prepared in first draft by the Committee appointed for that service (May 12, 1645), passed through the hands of the First Great Committee (July 16, 1645) to the Assembly. It was reported from this Committee on August 29, 1645 (Friday), and the Assembly at once entered into debate upon it. Debate is mentioned as being held upon it August 29, September 2, 3, [8], 9, 11, October 3, 17, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, [30], 31, November 3, 6, 7, 11. In the meantime portions of the chapter were twice, at least, (September 3 and November 6) recommitted—doubtless (for such seems to have been the Assembly's custom) to

special Committees: and on five occasions (September [8], 9, 11, October 3, 17, 21) the original Committee brought in additional reports. In the subsequent reviewing of the Confession as passed, the third chapter was debated again on Thursday and Friday, June 18, 19, 1646, before it was finally ordered. It appears, further, that Mr. Whitaker, a member of the Committee of Review, appointed December 8, 1645, but acting apparently on his own behalf alone on this occasion, moved an additional alteration in the chapter on September 23, 1646, and this naturally caused some further debate. The text was now, however, finally passed from. The proof-texts for the chapter were debated on January [13], 19, 20, 21, 1647, and after having been considered by the reviewing Committee appointed March 5, 1647, were finally passed on by the Assembly, April 6, 1647. Thus the text of the third chapter occupied the attention of the Assembly some part of at least twenty separate days, besides all the time given to it in the various Committees through whose hands it or parts of it passed. The proof-texts similarly occupied the Assembly on some parts of at least four days in addition to the care given to them in Committee. It would not be excessive to say, in a word, that a good portion of a month's public labor was given to this chapter by the Assembly; and certainly much more than this was expended on it by its Committees.

The debates upon the chapter which are signalized in the Minutes seem to have been especially careful and persistent: and they are perhaps unusually fully reported. We are not able to trace them in full, to be sure, or even to ascertain all the points on which they turned. But it is presumable that those mentioned explicitly were of more importance than those passed over without so much as an indication of the points on which they turned; and doubtless those recorded in some detail were the most important of all. If we may assume so much, we are not without some hint as to the matters about which most interest was felt, and the phraseology of which was framed most carefully and in the fullest light. As is usual in such cases, the real work of creating the chapter was of course done in Committee; and the chapter as finally passed by the Assembly is

obviously substantially what in the first instance was reported by the Committee. The notes of debate are sufficient to certify us of that natural and almost inevitable fact. But they also certify us that it was not passed by the Assembly without the most careful scrutiny or without many adjustments and alterations, so that as passed it represents clearly the deliberate and reasoned judgment of the Assembly as a whole.

This will at once be made evident by merely noting the special points on which debate is signaled. They concern the title of the chapter (August 29); the phrasing of the first section in no less than six separate particulars (August 29); the whole form of statement of the latter half of the second section (September 3 and 11); the statement of reprobation in section three (November 3, 1645, and September 23, 1646); the whole fabric and especially the retention of a particular phrase of the fifth section (October 3 and 17, 1645); the entire structure of the sixth section (October 20, 21), and, above all, the assertion of its last clause (October 22, 23, 24, 30, 31); the mode of statement of section seven (November 6, 7, 11); and at least the phraseology of section eight (June 18, 1646). It must be borne in mind that this is but a partial list of the topics debated; the precise topic debated is not always mentioned when the fact of a debate on chapter iii. is, nevertheless, recorded; and there is no reason to believe that when it is mentioned it is always done with completeness. The record is enough, however, to assure us that the debate was both extremely searching and very comprehensive. This chapter did not leave the Assembly's hands, we may feel sure, without having been conformed in every particular to the Assembly's belief and even taste.

This will become even more apparent if we will attend to the details debated, so far as the record enables us to follow them. It is quite clear that the report brought in by the Committee, while framed with independence and special theological knowledge and skill, was yet based upon the Irish Articles, and in places followed them very closely—though elsewhere breaking away from them and striking out

a new path. The knowledge of this fact will enable us now and again to reconstruct the form of the language in the original report, and so to follow the lines of the debate somewhat more closely than would otherwise be possible from the meager hints of the record.

1. For example, when we are told in the Minutes of August 29, 1645, that debate on this chapter was first joined "upon the title," we shall be wise to remind ourselves that the title of the corresponding Article in the Irish Articles ran: "Of God's Eternal Decree and Predestination"; and that it is therefore extremely likely that it was reported to the Assembly in some such form. We note accordingly with interest that in the distribution of the heads of the Confession to the three great Committees which was made on July 16, this head reads "God's decrees, Predestination, Election, etc." It is altogether likely, therefore, that when this chapter came to the Assembly it bore a title somewhat like that of the Irish Articles, "Of God's Eternal Decree and Predestination," and that the Assembly curtailed this to the simpler "Of God's Eternal Decree"; although, of course, it is possible, on the other hand, that it was the simpler title that it bore, and what happened in the Assembly was that it was queried whether the longer title of the earlier Articles were not better restored. This Irish title was not exactly tautological; for in the prevailing speech of the time the term "Predestination" was commonly limited to the soteriological decree, so that in the Irish title the collocation really is equivalent to "of God's general and special decree," or "of God's cosmical and soteriological decree." Even the threefold enumeration made in the designation of the topic in the act distributing the heads of the Confession to the Committees, would not be incapable of defense on the ground of progressive advance from the more general to the more specific. It was not uncustomary at the time, however, to look upon the word "Predestination" as so much a synonym of "Election," that it embodied all its precious connotations—a fact which underlies the discrimination between the terms "predestinate" and "foreordain" as used in the third and fourth sections, which otherwise would be puzzling. However accordant with current usage it was, it might well have seemed, therefore, desirable to avoid the

formal and unexplained treatment of Predestination as a more inclusive word than Election. Even the Irish heading might seem, indeed, to some, although not essentially tautological, yet to bear so nearly the formal appearance of tautology as to be offensive to the severer taste represented in the Assembly. The choice of the brief and simple "Of God's Eternal Decree" surely seems, in any event, to do the Assembly credit: it is as terse and simple as all the rest of its work and may be looked upon as a fair indication of its temper and taste alike.

We might be tempted to suppose that in the debate on the title of the chapter another point would be raised—whether the singular or plural form should be used—"Of God's Eternal Decree," or "Of God's Eternal Decrees." On October 20, when the sixth section of the chapter was under discussion, a question involved in this difference was under debate, and some difference of opinion on the matter was developed. There is no hint, however, that the question was raised when the title of the chapter was under discussion; and the very occurrence and especially the nature of the subsequent debate render it difficult to suppose that the same subject had already been threshed out so short a while before. It seems altogether likely that the debate on the title was confined, therefore, to its compass, and that the form "Of God's Eternal Decree" was simply adopted, without question raised, from the Irish Articles. How little importance was attached to the difference between the singular and plural forms is evident not only from the subsequent debate, in which indifference to it is manifested by the strongest Calvinists in the body and it is generally treated as a question of language rather than of things; but also from the circumstance that though the singular form is consistently maintained in the Confession, the plural is equally consistently maintained in the Catechisms, both Larger and Shorter.⁸⁴

2. Our knowledge that the Irish Articles underlay the draft sent in to the Assembly is of yet more aid to us in understanding the debates that are noted as having taken place on the first section of the

chapter (August 29, 1645). These are hinted at in the Minutes as follows: "Debate about the word 'counsel,' about those words 'most holy wise,' and about those words 'his own.' Debate about that word 'time,' about the word 'should.' Debate about the transposing." Not all these words occur in the section as passed: but they are explicable from the Irish Articles. We need only to assume that the first half of the section as at first reported was more similar to the Irish Articles than it became in the course of the debate. It probably ran as follows: "God from all eternity did, by the most holy and wise counsel of His own will, freely and unchangeably ordain whatsoever in time should come to pass." In the process of the debate the word "counsel" was scrutinized and retained; the adjectives "holy" and "wise" were transposed; "His own" was scrutinized and retained; and the last clause after careful scrutiny of its phraseology was exchanged to the simpler "whatsoever comes to pass." Thus the form that was adopted was arrived at: "God from all eternity did, by the most wise and holy counsel of His own will, freely and unchangeably ordain whatsoever comes to pass." That the changes thus made were improvements we can scarcely doubt: the order "wise and holy" is the order of nature as well as climax, in its progress from the intellectual to the moral perfections; while the new concluding clause is not only simpler and free from apparent but fictitious limitation, but avoids raising puzzling questions as to what are to be classed as pre- or extra-temporal and what as temporal acts.

What is intended by "the transposing," debate on which is noted, we have no means of confidently determining. It may concern simply the transposition of the adjectives "wise" and "holy," which we have already referred to. It may, on the other hand, concern some other transposition of words as originally reported of which we have no knowledge—or indeed some transposition of the words as given us which was not carried out. We note that the concluding words "but rather established" stand in the Irish Articles "but established rather": possibly the reference is to this. It seems most probable, however, that it refers to a transposition to a new section of the clause excluding dependence of the decree on the Divine foresight, to

the likelihood of which we shall recur when speaking of the following section—which, as we shall see, was originally a part of this section.

3. The second section of the Confession has nothing parallel to it in the Irish Articles, which reserve the guarding of the independence of God's decree until they are dealing with specific or soteriological predestination (§ 14). Without this aid we find ourselves naturally in difficulties as we essay to reconstruct its original form. The chief notes in the Minutes concerning it are found in the entries for September 3 and September 11. The former reads: "Report from the first Committee about adding the word 'absolutely'—debated. Absolutely without any [not being moved thereunto by any] foresight of anything without himself as a condition moving him thereunto. Ordered—This recommitted." The latter reads: "Report from the morning Committee that they think the former vote of the Assembly sufficient to print? the conditional decree."

It is at least evident from these notes that the framing of this section cost the Assembly some trouble. The new report from the digesting Committee as to adding the word "absolutely" is proof that there had already been puzzled discussion of the section. The recommitment of the matter, doubtless (as was the wont of the Assembly) to a special Committee, exhibits its dissatisfaction with its work so far. Probably between September 3 and September 11 the matter had again been before the Assembly, and the adjustment made which gives us our present section: for the report of September 11 appears to have come from a Committee meeting that morning, and seems to close the matter by recommending the treatment of a so-called "conditional decree," as it then stood, for passage for printing. Certainly the adjustment that was made was a good deal of a triumph: we do not indeed know the wording of the whole section as originally reported, or at any former stage of the debate—but the phrasing as ultimately agreed on is obviously a much finer piece of work than anything could have been of which the phraseology of the note of September 3 was a part. Is it too much to conjecture that this clause, for which no appropriate place can be found in section 2 as passed, was originally

only a part of the first section—coming, perhaps, in between the first and second clauses of that section? In that case the sentence would have read: "God from all eternity did, by the most wise and holy counsel of His own will, freely and unchangeably ordain whatsoever comes to pass, without any foresight of anything without Himself as a condition moving Him thereunto: yet so as thereby, etc." The stages of procedure would, in that case, be as follows: First, it was sought to strengthen the statement by inserting "absolutely" before "without." Then it was queried whether the "any" might not be better omitted. Then a new phraseology was tried: instead of "absolutely without foresight of anything," it was proposed to read "not being moved thereunto by any foresight of anything." It was finally seen that the trouble lay deeper than any adjustment of mere phraseology could cure; that the proposed addition to the Irish statement at this point hopelessly overweighted the sentence. The knot was then happily cut by relieving the sentence of the addition altogether and erecting a new section, which then it was comparatively easy to phrase happily. And, as we have already hinted, perhaps it is this transposition that was debated, but not determined, on August 29.

It is so far in favor of this general supposition that it is altogether likely that an attempt would first be made to include the whole doctrine of the general or cosmical decree in one section, as had been done in the Irish Articles; and the relieving of the heavy sentence which thence resulted would be apt to be an afterthought. And it seems to be brought, in this general sense at least, out of the region of conjecture into that of ascertained fact by a note in the Minutes of September 8: "Dr. Gouge offered a report of an addition, though the Committee was not a full number, but 7. He read it; but the Assembly thought not fit to meddle with it, because they were not a Committee. The addition was, without respect to anything foreseen, to be added after freely and unchangeably." These words occur in the first section, which, accordingly, it was proposed to read thus: "God from all eternity did, by the most wise and holy counsel of His own will, freely and unchangeably, without respect to anything foreseen, ordain whatsoever comes to pass." The proposal brought by Mr.

Gouge is evidently a substitute for the heavy clause that was debated and recommitted on September 3, and accordingly that clause too was a part of the first section.

The main result, in any event, of our scrutiny of the section is to advertise to us the importance which was attached by the Assembly to the proper guarding of the doctrine of the decree. This they sought to accomplish by adding in some fit way to the statement of the Irish Articles a clause explicitly affirming the independence of the decree—or, as has actually resulted in the event, fully setting forth the relation of the decree to the divine knowledge.

4. So far as the Minutes record, there was very little debate on sections 3 and 4, which, again, together represent a single section in the Irish Articles (§ 12). We read indeed in the notes for October 3: "Report additional to the article of Predestination. Debate about it." It is possible that this may refer to section 3, in which the term "predestinated" occurs for the first time, and in which the thing, as currently defined (of specific or soteriological predestination), for the first time emerges. On the other hand, however, the term may be used in a still narrower sense and the reference be to section 5, where the doctrine of election is discussed in its details. And it is almost equally possible that it is used in its broadest sense and refers to the chapter as a whole. The sequence of notices runs as follows: August 29, 1645, "Debate on the report of ... God's decree"; September 2, "proceed in the debate of the report of decrees"; September 9, "report concerning God's decree"; September 11, "proceed in the debate about the decree"; October 3, "report additional to the article of Predestination"; October 17, "debate upon the report ... concerning Predestination" [when § 5 was debated]; November 6, "the paragraph concerning Reprobation referred to the Committee, to make report to-morrow morning"; November 7, "Report made ... about Reprobation"; November 11, "Debate the report of Reprobation" [when § 7 was debated]. The appearance is rather strong that under the term "Predestination" the portion of the

chapter that treats of soteriological predestination, or more particularly §§ 3–6, was intended.

There can be little doubt that the entry in the Minutes of November 3, "Debate about leaving out those words, 'foreordained to everlasting death,' " refers to section 3: though it is, of course, not absolutely impossible (though most unlikely) that coming in at this late point in the debate, it may refer to a phrase originally in section 7, and omitted as the result of this debate. The likelihood of its reference to section 3 is moreover distinctly increased by an entry at a much later date—after the Confession, in fact, had been completed, and was ready to be sent up to Parliament. In the Minutes for September 23, 1646, we read: "Mr. Whitakers moved an alteration in these words in the chapt[er] of Predestination, viz., 'and some ordained to everlasting death.' It was debated, and upon debate it was Resolved upon the Q., The words shall stand without alteration. Mr. Whitakers enters his dissent." It can scarcely be doubted that the words in which Mr. Whitaker desired some alteration are the closing words of section 3; and the suggestion will perhaps present itself that he was only persisting at this final opportunity in pressing the desire of those who wished these words omitted in the earlier debate (November 3, 1645). It certainly is not said that Mr. Whitaker wished the words omitted, but only that "he moved an alteration in these words"—and what alteration he desired we have no means of ascertaining. And it would appear that he met with little or no support for his proposition. The Assembly not only rejected his motion, but he alone entered dissent. But it is at least not impossible that he was here only carrying to its latest stage the debate of November 3 for the omission of these words.

In that case, we should learn that there were some in the Assembly—or perhaps only one, as Mr. Whitaker is alone in his dissent on September 23, 1646, and may have been equally alone in the contention of November 3, 1645—who desired that the doctrine of reprobation should not be so sharply stated in section 3. What their—or his—reasons for so desiring were, we do not know. But we

should equally learn that the Assembly was not only decided, but we may say unusually usually decided in its determination to have the doctrine of reprobation clearly asserted in this its appropriate place in the Confession. We must not fail to observe that the matter was pressed to a vote, to the sharpest of decisions, and to a recorded dissent: and we must not fail to note the significance of this. Says Dr. Mitchell: "So far as appears from the minutes, the various articles of the Confession were passed by the Assembly all but unanimously. On some occasions, when dissent was indicated even by one or two of the members, the wording of the article they objected to was so modified as to satisfy them. The main occasions on which this policy was not followed were on 4th September 1645, with regard to Dr. Burgess's dissent from the resolution of the Assembly to leave out the word 'Blessed,' retained both in the English and Irish Articles, before the name of the Virgin mother of our Lord; on 23d September 1646, with regard to Mr. Whitaker's dissent from the words 'foreordained to everlasting death'; and on 21st October 1646, with regard to the dissent of several of the Independents from the insertion in a Confession of Faith of certain parts of § 3, chap. xxiii." We must esteem the clear and firm statement of the doctrine of foreordination to death, therefore, a matter which the Assembly deemed of the highest importance. When it was proposed to omit the words (November 3, 1645) the proposition was defeated: and when, at the eleventh hour, Mr. Whitaker returned to the charge and proposed at least some alteration in the words, it was resolved shortly, "The words shall stand without alteration," and Mr. Whitaker was left to enter his dissent. It is very clear that the Assembly by a very large majority—doubtless, in this case too, practically unanimously—deemed that important concerns were guarded by these words.

It is noteworthy that no debates and no dissents are noted on section 4.

5. Only the slightest hint of debate on section 5 is preserved. We have already observed the possibility, but hardly probability, of the notice of debate on "the article of Predestination" mentioned on October 3,

1645, referring to the fifth section. If that be set aside we have only the entry of October 17: "Report from the first Committee concerning Predestination.... Debate upon the report of the first Committee concerning Predestination. Debate about those words, 'unto everlasting glory,' whether they be not superfluous." The words were retained—to the enrichment of the statement. But the raising of the question of their superfluity is another indication of the severe terseness of the style given by the Assembly to this chapter—in contrast with the greater elaborateness, if not exactly elaboration, of the language of the underlying Irish Articles.

6. It was about the sixth section, however—the section in which is concentrated the *ordo salutis* of the Westminster Divines—that debate most gathered. From before October 20 to October 31 the Assembly was occupied with this great statement, and every element of it was subjected to the closest scrutiny. Especially did the discussion expand around the three points of the unity of the decree and the relation respectively of the decrees concerning the fall and redemption to the decree of election. We do not know precisely when debate on this section was first begun. The first notice of it (October 20) runs already: "Proceed in the debate about permission of man's fall; about 'the same decree.'" Nor can we reconstruct in its entirety the original form of the section. It seems to have begun somewhat thus: "As God hath appointed the elect unto glory, so hath He, to bring this to pass, ordained by the same decree to permit man to fall, etc."; and the debate first turned on the phrase "the same decree," and then on the phrase "to bring this to pass." To meet the objection to the former phrase, for which he would not contend—for, said he, "when that word is left out, is it not a truth, and so every one may enjoy his own sense"—Mr. Gillespie proposed that the statement should be modified so as to read: "As God hath appointed the elect unto glory, so hath He for the same end ordained to permit man to fall." This involved, however, the retention, in other language, of the idea involved in the phrase "to bring this to pass," which the Assembly was not disposed to insist on. A formula offered by Mr. Reynolds on October 21 accordingly found more favor. It runs as

follows: "As God hath appointed the elect unto glory, so hath He by the same eternal and most free purpose of His will fore-ordained all the means thereunto, which He in His counsel is pleased to appoint for the executing of that decree; wherefore they who are endowed with so excellent a benefit, being fallen in Adam, are called in according to God's purpose." This formula preserves the mention of the fall of Adam, as had just been ordered, but also the phrase "the same decree," which had been debated but the omission of which was not yet determined fully on, and meets by a happy turn the determination that the words "to bring this to pass" should not stand. Whether, however, this formula was simply (as we have presumed) the original formula, modified to meet these orderings, or an entirely new one wrought out by Mr. Reynolds himself, we have no sure means of determining. Immediately after the entry, "Mr. Reynolds offered something," with the text as given above, it is added, "Mr. Chambers offered something"—but no hint is given of what it was, possibly because the differing reception given to the propositions of the two advertised the scribe that it was Mr. Reynolds' and not Mr. Chambers' offering that would form the basis of subsequent debate. In any event, Mr. Reynolds' paper appears to register the results of the debate so far, and to lay the basis for further advance.

So far, we may say then, two things had been settled about this section: it should mention the fall of Adam and it should not insist on emphasizing the unity of the divine decree. In both matters the decision had been arrived at in the interest of what we may call, perhaps, comprehension—though this must be understood, of course, as a generic Calvinistic and not universalistic Christian comprehension. The Assembly had been led in this policy by the strictest Calvinists in the body. The sharp assertion of the sameness of the decree ordaining both the end and the means (for it was on this point of the unity of the decree alone that the debate turned) was advocated by Mr. Seaman, who seems to be most concerned about the possible misapprehension of the omission; by Mr. Whitaker, who takes the high ground that it is true, and therefore would best be

expressed—an indication, by the way, of the sound Calvinism of the man who later was so strenuous to have some alteration (we know not what, but surely from this we can infer no anti-Calvinistic one) made in the last words of the third section; and by Mr. Palmer, who fears to be brought into a worse snare by leaving it out than could arise from inserting it. Mr. Seaman urged that "if those words 'in the same decree' be left out, will involve us in a great debate"; that "all the odious doctrine of Arminians is from their distinguishing of the decrees, but our divines say they are one and the same decree"; that the censure the Remonstrants lay under for making two decrees concerning election would lie equally against making two decrees of the end and means. Mr. Whitaker simply urged that with reference to time all decrees are "simul and semel: in eterno there is not prius and posterius"; that though the conceptions of the Divines were very various about the decrees, there was no reason why the truth should not be frankly asserted. The other side was taken by men like Rutherford, Gillespie, Gouge, Reynolds, and Calamy. They did not deny the truth meant to be expressed in the phrase "the same decree," but rather unanimously affirmed it. But the keynote of their discussion was expressed by Gillespie when he said, "When that word is left out, is it not a truth, and so every one may enjoy his own sense," and by Reynolds when he remarked, "Let not us put in disputes and scholastical things into a Confession of Faith." Obviously it was generic Calvinism they were intent on asserting and not any particular variety of it. And this is given point to by another incident of the debate. Besides the mere phrase "the same decree," its sameness was asserted in the original draft by the concatenation of the clauses. We do not know precisely how its language ran at first; but apparently it was, as we have seen, something like this: "As God hath appointed the elect unto glory, so hath He, to bring this to pass, ordained by the same decree to permit man to fall"—and so on enumerating the several steps in the *ordo decretorum*. "I question," remarked Mr. Calamy, "that 'to bring this to pass'; we assert *massa pura* in this.... I desire that nothing may be put in one way or other; it makes the fall of man to be *medium executionis decreti*." It was in the same sense that Rutherford wished to amend by saying simply

"God also hath decreed." "It is very probable but one decree," he added, "but whether fit to express it in a Confession of Faith...." A remark of Gillespie's would seem to show that he was not quite willing to yield in this matter; let there be no dispute indeed about a word, he seems to say—but the matter involved is another thing: "Say, 'For the same end God hath ordained to permit man to fall.' ... This shows that in ordine naturæ God ordaining man to glory goes before His ordaining to permit man to fall." The appearance is that Gillespie desired the Confession to be committed not indeed to the supralapsarian position—for that occupies narrower ground than his words need to imply—but to the inclusion of the fall of Adam explicitly in the means to glorification.

Counsels of moderation thus prevailing as the result of this debate of Monday (October 20), the Assembly listened on Tuesday morning (October 21) to the "report made from the first Committee sitting before the Assembly"; and resolved "that mention be made of man's fall," and "that those words 'to bring this to pass' shall not stand." This is to say, it resolved to include man's fall within the decree of God, but not to assert it to be means to the end of glorification. It was then that Mr. Reynolds' statement as already quoted was brought before them and the debate commenced afresh from this new beginning. By what process this statement was ultimately reduced to the exquisite formula that was finally passed we are not informed. Considerable adjustment was needed. The first sentence required the omission not only of the word "same," but also of its whole concluding clause: "which He in His counsel is pleased to appoint for the executing of that decree"—a redundancy which must have been intolerable to this tersely speaking Assembly. Similarly, while the structure of the second section is adopted, and, of course, the happy phrase—cutting all knots—"being fallen in Adam," the language is wholly recast in the interests of clear and succinct statement: thus the long clause (derived from the Thirty-nine Articles) "who are endowed with so excellent a benefit" gives way to the simple "who are elected"; and the Scriptural "called according to God's purpose" to the more technical "effectually called," with an additional

definition of that unto which they are called and by what divine agency. Thence the statement proceeds through the items of the *ordo salutis*. So far as we can trace it, this is the history of the formulation of this beautiful section—wise in its insertions and omissions alike.

There remains, however, a very important clause of the section about which apparently the keenest and certainly the most fully reported of all the debates on this chapter was held—the final sentence of the section, which affirms: "Neither are any other redeemed by Christ, effectually called, justified, adopted, sanctified, and saved, but the elect only." The discussion of this statement was formally ordered at the close of the session on Tuesday, October 21, 1645: "Ordered—To debate the busin[ess] about Redemption of the elect only by Christ to-morrow morning." The debate, begun Wednesday morning, October 22, and continued at least to October 31, constitutes one of the most notable debates reported in the Minutes, and certifies us that the closing sentence of the sixth section is one of the most deliberate findings of the Assembly.

The protagonist in the debate was Mr. Calamy, who opened it with the enunciation of what is known as the "Hypothetical Universalistic" schema—a well-guarded expression of this theory, certainly, and even, perhaps, a somewhat modified expression of it, but also a clearly-cut and fully developed enunciation of universal redemption with limited application. "I am far from universal redemption in the Arminian sense," he said; "but that that I hold is in the sense of our divines in the Synod of Dort, that Christ did pay a price for all,—absolute intention for the elect, conditional intention for the reprobate in case they do believe,—that all men should be salvabiles, non obstante lapsu Adami ... that Jesus Christ did not only die sufficiently for all, but God did intend, in giving of Christ, and Christ in giving Himself, did intend to put all men in a state of salvation in case they do believe." Again, "The Arminians hold that Christ did pay a price for this intention only, that all men should be in an equal state of salvation. They say Christ did not purchase any impetration.... This universality of R[edemption]"—that is, of course,

that which he, in opposition to this Arminian construction, advocates—"doth neither intrude upon either doctrine of special election or special grace." Still again: "In the point of election, I am for special election; and for reprobation, I am for massa corrupta.... Those to whom He ... by virtue of Christ's death, there is ea administratio of grace to the reprobate, that they do wilfully damn themselves." If we were to take these statements just as they stand, we should probably be obliged to say that Calamy's position was characterized by the following points: 1. It denied the Arminian doctrine of a universal redemption for all men alike, without exception, on condition of faith, which faith is to be man's own act by virtue of powers renewed through a universal gift of sufficient grace. 2. It denied equally the Amyraldian doctrine of a universal redemption for all men alike, without exception, on condition of faith, which faith, however, is the product of special grace given to the elect alone, so that only the elect can fulfil the condition. 3. It affirmed a double intention on Christ's part in His work of redemption—declaring that He died absolutely for the elect and conditionally for the reprobate. Theologically his position, which has its closest affinities with the declarations of the English Divines at Dort, was an improvement upon the Amyraldian; but logically it was open, perhaps, to all the objections which were fatal to it as well as to others arising from its own lack of consistency.

Both sets of objections were made to tell upon it in the debate. For example, the fundamental objection to all schemes of conditional redemption, that it is inapplicable to more than a moiety of the human race, was early pressed upon him with telling effect. Mr. Palmer asked subtly, "I desire to know whether he will understand it *de omni homine*," i.e. whether Christ died for every man—of all sorts and in all conditions—only conditionally on the exercise of faith. Mr. Calamy must have felt hard pressed indeed when he answered simply, "*De adultis*." Where, then, shall those that die in infancy appear? On the other hand, Mr. Reynolds struck a deadly blow at the peculiar form which Mr. Calamy had given his doctrine when he remarked that to assert that Christ, besides dying absolutely for the elect, died also conditionally for the reprobate—in case they do

believe—is to say He died for them "upon a condition that they cannot perform, and God never intends to give them." It cannot seem strange to us, therefore, that Mr. Calamy was not able to preserve in the debate his somewhat artificial middle position, and is found arguing roundly for universal redemption of all and several, without distinction, at least in the Amyraldian sense.

To Calamy's aid in the debate there came Messrs. Seaman, Marshall, and Vines: while he was opposed by Palmer, Reynolds, Gillespie, Rutherford, Wilkinson, Burgess, Lightfoot, Price, Goodwin, and Harris. In the early part of the first day the debate turned on the *ordo decretorum*. Gillespie held it firmly to this broader question, and from that point of view—that "there is a concatenation of the death of Christ with the decrees"—asked significantly "a parte post what follows upon that conditional redemption." On the authority of the Dordrechtan Divines, to whom Calamy had appealed, Reynolds explained that "the Synod intended no more than to declare the sufficiency of the death of Christ; it is *pretium in se*, of sufficient value to all,—nay, ten thousand worlds," and that "to be salvable is a benefit, and therefore belongs only to them that have interest in Christ." Later in the day the debate turned rather on the Scriptural argument, and Calamy rested his case on the two texts, John 3:16 and Mark 16:15. From the former he argued that it was on account of the love of God for the world at large, not for the elect only, that Christ came—as the "whosoever believeth" sufficiently indicates. From the latter he argued that a universal redemption is requisite to give verity to the universal offer. Those who essayed to answer him exhibit minor differences, especially in the detailed exegesis of John 3:16. Gillespie and Rutherford understand that when it is said God so loved the world, it is the elect scattered everywhere in the world that are intended; Lightfoot and Harris understand that "the world" in contradistinction from the Jews is meant; and Price very wisely remarks that even if mankind at large be meant it does not at all follow that Christ died equally and alike for every individual—there is no inconsequence in saying that it was because of His love for the world that He gave His very life for the multitudes He chose out of

this world to save. However the term "the world" be taken, therefore, the result of the debate showed that no conclusion could be drawn from this text to the universality of redemption. As to Mark 16:15, Rutherford pointed out at once that the argument that the universality of the offer of the Gospel necessarily inferred precedent universality of redemption as its ground was obviously unsound inasmuch as it proved too much—the same argument is equally applicable to, say, justification. The promise of justification is as much included in the Gospel as the promise of redemption: shall we say, then, that we cannot preach the Gospel to all except on the supposition of a precedent universal justification? To this Mr. Seaman could reply only by repeating the shibboleth that what Christ did was to make all men only salvable, as Adam had made all men damnable—which one cannot believe was much of an aid to the cause he was advocating, as it involved a seriously low view of the effect of Adam's fall as well as of Christ's redemption: surely there were few in the Assembly who would assent to the proposition that the whole effect of Adam's sin was to render men liable to be condemned, instead of bringing them under actual condemnation, and the whole effect of Christ's work was to render men capable of salvation, instead of actually saving them. Gillespie, however, as was usual with that brilliant young man, put his finger here, too, on the technical flaw in Calamy's reasoning by insisting on the distinction between the *voluntas decreti* and *voluntas mandati*: "The command doth not hold out God's intentions; otherwise God's command to Abraham concerning sacrificing of his son...." Mr. Marshall, who with Mr. Vines gave a support to Mr. Calamy which was evidently as effective and wise as that of Mr. Seaman seems the opposite, acutely replies to this that "there is not only a *mandatum* but a promise"—but obviously this was a good rejoinder rather than a solid distinction. The weight of the debate was clearly on the side of the proposition proposed, and on that score alone we cannot feel surprise that it was retained in the Confession.

The interest of the debate to us lies in the revelation which it gives us of the presence in the Assembly of an influential and able, but

apparently small, body of men whose convictions lay in the direction of the modified Calvinism which had been lately promulgated by Cameron and Amyraut for the express purpose of finding a place for a universal redemption in the Calvinistic system. For the origin of this party Dr. Mitchell would point us to English sources: but Baillie especially mentions Amyraut in this connection;⁹¹ and it would seem that it was Amyraut and Cameron—both of whom Gillespie mentions in this debate—whom men had especially in mind during the discussion; and it would seem further to be clear that while the adherents of this universalistic view of the atonement in the Assembly held it with British moderation, and were not prepared to go all lengths with the French Divines who had lately promulgated it with such force, they yet looked upon them as of their school and sought support from them. The result of the debate was a refusal to modify the Calvinistic statement in this direction—or perhaps we should rather say the definitive rejection of the Amyraldian views and the adoption of language which was precisely framed to exclude them. Dr. Mitchell, reviving an old contention, suggests indeed that unless the clause of the Confession in question be read disjunctively rather than, as it is actually phrased, conjunctively, it will not operate for the exclusion of Amyraldians. It is not clearly obvious, however, that the word "and" here binds the several items of the enumeration so closely together as to make it appear that all that is affirmed is only that the whole of this process takes place in the case of the elect only: the natural sense of the clause is clearly that no one of the transactions here brought together is to be affirmed of the non-elect. And this impression is increased by the broader context, not to speak of the parallel passages in viii. 3 and 5. It might seem somewhat more to the point, possibly, to recall that in this section the language is so ordered as to seem to deal with the actual *ordo salutis* rather than directly with the *ordo decretorum*. It is asserted that the *ordo salutis* is the result of the decreeing of the means by which the elect are brought to glory. But what is subsequently asserted is that none but the elect are (actually) redeemed by Christ, effectually called, etc.—the mind being abstracted for the moment from the intention to the performance. The Westminster Amyraldians—if we may venture

so to call them—had, of course, freely admitted the distinction between the elect and non-elect in the application: it was only in the impetration that they disputed it: and it might perhaps seem to them possible to confess that though Christ had died for all, the merits of His death had actually been applied only to some, and to contend that only this is actually expressed by saying that none but the elect "are redeemed by Christ." Even this, however, appears more subtle than satisfactory; and in any event it would seem quite obvious that the Assembly intended to state in this clause with adequate clearness their reasoned and deliberate conviction that the decree of election lies behind the decree of the gift of Christ for redemption, and that the latter is to be classed as one of the means for the execution of the decree of election. This is the definite exclusion of the Amyraldian view, and anything that can be made really consistent with this conception of the *ordo decretorum* will be found to differ fundamentally from Amyraldism.

7. We first hear of the seventh section in the Assembly on November 6, 1645; but then after such a fashion as to suggest that it had already been before the Assembly and perhaps may have been already somewhat debated. We read simply: "The paragraph concerning Reprobation referred to the Committee, to make report to-morrow morning." This was doubtless a special Committee, according to the wont of the Assembly in such instances. On November 7 accordingly we read: "Report made by Mr. Reynolds about Reprobation." Then again on November 11 we read: "Debate the report of Reprobation.... Debate about that 'sovereign power.'" This is all that the Minutes tell us about the passage of this important section through the Assembly: and this tells us practically nothing, except that it was carefully scrutinized and debated. We may conjecture that the debate on the words "sovereign power" turned on the query whether something more or other than "power" might not wisely be indicated at this point: but this is mere conjecture, and we learn only that the retention of the phrase just as it now stands was not inadvertent but deliberate. The section is one of those which, though it has a point of suggestion in the Irish Articles, yet as it stands is the independent

product of the Assembly: and it certainly does credit to the Assembly by the combined boldness and prudence, faithfulness, and tenderness of its sonorous language.

8. There is no debate signaled on section 8 in its first passage through the Assembly. But when the chapter came back again from the perfecting Committee—June 18, 1646—we read: "The Assembly proceeded in debate of the Article 'of God's Eternal Decree'; and upon debate part of it was ordered. Upon debate about the last clause of it, concerning the handling of this doctrine, it was Resolved upon the Q., To refer this till to-morrow morning." We find nothing, however, on the subject in the Minutes for June 19 beyond this: "The Assembly proceeded in the debate of the Confession of Faith; and upon debate, that head 'of God's Eternal Decree' was ordered, and is as followeth...." We are therefore only certified concerning this admirable section that it was the object of the care of the Assembly itself up to the last moment, without being informed what precisely in the course of its stately march engaged its latest attention.

From this survey, by means, as it were, of specimen bits of the debates during which the third chapter of the Confession as we have it was beaten out, we may obtain some sort of idea of the labor and care expended on it by the Assembly. The survey is certainly calculated to enhance our idea of the deliberateness of its formulation. We have here no hasty draft, rushed through the body at breakneck speed and adopted at the end on the credit of the Committee that had drafted it. The third chapter of the Confession is distinctly the work of the Assembly itself, and comes to us as the well-pondered and thoroughly adjusted expression of the living belief of that whole body. The differences that existed between the members were not smoothed over in ambiguous language. They were fully ventilated. Room was made for them when they were considered unimportant and mere apices logici: but when they concerned matters of moment, after full discussion, the doctrine of the Assembly—well-reasoned and fully thought out—as distinguished from that of individuals, was embodied clearly and firmly in the

document. The document as it stands is thus emphatically the Confession of Faith of the Westminster Assembly. We cannot say that this or that clause represents this or that party in the Assembly. There were parties in the Assembly, and they were all fully heard and what they said was carefully weighed. But no merely party opinion was allowed a place in the document. When it came to voting the statements there to be set down, the Assembly as such spoke; and in speaking it showed itself capable of speaking its own mind. It is doing only mere justice to it, therefore, to read the document as the solemn and carefully framed expression of its reasoned faith.

In the appended text (to follow on the succeeding pages) we have given, in the middle column, as nearly as we can make it out, the form in which the third chapter came before the Assembly from its Committee, marking in footnotes the chief amendments which were made in it in the process of reducing the earlier draft to the form in which it left the Assembly and has come down to us. In order that the relations of this first reported text to the Irish Articles, on the one hand, and the completed Westminster Confession, on the other, may be easily apprehended, we have printed these two texts alongside of it, and we have sought so to present them that the eye may easily unravel the historical connections involved.

THE TEXT OF THE THIRD CHAPTER

IRISH ARTICLES (1615)	COMMITTEE'S PROPOSAL	WESTMINSTER CONFESSIOIN
II. OF GOD'S ETERNAL DECREE AND PREDESTINATION	OF GOD'S ETERNAL DECREE [AND PREDESTINATION]	OF GOD'S ETERNAL DECREE

(11) God, from all eternity, did, by his unchangeable counsel, ordain whatsoever in time should come to pass: yet so as thereby no violence is offered to the wills of the reasonable creatures, and neither the liberty nor the contingency of the second causes is taken away, but established rather.

[1] God from all eternity, did by the most holy [and] wise counsel of his [own] will freely and unchangeably ordain whatsoever in time should come to pass, [2] without any foresight of anything without himself as a condition moving him thereunto: yet so, as thereby neither is God the author of sin, nor is violence offered to the will of the creatures, nor is the liberty or contingency of second causes taken away but established rather.

(12) By the same eternal counsel, God hath predestinated some unto

[3] By the decree of God, for the manifestation

1. GOD FROM ALL ETERNITY DID, by the most wise and holy COUNSEL of his own will, freely and unchangeably ORDAIN WHATSOEVER COMES TO PASS; YET SO AS THEREBY neither is God the author of sin, NOR IS VIOLENCE OFFERED TO THE WILL OF THE CREATURES, NOR IS THE LIBERTY OR CONTINGENCY OF SECOND CAUSES TAKEN AWAY, BUT RATHER ESTABLISHED.

2. Although God knows whatsoever may or can come to pass upon all supposed conditions, yet hath he not decreed any thing because he foresaw it as future, or as that which would come to pass upon such conditions.

3. By the decree of God, for the manifestation of his

life, and reprobated some unto death: of both which there is a certain number, known only to God, which can neither be increased nor diminished.

of his glory, some men and angels are predestinated unto everlasting life, and others foreordained to everlasting death.

[4] These angels and men, thus predestinated and foreordained, are particularly and unchangeably designed, and their number is so certain and definite, that it cannot be either increased or diminished.

glory, SOME men and angels are PREDESTINATED UNTO everlasting LIFE, and others foreordained TO everlasting DEATH.

4. These angels and men, thus predestinated and foreordained, are particularly and unchangeably designed; and their NUMBER IS so CERTAIN and definite that it CANNOT BE EITHER INCREASED OR DIMINISHED.

(13) Predestination to life is the everlasting purpose of God, whereby, before the foundations of the world were laid, he hath constantly decreed in his secret counsel to deliver from curse and damnation those whom he hath chosen in Christ out of mankind, and to

[5] Those of mankind that are predestinated unto life, God, before the foundation of the world was laid, according to his eternal and immutable purpose, and the secret counsel

5. Those of mankind that are *predestinated unto life, God, BEFORE THE FOUNDATION OF THE WORLD WAS LAID*, according to his *ETERNAL* and *immutable PURPOSE, AND THE SECRET*

bring them by Christ unto everlasting salvation, as vessels made to honour.

(14) The cause moving God to predestinate unto life, is not the foreseeing of faith, or perseverance, or good works, or of anything which is in the person predestinated, but only the good pleasure of God himself. For all things being ordained for the manifestation of his glory, and his glory being to appear both in the works of his mercy and of his justice, it seemed good to his heavenly wisdom to choose out a certain number, towards whom he would extend his undeserved mercy, leaving the rest to be spectacles of his justice.

(15) Such as are predestinated unto life, *be called according unto God's purpose (his Spirit working in due season), and through grace they obey the calling, they be*

and good pleasure of his will, hath chosen in Christ unto everlasting glory, out of his mere free grace and love, without any foresight of faith or good works, or perseverance in either of them, or any other thing in the creature, as conditions, or causes moving him thereunto; and all to the praise of his glorious grace.

[6] As God hath appointed the elect unto glory, so hath he to bring this to pass, by the same decree, ordained

COUNSEL and *GOOD PLEASURE* of his will, *HATH CHOSEN IN CHRIST, UNTO EVERLASTING* glory, out of his mere free grace and love, *WITHOUT ANY FORESIGHT OF FAITH OR GOOD WORKS, OR PERSEVERANCE* in either of them, or any other thing in the creature, as conditions, or causes moving him thereunto; and all to the praise of his glorious grace.

6. As God hath appointed the elect unto glory, so hath he, by the eternal and most free purpose of his will, foreordained all the

justified freely, they be made sons of God by adoption, they be made like the image of his only-begotten Son Jesus Christ, they walk religiously in good works, and at length by God's mercy they attain to everlasting felicity.

But such as are not predestinated to salvation shall finally be condemned for their sins.

(16) The godly consideration of predestination and our election in Christ, is full of sweet, pleasant, and unspeakable comfort to godly persons, and such as feel in themselves the working of the Spirit of Christ, mortifying the

to permit man to fall; [and such as are predestinated unto life effectually to call to faith in Christ by his Spirit working in due season, to justify, adopt, sanctify, and to keep by his power through faith unto salvation]. Neither are any other redeemed by Christ, effectually called, justified, adopted, sanctified, and saved, but the elect only.

[7] The rest of mankind, God was pleased, according to the unsearchable counsel of his own will, whereby he extendeth or withholdeth mercy as he pleaseth, for the

means thereunto. *Wherefore they who are elected, being fallen in Adam, are redeemed by Christ, ARE effectually CALLED unto faith in Christ BY HIS SPIRIT WORKING IN DUE SEASON; ARE JUSTIFIED, ADOPTED, sanctified, and kept by his power through faith unto salvation. Neither are any other redeemed by Christ, effectually called, justified, adopted, sanctified, and saved, but the elect only.*

7. The rest of mankind God was pleased, according to the unsearchable counsel of his own will, whereby he extendeth or withholdeth mercy as he pleaseth, for the glory of his sovereign power

works of the flesh, and their earthly members, and drawing up their minds to high and heavenly things: as well because it doth greatly confirm and establish their faith of eternal salvation to be enjoyed through Christ, as because it doth fervently kindle their love towards God. And, on the contrary side, for curious and carnal persons lacking the Spirit of Christ, to have continually before their eyes the sentence of God's predestination is very dangerous.

glory of his sovereign power over his creatures, to pass by, and to ordain them to dishonour and wrath for their sin, to the praise of his glorious justice.

[8] The doctrine of this high mystery of predestination is to be handled with special prudence and care, that men attending to the will of God revealed in his word, and yielding obedience thereunto, may, from the certainty of their effectual vocation, be assured of their eternal election. So shall this doctrine afford matter of praise, reverence, and

over his creatures, to pass by, and to ordain them to dishonour and wrath FOR THEIR SIN, to the praise of his glorious justice.

8. The doctrine of this high mystery of predestination is to be handled with special prudence and care, that men *ATTENDING THE WILL OF GOD REVEALED IN HIS WORD*, and yielding obedience thereunto, may, from the certainty of their effectual vocation, be assured of their eternal election. So shall this doctrine afford matter of praise, reverence, and admiration of God; and of humility, diligence, and abundant consolation to all that sincerely obey the gospel.

admiration of
God, and of
humility,
diligence, and
abundant
consolation to all
that sincerely
obey the gospel.

*(17) We must receive
God's promises in such
wise as they be generally
set forth unto us in holy
Scripture: and in our
doings, that will of God
is to be followed which
we have expressly
declared unto us in the
word of God.*

III

THE WESTMINSTER DOCTRINE OF HOLY SCRIPTURE

THERE is certainly in the whole mass of confessional literature no more nobly conceived or ably wrought-out statement of doctrine than the chapter "Of the Holy Scripture," which the Westminster Divines placed at the head of their Confession and laid at the foundation of their system of doctrine. It has commanded the hearty admiration of all competent readers. Dean Stanley thinks that no council or synod has ever argued and decided any single theological question with an ability equal to that shown by the great theologians in their private treatises. But he immediately adds: "The nearest approaches to it are the chapters on Justification in the Decrees of Trent, and on the Bible in the Westminster Confession." Dr. Schaff considers it "the best Protestant counterpart of the Roman Catholic doctrine of the rule of faith," and remarks: "No other Protestant symbol has such a clear, judicious, concise, and exhaustive statement of this fundamental article of Protestantism."³ Such a statement of a fundamental doctrine is a precious heritage, worthy not only to be cherished but understood. That it may be at once highly praised and seriously misunderstood has been made sufficiently evident in the course of certain recent controversies. But apart from all reference to recent controversies, it cannot be otherwise than useful to subject so admirable a statement of doctrine to a close scrutiny, with a view to obtaining as clear an understanding of its true purport as possible. Something of this kind is attempted in this article. And that the formulas may be looked at discolored as little as possible by the haze which may rise from the years that have intervened since their composition, an effort is made to place them in their historical setting and to illustrate them from discussions contemporary with themselves.

I. THE PREPARATION OF THE CHAPTER

"If any chapter of the Westminster Confession of Faith," says Dr. Mitchell, "was framed with more elaborate care than another, it was that which treats 'Of the Holy Scripture.' It was considered paragraph by paragraph—almost clause by clause—by the House of Commons as well as by the Assembly of Divines, before it was finally passed; and its eighth paragraph was deemed worthy to be made the subject of a special conference between certain Members of the House and the Divines of the Assembly." The meager Minutes of the Assembly scarcely enable us to trace this careful work. As early as the 20th August, 1644, a Committee, consisting of Drs. Gouge, Temple, and Hoyle, Messrs. Gataker, Arrowsmith, Burroughs, Burgess, Vines, and Goodwin, together with the Scotch Commissioners, was appointed "to prepare matter for a joint Confession of Faith."⁵ A fortnight later (September 4), Dr. Smith and Messrs. Palmer, Newcomen, Herle, Reynolds, Wilson, Tuckney, Young, Ley, and Sedgewick were added to the Committee or constituted an additional Committee. Baillie was therefore justified in writing in October: "The Confession of Faith is referred to a committee, to be put in

severall the best hands that are here." How much of the matter was prepared by this Committee we do not know. On November 21, Baillie reports that though "the Catechise is drawn up," he fears "the Confession ... may stick longer";⁸ while on December 26 he thinks "that we must either passe the Confession to another season, or, if God will help us, the heads of it being distribute among many able hands, it may in a short time be so drawn up, as the debates of it may cost little time." By April 25, 1645, some reports concerning the Confession had been made to the Assembly,¹⁰ and on the 4th of May Baillie writes: "Our next work will be the Confession and Catechisme, upon both which we have already made some entrance." Accordingly, on the 12th of May, 1645, "the report of the Confession of Faith" was "read and debated,"¹² and a Committee was appointed to draw up the first draft of the Confession. This Committee consisted apparently of Drs. Temple and Hoyle, Messrs. Gataker, Harris, Burgess, Reynolds, Herle, and the Scotch Commissioners. On July 7, the first report was made: "Dr. Temple made report of that part of the Confession of Faith touching the Scriptures. It was read, debated." This chapter on the Scriptures occupied the attention of the Assembly thenceforward until July 18; but it is impossible to trace more than the general outlines of their work. On the 11th of July it is recorded: "Debate about the Scriptures where we left; about the knowledge of the divine authority of the Scripture."¹⁴ From this we may learn that the Assembly had got as far as the fifth section by this date. From the note on the 14th of July we learn that the statement about the necessity of the inward illumination of the Spirit for the saving understanding of the Scriptures was not a part of the original draft, but was inserted by the Assembly in the debate. It was debated on this day and on July 15, when also the word "saving" was added, confining this necessity to "the saving understanding" of the Word. The debate was continued on the 16th of July and on the 17th of July, on which latter occasion section 9 was before the house: "Proceed in the debate about 'literal sense.'" The last notice of the continuance of the debate is that of the 18th of July.¹⁸

Early in January, 1647, the proof-texts were added to the first chapter of the Confession. Those for the first paragraph on January 7; for the second on January 8; for the third, fourth, and part of the fifth on January 11; for the rest of the fifth on January 12; for the sixth and seventh on January 14, and for the rest on January 15.²⁰

In the meantime, on July 8, 1645, Messrs. Reynolds, Herle, and Newcomen had been appointed "to take care of the wording of the Confession of Faith, as it is voted in the Assembly from time to time, and to report to the Assembly when they think fit there should be any alteration in the words," after having consulted with at least one of the Scotch Commissioners. And on December 8, 1645, it was ordered that Messrs. Tuckney, Reynolds, Newcomen, and Whitaker be a Committee "to review the Confession of Faith as it is finished in the Assembly."²² The final phrasing of this chapter was, therefore, due to these Committees, or this Committee, for it is probable that it was all one Committee. Its final form was debated and approved by the Assembly on June 17 and 18, 1646.²⁴

The outline of their labors undoubtedly bears out the statement that great care was taken in the composition of the chapter, but apparently not that any special or unusual

discussion was given to it. There are no great debates recorded concerning it; and the Divines seem to have been more than usually at one concerning its propositions. We are surprised, indeed, by the rapidity and unanimity with which they did their work. The whole first draft passed through the Assembly between July 7 and 18: and debates are signalized only on the knowledge of the divine authority of the Scriptures (§ 5), the need of supernatural illumination for the saving understanding of the Word (§ 6), and the literal sense of Scripture (§ 9). To these may be added the conference with the House of Commons on section 8. The impression is very strong that, in the case of this chapter at least, Baillie's prevision proved correct and the Confession came before the Assembly in a form that roused little discussion and cost but little time in debate.

II. THE SOURCES OF THE CHAPTER

It belonged to the historical situation of the Westminster Divines that their doctrinal work should take much the form of a consensus of the Reformed theology. That theology had grown to its maturity during the controversies of the first century of its life. Everywhere there was a strongly felt desire for a comprehensive and universally acceptable creed statement of the Reformed faith, which would unify the scattered Churches and supersede or supplement the multitude of Confessions which had been produced in the first age of the Reformation; and this desire had already found expression in collections and harmonies of the Confessions. The special history of the British Churches—including the Anglo-Catholic and Arminianizing irruption under the leading of Laud—brought to the aid of this general tendency of the times both the impulse to seek support from the universal faith of other Reformed Churches and the necessity of vindicating unity of belief with them. It was in the nature of the case, therefore, that the Westminster Divines placed consciously before themselves as their dominant purpose, the task "of setting forth the whole scheme of Reformed doctrine in harmonious development, in a form of which their country should have no cause to be ashamed in the presence of any of the sister Churches of the continent." Dr. Mitchell does not overstate the matter when he represents the Westminster Assembly as having been "called together chiefly for two purposes: viz., first, to vindicate the doctrine of the Church of England from misrepresentation, and to show that it was in harmony with that of the other Reformed Churches; and, second, to effect such changes on her polity and worship as would bring her into closer union with the Church of Scotland and the Reformed Churches on the Continent." To this, indeed, it was practically bound by the ordinance by which it was called, which set forth as its purpose "the settling of the Government and Liturgy of the Church of England, and ... vindicating and clearing of the doctrine of the said Church from false aspersions and interpretations," reference being had (as is explicitly stated in its first paragraph) to securing "nearer agreement with the Church of Scotland and other Reformed Churches abroad"; while the Solemn League and Covenant included the vow that they would "endeavor to bring the Churches of God in the three kingdoms to the nearest conjunction and uniformity in religion, confession of faith" and catechising, as well as in government and worship.

THE FUNDAMENTAL SOURCE

This conscious reference in the work of the Assembly to the Reformed theology in general, while it adds interest to a search after the sources of its doctrinal statements, renders it almost impossible, in the chapter on the Scriptures at least, to determine them with any exactness. The difficulty is greatly increased by the circumstance that the Reformed theologians, whether on the Continent or in Britain, did not write in ignorance or independence of one another; so that it is a matter of merely literary interest to determine who was the originator of arguments or modes of statement that are common to all, or through what precise channels they came into the Confession of Faith. No reader of the Puritan literature of the seventeenth century will fail to observe how hard it leans upon the great Reformed divines of the Continent—freely appropriating from them lines of argument, forms of expression and points of view, while also, no doubt, freely adapting them to its own purposes. The consequence is that the sources of the several sections of the Confession of Faith can with almost equal readiness be found in Ball or Du Buc, in Cartwright or Calvin, according as we choose to look near or far for them. There is scarcely a leading divine of the first three-quarters of a century of Reformed theology, who has written at large on the Scriptures, from whom statements may not be so drawn as to make them appear to be the immediate sources of some of the Westminster sections. For example the following sentences from Calvin might very well lie as the basis of the first section:

"Ergo quanquam hominum ingratitude[m] satis superque omni patrocini[o] spoliat fulgor ille qui in coelo et in terra omnium oculis ingeritur, ... aliud tamen et melius adminiculum accedere necesse est quod nos probe ad ipsum mundi creatorem dirigat. Itaque non frustra verbi sui lumen addidit, quo innotesceret in salutem.... Nec frustra eodem remedio nos in pura sui notitia continet; quia mox alioqui diffuerent etiam qui videntur prae aliis firmi stare.... Tandem ut continuo progressu doctrinae veritas saeculis omnibus superstes maneret in mundo, eadem oracula quae deposuerat apud patres, quasi publicis tabulis consignata esse voluit.... Sed quoniam non quotidiana e coelis redduntur oracula, et scripturae solae exstant quibus visum est Domino suam perpetuae memoriae veritatem consecrare: non alio iure plenam apud fideles auctoritatem obtinent, quam ubi statuunt e coelo fluxisse, ac si vivae ipsae Dei voces illic exaudirentur."

This is but to say that the chief source of the Westminster doctrine of Holy Scripture is the general teaching of the Reformed theology; and it is better for us to recognize this at the outset than to lose ourselves in the perhaps vain task of endeavoring to find the proximate origin of its several clauses.

That we may realize how entirely the Westminster teaching on Scripture is the common possession of the Reformed theology, it will be well to draw out the Reformed doctrine on the subject in its salient points. In order to do this we shall purposely rely on Heppes statement, because it is framed out of the Continental divines only, and will serve, therefore, to advise us, in the most pointed way, of the unity of the faith in Britain and abroad. This course is naturally attended, no doubt, with the incidental difficulty that Heppes has not been able to retain so perfect an objectivity in stating the Reformed doctrine that his own conceptions do not sometimes enter into his statement and color the doctrine of his authorities. When this personal equation is allowed for, however, it

ceases to be a disadvantage; the essential agreement of the Westminster Confession with the general Reformed doctrine of Scripture becomes all the more striking when it is seen to be so conspicuous even from Heppé's statement of the latter. The following is a translation of Heppé's outline, with the omission, of course, of the passages from representative Reformed theologians, which he gives in his notes in support of the several statements:

Conf. of Faith, I. 1a.

"The consciousness that there is a God and that it is his duty to worship Him, is a natural and essential possession of man. This innate knowledge of God, the *notitia Dei insita*, frames itself in man, by the action of his reason and conscience, into the *notitia acquisita*. Hence there is a *religio naturalis*. Reason causes man to apprehend the idea of God immanent to it, and teaches him to rise by inference from the visible world, as the work of God, to its invisible author and ruler. At the same time, conscience teaches man to apprehend God as Him who loves and rewards what is good, abhors and punishes what is wicked, and to whom he is absolutely responsible. Man's natural knowledge of God, therefore (as distinguished from what it becomes through revelation), most completely shapes itself through this—that man looks upon himself as the image of God.

Conf. of Faith, I. 1b.

"This natural knowledge of God is, no doubt, insufficient for attaining eternal blessedness. For man, who is convicted of his sinfulness by his conscience, learns by this, indeed, that God punishes wickedness, but from himself knows nothing of what God's gracious purpose with the sinner may be. The *religio naturalis* is, therefore, not *salutaris*, and avails only to render man, if he does not receive revelation, *inexcusable*. Moreover, man cannot of himself apprehend what he apprehends of God by reason and conscience as it ought to be apprehended. Nevertheless, what natural religion teaches of God, although it is incomplete, is true and also useful; for, on the one side, every excuse is taken from man, as over against God, if he does not believe in God and keep His law; and, on the other hand, the natural man who seeks peace with God by the *religio naturalis* will the more joyfully and thankfully receive the revelation of God's grace when it is imparted to him; and the regenerate man who has received the gracious revelation, and believes it, will be able then the better to understand and comprehend the natural revelation of God.

"Since man knows himself in his conscience as breaker of God's command, and, therefore, guilty before God, and yet, through his natural knowledge of God, apprehends God only as righteous Judge of the good and bad, it follows that the *religio naturalis* can afford man no peace with God, and that it cannot be a sufficing *religio* in itself or for man. It itself points above itself, in that it awakens in man the need of and the longing for a revelation, through which he may first rightly understand what it means that a God exists, and through which he may apprehend that God can be the God even of the sinner, that God wishes to be sought by the sinner and how He will be found by the sinner. Thus only as faith in revelation does religion become what it should be, according to its

conception: not a knowledge of God, nor yet an observance of the divine commandment in itself, but a determination of immediate self-consciousness, a feeling (Schleiermacher) which rests on the experience of God as absolute love.

* * * * *

"Since theology is to recognize and present what belongs to natural religion too, a distinction may be drawn between *articuli simplices (puri)*, which rest simply on revelation, and *articuli mixti*, in the presentation of which reason also has its material part. Only we must hold fast to the fact that the fundamental doctrines of theology (of the Trinity, of the fall of the human race, of the Redeemer, of the true blessedness and of the only way to it) can be apprehended only out of revelation, and that, therefore, the holy Scriptures are of absolute authority in all the sections of the system of doctrine.

I. 2a, 3.

"The sole source and norm of all Christian knowledge is Holy Scripture, i.e. the sum of the contents of all those books which God has caused to be written through prophets, evangelists and apostles. *Scriptura S. est verbum Dei, autore Spir. S. in veteri test, per Mosen et prophetas, in novo vero per evangelistas et apostolos descriptum atque in libros canonicos relatum, ut de Deo rebusque divinis ecclesiam plene et perspicue erudiat, sitque fidei et vitae norma unica ad salutem (Heidegg., ii. 6).* To Holy Scripture belong, therefore, only those books which were written by prophets and apostles, i.e. by such men as God has illuminated in a special manner by His Spirit, in order to make use of them as instruments of revelation. Since these books have been recognized and numbered from antiquity down by a canon of the Church as prophetic and apostolic, they are called canonical. The writings preserved and handed down with them, which are not of prophetic or apostolic origin, are called, on the other hand, apocryphal books. *Libri apocryphi sunt et dicuntur, qui nec prophetas nec apostolos habent auctores (Wendel., Coll., p. 44).* Such apocryphal books occur, however, only in the Old Testament, as an appendix to it. For those books of the New Testament which were looked upon by the Reformers, and in part by their disciples, as apocryphal (i.e. as not proceeding from the apostles) ..., have long been recognized and received by the Church as canonical.

I. 2b.

"These canonical books of the Old and New Testament not only contain the Word of God, but are themselves God's written Word; for their penning was brought about by special and immediate agency of the Holy Spirit, who incited the authors to the writing, suggested to them the thoughts and words which should be penned, and guarded them from every error in the writing—that is, the canonical books were inspired by the Holy Ghost to their authors, in both contents and form. Upon this unparalleled peculiarity of the origin of Holy Scripture—i.e. upon its divinity—rest its peculiar properties (to wit, *proprietates, quibus divinitas eius sufficienter declaratur [L. Croc., Synt., iv. 1]*). These are: *auctoritas et certitudo, sufficientia et perfectio, necessitas and perspicuitas.*

I. 4, 5., I. 8, 10.

"The divinity or the inspired character of the Holy Scriptures represents itself to the believer primarily as the property of its AUTHORITY. *Auctoritas s. scripturae est dignitas et excellentia soli sacrae scripturae prae omnibus aliis scriptis competens, qua est et habetur authentica i.e. infallibiliter certa, sic ut necessitate absoluta ab omnibus ei sit credendum atque obtemperandum propter auctorem Deum (Polan., i. 14).* By virtue of this the Holy Scriptures are the principle of the whole of theology, the exclusive norm of Christian doctrine, and the infallible judge of all controversies; and that in such a manner that all that is contained in the language (Wortlaut) of Scripture, or follows by indubitable consequence from it, is dogma, while what is contrary to it is error, and everything else, even if it does not contradict Holy Scripture, is indifferent for the soul's welfare. This authority, i.e. its divinity and authenticity, rests in no sense (not even quoad nos) on the recognition of the Church, but wholly and only upon the Scripture itself, which as God's Word is *αὐτοπίστος* and *ἀνυπεύθυνος*. The sole witness which certifies Christians of the divinity and authority of the Holy Scriptures with absolute assurance, is, therefore, the witness which Scripture bears to itself, or God to it in the conscience of the believer, to wit, the witness of the Holy Spirit. This is given to the believer in the fact that the longing for salvation which fills him obtains complete satisfaction by means of the Holy Scriptures, that the Spirit of God which quickens him recognizes itself in the Holy Scriptures, and that his own life of faith finds itself promoted by them more and more and in ever more quickening manner. On this very account, however, the divinity and authority of the Scriptures can be apprehended only by Christians.... Other evidences which are used for the proof of the divine authenticity of the Scriptures have value for Christians, therefore, only in so far as they can be used for the defense of the authority of Scripture externally. Among them belong the witness of the Church, which delivers the Holy Scripture to the individual Christian as the Word of God, recognized by it as such in all ages (which tradition, nevertheless, has no more value than the witness of heretics, Jews and heathen, which likewise attests that the Holy Scripture was recognized by the Church from the beginning as God's Word), as well as the fulfilled prophecies of Holy Scripture (especially the destruction of Jerusalem and the earlier divine guidance and the later dispersion of the Jewish people) and the miracles, through the performance of which the writers of Holy Scripture are attested, by God Himself, as men of God.

"Since the authority of Scripture coincides with the authority of God, it is absolute authority. Nevertheless, there is a distinction drawn in the contents of Scripture in the matter of authority. Inasmuch as, to wit, all that Scripture records is absolutely certain historical truth, *auctoritas s. authentia historica* belongs to it; inasmuch, however, as it contains the absolutely divine rule of faith and life, *auctoritas s. authentia normativa* belongs to it: whence it appears that the *auctoritas historica* extends further than the *auctoritas normativa*. The former belongs to the whole contents of Scripture; the latter, on the other hand, only to a part of it, since what Scripture reports as to the works, words and thoughts of the devil and the godless has certainly *auctoritas historica*, but no *auctoritas normativa*.

I. 6., I. 8.

"On the divinity of the Holy Scriptures rests further their PERFECTION. *Perfectio scripturae est perfectio partium, qua omnia fidei et morum capita continet, et graduum, qua omnes gradus revelationis (Burm., 45).* With respect to the purpose of Scripture, its perfection presents itself as sufficiency, since Scripture contains all that is needful for man, in order that he may be able so to learn God's nature and will as well as himself, that thereby his consciousness of sin shall be awakened and the salvation which he needs be mediated to him. Yet this is not to say that Scripture presents all truths in express words, but that it (*implicite or explicite*) reveals the truth in a perfection which leads the believer into all truth, since it instructs man in all that it is necessary for him to know for the attainment of eternal life. A distinction is to be drawn between the *perfectio essentialis*, according to which Holy Scripture contains sufficingly the truths of revelation which are necessary for the attainment of eternal salvation, and the *perfectio integralis*, according to which the Holy Writings have been so preserved by God's grace from destruction and corruption, that no canonical book and no essential part of one has been lost. Of a tradition which may increase the doctrinal contents of Scripture, therefore, the Christian has no need. Only for the organization, discipline and worship of the Church can tradition come into consideration.

I. 1.

"Just as essentially as the properties of *perfectio* and *sufficiencia* belongs also that of *NECESSITAS* to the Scriptures, since the Scriptures, on account of the weakness of the human heart and the power of error which rules in the world, are necessary for the preservation in the earth of the pure knowledge of revealed truth. Scripture is necessary, therefore, not only for the well-being, but especially for the very being of the Church, which would pass out of existence if it had not an absolutely certain record of the revealed truth. Nevertheless, it must be observed that the necessity of Scripture is not an absolute one, but a *necessitas ex hypothesi dispositionis*, since, had it been the good pleasure of God, He could have preserved the pure knowledge and conviction of His truth, even without the means of a Holy Scripture.

I. 7.

"If now the Scriptures are necessary for the attainment of eternal life and for the preservation of the Church on earth, in like manner must their most essential contents be presented with sufficient clearness to be understood by even the unlearned man who reads the Scriptures with believing heart as one seeking salvation. Therefore there belongs to the Scriptures the property of *PERSPICUITAS*, *qua, quae ad salutem sunt scitu necessaria, in scriptura ita perspicue et clare sunt explicata, ut ab indoctis quoque fidelibus, devote et attente legentibus intelligi possint (Wendel., Proleg., cap. 3).* By this is, however, not to be understood that all the several words and sentences of Scripture are clear beyond doubt; rather is the perspicuity of Scripture to be referred only to the fundamental doctrines of revelation affecting salvation, which are contained in it; and it must be further noted that the true knowledge of them is possible only to the reader who

is seeking salvation, while others can obtain at the best only a theoretical and purely external knowledge of the truths of faith. For just as the brute can perceive the body but not the spirit of man, because he himself has none, so also the unspiritual man can see and understand, no doubt, the letters but not the spirit of Scripture.

"Neither does the perspicuity of Scripture exclude the necessity of interpreting it. Interpretatio S. Scripturae est explicatio veri sensus et usus illius, verbis perspicuis instituta, ad gloriam Dei et aedificationem ecclesiae (Pol., i. 45).

I. 9., I. 6.

"It likewise follows from the divinity of the Scriptures, that the interpretation of those passages which present difficulties is not to be made dependent on some other judge, as possibly on the authority of the Church, but only on the Spirit of God, the work of whom alone Scripture is, or on itself. Since now all doctrines, the knowledge of which is necessary for eternal life, are presented in Scripture with undoubtable clearness for those who read it with believing mind, i.e. according to the regula fidei et caritatis, it follows that the darker passages of Scripture are to be interpreted according to the indubitably clear ones, or according to the analogia fidei which rests on these: Analogia fidei est argumentatio a generalibus dogmatibus, quae omnium in ecclesiae docendorum normam continet (Chamier, i. 17). It is to be held fast at the same time, that not only what stands in the express language of Scripture, but also what flows from that by necessary consequence, is to be recognized as Scriptural content (Schriftinhalt) and revealed truth.

"In the interpretation of Scripture two things are included which, indeed, are expressed in the very idea of it, viz.: (1) The enarratio veri sensus Scripturae; and (2) the accommodatio ad usum (Pol., i. 45).

I. 9.

"The true sense of Scripture, which interpretation has established, can always be only single, and, in general, only the real, literal sense, the sensus literalis, which is either sensus literalis simplex or sensus literalis compositus. The former is to be firmly held as a rule; the latter, on the other hand, is to be recognized wherever Scripture presents anything typically; and only when the sensus literalis would contradict the articuli fidei or the praeceptis caritatis, where therefore Scripture itself demands another interpretation of its words, is the figurative meaning of them, the sensus figuratus, to be sought. Besides this, the allegorical interpretation has its right in the application of the language of Scripture to the manifold relations of life in the accommod. ad usum.

"For the right interpretation of Scripture there are, of course, requisite all sorts of human preparations, knowledges, fitnesses (general and spiritual training, knowledge of languages and history, etc.); but the essential qualification is, nevertheless, faith and life in communion with the Holy Ghost, who teaches us to understand the complete harmony of Scripture, even in the apparent contradictions of Scripture (in the ἐναντιοφωνή). For the Holy Spirit leads all those who are of believing heart, and who call

on Him for the purpose of receiving enlightenment only from Him, into all truth. Therefore the believer has the comfort of knowing that God really grants him the true understanding of Scripture, and that the true knowledge of the Word will be preserved forever on earth by God's gracious care."

Even so brief an abstract as this, framed for a far different purpose, illustrates the fact that no single assertion is made in the first chapter of the Confession which is not the common faith of the whole Reformed theology; and this could be vindicated, if there were need to do so, to the minutest detail. A fair case could be made out—if the anachronism of two centuries did not stand in the way—that Hepppe's statement was the source of the Westminster chapter. A statement drawn up, from its most representative Continental teachers, by one heartily in accord with all the details of Reformed doctrine, would even more conspicuously show the minuteness and completeness of the relation. The great source of this chapter is, therefore, the recognized Reformed theology of the time.

THE PROXIMATE SOURCES

The most important proximate source of the chapter on Holy Scripture, as it is also the main proximate source, as Dr. Mitchell has shown, of the whole Confession, was those Irish Articles of Religion which are believed to have been drawn up by Usher's hand, and which were adopted by the Irish Convocation in 1615. As no doubt can exist as to this fact, so, says Dr. Mitchell,²⁹ "as little doubt can be entertained in regard to the design of the framers in following so closely in the footsteps of Ussher and his Irish brethren. They meant to show him and others like him, who had not had the courage to take their place among them, that though absent they were not forgotten nor their work disregarded. They meant their Confession to be in harmony with the consensus of the Reformed Churches, and especially of the British Reformed Churches, as that had been expressed in their most matured symbol. They desired it to be a bond of union, not a cause of strife and division, among those who were resolutely determined to hold fast by 'the sum and substance of the doctrine' of the Reformed Churches—the Augustianism so widely accepted in the times of Elizabeth and James." Accordingly we might expect that in framing this chapter, too, while resting primarily on the Irish Articles, the Westminster Divines would not neglect the earlier Reformed creeds; and that they actually did their work in full view of what had been done in the way of creed-expression of the doctrine of Scripture before them, Dr. Mitchell shows elsewhere by means of a carefully framed parallel statement of the creeds on this subject. So much of this as seems needful for our purpose, we borrow:

EARLIER
CONFESSIONS

WESTMINSTER CONFESSION

IRISH ARTICLES OF 1615

We know God
by two means.
First, by the

I. Although the light of nature, and the
works of creation and providence, do so far
manifest the goodness, wisdom, and power

I. The ground of our
religion, and the rule of
faith and all saving

creation, and preservation, and government of the whole world ... by which the invisible things of God may be seen and known unto us, namely, his everlasting power and Godhead, as Paul the apostle speaketh, Rom. 1:20, which knowledge sufficeth to convince all men, and make them without excuse. But much more clearly and plainly he afterwards revealed himself unto us in his holy and heavenly word, so far forth as is expedient for his own glory, and the salvation of his in this life [“The Belgic Confession,” 1561].

[“The French Confession” like the Belgic, but far more brief.]

of God, as to leave men inexcusable; yet are they not sufficient to give that knowledge of God, and of his will, which is necessary unto salvation; therefore it pleased the Lord, at sundry times, and in divers manners, to reveal himself, and to declare that his will unto his church; and afterwards, for the better preserving and propagating of the truth, and for the more sure establishment and comfort of the church against the corruption of the flesh, and the malice of Satan and the world, to commit the same wholly unto writing; which maketh the Holy Scripture to be most necessary; those former ways of God’s revealing his will unto his people being now ceased.

truth, is the word of God, contained in the Holy Scripture.

All this Holy

II. Under the name of Holy Scripture, or

II. By the name of

Scripture is contained in the canonical books of the Old and New Testament, the catalogue whereof is this: [Catalogue follows] [“The French Confession,” 1559].

the word of God written, are now contained all the books of the Old and New Testament, which are these:

Holy Scripture, we understand all the canonical books of the Old and New Testaments, viz.:

OF THE OLD TESTAMENT		OF THE OLD TESTAMENT	
Genesis,	Ecclesiastes,	The five books	Ecclesiastes,
Exodus,	The Song of	of Moses,	Song of Solomon,
Leviticus,	Songs,		
Numbers,	Isaiah,		Isaiah,
Deuteronomy,	Jeremiah,		Jeremiah:
			Prophecy and
Joshua,	Lamentations,	Joshua,	Lamentations,
Judges,	Ezekiel,	Judges,	Ezekiel,
Ruth,	Daniel,	Ruth,	Daniel,
1 Samuel,	Hosea,	The 1st and 2d	The twelve less

2 Samuel,	Joel,	of Samuel,	Prophets.
1 Kings,	Amos,	The 1st and 2d	
2 Kings,	Obadiah,	of Kings,	
1 Chronicles,	Jonah,	The 1st and 2d	
2 Chronicles,	Micah,	of Chronicles,	
Ezra,	Nahum,	Ezra,	
Nehemiah,	Habakkuk,	Nehemiah,	
Esther,	Zephaniah,	Esther,	
Job,	Haggai,	Job,	
Psalms,	Zechariah,	Psalms,	
Proverbs,	Malachi.	Proverbs,	

OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

The Gospels

The Gospels

according to	1 To Timothy,	according to	
Matthew,	2 To Timothy,	Matthew,	Timothy (two),
Mark,	To Titus,	Mark,	
Luke,	To Philemon,	Luke,	Titus,

John,	The Epistle to	John,	Philemon,
The Acts of the	the Hebrews,	The Acts of the	Hebrews,
Apostles,	The Epistle of	Apostles,	
Paul's Epistles	James,	The Epistle of	The Epistle of
to the Romans,	The 1st and 2d	Paul to the	James,
1 Corinthians,	Epistles of	Romans,	
2 Corinthians,	Peter,	Corinthians	St. Peter (two),
Galatians,	The 1st, 2d and	(two),	
Ephesians,	3d Epistles of	Galatians,	St. John (three),
Philippians,	John,	Ephesians,	
Colossians,	The Epistle of	Philippians,	
1 Thessalo	Jude,	Colossians,	St. Jude,
nians,		Thessalonians	
2 Thessalo	The Revelation.	(two),	The Revelation
nians,			of St. John.

We
acknowledge
these books to

All which are given by inspiration of God,
to be the rule of faith and life.

All which are
acknowledged to be
given by inspiration of

be canonical;
that is, we
account them as
the rule and
square of our
faith [“French
Confession,”
1559].

We
furthermore
make a
difference
between the holy
books and those
which they call
apocryphal: for
so much as the
apocryphal may
be read in the
church, and it is
lawful also so far
to gather
instructions out
of them as they
agree with
canonical books;
but their
authority and
certainty is not
such as that any
doctrine
touching faith or
Christian
religion may
safely be built
upon their
testimony; so far
off is it, that they
can disannul or
impair the
authority of the
other [“Belgic
Confession”].

God, and in that regard
to be of most certain
credit and highest
authority.

III. The books commonly called
Apocrypha, not being of divine inspiration,
are no part of the canon of the Scripture; and
therefore are of no authority in the church of
God, nor to be any otherwise approved, or
made use of, than other human writings.

III. The other books,
commonly called
apocryphal, did not
proceed from such
inspiration, and
therefore are not of
sufficient authority to
establish any point of
doctrine; but the church
doth read them as books
containing many worthy
things, for example of
life and instruction of
manners.

We believe that the word contained in these books came from one God; of whom alone, and not of men, the authority thereof dependeth [“French Confession”].

IV. The authority of the Holy Scripture, for which it ought to be believed and obeyed, dependeth not upon the testimony of any man or church, but wholly upon God (who is truth itself), the author thereof; and therefore it is to be received, because it is the word of God.

Therefore without any doubt we believe those things which are contained in them; and that not so much because the church receiveth and alloweth them for canonical, as for that the Holy Ghost beareth witness to our consciences that they came from God; and most of all for that they also testify and justify by themselves this their own sacred authority and sanctity, seeing that even the blind may clearly behold, and as it were feel the fulfilling and

V. We may be moved and induced by the testimony of the church to an high and reverent 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 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.

accomplishment
of all things
which were
foretold in these
writings [“Belgic
Confession”].

We believe
also that the
Holy Scripture
doth most
perfectly contain
all the will of
God, and that in
it all things are
abundantly
taught,
whatsoever is
necessary to be
believed of man
to attain
salvation.
Therefore seeing
the whole
manner of
worshipping
God, which God
requireth at the
hands of the
faithful, is there
moat exquisitely
and at large set
down, it is lawful
for no man,
although he have
the authority of
an apostle, no,
not for any angel
sent from
heaven (as St.
Paul speaks, Gal.
1:8), to teach
otherwise than
we have long
since been

VI. The whole counsel of God, concerning
all things necessary for his own glory, man’s
salvation, faith, and life, is either expressly
set down in Scripture, or by good and
necessary consequence may be deduced from
Scripture: unto which nothing at any time is
to be added, whether by new revelations of
the Spirit, or traditions of men. Nevertheless
we acknowledge the inward illumination of
the Spirit of God to be necessary for the
saving understanding of such things as are
revealed in the word; and that there are
some circumstances concerning the worship
of God, and government of the church,
common to human actions and societies,
which are to be ordered by the light of nature
and Christian prudence, according to the
general rules of the word, which are always
to be observed.

VI. The Holy
Scriptures contain all
things necessary to
salvation, and are able
to instruct sufficiently in
all points of faith that
we are bound to believe,
and all good duties that
we are bound to
practise.

taught in the Holy Scripture. For seeing it is forbidden that any one should add or detract anything to or from the word of God, thereby it is evident enough that this holy doctrine is perfect and absolute in all points and parcels thereof; and therefore no other writings of men, although never so holy, no custom, no multitude, no antiquity, nor prescription of times, nor personal succession, nor any councils, and, to conclude, no decrees or ordinances of men, are to be matched or compared with these divine Scriptures, and this bare truth of God; for so much as God's truth excelleth all things ["Belgic Confession"].

VII. All things in Scripture are not alike

V. Although there be

plain in themselves, nor alike clear unto all; yet those things which are necessary to be known, believed, and observed, for salvation, are so clearly propounded and opened in some place of Scripture or other, that not only the learned, but the unlearned, in a due use of the ordinary means, may attain unto a sufficient understanding of them.

some hard things in the Scriptures (especially such as have proper relation to the times in which they were first uttered, and prophecies of things which were afterwards to be fulfilled), yet all things necessary to be known unto everlasting salvation are clearly delivered therein; and nothing of that kind is spoken under dark mysteries in one place, which is not in other places spoken more familiarly and plainly to the capacity both of learned and unlearned.

VIII. The Old Testament in Hebrew (which was the native language of the people of God of old), and the New Testament in Greek (which at the time of the writing of it was most generally known to the nations), being immediately inspired by God, and by his singular care and providence kept pure in all ages, are therefore authentical; so as in all controversies of religion the church is finally to appeal unto them. But because these original tongues are not known to all the people of God who have right unto, and interest in the Scriptures, and are commanded, in the fear of God, to read and search them, therefore they are to be translated into the vulgar language of every nation unto which they come, that the word of God dwelling plentifully in all, they may worship him in an acceptable manner, and, through patience and comfort of the Scriptures, may have hope.

IV. The Scriptures ought to be translated out of the original tongues into all languages for the common use of all men; neither is any person to be discouraged from reading the Bible in such

a language as he doth understand, but seriously exhorted to read the same with great humility and reverence, as a special means to bring him to the true knowledge of God, and of his own duty.

We acknowledge that interpretation of Scriptures for authentical and proper which, being taken from the Scriptures themselves (that is, from the phrase of that tongue in which they were written, they being also weighed according to the circumstances, and expounded according to the proportion of places, either of like or unlike, also of more and plainer), accordeth with the rule of faith and charity, and maketh notably for God's glory and man's salvation
IX. The infallible rule of interpretation of Scripture is the Scripture itself; and therefore, when there is a question about the true and full sense of any Scripture (which is not manifold, but one), it must be searched and known by other places that speak more clearly.
["Latter Swiss Confession"].

Wherefore we do not contemn the holy treatises of the fathers, agreeing with the Scriptures; from whom, notwithstanding, we do modestly dissent, as they are deprehended to set down things merely strange, or altogether contrary to the same.... And according to this order we do account of the decrees and canons of councils.

X. The Supreme Judge, by which all controversies of religion are to be determined, and all decrees of councils, opinions of ancient writers, doctrines of men, and private spirits, are to be examined, and in whose sentence we are to rest, can be no other but the Holy Spirit speaking in the Scripture.

Wherefore we suffer not ourselves in controversies about religion, or matters of faith, to be pressed with the bare testimonies of fathers, or decrees of councils; much less with received customs, or with the multitude of men being of one judgment, or with prescription of long time.

Therefore in
controversies of
religion or
matters of faith,
we cannot admit
any other judge
than God
himself
pronouncing by
the Holy
Scriptures what
is true, what is
false, what is to
be followed, or
what to be
avoided. So we
do not rest but
in the judgments
of spiritual men,
drawn from the
word of God
[“Latter Swiss
Confession”].

Our knowledge that the Westminster Divines did make use of the Irish Articles, both in determining the general outline of the Confession and (in places) its more detailed phraseology, helps us to perceive that it underlay their work in this chapter too. But it is no more clear that they used it than that they used it very freely and only so far forth as served their purpose; they looked to it for advice, not authority.

In one of the passages of this chapter, the rich phraseology of which has been much admired, and to which the Irish Articles have no corresponding section, Dr. Candlish has discovered the traces of a Scotch hand. He points out that section 5 bears so close a resemblance to a passage in Gillespie's "Miscellany Questions" as to suggest that the two came from the same pen.³³ Dr. Mitchell takes up the hint and feels sure that we may here trace Gillespie's authorship. We place the two in parallel columns:

CONFESSION OF FAITH

“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

GILLESPIE

“The Scripture is known to be indeed the word of God by the beams of divine authority which it hath in itself ... such as the heavenliness of the matter; the majesty of the style; the irresistible power over the conscience; the general scope, to abase man and to

(which is to give all 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." exalt God; nothing driven at but God's glory and man's salvation; ... the supernatural mysteries revealed therein, which could never have entered into the reason of men; the marvellous consent of all parts and passages (though written by divers and several penmen), even where there is some appearance of difference, ... these, and the like, are characters and marks which evidence the Scriptures to be the word of God."

There is much here that belongs to the commonplaces of the time, and almost as close parallels to section 5 may be derived from the writings of several others of the Westminster Divines. Nevertheless the phraseology seems too closely similar for there not to have been some literary connection.

How closely the Westminster Confession held itself to the theological thought of its day may be illustrated from another parallel which we shall immediately give, in which the Confession is placed side by side with two of the chief popular dogmatic handbooks of the age. Ball's "Catechism" was in everybody's hand and is a very fair representative of the Puritan trend of thought. The "Body of Divinity," published by Downname in 1645, under Archbishop Usher's name, may not have been before the framers of this chapter before their work was well on its way. The parallelism is so close, however, that it is hard to believe that it did not affect some of the matter or even the phraseology. If not, the closeness of the parallels is a pointed indication of the great indebtedness of the Confession to the same general sources from which Usher drew the material for his "commonplace book." In any case, this parallel will measure for us the accord of the Westminster doctrine of Scripture with the current doctrine of the times among the pronounced Protestant party in England.

BALL,
 "A Short
 Treatise
 containing
 all the
 Principal
 Grounds of
 Christian
 Religion,"
 15th
 impression,
 London,
 1656.

CONFESSIO USHER, "The Sum and Substance of the Christian
 OF FAITH Religion," London, 1702.

<p>P. 49: “The Gentiles by nature have the law written in their hearts.”</p>	<p>I. i. a: “Although the light of nature, and the works of creation and providence, do so far manifest the goodness, wisdom, and power of God, as to leave men inexcusable;”</p>	<p>Pp. 3, 4: “By what means hath God revealed himself? By his divine works and by his holy word.... What be the divine works whereby God hath shewed himself? The creation and preservation of the world and all things therein.... What use is there of the knowledge obtained by the works of God? There is a double use. The one to make men void of excuse; as the Apostle teacheth, Rom. 1:20, and so it is sufficient unto condemnation. The other is to further unto salvation, and that by preparing and inducing men to seek God, if happily, by groping they may find him (as the Apostle sheweth, Acts 17:27), whereby they are made more apt to acknowledge him when he is perfectly revealed in his word....” Cf. p. 23: “That this knowledge of God is to be had partly by his works, viz., so much as may serve to convince man and make him inexcusable.”</p>
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P. 46: “In respect of substance, the word of God was always necessary, without which we could (1) neither know, nor (2) worship God aright.”

P. 4: “He sendeth us to his word alone for direction, how to attain salvation, Isa. 8:20, Luk. 10:26; therefore none but he can reveal the way how we should obtain that everlasting inheritance, Psalm 16:11, Prov. 2:6, 9.”

P. 51: “Faith and obedience is the way to happiness, and the whole duty of man is faith working by love, which man could not learn of himself.”

I. i. b: “yet are they not sufficient to give that knowledge of God, and of his will, which is necessary unto salvation;”

[Cf. X. iv.]

P. 4: “Are not the works of God sufficient to give knowledge of the only true God and the way unto everlasting happiness? They may leave us without excuse, and so are sufficient unto condemnation; but are not able to make us wise unto salvation. Because of things which are necessary unto salvation, some they teach but imperfectly, others not at all, as the distinction of the persons in the Godhead, the fall of man from God, and the way to repair the same.” Cf. p. 1: “May a man be saved by any religion? No, but only by the true, as appeareth by John 17:3.”

Pp. 5, 6: "What understand you by the word of God? By the word of God we understand the will of God revealed unto man being a reasonable creature, teaching him what to do, believe, and leave undone, Deut. 29:29.... Hath not this word been diversly made known heretofore? This word of God hath heretofore been diversly made known, Heb. 1:1, as (1) By inspiration, 2 Chr. 15:1, Isa. 59:21, 2 Pet. 1:21. (2) By ingraving in the heart, Rom. 2:14. (3) By visions; Num. 12:6, 8, Acts 10:10, 11, Apoc. 1:10. (4) By dreams, Job 33:14, 15, Gen. 40:8. (5) By Urim and Thummim, Num. 27:21, 1 Sam. 30:7, 8. (6) By signs, Gen. 32:24, Exo. 13:21. (7) By audible voice, Exo. 20:1, 2, Gen. 22:15. And lastly by writing, Exo. 17:14."

I. i. c:
"therefore it pleased the Lord, at sundry times, and in divers manners, to reveal himself, and to declare that his will unto his church;"

P. 4: "Where then is the saving knowledge of God to be had perfectly? In his holy word. For God, 'according to the riches of his grace, hath been abundant towards us in all wisdom and understanding, and hath opened unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure, which he hath purposed in himself,' as the Apostle teacheth, Ephes. 1:7, [8](#), [9](#). What course did God hold in the delivery of his word unto men? In the beginning of the world he delivered his word by revelation and continued the knowledge thereof by *tradition*, while the number of his true worshippers was small.... Were these revelations in times past delivered all in the same manner? No. For (as the Apostle noteth, Heb. 1:1) 'at sundry times and in divers manners God spake in times past, unto the Fathers by the Prophets.' The divers kinds are set down in Num. 12:6, and 1 Sam. 28:6, and may be reduced to these two general heads: Oracles and Visions."

P. 7: "Why was the truth delivered to the church in writing? The truth of God was delivered to the church in writing, (1) That it might be preserved pure from corruption; (2) That it might be better conveyed to posterity; (3) That it might be an infallible standard of true doctrine; (4) That it might be the determiner of all controversies; (5) That our faith might be confirmed, beholding the accomplishment of things prophesied; And (6) for the more full instruction of the church, the time of the Messiah either drawing nigh, or being come." P. 46: "Without which, error in doctrine and manners is unavoidable."

P. 46: "In respect of the manner of revealing in writing, the Scriptures were necessary ever since it pleased God after that manner to make known his will, and so shall be to the end of the world."

I. i. d: "and afterwards, for the better preserving and propagating of the truth, and for the more sure establishment and comfort of the church against the corruption of the flesh, and the malice of Satan and the world, to commit the same wholly unto writing;"

I. i. e: "which maketh the Holy Scripture to be most necessary;

P. 4: "But after he chose a great and populous nation, in which he would be honoured and served, he caused the same to be committed to writing for all ages to the end of the world.... Yet so that in half that time, God's will was also revealed without writing, extraordinarily, and the Holy Books indited one after another, according to the necessity of the times; but in this last half, the whole canon of the Scriptures being fully finished, we and all men, unto the world's end, are left to have our full instruction from the same, without expecting extraordinary revelations, as in times past."

P. 5: "Where then is the word of God now certainly to be learned? Only out of the book of God contained in the Holy Scriptures; which are the only certain testimonies unto the church of the word of God.

"Why may not men want the Scriptures

those former ways of God's revealing his will unto his people being now ceased."

now, as they did at the first from the creation until the time of Moses, for the space of 2513 years? First, because then God immediately by his voice and Prophets sent from him, taught the church his truth; which now are ceased." P. 4: "But in this last half, the whole canon of the Scriptures being fully finished, we and all men unto the world's end, are left to have our full instruction from the same, without expecting extraordinary revelations as in times past."

P. 6: "What call you the word of God? The Holy Scripture, immediately inspired, which is contained in the books of the Old and New Testament." Pp. 7, 8: "What is it to be immediately inspired? To be immediately inspired, is to be as it were breathed, and to come from the Father by the Holy Ghost, without all means. Were the Scriptures thus inspired? Thus the Holy Scriptures in the originals were inspired both for matter and words. What are the books of the Old Testament? Moses and the Prophets. What mean you by the books of the Old Testament? All the books of Holy Scripture, given by God to the church of the Jews." P. 9: "Which are the books of the New Testament? Matthew, Mark, Luke and the rest as they follow in our Bibles."

P. 1: "What ought to be the chief and continual care of every man in this life? To

I. ii: "Under the name of Holy Scripture, or the word of God written,

are now contained all the books of the Old and New Testament, which are these:

[Catalogue.]

P. 5: "What is Scripture then? The word of God written by men inspired by the Holy Ghost for the perfect building and salvation of the church; or holy books written by the inspiration of God to make us wise unto salvation. If the Scriptures be written by men, which are subject unto infirmities; how can it be accounted the word of God? Because it proceeded 'not from the will or mind of man,' but 'holy men' set apart by God for that

glorify God and save his soul.” P. 4: “Whence must we take directions to attain hereunto? Out of the word of God alone.”

All which are given by inspiration of God, to be the rule of faith and life.”

work, spake and writ ‘as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.’ Therefore God alone is to be accounted the *Author* thereof, who inspired the hearts of those holy men, whom he chose to be his secretaries; who are to be held only the *instrumental causes* thereof....” P. 10: “What books are the Holy Scriptures; and by whom were they written? First, the books of the Old Testament, in number nine and thirty, ... written by Moses and the Prophets, who delivered the same to the church of the Jews. Secondly, the books of the New Testament, in number seven and twenty, written by the Apostles and Evangelists, who delivered them to the church of the Gentiles.”

[Catalogue, pp. 11, 14.]

I. iii.: “The books commonly called Apocrypha, not being of divine inspiration, are no part of the canon of the Scripture; and

Pp. 11, 12: “Are there no other canonical books of the Scripture of the Old Testament besides these that you have named? No; for those other books which papists would obtrude unto us for

therefore are of no authority in the church of God, nor to be any otherwise approved, or made use of, than other human writings.”

canonical, are apocryphal, that is to say, such as are to lie hid when there is proof to be made of religion. How prove you that these apocryphal books are no part of the canonical Scriptures? First, they are not written first in Hebrew, the language of the church before Christ, which all the books of the Old Testament were originally written in. Secondly, they were never received into the canon of Scripture by the church of the Jews before Christ (to whom alone in those times the oracles of God were committed, Rom. 3:2), nor read and expounded in their synagogues. See *Josephus Contra Appion, lib. i.* and *Eusebius, lib. iii. 10.* Thirdly, the Jews were so careful to keep Scripture entire as they kept the number of the verses and letters; within which is none of the Apocrypha. Fourthly, the Scripture of the Old Testament was written by Prophets, ... But Malachi was the last Prophet, after whom all the Apocrypha was written. Fifthly, they

are not authorized by Christ and his Apostles who do give testimony unto the Scriptures. Sixthly, by the most ancient Fathers and Councils of the primitive churches after the Apostles, ... they have not been admitted for trial of truth.... Seventhly, there is no such constant truth in them as in the canonical Scriptures. For every book of them hath falsehoods in doctrine or history.”

Pp. 44, 45: “What is the divine authority of Holy Scripture? Such is the excellency of the Holy Scripture above all other writings whatsoever, that it ought to be credited in all narrations, threatenings, promises, or prophesies, and obeyed in all commandments. Whence hath it this authority? From God the author thereof, he being of incomprehensible wisdom, great goodness, absolute power and dominion, and truth that can neither deceive or be deceived. Doth the authority of the Scripture wholly depend upon God? The authority of the Scripture doth only and wholly depend upon God the author of it. May not one part of Scripture be preferred before another? Though one part may be preferred before another, in respect of excellency of matter and use, yet in authority and certainty, every part is equal. Is any other writing of equal authority to the Scripture? Only Scripture is of divine authority.”

I. iv.: “The authority of the Holy Scripture, for which it ought to be believed and obeyed, dependeth not upon the testimony of any man or church, but wholly upon God (who is truth itself), the author thereof; and therefore it is to be received, because it is the word of God.”

P. 15: “The authority of these holy writings, inspired by God, is highest in the church, as the authority of God; whereunto no learning or decrees of angels or men, under what name or color soever it be commended, may be accounted equal, ... neither can they be judged or sentenced by any.”

P. 10: “Reason or witnesses of men; unto which it is unmeet that the word of God should be subject, as papists hold, when they teach that the Scriptures receive their authority from the church. For by

thus hanging the credit and authority of the Scriptures on the church's sentence, they make the church's word of more credit than the word of God. Whereas the Scriptures of God cannot be judged or sentenced by any; and God only is a worthy witness of himself, in his word, and by his Spirit; which give mutual testimony one of the other, and work that assurance of faith in his children, that no human demonstrations can make, nor any persuasions or enforcements of the world can remove.'

P. 9: "How may it be proved that these books are the word of God immediately inspired by the Holy Ghost to the Prophets and Apostles? First, by the testimony of the church; secondly, CONSTANCY OF THE SAINTS; thirdly, MIRACLES WROUGHT TO CONFIRM THE TRUTH; and fourthly, BY THE ANTIQUITY THEREOF."

P. 15: "What understand you by the church? By the church we understand not the pope, whom the papists call the church virtual; nor his bishops and cardinals met in general council, whom they call the church representative; but the whole company of believers, who have professed the true faith; whether those who received the books of holy Scripture from the Prophets and Apostles, or those who lived after." Pp. 16–18: "How is this testimony of the church considered? The testimony of the church is considered, (1) Of the Jews; (2) Of the Christians. What books

I. v. a: "We may be moved and induced by the testimony of the church to an high and reverent esteem of the Holy Scripture;"

P. 6: "How may it appear therefore, that this book which you call the book of God, and the Holy Scripture, is the word of God indeed and not men's policies? By the constant testimony of men in all ages, from them that first knew these penmen of the Holy Ghost with their writings, until our time; and reasons taken out of the works themselves, agreeable to the quality of the writers. Both which kinds of arguments the

did the Jews receive? The church of the Jews professed the doctrine and received the books of the Old Testament, and testified of them that they were divine. What things give force to this testimony? To the testimony of the Jews, these things give force. (1) To them were committed the oracles of God. (2) In great misery they have constantly confessed the same.... (3) Notwithstanding the high Priests and others persecuted the Prophets while they lived, yet they received their writings as prophetic and divine. (4) Since obstinacy is come to Israel, notwithstanding their great hatred to the Christian religion, the holy Scripture of the Old Testament is kept pure and uncorrupt amongst them, even in those places which do evidently confirm the truth of Christian religion. What books did the Christian church receive? The Christian church hath embraced the doctrine of God, and received the books both of the Old and New Testament. What things give weight to this testimony? To the testimony of Christians, two things give force: (1) Their great constancy. (2) Their admirable and sweet consent: for in other matters we may observe differences in opinion, in this a singular and wonderful agreement. How many ways is this testimony of Christians considered? This testimony of Christiana is considered three ways: (1) Of the universal church, which from the beginning thereof, until these times, professing the Christian religion to be divine, doth also profess that these books are of God. (2) Of the several primitive churches, which first received the books of the Old Testament, and the Epistles written from the Apostles, to them, their pastors, or some they knew; and after delivered them under the same title to their successors, and other churches. (3) Of the pastors and doctors, who (being furnished with skill, both in the tongues and matters divine) upon due trial and examination have pronounced their judgment and approved

Holy Scriptures have as much and far more than any other writings. Wherefore, as it were extreme impudence, to deny the works of Homer, Plato, Virgil, Tully, Livy, Galen, and such like, which the consent of all ages have received and delivered unto us; which also by the tongue, phrase, matter, and all other circumstances agreeable, are confirmed to be the works of the same authors whose they are testified to be: so it were more than brutish madness to doubt of the certain truth and authority of the Holy Scriptures, which no less but much more than any other writings, for their authors, are testified and confirmed to be the sacred word of the ever-living God. Not only testified (I say) by the uniform witness of men in all ages, but also confirmed by such reasons taken out of the writings themselves, as do sufficiently argue the Spirit of God to be the author of them. For we may learn out of the testimonies themselves

them to the people committed to their charge. Of what force is this testimony? This testimony of the church is of great weight and importance: (1) It is profitable to prepare the heart and to move it to believe. (2) It is of all human testimonies (whereby the author of any book that hath, is, or shall be extant, can be proved) the greatest, both in respect of the multitude, wisdom, honesty, faithfulness of the witnesses; and the likeness, constancy and continuance of the testimony itself. (3) But this testimony is only human. (4) Not the only, nor the chief whereby the truth and divinity of the Scripture is confirmed. (5) Neither can it be the ground of divine faith and assurance.”

[The other items mentioned in the first question quoted are then treated in similar manner.]

(as David did, Psl. 119:152) that God hath established them forever.” P. 9: ... “The church of the Jews until the coming of Christ in the flesh, embraced all the former writings of the Prophets as the book of God. Christ himself appealeth unto them as a sufficient testimony of him, John 5:39. The Apostles and Evangelists prove the writings of the New Testament by them: and the catholic church of Christ, from the Apostles’ time unto this day, hath acknowledged all the said writings, both of the Old and New Testaments, to be the undoubted word of God. Thus have we the testimony both of the old church of the Jews, God’s peculiar people and first-born, to whom the oracles of God were committed, and the new of Christians: together with the general account which all the godly at all times have made of the Scriptures, when they have crossed their natures and courses, as accounting it in their souls, to be of God; and the special

testimony of martyrs who have sealed the certainty of the same, by shedding their blood for them. Hereunto also may be added the testimony of those who are out of the church; heathens, out of whom many ancient testimonies are cited, to this purpose by *Josephus contra Appion*, Turks, Jews, (who to this day acknowledge all the books of the Old Testament) and heretics, who labor to shroud themselves under them.”

P. 21: “How else may it be proved that these books are the word of God? BY THE style, efficacy, sweet consent, admirable doctrine, excellent end AND THE WITNESS OF THE SCRIPTURE ITSELF.” P. 23: “These things declare the majesty of the style.” P. 27: “The efficacy of this doctrine doth powerfully demonstrate the divinity thereof.” P. 31: “The sweet and admirable consent which is found in all and every part of Scripture cannot be ascribed to any but to the Spirit of God, each part so exactly agreeing with itself and with the whole.” P. 35: “The matter treated of in Holy Scripture is divine and wonderful.” P. 38: “The end of the Scripture is divine, viz. (1) The glory of God: and (2) The salvation of man, not temporal but eternal.” Pp. 30, 40: “These arguments are of great force, whether they be severally or jointly considered; and do as strongly prove that the Christian religion is only true, as any other reason can, that there was, is, or ought to be any true religion.... The testimony of the Scripture

I. v. b: “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 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

Pp. 6, 7, 8: “Let me hear some of those reasons which prove that God is the author of the Holy Scriptures.... Fourthly, the matter of the Holy Scripture being altogether of heavenly doctrine, ... declareth the God of heaven to be the only inspirer of it. Fifthly, the doctrine of the Scripture is such as could never breed in the brains of man.... Sixthly, the sweet concord between these writings and the perfect coherence of all things contained in them.... For there is a most holy and heavenly consent

itself ... is (1) most clear, (2) certain, (3) infallible, (4) public, and (5) of itself worthy credit.”

whereby it doth abundantly evidence itself to be the word of God;” and agreement of all parts thereof....
Seventhly, a continuance of wonderful prophecies.... Eighthly, the great majesty, full of heavenly wisdom and authority, such as is meet to proceed from the glory of God, shining in all the Holy Scriptures: yea, oftentimes under great simplicity of words, and plainness and easiness of style.... Ninthly, in speaking of matters of the highest nature, they ... absolutely require credit to be given to them.... Tenthly, the end and scope of the Scriptures, is for the advancement of God’s glory and the salvation of man’s soul.... Eleventhly, the admirable power and force that is in them to convert and alter men’s minds.” ... etc.

Pp. 40 sq.: “Is this testimony of force to open the eyes or assure the heart? No, for the external light of arguments, and testimonies brought to confirm and demonstrate, must be distinguished from the inward operation of the Holy Ghost, opening our eyes to see the light shining in the Scripture and to discern the sense thereof. These reasons may convince any, be he never so obstinate: but are they sufficient to persuade the heart thereof? No; the testimony of the Spirit is

I. v. c: “yet, notwithstanding, our full persuasion and assurance of the infallible truth and divine authority thereof, is from the inward work of the Holy

P. 9: “Are these motives of themselves sufficient to work saving faith, and persuade us fully to rest in God’s word? No. Besides all these, it is required, that we have the Spirit of God, as well to open our eyes to see the light, as to seal

necessary and only all-sufficient for this purpose. Why is the testimony of the Spirit necessary? Because by nature we are blind in spiritual things. Though therefore the Scripture be a shining light, yet unless our eyes be opened, we cannot see it, no more than a blind man doth the sun. Why is the testimony of the Spirit all-sufficient? (1) Because the Spirit is the author of supernatural light and faith. (2) By the inspiration thereof were the Scriptures written. (3) The secrets of God are fully known unto, and effectually revealed by, the Spirit. (4) The same law which is written in the Scriptures, the Spirit doth write in the hearts of men that be indued therewith. For which reasons it must needs be that the testimony of the Spirit is all-sufficient to persuade and assure the heart that the Scriptures are the word of God.”

Spirit, bearing witness by and with the word in our hearts.”

up fully unto our hearts that truth which we see with our eyes. For the same Holy Spirit that inspired the Scriptures, inclineth the hearts of God’s children to believe what is revealed in them, and inwardly assureth them, above all reasons and arguments, that these are the Scriptures of God.” ... P. 10: “This testimony of God’s Spirit in the hearts of his faithful, as it is proper to the word of God, so is it greater than any human persuasions grounded upon reason or witnesses of men: unto which it is unmeet that the word of God should be subject, as papists hold, when they teach that the Scriptures receive their authority from the church,” etc [as above on I. iv.].

Pp. 47–49: “Whatsoever was, is, or shall be necessary or profitable to be known, believed, practised or hoped for, that is fully comprehended in the books of the Prophets and Apostles.... The perfection of the Scripture will more plainly appear, if we consider, (1) That religion for the substance thereof, was ever one and unchangeable. (2) The law of God, written by Moses and the Prophets, did deliver whatsoever is needful for, and behoveful to the salvation of the Israelites. (3) Our Saviour 1. Made known unto his Disciples the last and full will of his

I. vi. a: “The whole counsel of God, concerning all things necessary for his own glory, man’s salvation, faith, and life, is either expressly set down in Scripture, or by good and necessary

P. 15: “Since God hath appointed the Holy Scriptures, which bear witness of Christ, to be written for our learning: He will have no other doctrine pertaining to eternal life to be received, but that which is consonant unto them, and hath the ground thereof in them. Therefore unto

heavenly Father, and 2. What they received of him they faithfully preached unto the world, and 3. The sum of what they preached is committed to writing. (4) There is nothing necessary to be known of Christians, over and above that which is found in the Old Testament, which is not plainly, clearly and fully set down, and to be gathered out of the writings of the Apostles and Evangelists.... In the whole body of the Scripture, all doubts and controversies are perfectly decided, and every particular book is sufficiently perfect for the proper end thereof. What use is to be made hereof? Unwritten traditions, new articles of faith, and new visions and revelations are now to be rejected.”

consequence may be deduced from Scripture: unto which nothing at any time is to be added, whether by new revelations of the Spirit, or traditions of men.”

them only is the church directed for the saving knowledge of God.” Also: “The books of Holy Scripture are so sufficient for the knowledge of Christian religion, that they do most plentifully contain all doctrine necessary to salvation. They being perfectly profitable to instruct to salvation in themselves, and all other imperfectly profitable thereunto, further than they draw from them. Whence it followeth that we need no unwritten verities, no traditions, or inventions of men, no canons of Councils, no sentences of Fathers, much less decrees of popes, for to supply any supposed defect of the written word, or for to give us a more perfect direction in the worship of God, and the way of life, than is already expressed in the canonical Scriptures.” P. 17: “It ought to be no controversy amongst Christians, that the whole Scriptures of the Old and New Testament doth most richly and abundantly contain all that is necessary for a

Christian man to believe and to do for eternal salvation.”

Pp. 49, 50: “To a natural man the Gospel is obscure, accounted foolishness.... Things necessary to salvation are so clearly laid down that the simplest, indued with the Spirit, cannot be altogether ignorant of the same.... But to them that are in part illighted many things are obscure and dark.”

I. vi. b:
“Nevertheless we acknowledge the inward illumination of the Spirit of God to be necessary for the saving understanding of such things as are revealed in the word;”

P. 18: “All which are dark and difficult unto those whose eyes the God of this world hath blinded. But unto such as are by grace enlightened and made willing to understand, howsoever some things remain obscure to exercise their diligence, yet the *fundamental doctrines* of faith and precepts of life are all plain and perspicuous.”

I. vi. c: “and that there are some circumstances concerning the worship of God, and government of the church, common to human actions and societies, which are to be ordered by the light of nature and Christian prudence, according to the general rules of the word, which are always to be observed.”

P. 49: “In themselves the whole Scripture is easy, for such excellent matter could not be

I. vii. a: “All things in

P. 18: “There are some things hard in the

delivered in more significant and fit words. But all things in Scripture are not alike manifest.... Things necessary to salvation are so clearly laid down that the simplest, indued with the Spirit, cannot be altogether ignorant of the same....” Pp. 56–57: “What be the means to find out the true meaning of the Scriptures?... (1) Conference of one place of Scripture with another.... (2) Diligent consideration of the scope. (3) And circumstances of the place.... (4) Consideration of the matter whereof it doth entreat.... (5) And circumstances of persons, times and places.... (6) Also consideration whether the words be spoken figuratively or simply.... (7) And knowledge of the arts and tongues wherein the Scriptures were originally written.... (8) But always it is to be observed that obscure places are not to be expounded contrary to the rule of faith set down in plainer places of the Scripture.”

Scripture are not alike plain in themselves, nor alike clear unto all; yet those things which are necessary to be known, believed, and observed, for salvation, are so clearly propounded and opened in some place of Scripture or other, that not only the learned, but the unlearned, in a due use of the ordinary means, may attain unto a sufficient understanding of them.”

Scriptures that have proper relation to the time in which the Scripture was written and uttered, or which are prophecies of things to be fulfilled hereafter; which if we never understand, we shall be never the worse for the attaining of everlasting salvation.... For all doctrine necessary to be known unto eternal salvation, is set forth in the Scriptures most clearly and plainly, even to the capacity and understanding of the simple and unlearned.” P. 19: “These matters indeed are above human reason: and therefore are we to bring faith to believe them, not human reason to comprehend them. But they are delivered in Scripture in as plain terms as such matter can be.” “The whole doctrine of salvation is to be found so plain that it needeth no commentary. And commentaries are for other places that are dark; and also to make more large use of Scripture than a new beginner can make of himself; which we see

necessary in all human arts and sciences.”

P. 54: “The Scriptures were written in Hebrew and Greek.”

P. 6: “The Holy Scripture, immediately inspired, which is contained in the books of the Old and New Testament.” Pp. 7, 8: “To be immediately inspired is to be as it were breathed, and to come from the Father by the Holy Ghost, without all means.” “Thus the Holy Scriptures in the originals were inspired, both for matter and words.”

I. viii. a: “The Old Testament in Hebrew (which was the native language of the people of God of old), and the New Testament in Greek (which at the time of the writing of it was most generally known to the nations), being immediately inspired by God,”

P. 10: “What language were the books of the Old Testament written in? In Hebrew: which was the first tongue of the world, and the most orderly speech; in comparison of which all other languages may be condemned of barbarous confusion; But chosen specially, because it was the language at that time best known unto the church (teaching that all of them should understand the Scriptures). Only some few portions by the later prophets were left written in the Chaldean tongue (understood by God’s people after their carrying away into Babylon).” P. 14: “In what language were the books of the New Testament written? In Greek, because it was the most common language, best known then to Jews and Gentiles; teaching that all kingdoms should have the Scriptures in a language which they understand.”

[On Inspiration, see above, on I. ii., and cf.

p. 10, where the
aboriginality of the
Hebrew vowel points is
defended.]

I. viii. b: “and
by his singular
care and
providence kept
pure in all ages,

P. 8: “The
marvellous
preservation of the
Scriptures. Though
none in time be so
ancient, nor none so
much oppugned; yet
God hath still by his
Providence preserved
them and every part of
them.”

are therefore
authentic;

Pp. 20, 21:
“Although in the
Hebrew copies there
hath been observed by
the Masorites, some
very few differences of
words, by similitude of
letters and points; and
by the learned in the
Greek tongue, there are
like diversities of
readings noted in the
Greek text of the New
Testament, which came
by fault of writers: yet
in most by
circumstance of the
place, and conference
of other places, the true
reading may be
discerned. And albeit in
all it cannot.... yet this
diversity or difficulty
can make no difference
or uncertainty in the
sum and substance of
Christian religion;
because the Ten

so as in all
controversies of
religion the
church is finally
to appeal unto
them.”

Commandments, and the principal texts of Scripture on which the Articles of our faith are grounded, the sacraments instituted, the form of prayer taught (which contain the sum or substance of Christian religion) are without all such diversity of reading... so plainly set down ... that no man can make any doubt of them, or pick any quarrel against them.” P. 20: “The original languages ... in them only the Scriptures are for the letter to be held authentic. And as the water is most pure in the fountain or spring thereof: so the right understanding of the words of the Holy Scriptures is most certain in the original tongues of Hebrew and Greek in which they were first written and delivered to the church.... All translations are to be judged, examined, and reformed according to the text of the ancient Hebrew and original Chaldee ... and the Greek text.... Consequently that the vulgar Latin, etc.”

Scriptures belong unto all men? Yes, all men are not only allowed, but exhorted and commanded to read, hear and understand the Scripture.... (1) Because the Scriptures teach the way of life, (2) Set forth the duties of every man in his place and estate of life, (3) Are the ground of faith, (4) The epistle of God sent to his Church, (5) His testament wherein we may find what legacies he hath bequeathed unto us, (6) The sword of the Spirit, (7) Being known and embraced, they make a man happy, but (8) Being neglected or contemned, they plunge men into all misery.... All men of what age, estate, quality or degree soever, ought to acquaint themselves with the word of God.” P. 54: “The Scriptures were written in Hebrew and Greek, how then should all men read and understand them? They ought to be translated into known tongues and interpreted.... (1) Because the Prophets and Apostles preached their doctrines to the people and nations in their known languages, (2) Immediately after the Apostles’ times, many translations were extant, (3) All things must be done in the congregation unto edifying, 1 Cor. 14:26, but an unknown tongue doth not edify, and (4) All are commanded to try the spirits.”

Pp. 55–57: “Is the sense of Scripture one or manifold? Of one place of Scripture, there is but one proper and natural sense, though sometimes things are so expressed, as that the things themselves do signify other matters, according to the Lord’s ordinance. Are we tied to the exposition of the Fathers? We are not necessarily tied to the exposition of Fathers or Councils for the finding out of the sense of Scripture. Who is the faithful

because these original tongues are not known to all the people of God who have right unto, and interest in the Scriptures, and are commanded, in the fear of God, to read and search them, therefore they are to be translated into the vulgar language of every nation unto which they come, that the word of God dwelling plentifully in all, they may worship him in an acceptable manner, and through patience and comfort of the Scriptures, may have hope.”

I. ix.: “The infallible rule of interpretation of Scripture, is the Scripture itself; and therefore, when there is a question about the true and full sense of any

which languages they must be truly translated for the understanding of them that have not the knowledge of those tongues.” P. 22: “The Holy Scriptures are reverently and profitably to be read and heard of all sorts and degrees of men and women; and therefore to be truly translated out of the original tongues into the language of every nation which desireth to know them. For the lay people as well as the learned must read the Scriptures or hear them read, both privately and openly, so as they may receive profit by them: and consequently in a tongue they understand.” P. 23: “It were happy if they could understand the Hebrew and Greek; but, howsoever, they may read translations.”

P. 20: “What assurance may be had of the right understanding the Holy Scriptures? For the words, it is to be had out of the original text, or translations of the same: for the sense or meaning, only out of

interpreter of the Scripture? The Holy Ghost speaking in the Scripture is the only faithful interpreter of the Scripture. What be the means to find out the true meaning of the Scriptures? The means to find out the true meaning of the Scriptures, are (1) Conference of one place of Scripture with another.... (8) But always it is to be observed that obscure places are not to be expounded contrary to the rule of faith set down in plainer places of the Scripture.”

Scripture (which is not manifold, but one), it must be searched and known by other places that speak more clearly.”

the Scriptures themselves (Nehem. 8:8), which by places plain and evident, do express whatsoever is obscure and hard touching matters necessary to eternal salvation.” P. 21: “Why must the true sense or meaning of the Scriptures be learned out of the Scriptures themselves? Because the Spirit of God alone is the certain interpreter of his word, written by his Spirit.” (1 Cor. 2:11, 2 Pet. 1:20, 21) “The interpretation therefore must be by the same Spirit by which the Scripture was written: of which Spirit we have no certainty upon any man’s credit, but only so far forth as his saying may be confirmed by the Holy Scripture. What gather you from hence? That no interpretation of holy Fathers, popes, Councils, custom or practice of the church, either contrary to the manifest words of the Scripture, or containing matters which cannot necessarily be proved out of the Scriptures are to be received as an undoubted truth. How

then is Scripture to be interpreted by Scripture? According to the *analogy of faith* (Rom. 12:6), and the scope and circumstances of the present place; and conference of other plain and evident places, by which all such as are obscure and hard to be understood, ought to be interpreted. For there is no matter necessary to eternal life which is not plainly and sufficiently set forth in many places of Scripture; by which other places ... may be interpreted.”

I. x.: “The Supreme Judge, by which all controversies of religion are to be determined, and all decrees of councils, opinions of ancient writers, doctrines of men, and private spirits, are to be examined, and in whose sentence we are to rest, can be no other but the Holy Spirit speaking in the Scripture.”

P. 15: “These Holy Scriptures are the rule, the line, the square, the light, whereby to examine and try all judgments and sayings of men and angels.... All traditions, revelations, decrees of Councils, opinions of doctors, &c., are to be embraced so far forth as they may be proved out of the divine Scriptures, and not otherwise. So that from them only, all doctrine concerning our salvation must be drawn and derived: that only is to be taken for truth, in matters

appertaining to
Christian religion,
which is agreeable unto
them; and whatsoever
disagreeth from them
is to be refused.” Also:
“The authority of these
holy writings, inspired
of God, is highest in the
church, as the authority
of God; whereunto no
learning or decrees of
angels or men, under
what name or color
soever it be
commended, may be
accounted equal,
neither can they be
judged or sentenced by
any.”

III. THE CONTENTS OF THE CHAPTER

As the Confession accords with the fundamental idea and ordinary practice of the Reformed theology, in beginning its exposition of doctrine with the doctrine of Holy Scripture, as the root out of which all doctrine grows, because the Scriptures are the fountain from which all knowledge of God's saving purpose and plan flows; so in stating the doctrine of Scripture it follows the logical and natural order of topics which had been wrought out by and become fixed in the Reformed theology. First, the necessity of the Scriptures is asserted and exhibited (section 1). Then Scripture is defined, both extensively, or in relation to its general contents, in other words as to the Canon, and intensively, or in relation to its essential character, in other words as to its inspiration; and this definition is applied to the exclusion of the apocryphal books (sections 2 and 3). Then the three great properties of Scripture are taken up: its authority (sections 4 and 5), its completeness or perfection (section 6), and its perspicuity (section 7). The chapter closes with a statement of certain important corollaries, as to the use that is to be made of Scripture, with especial reference to its transmission, whether in the originals or translations, to its interpretation, and to its final authority in controversies (sections 8, 9, and 10).

In somewhat greater detail, the scheme of the chapter is, therefore, the following:

I. The Necessity of Scripture, § 1.

1. Reality and Trustworthiness of Natural Revelation.
2. Insufficiency of Natural Revelation.
3. Reality and Importance of Supernatural Revelation.
4. Its complete Commitment to Inspired Scriptures.
5. Consequent Necessity of Scripture.

II. The Definition of Scripture, §§ 2 and 3.

1. Extensively: The Canon, § 2a.
2. Intensively: Inspiration, § 2b.
3. Exclusively: The Apocrypha, § 3.

III. The Properties of Scripture, §§ 4–7.

1. The Authority of Scripture, §§ 4 and 5.
 - A. The Source of the Authority of Scripture, § 4.
 - B. The Proof of the Authority of Scripture, § 5.
 - (a) The Reality and Value of the External Evidence.
 - (b) The Reality and Value of the Internal Evidence,
 - (c) The Necessity and Function of the Divine Evidence.
2. The Perfection of Scripture, § 6.
 - A. Absolute Objective Completeness of Scripture, for the purpose for which it is given.
 - B. Need of Spiritual Illumination for its full use.
 - C. Place for Christian Prudence and Right Reason.
3. The Perspicuity of Scripture, § 7.
 - A. Diversity in Scripture in Point of Clearness.
 - B. Clear Revelation of all Necessary Truth.
 - C. Accessibility of Saving Truth by Ordinary Means.

IV. The Use of Scripture, §§ 8–10.

1. In Relation to Its Form and Transmission, § 8.

A. Primary Value and Authority of the Originals.

(a) The immediate Inspiration of the Hebrew and Greek Scriptures.

(b) Their Providential Preservation in Purity.

B. The Right, Duty, and Adequacy of Translations.

2. In Relation to Interpretation, § 9.

A. Scripture Alone the Infallible Interpreter of Scripture.

B. The Single Sense of Scripture.

3. In Relation to Controversies, § 10.

A. Scripture the Supreme Judge in Controversy.

B. Scripture the Test of all Other Sources of Truth.

Within this scheme, the common Reformed doctrine of Scripture is developed with great richness and beauty of thought and expression. We shall seek to outline the matter of the statement as briefly as possible. To this outline we shall add (under each head, successively) a few illustrative extracts from the writings of the members of the Westminster Assembly, which may serve to enable the reader to enter more readily into the atmosphere of their symbolical statements. These extracts could be almost indefinitely increased in number, but it is hoped that enough are given to serve the purpose in view.

THE NECESSITY OF SCRIPTURE

I. First, then, the Confession expounds the necessity of Scripture, in a paragraph which has always been admired, no less for the chaste beauty of its language than for the justness of its conception.

The paragraph opens with the recognition of the reality and trustworthiness of the natural revelation of God. The scope of this natural revelation is briefly defined as embracing "the goodness, wisdom, and power of God." This is afterwards more fully stated in chapter xxi. 1: "The light of nature showeth that there is a God, who hath Lordship and sovereignty over all; is good, and doeth good unto all; and is therefore to be feared, loved, praised, called upon, trusted in, and served with all the heart, and with all the soul, and with all the might." The effect of this natural revelation, in rendering men inexcusable for not yielding God the service which is His due, is pointed out. Then its insufficiency "to give that knowledge of God, and of His will, which is necessary unto

salvation" is explained. This fundamental point, also, is returned to at a later place in the Confession (x. 4), when, in exact harmony with what is here said, it is declared that "men not professing the Christian religion" cannot "be saved in any other way whatsoever, be they never so diligent to frame their lives according to the light of nature, and the law of that religion they do profess." The parallel question and answer of the Larger Catechism (Q. 60) still further exhibits the care of the framers of the Confession to hold forth the Gospel of the grace of God as the only saving power on earth. "Q. Can they who have never heard the Gospel, and so know not Jesus Christ, nor believe in Him, be saved by living according to the light of nature? A. They who, having never heard the Gospel, know not Jesus Christ, and believe not in Him, cannot be saved, be they never so diligent to frame their lives according to the light of nature, or the laws of that religion which they profess; neither is there salvation in any other but in Christ alone, who is the Saviour only of His body, the Church."

It was because of this insufficiency of the natural revelation, that (so the Confession teaches) God in His goodness was led to give a supernatural revelation to His Church, of "His will which is necessary unto salvation." The manner of this supernatural revelation is suggested; it was in parts and by stages, i.e. progressive—"at sundry times and in divers manners." Nor was the goodness of God exhausted in merely making known the saving truth unto men; he took means to preserve the knowledge of it and to propagate it. The Confession teaches that "for the better preserving and propagating of the truth, and for the more sure establishment and comfort of the Church against the corruptions of the flesh, and the malice of Satan and of the world," God, after revealing Himself and His will necessary unto salvation, was pleased "to commit the same wholly unto writing." This declares the written Scriptures to be, at least in part, subsequent to the revelation of God's will; and so far distinguishes them from, and makes them, in this sense, the record of, revelation; a "record," however, made by God Himself, since it was He who committed the revelation to writing. The importance and value of such a commitment to writing is also moderately and winningly stated. It is not affirmed that it was necessary for God to commit His revelation to writing, in order to do justice to man on the one side, or in order to prevent the truth from perishing utterly on the other. It was a matter of "good pleasure" for Him to fix His revelations in writing as truly as it was for Him to give them at all. It was only for "the better preserving and propagating of the truth, and for the more sure establishment and comfort of the Church" that He committed His revelations wholly to writing. Had they been left unwritten and been committed for safe-keeping and transmission to the native powers of men, they might possibly have been (in some form or other) by God's good providence preserved and propagated, but not so well, so surely, or so safely as in written form. Inspiration is in order to the accurate preservation and wide propagation of the truth, not in order to its very existence, nor (had God chosen so to order it) to its persistence.

All this is the groundwork for the proof of the necessity of the Scriptures. This comes in the further declaration: "Which maketh the Holy Scripture to be most necessary; those former ways of God's revealing His will unto His people being now ceased." The necessity of Scripture is thus made to rest on the insufficiency of natural revelation and the cessation of supernatural revelation—the record of which latter Scripture is declared

to be, though a record of such sort that it is itself a revelation of God, since it was God and not merely man who committed His will "wholly unto writing." By this statement the Scriptures are contrasted, not with revelation as something different in kind and quality from it, but with other forms of revelation, as being themselves a substantive part of God's revelation: "Those former ways of God's revealing His will unto His people being now ceased." Among the ways in which God has revealed His will, the Scriptures thus are set forth as one way; and as the complete, permanent, and final way, in no respect subordinate to the other ways, except in the matter of time. And their necessity is made to rest on nothing else than that they are the permanent embodiment and sole divinely safeguarded and, indeed, only trustworthy, extant form in which the revelation of God and of His will which is necessary to salvation exists. They are, therefore, something more than the "record" of revelation—they are the revelation itself fixed in written form for its better preservation and propagation. And they are something more than useful—they are necessary, since this alone saving revelation is extant now only in their pages.

"Now that God by the works of his Creation and Providence in the world, doth teach and convince men, and so in that general way call men, is plain, Rom. 1.... So then, the whole world, in the excellent harmony of it, doth necessarily teach a God.... This invitation Paul considers of in his Sermon at Athens, Acts 17:27.... Now there have been some of old, yea, and many in these days, that would stretch these Texts too far, as if the invitation by the creatures, were immediately saving, or that men might obtain salvation by looking into these: They have not been afraid to say, That by the Sun and Stars we may come to be effectually called, as well as by the Apostles, and the preaching of the Gospel: But how senseless and absurd is this? For

"First, This invitation and call by the creatures, doth not, nor cannot reveal anything of Christ, the onely cause of salvation: Without Christ there is no Salvation; Now how is it possible by the Creatures, in a natural way of discourse, that ever we should come to know or believe in a Christ?...

"Secondly, The call by the creatures is not saving, because it discovers not the way of Salvation, no more than the cause; viz., Faith: As Christ is wholly a Supernatural object, and by revelation, so is faith the way to come to him, the hand to lay hold on him, onely by revelation ... where then there is no Christ, nor no faith, there must necessarily be no call to salvation.

"Thirdly, This call could not be saving, for the furthest and utmost effect it had upon men, was onely outwardly to reform their lives: It restrained many from gross sins, and kept them in the exercises of temperance and justice, and such Moral vertues.... But you may say, To what purpose is this call of God by the Creatures, and the work of his providence, if it be not to salvation? Yes, it is much every way:

"First, Hereby even all men are made inexcusable: As the Apostle urgeth, God had not left them without a witness or testimony.... Men therefore are made inexcusable by this way; they cannot say, God hath left them without any conviction or manifestation of

himself: No, the creatures they call, all the works of Gods justice and Gods mercy, they call; and then conscience, which is implanted in every man, the dictates and reasonings thereof, they also call: Thus there will be enough to clear God, and to stop every mans mouth.

"Secondly, Gods purpose in these calls, is to restrain sin, and to draw men on further then they do: There is no man that hath no more than this remote and confuse call, that doth what he may do, and can do; He doth not improve, no, not that natural strength that is in him: (I do not say) to spiritual good things; for so he hath no natural strength: but to such objects as by nature he might: He willfully runneth himself in the committing of sins, against his conscience and knowledge; he doth with delight and joy, tumble himself in the mire and filth of sin: Now God calleth by these natural ways, to curb and restrain him, to put a bound to these waves: For if there were not these general convictions, no Societies, no Commonwealths could consist."—A. BURGESS, "Spiritual Refining: or a Treatise of Grace and Assurance," London, 1652, pp. 692–694.

"As for that dangerous opinion, that makes Gods calling of man to repentance by the Creatures, to be enough and sufficient, we reject, as that which cuts at the very root of free grace: A voyce, indeed, we grant they have, but yet they make like Pauls Trumpet, an uncertain sound; men cannot by them know the nature of God and his Worship, and wherein our Justification doth consist."—A. BURGESS, "Spiritual Refining, etc.," London, 1652, p. 588.

"For to maintain (as some do) that a man may be saved in an ordinary course (I meddle not with extraordinary dispensations, but leave the secrets of God to himself) by any Religion whatsoever, provided he live according to the principles of it, is to turn the whole world into an Eden; and to find a Tree of life in every garden, as well as in the paradise of God" (p. 71). He argues "the insufficiency of all exotick doctrines," from the failure of pagan philosophy to find saving truth (pp. 72 sqq.). "The Scriptures ... contain the minde of Jehovah. Somewhat of his nature we may learn from the creatures, but should have known little or nothing of his will, had not canonical Scripture revealed it" (pp. 86, 87). There are "six several acts" through which men come by nature to know God—"respicere, prospicere, suspicere, despicerere, inspicere, and circumspicere" (p. 120): "But notwithstanding all this, as it fared with the wise men from the east, who, although they were assured by the appearance of a star that a King of the Jews was born, yet needed the prophets manuduction to give them notice who he was, and where they might finde him: so though natural reason improved can make it appear that there is a God, yet there is a necessity of Scripture-revelation to inform us who and what he is, in regard of his Essence, Subsistence, and Attributes" (p. 128).—JOHN ARROWSMITH, "A Chain of Principles," Cambridge, 1659.

"There are two great Gifts that God hath given to his people. The Word Christ, and the Word of Christ: Both are unspeakably great; but the first will do us no good without the second" (pp. 55, 56)... "If the Word of God be of such invaluable excellency, absolute necessity, and of such admirable use, ... Blessed be God who hath not only given us the book of the Creatures, and the book of Nature to know himself and his will by; but also,

and especially the book of the Scriptures, whereby we come to know those things of God, and of Christ, which neither the book of Nature nor of the Creatures can reveal unto us. Let us bless God, not only for revealing his Will in his Word, but for revealing it by writing. Before the time of Moses, God discovered his Will by immediate Revelations from Heaven. But we have a surer word of Prophesie, 2 Pet. 1:19, surer (to us) than a voice from Heaven. For the Devil (saith the Apostle) transforms himself into an Angel of light. He hath his apparitions, and revelations.... And if God should now at this day discover his way of Worship, and his Divine Will by revelations, how easily would men be deceived, and mistake Diabolical Delusions, for Divine Revelations? and therefore let us bless God for the written Word, which is surer and safer (as to us) than an immediate Revelation: There are some that are apt to think, that if an Angel should come from heaven, and reveal God's will to them, it would work more upon them than the written Word; but I would have these men study the conference between Abraham and Dives, Luke 16:27, 28, 29, 30, 31. Habent Mosen et Prophetas, etc. They have Moses and the Prophets; if they will not profit by them, neither would they profit by any that should come out of Hell, or down from Heaven to them: for it is the same God that speaks by his written Word, and by a voice from Heaven. The difference is only in the outward cloathing; and therefore if Gods speaking by writing, will not amend us, no more will Gods speaking by a voice. O bless God exceedingly for the written Word! Let us cleave close to it, and not expect any Revelations from Heaven of new truths but say with the Apostle, Gal. 1:8, 9" (pp. 90–93).—EDWARD CALAMY, "The Godly Mans Ark, etc.," seventh ed., London, 1672.

"Though Humane Reason be a Beam of Divine Wisdom, yet if it be not enlightened with an higher Light of the Gospel, it cannot reach unto the things of God as it should.... For though Reason be the Gift of God, yet it doth proceed from God as he is God, and General Ruler of the World: But the Gospel, and the Light thereof, did proceed from the Father, by the Son, to the Church, Rev. 22:1.... John 1:17, 18. Though Reason be the Gift of God, and a Beam of the Wisdom of God; yet it cannot sufficiently discover a mans Sins unto him; ... And as meer Humane Reason cannot make a sufficient discovery of Sin, so it cannot strengthen against Sin, and Temptation.... Though the Light of Reason be good, yet it is not a saving Light.... Tis Revelation-Light from the Gospel, that doth bring to Heaven: meer Humane Reason cannot do it."—WILLIAM BRIDGE, "Scripture-Light, the Most Sure Light," London, 1656, pp. 32, 33.

"It is true, that the very light of nature, which God hath planted in every man, will discover unto him some of the chief heads of the duties, that he requires of him, as to love the Lord with all our hearts, and to fear, and serve him, Deut. 10:12. And to serve one another through love, Gal. 5:13. But in what particular services we are to express our piety to God, or love to men, what can man prescribe or imagine?" (p. 13). "Whatsoever was impossible to be known by any creature, or to be found out by discourse of naturall reason, that must of necessity be discovered and made known by God himself. But it will appear, as evidently as the very light, that most of the grounds of faith, which the Scripture proposeth unto us, are such as neither eye hath seen, nor eare heard, nor ever entered into mans heart, 1 Cor. 2:9, and therefore could never be either revealed or discovered by man. Wherefore, seeing we finde them discovered in the Scriptures, we

can doe no lesse then acknowledge them to be the word of God" (p. 25). The necessity for a written word is argued under the following heads (marginal analysis): "1. As the most easie way to make it publike. 2. As the safest way to prevent corruption. 3. As the best way to win credit to his Word. 4. And as the most honorable" (pp. 67, 68).—JOHN WHITE, "A Way to the Tree of Life," London, 1647.

"But yet the whole world in the frame thereof, was sufficient evidence of the Eternall power and Godhead, Rom. 1:20, and Psal. 19:1. The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handy worke. And albeit Aristotle, the greatest of Philosophers, maintained the eternity thereof without beginning; yet he confesseth ingeniously in his Book De cœlo, that all that went before him maintained mundum genitum esse; neither was his discourse of power to raze out that naturall instinct hereof, which seems to be graven in the hearts of men, and was the chiefe ground of that universall acknowledgment of a divine power supream. Now as God made himself known by his works so I nothing doubt but herewithall it was their duty to know him, and according to their knowledge to serve him and glorifie him, in acknowledgment of his glorious nature, so farre as they took notice of it; But as for a rule whereby they should worship him, I know none that God had given them, or that they could gather from contemplation of the creatures. And surely the knowledge of God, as a Creator only, is nothing sufficient to salvation; but the knowledge of him as a Redeemer: And therefore seeing the World by wisdom knew not God in the wisdom of God, it pleased God by the foolishnesse of Preaching to save them that believe, 1 Cor. 1:21. And the Gentiles are set forth unto us in Scripture, as such who knew not God, 1 Thes. 4:5; 2 Thes. 1:8. And had they means sufficient without, and ability sufficient within to know him? How could it be that none of them should know him?... Yet were they inexcusable (and thus farre their knowledge brought them, Rom. 1:20) in changing the glory of the incorruptible God, to the similitude of the image of a corruptible man, and of birds, and of fourefooted beasts, and of creeping things.... Yet what shall all such knowledge profit a man, if he be ignorant in the knowledge of him as a redeemer?" (pp. 188, 189). "And yet I see no great need of Christ, if it be in the power of an Heathen man to know what it is to please God, and to have an heart to please him; For certainly as many as know what it is to please God, and have an heart to please him, God will never hurt them, much lesse damne them to hell. Yet the Apostle telleth us, that they that are in the flesh cannot please God ..." (p. 190). "No question but The word of God is the sword of the spirit, Ephes. 6, And the Law of the Lord is a perfect Law, converting the soule, Psal. 19. And it seemes to be delivered in opposition to the Book of the creatures, as if he had said, though The Heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handy work, yet this is the peculiar prerogative of the Book of God's word, and the Doctrine contained therein, that it converteth the soule: and upon this is grounded the great preferment of the Jews above the Gentiles, chiefly that unto them were committed the Oracles of God" (p. 194).—WILLIAM TWISSE, "The Riches of Gods Love, etc.," Oxford, 1653 (written 1632, see p. 258).

THE DEFINITION OF SCRIPTURE

II. Having thus exhibited the indispensableness of the written form of God's revealed will, which is known under the name of Holy Scripture, the Confession naturally proceeds to define this Holy Scripture, which has been shown to be necessary. The designation used for it is determined by the precedent statement: "Holy Scripture or the Word of God written." God's revelation of Himself and of His will is the Word of God; the Scriptures are this revelation wholly committed unto writing; and, therefore, they are appropriately called "the Word of God written."

The definition of them is framed, first, extensively by the enumeration of the writings which constitute the volume called "Holy Scripture or the word of God written." These are first designated generally as "all the books of the Old and New Testament"; and then to prevent all mistake they are enumerated, one by one, by name. Of these books it is then affirmed, by way of intensive definition, that they are, one and all, in their entirety, "given by inspiration of God, to be the rule of faith and life." The definition having thus been made quantitatively and qualitatively, i.e. both as to the canon and as to inspiration, it is finally applied to the exclusion of "the books commonly called Apocrypha," which, "not being of divine inspiration," "are no part of the canon of the Scripture." They are, therefore, declared, in accord with the ordinary Reformed doctrine, to be "of no authority in the Church of God, nor to be any otherwise approved, or made use of, than other human writings."

In this definition of Scripture the fact of inspiration is very sharply asserted as the distinguishing characteristic of Scripture. "All the books of the Old and New Testament," in their entirety, are declared to be "given by inspiration of God"; and only because they are thus, as wholes and in all their parts, "of divine inspiration," are they "part of the canon of the Scripture" and of "authority in the Church of God." It is due to this fact of inspiration that they are not of the category of "human writings," to which category the "books commonly called Apocrypha" are ascribed, expressly because they are not "of divine inspiration." Here is a strong assertion of the fact of inspiration as the distinguishing characteristic of Scriptural books; but here is no definition of inspiration. The thing in definition is Scripture, not inspiration, and inspiration is the defining, not the defined fact.

The last clause of the second section, "All which are given by inspiration of God, to be the rule of faith and life," is not, therefore, to be taken as a formal definition of inspiration, although it is an express assertion of inspiration; and much less is it to be read as if it were intended to limit inspiration to matters of faith and practice. It is not a definition of inspiration, but part of the definition of Scripture; and what it affirms is that "all the books of the Old and New Testaments" just enumerated in detail, and, therefore, severally and in their entirety, have been fitted by inspiration to be in their entirety, without discrimination of parts or elements, "the rule of faith and life." Inspiration is asserted to be pervasive, to belong to all the books enumerated without exception, and to all their parts and elements without discrimination; and its result is said to be that it fits these books to be "the rule of faith and life," that is, constitutes them parts of the "canon of the Scripture." Accordingly, the Apocrypha are immediately afterwards excluded from "the canon of the Scripture" on the express ground that they

are not of "divine inspiration," but "human writings." The fact of inspiration is asserted, its pervasiveness, and its effect in making the books of which it is affirmed divine and not "human" books; but no definition of it is here given.

The misinterpretation of this clause, which would use it as a definition of inspiration, in the hope of confining inspiration in the definition of the Confession to matters of faith and practice, moreover, is discredited as decisively on historical as on exegetical grounds. This view was not the view of the Westminster Divines. It had its origin among the Socinians and was introduced among Protestants by the Arminians. And it was only on the publication, in 1690, of the "Five Letters concerning the Inspiration of the Holy Scriptures, translated out of the French," which are taken from Le Clerc, that it began to make a way for itself among English theologians.

But, although this special passage presents no formal definition of the nature of inspiration, the Confession by no means leaves its own conception of the nature of inspiration undefined. Already in the first section it had declared that it was God who constituted Scripture by Himself committing His will wholly unto writing, thereby making another way of revelation in addition to those other supernatural ways formerly used by Him. And in the third section this inspiration, so strongly affirmed in the second section as the characteristic of all the books of the Old and New Testaments, is declared to make these books divine and not human writings. In conformity with this, the Confession subsequently declares that the Biblical books have "God (who is truth itself)" for their "author" (§ 4), that they are "immediately inspired by God" (§ 8), so that they are "the very Word of God" (Larger Catechism, Q. 4), that they are of "infallible truth and divine authority" (§ 5), and are to be believed to be true by the Christian man in everything that is revealed in them (xiv. 2). As the historical meaning of the word "Inspiration," conferred on the Scriptures in our present section, is not doubtful, so neither is the meaning of these phrases, further describing its Confessional sense. For example, the phrase, to be "immediately inspired," which is used in section 8, is of quite settled and technical connotation. We may find it, for instance, in Calov ("Syst. loc. theol.," i. p. 463): "Nec ea tantum credenda verissima, quae ad fidem et mores spectantia in Scriptura traduntur, sed etiam alia quaecunque in eadem occurrentia, quam ab immediato divino impulsu profecta sint." Or, in Hollaz ("Examinis Theologici, etc.," p. 94): "Inspiratio diuina, qua res et verba dicenda non minus, quam scribenda prophetis atque apostolis a spiritu sancto immediate suggesta sunt." Or, if this seems to be going too far afield, we may find it in the plainest of English in John Ball, the Puritan catechist, held in the highest honor by all the Westminster men. "What is it to be immediately inspired?" he asks in his "A Short Treatise, etc." (15th ed., 1656, pp. 7 and 8), and answers: "To be immediately inspired, is to be as it were breathed, and to come from the Father by the Holy Ghost, without all means." And again: "Were the Scriptures thus inspired? A. Thus the Holy Scriptures in the Originals were inspired both for matter and words." The Westminster Confession contains in itself, therefore, the material by which we may be assured that the inspiration, which it affirms in our present sections to be the characteristic of all the Biblical books, was conceived by it as constituting the Scriptures in the most precise sense, the very Word of God, divinely trustworthy and divinely authoritative in all their parts and in all their elements alike.

"29 Q. From whence must wee learne to know God and serve him rightly? 29 A. To know God, and to serve him rightly, wee must be taught out of Gods Word. 30 Q. Which book is Gods Word? 30 A. The Bible or the Scripture of the Old and New Testament is the very word of God."—HERBERT PALMER, "An Endeavour of Making the Principles of Christian Religion ... plaine and easie, etc.," London, 1644, p. 7.

"The only rule of faith and obedience is the written Word of God, contained in the Bible or the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament."—FIRST DRAFT OF CATECHISM OF WESTMINSTER ASSEMBLY ("Minutes," p. 281, for September 14, 1646).

"... Hebrew. (In which tongue the Prophets left their doctrine as the Canon of the Church)." "For the Original Copies, I must subscribe to that of Canus a Papist, who tells us, That we are not to receive into the holy Canon both for the Old and New Testament, but such books as the Apostles did allow, and deliver over to the Church of Christ."—RICHARD CAPEL, "Remains, etc.," London, 1658, pp. 37 and 65.

"So that the Spirit of God inspired certain persons, whom he pleased, to be the revealers of his will, till he had imparted and committed to writing what he thought fit to reveal under the Old Testament; and when he had completed that, the Holy Ghost departed, and such inspirations ceased. And when the gospel was to come in, then the Spirit was restored again, and bestowed upon several persons for the revealing farther of the mind of God, and completing the work he had to do, for the settling of the gospel, and penning of the New Testament: and that being done, these gifts and inspirations cease, and may no more be expected, than we may expect some other gospel yet to come" (p. 371). "From these men's [those that companied with Christ] sermons and relations, many undertook to write gospels, partly for their own use, and partly for the benefit of others: which thing though they did lawfully and with a good intent, yet because they did it not by inspiration, nor by divine warrant; albeit what they had written, were according to truth, yet was the authority of their writings but human, and not to be admitted into the divine canon" (p. 19).—JOHN LIGHTFOOT, "Works," ed. Pitman, iii. 1822.

"The word λόγια, whereby heathen writers had been wont to express their oracles ... was enfranchised by the holy Ghost, and applied to the books of Scripture to intimate (as I conceive) that these books were to be of like use to Christians, as those oracles had been to Infidels" (p. 86). "These Scripture-Oracles differ from and excel those other.... I. In point of perspicuity.... II. In point of piety.... III. In point of veracity.... IV. In point of duration.... V. In point of authority.... Scripture is of divine authority: Holy men of God (saith Peter) spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. They wrote accordingly. All Scripture, saith Paul, was given by inspiration of God. It is not more true that they are oracles for their use, then that they have God for their authour" (pp. 95–103). "I answer, Although the pen-man did not, the inditer, viz. the Holy Ghost did exactly know whose names were written in the book of life, and whose were not. Now he it was that in the history of the Acts suggested and dedicated to his secretary both matter and words" (p. 299).—JOHN ARROWSMITH, "A Chain of Principles," Cambridge, 1659.

"The Scripture, and the Word of God is [the Rule of Lawfulness or Unlawfulness], it is the only Rule whereby I may, and must make up my Judgment of Lawfulness, and Unlawfulness; it is that only which doth stamp Lawfulness upon an Action" (p. 32). "Now this Duty is urged, and amplified; urged by divers Arguments: some taken from the excellency of the Word it self. First, It is λόγος προφητικός, a Word of Prophesie, or a Prophetical Word, written by Divine Inspiration; the same that is spoken of in verse 20 [2 Peter 1], called Prophesie of Scripture. Secondly, It is λόγος βεβαιότερος, a more sure Word: Some think the Comparative, is put for the Superlative.... But I take it rather to be meant Comparatively; for the Word of God written, is surer than that Voyce which they heard in the Mount (whereof he spake in the former Verse). More sure is the Word written, than that Voyce of Revelation; not *ratione veritatis*, not in regard of the Truth uttered, for that Voyce was as true as any word in the Scripture; but more sure, *ratione manifestationis*, more certain, settled, and established" (pp. 1, 4). "What must we do, that we may take heed, and attend unto Scripture?... First, for your knowledge in, and understanding of the Scripture, and the written Word of God, ye must, [1.] Observe, keep, and hold fast the Letter of it; for though the Letter of the Scripture be not the Word alone, yet the Letter with the true sense and meaning of it, is the Word. The Body of a Man, is not the Man; but the Body and Soul together, make up the whole Man: the Soul alone, or the Body alone, is not the Man. So here; though the Letter of the Scripture alone, do not make up the Word; yet the Letter, and sense together, do; and if ye destroy the Body, ye destroy the Man; so if ye destroy the Letter of the Scripture, you do destroy the Scripture; and if you deny the Letter, how is it possible that you should attain to the true sense thereof, when the Sense lies wrapped up in the Letters, and the words thereof?... [2.] If you would have the true knowledge, and understand the Scripture, and so behold this great Light in its full glory and brightness; you must diligently enquire into the true sense and meaning of it: for the true sense and meaning, is the soul thereof" (pp. 46, 47).—WILLIAM BRIDGE, "Scripture-Light, The Most Sure Light," London, 1656.

"These holy writings are the Word of God himself, who speaks unto us in and by them. Wherefore when we take in hand the Book of the Scriptures, we cannot otherwise conceive of our selves, then as standing in God's presence, to hear what he will say unto us" (p. 1). "Of the pen-men of the Scriptures, that they were holy men, inspired and guided in that work infallibly and wholly, by the Spirit of God" (p. 57). "Who the most of these holy men were, it is well known to the Church, the titles of their Books bearing their names.... And that the rest, whose names are either concealed, or doubtful, were such likewise, will be evident to any indifferent person that shall consider two things.... It addes something to the estimation of the Scriptures, that they were written by such holy men, as we have formerly mentioned ... but that which procures unto them divine reverence, which ought to make all hearts stoop unto them, is that they were written by the direction of the holy Spirit, the Spirit of truth, especially if we thoroughly consider what manner of direction it was which was given unto these holy Pen-men of these sacred Oracles, in the composing thereof. The Apostle, 2 Pet. 1:20, 21, describes that kinde of assistance of the holy Ghost, in the delivery of the Scriptures, two ways. First, by way of negation, that they were neither of private interpretation, nor came by the wil of man. Secondly, he describes the same assistance affirmatively, testifying that they spake

as they were moved by the holy Ghost. In the former of these, wherein he expresseth this manner of delivering the Scriptures by way of negation, the Apostle excludes the working of the naturall faculties of mans minde altogether.... So that both the understanding, and will of man, as farre as they were meerly naturall, had nothing to doe in this holy work, save onely to understand, and approve that which was dictated by God himselfe, unto those that wrote it from his mouth, or the suggesting of his Spirit.... For we may not conceive that they were moved in writing these Scriptures, as the pen is moved by the hand that guides it, without understanding what they did; For they not onely understood, but willingly consented to what they wrote.... But the Apostles meaning is, that the Spirit of God moved them in this work of writing the Scriptures, not according to nature, but above nature, shining into their understandings clearly, and fully, by an heavenly and super-naturall light, and carrying and moving their wils thereby with a delight, and holy embracing of that truth revealed, and with a like desire to publish and make known the secrets and counsels of God, revealed unto them, unto his Church. Yea, beyond all this, the holy Ghost not only suggested unto them the substance of that doctrine which they were to deliver and leave upon record unto the Church, ... but besides hee supplied unto them the very phrases, method, and whole order of those things that are written in the Scriptures, ... Thus then the holy Ghost, not only assisted holy men in penning the Scriptures, but in a sort took the work out of their hand, making use of nothing in the men, but of their understandings to receive and comprehend, their wils to consent unto, and their hands to write downe that which they delivered" (pp. 57–61).—JOHN WHITE, "A Way to the Tree of Life," London, 1647.

"All the Scriptures are θεόπνευστοι by Divine inspiration; and therefore the breathings of Gods spirit, are to be expected in this Garden: and those commands of attending to the Scripture onely, and to observe what is written, is a plain demonstration that God hath tyed us to the Scriptures onely: so that as the child in the womb liveth upon nourishment conveyed by the Navel cleaving to it, so doth the Church live onely upon Christ by the Navel of the Scripture, through which all nourishment is conveyed."—A. BURGESS, "Spiritual Refining, etc.," London, 1652, p. 132.

"It is certain that all Scripture is of Divine inspiration, and that the holy men of God spake as they were guided by the Holy Ghost.... It transcribes the mind and heart of God. A true Saint loveth the Name, Authority, Power, Wisdom, and goodness of God in every letter of it, and therefore cannot but take pleasure in it. It is an Epistle sent down to him from the God of Heaven" (p. 55). "The Word of God hath God for its Author, and therefore must needs be full of Infinite Wisdom and Eloquence, even the Wisdom and Eloquence of God. There is not a word in it, but breathes out God, and is breathed out by God. It is (as Irenæus saith) κανων τῆς πίστεως ἀκλινης, an invariable rule of Faith, an unerring and infallible guide to heaven. It contains glorious Revelations and Discoveries, no where else to be found" (p. 80). "Before the time of Moses, God discovered his Will by immediate Revelations from Heaven. But we have a surer word of Prophesie, 2 Pet. 1:19, surer (to us) than a voice from Heaven.... For it is the same God that speaks by his written Word, and by a voice from Heaven" (pp. 91–93).—EDWARD CALAMY, "The Godly Mans Ark," seventh ed., London, 1672.

"If Solomon mistooke not. (And how could hee mistake in that, which the spirit himselfe dictated vnto him)."—CORNELIUS BURGESS, "Baptismall Regeneration of Elect Infants," Oxford, 1629, p. 277 (quoting from Proverbs).

"The Apocrypha speaks for itself, that it is not the finger of God, but the work of some Jews. Which got it so much authority among Christians; because it came from them, from whom the lively oracles of God indeed came also. But the Talmud may be read to as good advantage, and as much profit, and far more."—JOHN LIGHTFOOT, "Works," ed. Pitman, ii. p. 9. "The words of the text are the last words of the Old Testament,—there uttered by a prophet, here expounded by an angel: there concluding the law, and here beginning the gospel.... Thus sweetly and nearly should the two Testaments join together, and thus divinely would they kiss each other, but that the wretched Apocrypha doth thrust in between.... It is a thing not a little to be admired, how this Apocrypha could ever get such place in the hearts and in the Bibles of the primitive times, as to come to sit in the very centre of them both.... But it is a wonder, to which I could never yet receive satisfaction, that in churches that are reformed, they have shaken off the yoke of superstition, and unpinned themselves from off the sleeve of former customs, or doing as their ancestors have done,—yet in such a thing as this, and of so great import, should do as first ignorance, and then superstition, hath done before them. It is true, indeed, that they have refused these books out of the canon, but they have reserved them still in the Bible: as if God should have cast Adam out of the state of happiness, and yet have continued him in the place of happiness."—JOHN LIGHTFOOT, "Works," ed. Pitman, vi. pp. 131, 132.

THE PROPERTIES OF SCRIPTURE

III. Having thus defined Scripture as the very Word of God given by divine inspiration, and, therefore, not a human, but a divine book, the Confession proceeds next to exhibit the properties that belong to it as such (§§ 4–7).

The Authority of Scripture

1. The first property of a divine book to be adduced is, naturally, its authority (§§ 4–5). (A) Just because the book is God's Book, revealing to us His will, it is authoritative in and of itself; and it ought to be believed and obeyed, not on the ground of any borrowed authority, lent it from any human source, but on the single and sufficient ground of its own divine origin and character, "because it is the Word of God," and "God (who is truth itself)" is "the author thereof" (§ 4). So the Confession asserts, in unison with the whole body of Protestant theology, not as if it held that Scripture is to be believed and obeyed as God's Word before we know it to be such, but as basing its right to be believed and obeyed on its divine origin and character already established by definition in the preceding sections. Because inspired, Scripture is the Word of God; and because the Word of God, it exercises lawful authority over the thought and acts of men.

"The former Position being once granted, that the Scriptures are Gods Word, no man can question their Authority, whether that be of him or no."—JOHN WHITE, "A Way to the Tree of Life," London, 1647, p. 45.

"Scripture is of divine authority... It is not more true that they are oracles for their use, then that they have God for their authour."—JOHN ARROWSMITH, "A Chain of Principles," Cambridge, 1659, p. 103.

"The Scripture resolves our faith on Thus saith the Lord, the only authoritie that all the Prophets alledge, and Paul, 1 Thes. 2:13...."—SAMUEL RUTHERFORD, "A Free Disputation against pretended Liberty of Conscience," London, 1649, p. 364.

"The Scriptures are to be believed for themselves, and they need not fetch their credit from any thing else.... They are the truth.... The reason of the Scriptures' credibility is, because they are the word of God.... It is not proper to say, We believe Scriptures are Scriptures, because of the church, without distinguishing upon believing.... We may satisfy this by an easy distinction, betwixt believing that Scripture is Scripture, and believing that the church all along hath taken them for Scripture.... We believe the church owns the Scriptures; but he is but a poor Christian, that believes the Scriptures are the Scriptures upon no other account.... God gives his word; and whether men will hear, or whether they will forbear, it is, and will be, the word of God for ever."—JOHN LIGHTFOOT, "Works," ed. Pitman, vi. pp. 56, 62, 63, 351.

(B) But men are not so constituted as readily to yield faith and obedience even to lawful authority. Their minds are blinded, and their consciences dulled, and their wills enslaved to evil. The Confession accordingly devotes a paragraph of unsurpassed nobility of both thought and phrase to indicating how sinful men may be brought to full conviction of and practical obedience to the infallible truth and divine authority of the Scriptures. The value of the external testimony of the Church is recognized: the assurance of the Church that they are the very Word of God may move and induce us to a high and reverent esteem for the Holy Scriptures. The greater value of the witness of the Scriptures themselves, in form and contents, to their supernatural origin is affirmed and richly illustrated: by the miracle of Scripture itself, it abundantly evidences itself to be the Word of God. "Abundant evidence" one must suppose to be sufficient; and objectively it is sufficient and more than sufficient; and this is what the Confession means to affirm. But, according to the Reformed theology, man needs something more than evidence, however

abundant, to persuade and enable him to believe and obey God's Word; he needs the work of the Holy Spirit accompanying the Word, *ab extra incidens*. And, therefore, the Confession proceeds to point out that something more is needed, besides this abundant evidence, to work within us a "full persuasion and assurance of the infallible truth and divine authority" of God's Word—to lead us to commit ourselves wholly to it, trusting its every word as true and obeying its every command as authoritative. What is needed is, in ordinary language, a new heart; in the Confession's language, "the inward work of the Holy Spirit bearing witness by and with the Word in our hearts."

This beautiful statement of the Confession has sometimes of late been strangely misunderstood. It is no more than to say, what every Reformed thinker must be ready to say, that faith in God's Word is not man's own work, but the gift of God; and that man needs a preparation of the spirit, as well as an exhibition of the evidences, in order to be persuaded and enabled to yield faith and obedience. If this be not true the whole Reformed system falls with it. It is, then, neither to be misunderstood as mysticism, on the one hand, as if "the testimony of the Holy Spirit" were to be expected to work faith in the Word apart from or even against the evidences; nor, on the other hand, is it to be explained away in a rationalizing manner as if it meant nothing more than that the Holy Spirit, as the immanent spring of all life and activity, is operative in all human thought. It is simply the Reformed doctrine of faith, stated here in explanation of the origin of faith in the Scriptures. It is, therefore, naturally returned to in the chapter on Saving Faith (chapter xiv.). The first half of the second section of that chapter is nothing more than a restatement of the declaration here: "By this faith"—which (§ 1) "is the work of the Spirit of Christ" in the heart—"a Christian believeth to be true, whatsoever is revealed in the Word, for the authority of God Himself speaking therein; and acteth differently, upon that which each particular passage thereof containeth; yielding obedience to the commands, trembling at the threatenings, and embracing the promises of God for this life, and that which is to come." The only

difference between the two passages is that difference of form which springs necessarily from the difference in general subject; here the subject is the Scriptures, and we are told how men are brought to a full faith in them—there the subject is faith, and we are told how this faith acts with reference to the Scriptures. Both passages alike, however, speak simply of that *fides generalis*, which is a topic treated at large in all Reformed systems; and both ascribe, in harmony with all Reformed thought, this *fides generalis* to the testimony of the Holy Spirit, without which no evidences would suffice to awaken it.

"Q. What special proofs are there that the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament are the very Word of God? A. The Scriptures are [specially] proved to be the very Word of God by their majesty and holiness of doctrine, and the fulfilling of the prophecies, by their exalting God and debasing man, and yet offering him sufficient means of comfort and salvation, and by their light and power in convincing and converting.

"[Q. May not all these excellencies and perfections be found in other books besides the Scriptures? A. No words or writings of men have all these excellencies and perfections in them but as they agree unto and are taken from the Scriptures.]

"5 Q. Are all these proofs sufficient of themselves to persuade a man to believe that the Scriptures are the Word of God? A. It is only the Spirit of God that makes any proofs effectual to assure the soul of this truth, that the Scriptures are the Word of God."—ORIGINAL DRAFT OF CATECHISM, "Minutes," pp. 281–283.

"It is a right, a safe, a sure way to seek after and to enjoy assurance of our interest in Christ, and in the covenant of grace, by the marks and fruits of sanctification.... All thy marks will leave thee in the dark if the Spirit of grace do not open thine eyes that thou mayest know the things which are freely given thee of God. Hagar could not see the well, though she was beside it, till her eyes were opened. Marks of grace are useless, undiscernible, unsatisfactory to the deserted and

overclouded soul.... Whereas, to make no trial by marks, and to trust an inward testimony, under the notion of the Holy Ghost's testimony, when it is without the least evidence of any true gracious mark, this way (of its own nature, and intrinsically, or in itself) is a deluding and ensnaring of the conscience.

"Quest. But it may be asked, and it is a question worthy to be looked into (though I must confess I have not read it, nor heard it handled before), How doth this assurance by marks agree with, or differ from assurance by the testimony of the Holy Ghost? May the soul have assurance either way, or must there be a concurrence of both (for I suppose they are not one and the same thing) to make up the assurance?

"Ans. For answer whereunto I shall first of all distinguish a twofold certainty, even in reference to the mind of man, or in his conscience (for I speak not here de certitudine entis, but mentis): the one may be called ἀσφάλεια, when the conscience is in tuto, may be secure; needeth not fear and be troubled. The Grecians have used the word ἀσφάλεια when they were speaking of giving security and assurance by safe conducts, or by pledges, or by sureties, or the like (H. Steph. in Thes. Ling. Gr., tom. 3, p. 1173). The other is πληροφορια, a full persuasion, when the soul doth not only steer a right and safe course, and needeth not fear danger, but saileth before the wind, and with all its sails full. So there is answerably a double uncertainty, the one may be called ἀποριᾶ, when a man is in himself perplexed and difficulted, and not without cause, having no grounds of assurance; when a man doth doubt and hesitate concerning a conclusion, because he hath no reasons nor arguments to prove it; when a man is in a wilderness where he can have no way, or shut up where he can have no safe escaping. The other is ἐποχῆ, which is a doubting that ariseth not from want of arguments, or from the inextricable difficulty of the grounds, but from a disease of the mind, which makes it suspend or retain its assent, even when it hath sufficient grounds upon which it may be assured. Now it is the evidence of signs of marks of grace which giveth that first kind of certainty, and

removeth that first kind of uncertainty; but it is the testimony of the Spirit of the Lord which giveth the second kind of certainty, and removeth the second kind of uncertainty. Take two or three similes for illustration.

"The Scripture is known to be indeed the word of God, by the beams of divine authority which it hath in itself, and by certain distinguishing characters, which do infallibly prove it to be the word of God; such as the heavenliness of the matter; the majesty of the style; the irresistible power over the conscience; the general scope, to abase man and to exalt God; nothing driven at but God's glory and man's salvation; the extraordinary holiness of the penmen of the Holy Ghost, without respect to any particular interests of their own, or of others of their nearest relations (which is manifest by their writings); the supernatural mysteries revealed therein, which could never have entered into the reason of men; the marvellous consent of all parts and passages (though written by divers and several penmen), even where is some appearance of difference; the fulfilling of prophecies; the miracles wrought by Christ, by the prophets and apostles; the conservation of the Scriptures against the malice of Satan and fury of persecutors;—these, and the like, are characters and marks which evidence the Scriptures to be the word of God; yet all these cannot beget in the soul a full persuasion of faith that the Scriptures are the word of God; this persuasion is from the Holy Ghost in our hearts. And it hath been the common resolution of sound Protestant writers (though now called in question by the sceptics of this age (Mr. J. Godwin in his *Hagiomastix*) that these arguments and infallible characters in the Scripture itself, which most certainly prove it to be the word of God, cannot produce a certainty of persuasion in our hearts, but this is done by the Spirit of God within us, according to these scriptures, 1 Cor. 2:10–15; 1 Thess. 1:5; 1 John 2:27; 5:6–8, 10; John 6:45....

"I heartily yield that the Spirit of the Lord is a Spirit of revelation, and it is by the Spirit of God that we know the things which are freely given us of God, so that without the Comforter, the Holy Ghost

himself, bearing witness with our spirit, all our marks cannot give us a plerophory or comfortable assurance; but this I say, that that which we have seen described by the Antinomians as the testimony of the Spirit of the Lord, is a very unsafe and unsure evidence, and speaks beside, yea, contrary, to the written word.... But it is another which is here in question, for clearing whereof observe, that the efficient cause, or revealing evidence, which makes us believe and be assured, is one thing, the objectum formale fidei, or that for which we believe and are assured, is another thing. In human sciences, a teacher is necessary to a young student, yet the student doth not believe the conclusions because his teacher teacheth him so, but because these conclusions follow necessarily from the known and received principles of the sciences; and although he had never understood either the principles or the conclusions without the help of a teacher, yet he were an ill scholar who cannot give an account of his knowledge from demonstration, but only from this, that he was taught so. In seeking a legal assurance or security we consult our lawyers, who peradventure will give us light and knowledge of that which we little imagined; yet a man cannot build a well-grounded assurance, nor be secure, because of the testimony of lawyers, but because of the deeds themselves, charters, contracts, or the like. So we cannot be assured of our interest in Christ without the work of the Holy Ghost, and his revealing evidence in our hearts; yet the ground and reason of our assurance, or that for which we are assured, is not his act of revealing, but the truth of the thing itself which he doth reveal unto us from the word of God."—GEORGE GILLESPIE, "A Treatise of Miscellany Questions," chapter xxi. 1649; Edinburgh reprint, 1844, pp. 104–110, in "The Presbyterian's Armoury," ii. 1846.

"Scripture is of divine authority.... It is not more true that they are oracles for their use, then that they have God for their authour. Many large volumes have been written for to make good this assertion. It is a thing wherein the Spirit of God, who indited the Scripture, gives such abundant satisfaction to the spirit of godly men, as to make other arguments, though not useless, yet to them of less necessity;

He alone bearing witness to the divinity of holy writ, and to the truth of his own testimony, so putting a final issue to that controversie. But because there is need of other reasons for the conviction of other men, I have produced certain arguments elsewhere" [in "Tactica Sacra," lib. 2, cap. ult.], "and shall here make an addition of two more, which are not mentioned in that discourse, one from consent, another from continuance" (pp. 103, 104). Under "consent," he continues: "Writings of men differ exceedingly one from another, which made Seneca say, Philosophers would then be all of one minde when all clocks were brought to strike at one and the same time. Yea it is hard finding an author that doth not differ from himself more or less, if he write much, and at various seasons. But here is a most harmonious consent. The word since written fully agrees with that which in former times was delivered to the Patriarchs, and transmitted by word of mouth. As the Word God is the same to-day, yesterday and for ever, although not incarnate till the fulness of time came, and then made flesh: So the word of God, although till Moses received a command to put it in writing, there wanted that kinde of incarnation, was for substance the same before and after. And as the written word agreed with the unwritten, so doth one part of that which is written harmonize with another. The two Testaments, Old and New, like the two breasts of the same person give the same milk. As if one draw water out of a deep well with vessels of different mettall, one of brass, another of tin, a third of earth, the water may seem at first to be of a different colour; but when the vessels are brought near to the eye, this diversity of colours vanisheth, and the waters tasted of have the same relish: So here, the different style of the historiographers from Prophets, of the Prophets from Evangelists, of the Evangelists from Apostles may make the truths of Scripture seem of different complexions till one look narrowly into them and taste them advisedly, then will the identity both of colour and relish manifest it self" (pp. 104–106).—JOHN ARROWSMITH, "A Chain of Principles," Cambridge, 1659.

The passage in "Tactica Sacra" referred to above, opens by stating that Protestants and Papists agree in believing that the "Sacred

Volume is the word of God and not of man," but differ as to the ultimate ground of faith—as to "quidnam illud sit in quod ultimò resolvitur ista fides, id est, quod sistit credulitatem nostram, ità ut quando illuc pervenitur non opus sit ulteriore scrutinio" (p. 206). In order to elucidate the matter, he distinguishes a "triplex principium" of the faith we owe to the divine authority of the Scriptures: "unum Introductivum, alterum Argumentativum, tertium, verò Productivum." (1) The Introducing source of faith is the testimony of the Church: "It may happen, and often does happen, that the testimony of the church is the introducing source of faith, i.e. that some believe the Scriptures to be the very word of God by means of the church as the first to point them to it, but not on account of the church as the palmary basis of assent, but rather on the Scripture's own account" ("per Ecclesiam, ut primum indicem," not "propter Ecclesiam ut palmarium assensûs argumentum," but "propter Se," p. 207). (2) The Probative source of faith is defined as "ipsius Scripturæ genius et indoles, sive innata" (p. 210). As light makes both other things and itself manifest, so the Scriptures. He lays stress especially on these three qualities as eminently proving Scripture to be the word of God—the majesty of the style, the sublimity of the matter, and the efficacy of the doctrine. (3) The Producing source of faith in the Scriptures is "the operation of the Holy Spirit and it alone." "Let the church testify all it is able to; let the Scripture shine with its own inherent light all it is wont to; if nevertheless, there be present no operation of the Holy Ghost, touching the heart with its own afflatus so that it may recognize the divinity that shines in the sacred volume, Divine Faith will still be absent; the testimony of the church cannot produce more than human faith, nor can the genius of Holy Scripture itself produce more than theological opinion" (p. 212). He then summons to the support of his teaching Calvin ("Institutes," I. vii. 4), Chamier (lib. VI. De Canone, cap. i. § 7), Whitaker ("Opera," in fol., tom. i. pp. 10, 78) and Baronius (p. 212), and defends himself from the charge of enthusiasm or mysticism.—JOHN ARROWSMITH, "Tactica Sacra," Cambridge, 1657 (Amsterdam ed. of 1700, pp. 206–212).

"It must be considered that at present, we have nothing to doe with Atheists, Pagans, Jews, or Turks, that deny the Scriptures, either wholly, or in part, so far are they from acknowledging them to be Gods word; but onely with such persons, as admitting and allowing them to be the word of God, doe yet want some clearer light, and fuller evidence, to work into their hearts a more certain perswasion, and more feeling impression of that truth whereof they are convinced, that all that is within them, even their whole heart, may not onely bow and stoop, but be wholly thrown down, and laid flat on the earth before this mighty scepter of the kingdom of Christ. Wherefore, we shall not need to bring in all the arguments that are used and taken up by others, to prove the Scriptures to be Gods word, but passing by amongst them such as are more obscure and farther deduced, shall content our selves with such plain evidences of this truth, as may be best understood of the simple, and appear at the first view, as being lively characters imprinted on the face and body of this sacred Book, by that divine Spirit that composed it" (pp. 7, 8)... The arguments adduced are: 1. That the Scriptures are a law to the church, and "neither could nor were fit to be given by any other than by God himself"; 2. "That the holy Scriptures appear evidently to be the word of God." Under the latter: "The marks, or notes, by which the holy Scriptures are evidently discovered to be Gods word, are divers, of which we shall for the present content our selves with three only, and those which are most easie to be discerned. The first is, the style and phrase of speech, wherein the Scriptures apparently differ from all other writings, composed by men. The second is, the subjects or matter which the Scriptures handle, which are many times beyond the compasse of mans reason to finde out, and therefore must be revealed by God himself. The third evidence, is taken from the wonderfull effectuall power, which the Scriptures appear to have upon the hearts of men, in terrifying, comforting, subduing, and renuing them" (p. 18). These marks are then developed at large. Subsequently he develops the difference between Historical and Justifying faith: "Amongst Divines, Faith is commonly taken for a full perswasion of any truth upon Divine testimony.... The cause of faith is ... the Spirit of Grace flowing unto a regenerate man

from Christ his head.... And here we meet with the first difference between Historicall, and Justifying Faith, that they proceed from different causes, the one being infused by the spirit of Christ, dwelling in us, the other the effect onely of naturall reason, further inlightned (at the most) by the assistance of that Spirit.... The kind of assurance which true faith is built upon, we call an evidence.... How justifying faith hath an evidence of the things which it apprehends, we have seene: Historicall wants this evidence ... as having no further assurance of what it beleeves, then that which Reason suggests, which may rather be tearmed a conviction that such things must be, then an evidence what they be.... To cleare this truth fully, we must consider the different testimonies, upon which justifying and historicall faith are built. For we shall find that true faith is built upon a Divine, the other upon a Humane testimony.... We call that a Divine testimony which is given of the Spirit of God to that spirit which is within a regenerate person. For unto any testimony two things are required, First, the manifesting, and presenting that which is to be credited, or beleaved: Secondly, an ability in him to whom it is witnessed to understand it.... It is evident then that true Faith is grounded upon a Divine testimony. In the next place we must make it appeare, that Historicall faith relies onely upon an humane testimony. Now it cannot be denied that the truths of Divine mysteries though they cannot be found out by mans reason, ... yet are they all consonant to right reason: and it is as evident that the testimony of reason, is an humane testimony. I say then, that historicall faith rests not upon the evidence or demonstration, but upon the reasonableness of divine truths, which therefore mans reason cannot but assent unto.... It is evident, that an Historicall faith beleaving these things for the Reasonableness of them, is but meere upon an Humane Testimonie. Nay, if he should goe a steppe further and beleave any thing that is written in the Scriptures, for the Testimony of the Scriptures, yet still he beleeves upon an Humane testimony, because he beleeves the Scriptures themselves upon Humane testimony, as upon the generall consent of the Church which receives the Scriptures, as the Word of God; or upon the probability and reasonableness of the things therein delivered;

lastly, upon the observation of the Truth of those holy writings in most things, which makes them beleev'd to be true in all.... We see then a wide Difference between Justifying, and Historicall faith, in the cause, subject and ground of Assurance; we shall finde no lesse in the Object. Now the generall Object of Faith, we know, is Gods Word and Promise, which onely is a sure ground to build Faith upon, as being the Word of the God of truth, Deut. 3:2, 4, who cannot lye, Tit. 1:2, or denie himselfe, 2 Tim. 2:13, or change his minde, Num. 23:19. So that his Word must needs be Everlasting, Psal. 119:144, founded for ever, v. 132, upon two unfailing foundations, his Everlasting Truth, and unresistable Power. But the particular Object of justifying Faith is Gods Promise of Reconciliation, and Salvation by Christ, in whom onely we are Justified, Rom. 3:24. In these Promises, both generall, and particular, an Historicall faith may beleve both the truth, and the goodnesse of them: But the goodnesse of them to himselfe in particular he beleevs not, which a justifying Faith assents unto, and embraceth" (pp. 90–99).—JOHN WHITE, "A Way to the Tree of Life," London, 1647.

"In your first and main part, concerning the Scriptures, your discourse beares a comely suitableness to the nature and scope of that subject also. For as the Historicall beleefe of their authority, end, and use, is the foundation of all: so your demonstrations thereof are formed out of, and framed into a congeniall Harmony and consonancy to right Reason, and containe a naturall Genealogy and story of divine Truth about them ... which way of setting forth divine Truths, as it carries with it the greatest conviction, and (as your selfe (in that forementioned Treatise) expresse it) begets faith Historicall, which hath for its ground a rationality, and consonancy to reason; so it is made use of by the holy Ghost, as a blessed subservient to that which you make the immediate proper cause of saving Faith, The Demonstration of the Spirit."—THOMAS GOODWIN, in the letter "To the Author," prefixed to John White's "A Way to the Tree of Life," 1647, as above.

"The only preaching of the word, it alone without the Spirit, can no more make an hair white or black, or draw us to the Son, or work repentance in sinners, then the sword of the Magistrate can work repentance.... What can preaching of man or angel doe without God, is it not God and God only who can open the heart?"—SAMUEL RUTHERFORD, "A Free Disputation, etc.," p. 351.

"And that this light in the word is manifested unto us, 1. By the manuduction and ministry of the church, pointing unto the star, which is seen by its own light. 2. Because we bring not such an implanted suitableness of reason to scripture, as we do to other sciences ... therefore, to proportion the eye of the soul to the light of the word, there is required an act of the spirit opening the eyes, and drawing away the vail, that we may discern the voice of Christ from strangers: for having the mind of Christ, we do, according to the measure of his spirit in us, judge of divine truths as he did."—EDWARD REYNOLDS, "Works," 1826, v. p. 154.

"Q. How are we assured that the Scripture is Gods Word? A. Not onely by the Testimony of the Church, which cannot universally deceive, but especially by the Testimony of the Spirit, working strange and supernaturall effects in us by the Word, giving us such joy, contentment, and satisfaction touching spirituall and eternall things, by way of tast and feeling, as is not possible for humane reason to doe: Joh. 4:42; Joh. 6:68, 69; 1 Thes. 1:5; 2 Pet 1:18, 21; 2 Cor. 4:6."—W. LYFORD, "Principles of Faith and Good Conscience, etc.," fifth ed., Oxford, 1658, p. 2.

"There remaines one Question to be resolved, 'for the close of this whole matter (namely) Into what then is our Faith finally resolved, and whereupon doth it stay it selfe, seeing the fore mentioned things, the Church, the Spirit, Reason and Providence, though their help and Ministry be needfull, yet our Faith is not built upon them, as hath been shewed?

"The Authority and Truth of God speaking in the Scripture, is that upon which our Faith is built, and doth finally stay it selfe; the Ministry of the Church, the Illumination of the Spirit, the right use of Reason, are the choicest helps, by which we believe, by which we see the Law and will of God; But they are not the Law it selfe; the Divine Truth and Authority of Gods Word, is that which doth secure our Consciences.

"To the grounding of Faith it is necessary, that we know, first, what is the truth revealed, for else we cannot believe it, nor rest upon an unknown Truth; Secondly that God hath indeed revealed and declared those truths; and then the soul resteth upon it, as a sure Anchor of faith and hope.... If you ask further, How I know that God hath revealed them? I answer, by a two-fold certainty; one of Faith, the other of Experience; First I do infallibly by faith believe the Revelation, not upon the credit of any other Revelation but for it selfe, the Lord giving Testimony thereunto, not only by the constant Testimony of the Church, which cannot universally deceive, nor only by miracles from heaven, bearing witness to the Apostles doctrine, but chiefly by its own proper divine light, which shines therein. The truth contained in Scripture is a light, and is discerned by the Sons of light: It doth by its own light perswade us, and in all cases, doubts, and questions, it doth clearly testifie with us, or against us; which light is of that nature, that it giveth Testimony to it selfe, and receiveth Authority from no other, as the Sun is not seene by any light but his own, and we discern sweet from sowre by its own Taste. And the meanes for opening our eyes to see this light (whereby our consciences are assured that we rest in God,) are diverse: first, some private, as Reading, Prayer, conference of places, consent of Churches in all Ages, Helps of learning, and reason sanctified. Secondly, some publike, as the Ministry of the Word.... Thirdly, But the chiefe helpe, to shew me and assure me of this light, is the Holy Spirit, given to Gods children, in, and by the use of the former meanes to open our understandings, to enlighten our mindes, that we may know and believe the words of this life, and the things which are freely given unto us of God; In which light thus shewn unto us,

Faith staieth it selfe, without craving any further testimony or prooffe, in the same manner that the Philosopher proveth, that with the same sense we see, and are assured we see: Thus I know by the certainty of Faith, resting upon its object, that the Doctrine of Scripture is from God: This is a certainty in respect of the understanding.

"2. Whereunto adde, that other certainty of experience, which is a certainty in respect of the Affections and of the spirituall man, This is the spirits Seale set to Gods truth, (namely) the light of the word; when it is thus shewen unto us, it doth worke such strange and supernaturall effects upon the soul ... so that the things apprehended by us in Divine knowledge, are more certainly discerned in the certainty of experience, than anything is discerned in the light of naturall understanding... And thus much of my first doctrine; the supream and divine Authority of the Scripture, to determine in all matters of faith, and practice."—WILLIAM LYFORD, "The Plain Mans Senses Exercised, etc.," London, 1657, pp. 37–40.

"And now we will draw towards the main conclusion, How a simple Countrey-man is to believe our Bible to be the Word. Doctor Jackson, and Master John Goodwin have set downe many, and many excellent things, but they flie so high, that they are for Eagles.... Now all the considerations these great Sophies have, and let there be as much more added to them, yet they will not do the work, till they come to the testimony of the spirit: They may and do work, and acquire in us an humane faith, which may stand free from actual hesitation, and doubting, but not from possible dubitation, for lay them all together, yet they may deceive, or be deceived.... So that when we have all done, and got all the help we can to rest on the Scriptures, the work is not done, till we by the Spirit of God have this sealed by infused faith in our souls that these books (which we have translated) are the very words of God.... Well then, though all humane reasons, the consent of all the world, will not help us to that faith in the Word, which will help us to heaven, yet they are a preparation, and such a preparation to this faith infused, that we cannot ordinarily look for faith infused, but by the way of this faith

which is gotten by the arguments, reasons, considerations, convictions, and helps wrought by the Argumentations, and considerations proposed by men which do work (as most often it doth) in us an acquired humane faith free from actual (though not from possible) mistake and doubting. This may be and is, a faire meanes to bring us to look on the Scripture without any actual question made of it as the Word of God. And then by the use of the Word to attain to a Divine faith, which is infallible by reason of the Divine infallible truth rightly conceived and believed by it."—RICHARD CAPEL, "Remains, etc.," London, 1658, pp. 69–73.

The Completeness of Scripture

2. The second property of Holy Scripture which the Confession adduces is its perfection or completeness (§ 6). Here the absolute objective completeness of Scripture for the great and primary purpose for which it is given is affirmed; and the necessity of any supplement to it is denied, with reference especially to the "new revelations" of the sectaries and the "traditions" of Rome. It is not affirmed that the Scriptures contain all truth, or even all religious truth; or that no other truth, or even religious truth, is attainable or verifiable by man through other sources of knowledge. This would be inconsistent with the frank recognition in section 1 of the light of nature as a real and trustworthy source of knowledge concerning God. There is only a strong assertion of the completeness and the finality of the Scriptural revelation of truth, for the specific purpose for which Scripture is given. God may give men knowledge concerning Him through the forms of the reason; and the amount of knowledge so attainable, as outlined by the Confession in the first section, is asserted to be enough to render men inexcusable for withholding from God the worship and service which is His due. The memory of the revelations which He may have supernaturally given to men in the past may be, more or less fully or purely, preserved in historical records or institutions; and this is especially true of those revelations which He has embodied in the institution, and in the institutions, of the Church which He has established in the world: the

truths so preserved will exert their power over men's consciences, when conveyed to their knowledge by the ordinary testimony of men or by the offices and testimony of the Church. The Confession does not deny either the existence or the value of truth so obtained or so preserved for man. But it does deny the need of such sources of knowledge to supplement what is set down in Scripture, in order to instruct us what "man is to believe concerning God and what duty God requires of man." It does affirm the absolute objective completeness of Scripture as a guide to the service of God, to faith, and to life. And it does deny that aught in the way of truth required by God to be believed, or in the way of duty required by Him to be performed, in order that we may attain salvation, is to be added from any other source whatever to what is revealed in Scripture.

This, it is to be observed, is to make Scripture something more than a rule of faith and practice; something more than the rule of faith and practice, in the sense of merely the fullest and best extant rule; something more even than a sufficient rule of faith and practice. It is to make it the only rule of faith and practice, to which nothing needs to be added to fit it to serve as our rule, and to which nothing is to be added to make it altogether complete as our authoritative law. It contains not only enough to serve all the purposes of a rule of faith and practice, but all that is to be laid as the authoritative law of life on the consciences of Christians. Therefore, the Larger Catechism defines (Q. 3): "The Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament are the Word of God, the only rule of faith and obedience"; and the Shorter Catechism: "The Word of God, which is contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, is the only rule to direct us how we may glorify and enjoy Him." One of the chief effects of this declaration of the Confession is, therefore, to protect the people of God from the tyranny of human requirements, which lay upon men's consciences burdens that God has not laid upon them, and that are too grievous to be borne. It is the doctrinal basis of the subsequent assertions that "good works are only such as God hath commanded in His holy Word, and not such as, without the warrant thereof, are devised by men out of blind zeal, or upon any pretence of good

intention" (xvi. 1); and that "God alone is Lord of the conscience, and hath left it free from the doctrines and commandments of men which are in anything contrary to His Word, or beside it in matters of faith and worship: so that to believe such doctrines or to obey such commandments out of conscience, is to betray true liberty of conscience" (xx. 2). In a word, the Confessional doctrine of the sufficiency or completeness of Scripture is the charter of liberty of conscience; God's prescriptions for faith and conscience are required to be received with humility of heart, and none but God's.

It must be observed, however, that the teachings and prescriptions of Scripture are not confined by the Confession to what is "expressly set down in Scripture." Men are required to believe and to obey not only what is "expressly set down in Scripture," but also what "by good and necessary consequence may be deduced from Scripture." This is the strenuous and universal contention of the Reformed theology against Socinians and Arminians, who desired to confine the authority of Scripture to its literal asseverations; and it involves a characteristic honoring of reason as the instrument for the ascertainment of truth. We must depend upon our human faculties to ascertain what Scripture says; we cannot suddenly abnegate them and refuse their guidance in determining what Scripture means. This is not, of course, to make reason the ground of the authority of inferred doctrines and duties. Reason is the instrument of discovery of all doctrines and duties, whether "expressly set down in Scripture" or "by good and necessary consequence deduced from Scripture": but their authority, when once discovered, is derived from God, who reveals and prescribes them in Scripture, either by literal assertion or by necessary implication. The Confession is only zealous, as it declares that only Scripture is the authoritative rule of faith and practice, so to declare that the whole of Scripture is authoritative, in the whole stretch of its involved meaning. It is the Reformed contention, reflected here by the Confession, that the sense of Scripture is Scripture, and that men are bound by its whole sense in all its implications. The reëmergence in recent controversies of the plea that the authority of Scripture is to be confined to its expressed

declarations, and that human logic is not to be trusted in divine things, is, therefore, a direct denial of a fundamental position of Reformed theology, explicitly affirmed in the Confession, as well as an abnegation of fundamental reason, which would not only render thinking in a system impossible, but would discredit at a stroke many of the fundamentals of the faith, such e.g. as the doctrine of the Trinity, and would logically involve the denial of the authority of all doctrine whatsoever, since no single doctrine of whatever simplicity can be ascertained from Scripture except by the use of the processes of the understanding. It is, therefore, an unimportant incident that the recent plea against the use of human logic in determining doctrine has been most sharply put forward in order to justify the rejection of a doctrine which is explicitly taught, and that repeatedly, in the very letter of Scripture; if the plea is valid at all, it destroys at once our confidence in all doctrines, no one of which is ascertained or formulated without the aid of human logic.

It is further to be observed that the Confession, in asserting the perfection or completeness of Scripture, forgets neither the subjective disabilities of fallen man, nor his needs outside the sphere of "things necessary for God's glory, man's salvation, faith and life," in which sphere alone Scripture is asserted to be objectively complete or perfect. The Confession explicitly recognizes the "inward illumination of the Spirit of God" as necessary to man's "saving understanding of such things as are revealed in the Word." And it as explicitly recognizes that there are "circumstances concerning the worship of God and government of the Church, common to human actions and societies, which are to be ordered by the light of nature and Christian prudence."

While strenuously asserting the completeness of the Scriptural revelation of faith and duty, considered objectively, it adopts the principle, "credo ut intelligam," and as clearly asserts that a preparation of spirit is necessary to its saving understanding. As the Minutes of the Assembly show, the word "saving" is significant here. It is not denied that men, in the exercise of their natural powers of

understanding, may attain to a knowledge from Scripture of what is revealed in Scripture. It is only denied, as Dr. James S. Candlish admirably phrases it, that it is possible to attain, without the Spirit's illumination, "such a knowledge as is not merely intellectual and inoperative, but accompanied with a relish and love for the truth, and leading to a life of holy obedience."

And while jealously guarding the uniqueness of the authority of Scripture in divine things, and its completeness in the sphere of faith and duty, the Confession equally clearly asserts that its prescriptions do not cover in detail every circumstance "concerning the worship of God and government of the Church." All that is in Scripture, by express statement or necessary implication, must be obeyed; and all that must be obeyed is in Scripture; but outside of and beyond what Scripture prescribes, there is a sphere of what may properly be done in worshiping God and governing His Church in which the principle of Christian liberty reigns, and in which the ordering is left to the light of nature and Christian prudence. How wide this sphere is, may be a matter of dispute: it is enough that the Confession explicitly recognizes its existence; and specifies "circumstances concerning the worship of God and government of the Church" as matters which fall within it. The limitation it suggests is that these circumstances are such as are "common to human actions and societies"; which probably means that the Church, as a society in the world, is free to take such order for its activities and government as are open to other human societies, though always, of course, because it is a divine society and under a divinely given charter, with regard to "the general rules of the Word, which are always to be observed."

Unless the declaration here be pressed beyond all bounds, no inconsistency will emerge with the position taken in chapter xxi. 1, that "the acceptable way of worshiping the true God is instituted by Himself, and so limited by His own revealed will, that He may not be worshiped according to the imaginations and devices of men, or the suggestions of Satan, under any visible representation or any other way not prescribed in the Holy Scripture." Much less will

inconsistency emerge with the teaching of chapters xxx. and xxxi. that "the Lord Jesus, as King and Head of His Church, hath therein appointed a government," established offices, and authorized synods. On the contrary, the same provision for the prudent regulation of worship and government which is here made, is there repeated, it being expressly set forth as one of the duties of synods and councils, "to set down rules and directions for the better ordering of the public worship of God, and government of His Church"—which appears to be an authoritative commentary on our present passage. A distinction apparently is intended to be drawn between "a way of worship" and the "ordering of worship": the ordination of the former, in strong anti-Romish polemic, is reserved to God, while the latter alone is placed in the sphere of the prudent and reasonable regulation of the Church itself. The extreme position is excluded that nothing is to be done in the ordering of God's house except what is warranted by explicit provisions of the Word; but a sharp line of distinction is drawn between the duty of conforming in all things to the provisions of the Word and the liberty to be exercised outside of and beyond these provisions.

There is an inferential application of this declaration to the affairs of daily life also, which it may be wise for us to note. "In other words," says Dr. Alexander F. Mitchell, in his Lecture on "The Westminster Confession of Faith," "the Westminster divines were so far from holding, as the earlier Puritans are accused of doing, that one must have an express text of Scripture for everything he says or does in common life; that they directly assert there are circumstances in regard both to the worship of God, and the government of His Church, for which no such sanction is to be sought, but which are left to be regulated by the dictates of reason and Christian prudence, if only care is taken that all be done decently and in order; and, while they directly grant this much, they leave it clearly to be inferred, farther, that merely human actions and the doings of civil societies, are to be regulated in the same way, or, as they elsewhere have it, according to justice, faithfulness, and truth."

"Chapter XX. That necessary consequences from the written word of God do sufficiently and strongly prove the consequent or conclusion, if theoretical, to be a certain divine truth which ought to be believed, and, if practical, to be a necessary duty which we are obliged unto, *jure divino*.

"This assertion must neither be so far enlarged as to comprehend the erroneous reasonings and consequences from Scripture which this or that man, or this or that church, apprehend and believe to be strong and necessary consequences (I speak of what, is, not of what is thought to be a necessary consequence): neither yet must it be so far contracted and straitened as the Arminians would have it, who admit of no proofs from Scripture, but either plain explicit texts, or such consequences as are *nulli non obviæ*, as neither are, nor can be, controverted by any man who is *rationis compos* (see their *Præf. ante Exam. Cens.*, and their *Examen*, cap. 25, p. 283); by which principle, if embraced, we must renounce many necessary truths which the reformed churches hold against the Arians, Antitrinitarians, Socinians, Papists, because the consequences and arguments from Scripture brought to prove them are not admitted as good by the adversaries.

"This also I must, in the second place, premise, that the meaning of the assertion is not that human reason, drawing a consequence from Scripture, can be the ground of our belief or conscience; for although the consequence or argumentation be drawn forth by men's reasons, yet the consequent itself, or conclusion, is not believed nor embraced by the strength of reason, but because it is the truth and will of God, which *Camero, Præl.*, tom. i. p. 364, doth very well clear....

"Thirdly, Let us here observe with Gerhard, a distinction between corrupt reason and renewed or rectified reason.... It is the latter, not the former reason, which will be convinced and satisfied with consequences and conclusions drawn from Scripture, in things which concern the glory of God, and matters spiritual or divine.

"Fourthly, There are two sorts of consequences which Aquinas, part 1, quest. 32, art. 1, distinguisheth: 1. Such as make a sufficient and strong proof, or where the consequence is necessary and certain.... 2. By way of agreeableness or convenience.... This latter sort are in divers things of very great use; but for the present I speak of necessary consequences." He next proves his point: 1. From the example of Christ and His Apostles. 2. From the custom of the people of God. 3. "If we say that necessary consequences from Scripture prove not a jus divinum, we say what is inconsistent with the infinite wisdom of God; for although necessary consequences may be drawn from a man's word which do not agree with his mind and intention, and so men are oftentimes ensnared by their words; yet (as Camero well noteth) God being infinitely wise, it were a blasphemous opinion to hold that anything can be drawn by a certain and necessary consequence from his holy word which is not his will." ... 4. That great absurdities follow from the denial of this principle. 5. That the principle is conceded and acted on by those who deny it. 6. We would by denying it, deny "to the great God that which is a privilege of the little gods, or magistrates."—GEORGE GILLESPIE, "A Treatise of Miscellany Questions," 1649 (Edinburgh reprint of 1844, pp. 100–103, in "The Presbyterian's Armoury," vol. ii.).

"Now things may be contained in Scripture, either expresly, and in plain tearms, or by consequence drawn from some grounds that are delivered in Scripture, and one of these two ways all grounds of faith, or rules of practise, are to be found in these holy writings" (p. 65).... "two conclusions. The first is acknowledged by all men without contradiction, which is, That there can be no infallible interpreter of the Scriptures but God himselfe. The second, though it be somewhat more questioned, yet is as true as it in all points, namely, That every Godly man hath in him a spirituall light, by which he is directed in the understanding of Gods mind revealed in his word in all things needfull to salvation" (p. 161).—JOHN WHITE, "A Way to the Tree of Life," London, 1647.

"But you will say unto me, Now it is given by those holy apostles and prophets, and laid up in the Scriptures, may not all men, or any man, understand it? No; for as you have it in 2 Pet. 1:20, the Scripture is not of private interpretation (and he speaks especially of the gospel), that is, it is not in the power of any man's understanding to apprehend or know the meaning of the word. 'But,' saith he, 'holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost'; and, therefore, as the Scripture was written by the Holy Ghost, so it must be the Holy Ghost that must interpret it. Take all the wise men in the world, they are not able to understand one Scripture: it is but private interpretation. The Holy Ghost, therefore, the same Spirit that guided the holy apostles and prophets to write it, must guide the people of God to know the meaning of it; and as he first delivered it, so must he help men to understand it."—THOMAS GOODWIN, "Works," ed. Nichol, iv. 1862, p. 295.

"But Secondly, and more practically: If you would so understand the Scripture, that you may take heed thereunto, as to a Light shining in your dark state: then, First: you must go to God for the Spirit; for without it, ye cannot understand the Mind of God in the Scripture.... And seeing God hath promised to give this Spirit unto them that ask it, go unto God for the same. Secondly: Take heed of a worldly, fleshly mind; fleshly sins do exceedingly blind the mind from the things of God."—WILLIAM BRIDGE, "Scripture-Light, the Most Sure Light," London, 1656, p. 52.

"It is the spirit of wisdom and revelation, which both openeth the heart to the word, giving an understanding to know the scriptures, and openeth the scriptures to the heart; for he takes of Christ's, and sheweth it unto us.... The spirit doth not reveal truth unto us, as he did in the primitive patefaction thereof to the prophets and apostles, —by divine and immediate inspiration, or in a way of simple enthusiasm: but what he reveals, he doth it by and out of the scriptures, which are the full and perfect rule of faith and obedience; as Christ opened to his disciples in the scriptures the things which

concerned himself (Luke 24:27)."—EDWARD REYNOLDS, "Works," v. 1826, pp. 152, 153.

The Perspicuity of Scripture

3. The third property of Scripture adduced, is its perspicuity (section 7): and here again the Confession is no less precise and guarded than clear and decided in its assertions. The perspicuity of Scripture is sharply affirmed, in the sense that the saving truth is declared to be placed in Scripture within the reach of all sincere seekers after it. But the limitations of its perspicuity are very fully and carefully stated. It is only "those things which are necessary to be known, believed, and observed, for salvation" that are said to lie perspicuously in Scripture. Even these things are not said to be plainly delivered on every occasion in which they fall to be mentioned or treated in Scripture; but only "in some place of Scripture or other." Nor is it even stated that they all are anywhere so clearly propounded and opened as that they may easily be understood unto perfection; but only so as that "a sufficient understanding of them" may be attained. Nor yet are they affirmed to be equally understandable by all; but only that they are so clearly spread on the face of Scripture that every man, learned or unlearned, may attain a sufficient understanding of them to secure his salvation and peace. The variety of Scripture is here fully recognized—its frequent obscurities, its difficulties, its problems, and its profound depths darkening to all human gaze. The variety of mental acumen and teachableness of heart brought to the study of Scripture, is sufficiently recognized. But the fact that the Scriptures, despite all their obscurities, are a people's book, is sharply and decisively asserted; and with it the right of the unlearned man to them, and his capacity to make full use of them for the main purpose for which they were given; and as well, the openness of the Scriptures to the "due use of the ordinary means." In a word there is combined here an adequate recognition of the profundity of the Scriptures and their occasional obscurity, with an equally clear assertion of the popular character of the Word of God as a message to every one of His children.

We must not overlook, in passing, that it is by "a due use of the ordinary means" that the learned and unlearned alike are said to be able to attain a sufficient knowledge of the saving message of Scripture. By the phrase, "a due use of the ordinary means," not only is the need of an infallible interpreting Church denied; but also all dependence on extraordinary revelations, the "inner light" of the mystical sectaries, and the like, is excluded. Within the "ordinary means" is included that "inward illumination of the Spirit of God," which is declared to be necessary to the saving understanding of Scripture in section 6, and which is here declared to be an ordinary endowment of the children of God. Within them is included all the religious and gracious means which God has placed at the disposal of His people, in the establishment of His Church and its teaching functions. But in this phrase is also included the implication that Scripture is to be interpreted, as other books are interpreted, in the ordinary processes and by means of the ordinary implements of exegesis. There is included here, therefore, the charter of a sound and rational system and method of exposition; and we are accordingly not surprised to find the Westminster Divines dealing constantly in their extant writings with the question of "how to read the Scriptures," and laying down well-considered and reasonable canons of interpretation.

"The word is perspicuous, and hath 'notas insitas veritatis' in all necessary truth, as being written not for scholars only, but for vulgar and illiterate men."—EDWARD REYNOLDS, "Works," v. 1826, p. 154.

"Scripture is so framed, as to deliver all things necessary to salvation in a clear and perspicuous way. There are indeed some obscure passages in it to exercise our understandings, and prevent our loathing of overmuch plainness and simplicity: yet whatsoever is needfull for us to satisfie hunger, and nourish our souls to life eternal, is so exprest (I do not say that it may be understood, but so) as men that do not wilfully shut their eyes against the light, cannot

possibly but understand it."—JOHN ARROWSMITH, "A Chain of Principles," Cambridge, 1659, p. 96.

"As it is a ful, and sufficient Light; so is it a cleer Light, a Light that shineth; ... not that there are no hard things therein, and difficulties; where is the man that ever was able to untie al the knots and difficulties of Scripture? Pauls Epistles have their hard things to be understood, even in the Eyes of Peter, Epist. 2. Chap. 3. Verse 16. Yet what Truth is in all the Scripture, which is necessary to Salvation, but doth lie plain and cleer?... Deut. 30:11, 12, 13, 14. Ro. 10:6, etc.... 1 Cor. 2:16. Surely therefore this Light is a cleer, and a shining light" (p. 14). "Is there then no use of Reason, and of the Light thereof? Yea, much: Not only in Civil things; but in the things of God, comparing Spiritual things, with Spiritual. Did not Christ himself make use of Reason to prove the Resurrection: ... So the Apostles after him. Surely therefore, we are not so to adhere to the Letter of the Scripture, as to deny the use of our Reason in finding out the true sense and meaning of the Scripture.... Reason is of great use, even in the things of God: and wel hath he said, Contra Rationem nemo sobrius" (p. 33). [Clear rules for interpreting Scripture are laid down, pp. 50 sq.]—WILLIAM BRIDGE, "Scripture-Light, the Most Sure Light," London, 1656.

"It is true that this inward light, or anointing (as Saint John calls it) may be much cleered and enlarged by such helps as God is pleased to afford us, by the ministry of his word, by private conferences, and reading of godly mens writings, which are therefore to be made full use of diligently and constantly." [Good and sound rules for interpreting follow on pp. 164 sq.]—JOHN WHITE, "A Way to the Tree of Life," p. 163.

"Thus they fly from the Word written, to their owne revelations; which (as Melanchthon doth truly and wisely observe) doth draw after it three maine and mischievous conclusions. 1. A losse of the certainty of the doctrine of the Law, and the Articles of our faith. 2. An utter uncertainty of Christian consolations. 3. An extinction and

destruction of true faith, and the exercises of faith: whereas there are now no revelations (sith all is written,) nor no need of any extraordinary revelations to expound the Word, but ordinary only, to expound the Scripture by the Scripture, and so give the sense, comparing places with places" (pp. 245, 246). "That one meaning of the Word is plaine, and a plaine heart shall have a plaine answer from God by his Spirit, which is which" (p. 243).—RICHARD CAPEL, "Tentations," (The fourth Part), London, 1655.

THE USE OF SCRIPTURE

IV. On the basis of this exposition of what Scripture is, in its origin and characteristics, the Confession next propounds certain important corollaries as to its use, with especial reference, as we have seen, to its form and transmission in text and translation, to its interpretation, and to its final authority in controversies (sections 8–10). These sections contain the application of the principles laid down in the preceding sections, to the burning practical questions raised by the very existence of the Reformed religion. Their declarations enunciate the fundamental principles of Protestantism: that the appeal for doctrine is not to be to the Latin Vulgate, but to the original Scriptures; that the people have right to the Scriptures in the vernacular; that Scripture, and not an infallible interpreting Church, is the Supreme Interpreter of Scripture; and that Scripture and not the Church is the Supreme Judge in religious controversy. There is a true sense in which the whole preceding portion of the chapter was written in order to furnish firm groundwork for these three closing sections.

The Transmission of Scripture

1. The object of the first of these sections (section 8) is to indicate the proper place in the Church of God, both of the original Scriptures and of translations of them into vernacular tongues. The originals are asserted to be the only final appeal in the defining and defense of

doctrine. The translations are asserted to be competent channels for the transmission of saving truth to the people at large.

In both matters, the impelling motive of the Confessional statement was, of course, the contentions of the Church of Rome, which on the one hand declared that the Latin Vulgate was to be held "pro authentica" in all "public reading, disputation, preaching, and exposition"; and on the other, discountenanced the free use by the people of the Scriptures in vernacular versions. In defense of both contentions, the Romanist controversialists made much of the uncertainties in the transmission of Scripture, pointing to the various readings in the original text and to the mistranslations in the versions, with the general design of leaving the impression that the Scriptures have been to such a degree corrupted in their transmission that no one can safely commit himself to their teaching, except under the safeguard of an infallible Church attesting and assuring of the truth. The Westminster Divines were the more driven formally to oppose this assertion of the practical loss of the divine Scriptures under the errors of transmission, that it had been taken up by the sectaries of the day in their plea for toleration: how absurd, it was argued, to punish a man for not believing in the divine authority of Scripture, when you have no certainty that you have the true inspired Scripture in this or that passage appealed to. In opposition to both bodies of opponents alike, the Confession affirms the providential preservation of the inspired Scriptures in purity in the originals, and the adequate purity of the Word of God in translations.

The necessity of looking upon the original Scriptures only as "authentic," that is, authoritative in the highest sense, and appealing to them alone as final authorities "in all controversies of religion," is based by the Confession on the fact that these original Scriptures, and they alone, are the inspired Bible. The Confession uses the strongest phrase of technical theological terminology to express their divine origin: "Being immediately inspired by God." It thereby points to the originals as the very Word of God,

authoritative, as such, in every one of their deliverances of whatever kind. The possibility of appealing to the original Scriptures, as we now have them, as the Word of God, is based on the further fact that they have been "by God's singular care and providence kept pure in all ages." The Confession thus distinguishes between the autographic text of sacred Scripture, which it affirms was "immediately inspired by God," and its subsequent transmission in copies, over the course of which it affirms, not that an inspiring activity of God, but that a providential care of God has presided, with the effect that they have been kept pure and retain full authority in religious controversy. This distinction cannot be overlooked or explained away; it was intentional, as is proved by the controversies of the day in which the framers of the Confession were actively engaged.

When it is affirmed that the transmission has been "kept pure," there is, of course, no intention to assert that no errors have crept into the original text during its transmission through so many ages by hand-copying and the printing press; nor is there any intention to assert that the precise text "immediately inspired by God," lies complete and entire, without the slightest corruption, on the pages of any one extant copy. The difference between the infallibility or errorlessness of immediate inspiration and the fallibility or liability to error of men operating under God's providential care alone, is intended to be taken at its full value. But it is intended to assert most strongly, first, that the autographs of Scripture, as immediately inspired, were in the highest sense the very Word of God and trustworthy in every detail; and, next, that God's singular providential care has preserved to the Church, through every vicissitude, these inspired and infallible Scriptures, diffused, indeed, in the multitude of copies, but safe and accessible. "What mistake is in one copy is corrected in another," was the proverbial philosophy of the time in this matter; and the assertion that the inspired text has "by God's singular care and providence been kept pure in all ages," is to be understood not as if it affirmed that every copy has been kept pure from all error, but that the genuine text has been kept safe in the multitude of copies, so as never to be out of the reach of the Church of God, in the use of the

ordinary means. In the sense of the Westminster Confession, therefore, the multiplication of copies of the Scriptures, the several early efforts towards the revision of the text, the raising up of scholars in our own day to collect and collate MSS., and to reform the text on scientific principles—of our Tischendorfs and Tregelleses, and Westcotts and Hort—*are all parts of God's singular care and providence in preserving His inspired Word pure.*

No doubt the authors of the Confession were far from being critics of the nineteenth century: they did not foresee the course of criticism nor anticipate the amount of labor which would be required for the reconstruction of the text of, say, the New Testament. Men like Lightfoot are found defending the readings of the common text against men like Beza; as there were some of them, like Lightfoot, who were engaged in the most advanced work which up to that time had been done on the Biblical text, Walton's "Polyglott," so others of them may have stood with John Owen, a few years later, in his strictures on that great work; and had their lot been cast in our day it is possible that many of them might have been of the school of Scrivener and Burgon, rather than of that of Westcott and Hort. But whether they were good critics or bad is not the point. It admits of no denial that they explicitly recognized the fact that the text of the Scriptures had suffered corruption in process of transmission, and affirmed that the "pure" text lies therefore not in one copy, but in all, and is to be attained not by simply reading the text in whatever copy may chance to fall into our hands, but by a process of comparison, i.e. by criticism. The affirmation of the Confession includes the two facts, therefore, first that the Scriptures in the originals were immediately inspired by God; and secondly that this inspired text has not been lost to the Church, but through God's good providence has been kept pure, amidst all the crowding errors of scribes and printers, and that therefore the Church still has the inspired Word of God in the originals, and is to appeal to it, and to it alone, as the final authority in all controversies of religion.

The defense of the right of the people to translations of Scripture in their mother tongue, is based by the Confession on the universality of the Gospel and the inability of the people at large to read and search the Scriptures in the original tongues. In making good this right, the competence of translations to convey the Word of God to the mind and heart is vigorously asserted; and as well the duty of all to make diligent use of translated Scripture, to the nourishing of the Christian life and hope. The sharp distinction that is drawn between the inspired originals and the uninspired translations is, therefore, not permitted to blind men to the possibility and reality of the conveyance in translations, adequately for all the ordinary purposes of the Christian life and hope, of that Word of God which lies in the sense of Scripture, and not in the letter save as in a vessel for its safe conduct. When exactness and precision are needed, as in religious controversies, then the inspired originals only can properly be appealed to. But just because of the doctrine of the perspicuity of Scripture, as set forth in section 7, and that of its perfection, as set forth in section 6, translations suffice for all ordinary purposes, and enable those who truly seek for it to obtain a thorough knowledge of what is "necessary to be known, believed, and observed, for salvation." The use of translations is, thus, vindicated by the Confessional doctrine of the properties of Scripture.

But something more than the right of translations is here vindicated. The duty of making translations "into the vulgar language of every nation" under heaven, is laid upon the consciences of the people of God—a duty to which the great Bible Societies are a part of the splendid response. And the duty of that personal searching of and feeding upon the Scriptures out of which alone a vigorous Christian life can be nourished, is laid upon the individual heart. The characteristic of Westminster piety is distinctly set forth as Bible piety; and everything is said here which could be said, to secure that the teachings of those who should acquire the right to teach under the sanction of this document, should be purely Bible teaching, and that the life of those who should live under it should draw its springs

from a personal, vital, and constant contact with "the Word of God, which liveth and abideth forever."

"If you will dispute in Divinity, you must be able to produce the Scriptures in the Original Languages. For no Translation is simply Authentical, or the undoubted word of God. In the undoubted word of God there can be no error. But in Translations there may be, and are errors. The Bible translated therefore is not the undoubted Word of God, but so far only as it agreeth with the Original" (p. 1). "They [the Anabaptists] can alledge no Scripture but that which is translated into their Mother-tongue, in which there may be and are some errors; for, though the Scriptures be the infallible Word of God, yet the Translators were men subject to error, and they sometimes mistook" (p. 15). To the Anabaptist objection: "Though we cannot prove the Letter to be well translated, that matters not much, for the Letter of the Scripture is not Scripture," Featley answers: "That is blasphemy, I pray take notice of it, he denieth the letter of the Text to be Scripture. (Anabaptist.) The letter of the Word of God is not Scripture, without the revelation of the Spirit of God: the Word revealed by the Spirit is Scripture. (D. Featley.) Very fine Doctrine; if God reveal not to us the meaning of the Scripture, is not the letter of the Text Scripture? By this reason, the greatest part of the Revelation, and other difficult Texts of Scripture should not be Scripture, because God hath not revealed to us the meaning of them" (p. 16).—DANIEL FEATLEY, "The Dippers dipt," London, 1660.

Usher, in his "Catholica Assertio Integritatis Fontium" (1610), lays down the propositions:—1. "Ea editio quæ ab ipso Spiritu Sancto profecta est, et a Prophetis atque Apostolis Ecclesiæ primum tradita, pro authentica agnoscenda est; norma que esse debet, ad quam translations humana industria elaboratæ examinari debeant" (p. 211). 2. These fountains are not so contaminated as to have lost their αὐθεντία for their normative function (p. 213).

The argument for the preservation of Scripture in integrity is drawn from providence, a priori applied (p. 215): it is not likely that God

would have suffered the words of such illustrious Prophets and Apostles to be generally falsified; merely profane writings have been preserved through longer periods. And the argument may be made a fortiori: God's providence is over all His works, least of all will it fail with the "divina oracula, præcipuum manus opus ejus," and thus it is incredible that "utriusque Testamenti verba a Sancto ipsius Spiritu dictata ita corrumperentur, ut amissa primæva αὐθεντία ..." (p. 216). He argues further against the possibility of a perfect translation (pp. 216–218).—JAMES USHER, "Works," ed. Elrington, xiv. 1864, pp. 211–218.

"To believe the Scriptures (which we are bid to search) whether in the Originals, or in the English translations, to be the Word of God (that is) to contain in them the Mind and Will of God, concerning Mans Salvation, is a necessary foundation of Christian Religion, that is, of our Faith, and worship of our Profession and Practise... Obj. Yea, but to believe the English scriptures, or the Bible translated into English to be the word of God; This is no foundation of Christian Religion. This is but an old piece of Popery in an Independent dresse... For answer hereunto, I lay down these two Conclusions: First, that Divine Truth in English, is as truly the Word of God, as the same Scriptures delivered in the Originall, Hebrew or Greek; yet with this difference, that the same is perfectly, immediately, and most absolutely in the Originall Hebrew and Greek, in other Translations, as the vessels wherein it is presented to us, and as far forth as they do agree with the Originalls: And every Translation agreeing with the Originall in the matter, is the same Canonick Scripture that Hebrew or Greek is, even as it is the same Water, which is in the Fountain, and in the Stream; we say this is the Water of such or such a Well, or Spring, because it came from thence; so it is in this business, when the Apostles spake the wonderfull works of God in the languages of all Nations (that were at Jerusalem) wherein they were born; the Doctrine was the same to all, of the same truth and Divine Authority in the severall Languages: And this Doctrine is the Rule we seek for, and the foundation upon which our Religion is grounded, and it is all one thing, whether it be brought to my understanding in Welch, or

English, or Greek, or Latine: All Language, or Writing, is but the Vessell, the Symbole, or Declaration of the Rule, not the Rule it self: It is a certain form or means by which the divine Truth cometh unto us, as things are contained in their words, and because the Doctrine and matter of the Text is not made known unto me but by words, and a language which I understand; therefore I say, the Scripture in English is the rule and ground of my Faith; whereupon I relying, have not a humane, but a Divine Authority for my Faith. Even as an unbeliever coming to our Sermons, is convinced of all, and judged of all, and he will acknowledge the Divine Truth of God, although by a humane voice in preaching, it be conveyed unto him, so we enjoy the infallible Doctrine of the Scripture, though by a mans Translation it be manifested unto me....

"O, but I cannot believe them to be true, because the Translators were not assisted immediately by the holy Ghost.

"Such extraordinary assistance is needfull to one, that shall indite any part of Scripture, but not to a Translator, for a man by his skill in both Languages, by the ordinary helps of prayer and industry is able to open in the English tongue, what was before lockt up in the Originall Hebrew, or Greek. As a Spanish or Danish Embassadour, delivers his Message, and receives his answer by an Interpreter.—The interpreter needs not any inspiration, but by his skill in both languages, and his fidelity, he delivers the true mind of one Nation to another: So it is in this case, the Translator is Gods interpreter to a strange people.

"Oh! But by the often change and variable Translations, it seems that some have erred....

"We do not say that this or that Translation is the Rule and Judge, but the Divine Truth translated; the knowledge whereof is brought to us in the Translation, as the vessell, wherein the Rule is presented to us, as is above said."—WILLIAM LYFORD, "The Plain Mans Senses Exercised," London, 1657, pp. 46–51.

"Now by Scripture is meant the Word of God written. Written then, Printed now; ... It is consented unto by all parties, that the Translators and Transcribers might erre, being not Prophets, nor indued with that infallible spirit in translating, or transcribing, as Moses and the Prophets were in their Original writings. The tentation lies on this side, ... Sith there are no Prophets, no Apostles, no nor any infallible spirits in the Church, how can we build on the foundation of the Prophets and Apostles now, sith the Scriptures in their translated Copies are not free from all possible corruptions, in the Copies we have either by transcribers or translators.... For the Originals, though we have not the Primitive Copies written by the finger of God in the Tables, or by Moses and the Prophets in the Hebrew, or by the Apostles, and the rest in the Greek for the New Testament, yet we have Copies in both languages, which Copies vary not from the Primitive writings in any matter which may stumble any. This concernes onely the learned, and they know that by consent of all parties, the most learned on all sides amongst Christians do shake hands in this, that God by his providence hath preserved them uncorrupt. What if there be variety of readings in some Copies? and some mistakes in writing or Printing? this makes nothing against our doctrine, sith for all this the fountaine runs clear, and if the fountain be not clear all translations must needs be muddie....

"For if an Ambassadour deliver his minde by an Interpreter, are not the words of the Interpreter the words of the Ambassadour? Right, say you, if the Interpreter do it truely: So, say I, a Translation, is a translation no further then he doth translate, and interpret truely: for a false translation, so farre as it is false, is no translation.... God being in his providence very careful, that his Church shall not want sufficient provision for their soules, hath ever, doth, and will ever so assist Translators, that for the main they shall not erre. I am of minde, that there was never any Christian Church, but the Lord did so hold the hands, and direct the pens of the translators, so that the translations might well be called the Word of God, ... subject I confesse to some errour, but not such errour, but that it did serve to help the Church to faith, for the salvation of their souls....

"I cannot but confesse that it sometimes makes my heart ake, when I seriously consider what is said, That we cannot assure our selves that the Hebrew in the Old Testament, and the Greek in the New, are the right Hebrew and Greek, any further then our Masters and Tutors, and the General consent of all the Learned in the world do so say, not one dissenting. But yet say these, since the Apostles, there are no men in the world but are subject to deceive, and to be deceived. All infallibility in matters of this nature having long since left the world.... And to the like purpose is that observation, That the two Tables written immediately by Moses and the Prophets, and the Greek Copies immediately penned by the Apostles, and Apostolical men are all lost, or not to be made use of, except by a very few. And that we have none in Hebrew or Greek, but what are transcribed. Now transcribers are ordinary men, subject to mistake, may faile, having no unerring spirit to hold their hands in writing.

"These be terrible blasts, and do little else when they meet with a weak head and heart, but open the doore to Atheisme and quite to fling off the bridle, which onely can hold them and us in the wayes of truth and piety: this is to fill the conceits of men with evil thoughts against the Purity of the Originals: And if the Fountains run not clear, the Translation cannot be clean.... It is granted that translators were not led by such an infallible spirit as the Prophets, and Apostles were.... Well then, as God committed the Hebrew Text of the Old Testament to the Jewes, and did and doth move their hearts to keep it untainted to this day: So I dare lay it on the same God, that he in his providence is so with the Church of the Gentiles, that they have and do preserve the Greek Text uncorrupt, and clear: As for some scapes by Transcribers, that comes to no more, than to censure a book to be corrupt, because of some scapes in the printing, and 'tis certaine, that what mistake is in one print, is corrected in another.... Therefore I make no question, but the sweet providence of God hath held the hearts, and hands, and pens of translators, so in all true Churches in all times, that the virnacular, and popular translation into mother tongues, have been made pure, without any considerable tincture of errour to endanger the soules of his Church. For what if

Interpreters and Translators were not Prophets, yet God hath and doth use so to guide them, that they have been, are, and shall be preserved from so erring in translating the Scriptures, that the souls of his people may have that which will feed them to eternal life, that they shall have sufficient for their instruction, and consolation here, and salvation hereafter.... Translations are sufficient with all their mistakes to save the Church. I will deliver this in the words of Master Baine (Spiritual armory. 263, 264). Faith cometh by hearing of the word from a particular Minister, who by confession of all is subject to error; As God hath not immediately and infallibly assisted Ministers, that they cannot erre at all, so we know that he is in some measure with them, that they cannot altogether erre. A Translation that erreth cannot beget faith, so farre forth as it erreth, The word Translated, though subject to error, is Gods Word, and begetteth, and increaseth faith, not so farre forth, as man through frailty erreth, but as he is assisted through speaking, and translating to write the truth. So he, This gives full satisfaction to me, and I hope it will to others."—RICHARD CAPEL, "Remains," London, 1658, pp. 3, 12–13, 19–20, 29–33, 38–40, 43, and 79–83.

"But to goe on, That cannot be the way of God which necessarily inferreth the darkeness, inevidence, and inextricable difficultie of understanding the Scriptures. But such is the way of Libertie of Conscience.... For Master John Goodwin, undeniably the learnedst and most godly man of that way, hath said in a marginall note, of men for piety and learning, I cannot admire enough.

"The Vindicators call the denying of Scriptures to be the word of God a damnable Heresie, and we have no certainty that the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament which we now have, either the English translation, or the Originall of Hebrew and Greek copies are the word of God. So then holding the Scriptures to be the Word of God in either of these two senses, or significations of the words (either translations, or originall) can with no tolerable pretext or colour be called a foundation of Christian Religion, unlesse their foundations be made of the credit, learning and authoritie of men.

"Because there is need to wonder, by the way, at this, Let the reader observe, that Libertines resolve all our faith, and so the certaintie of our salvation on Paper and Inke; and Mr. John Goodwin will allow us no foundation of faith, but such as is made of grammars and Characters, and if the Scripture be wrong pointed, or the Printer drunke, or if the translation slip, then our faith is gone: Whereas the meanes of conveying the things beleevd may be fallible, as writing, printing, translating, speaking, are all fallible meanes of conveying the truth of old and new Testament to us, and yet the Word of GOD in that which is delivered to us is infallible, 1. For let the Printer be fallible, 2. The translation fallible. 3. The Grammer fallible. 4. The man that readeth the word or publisheth it fallible, yet this hindreth not but the truth it self contained in the written word of God is infallible; ... Now in the carrying of the doctrine of the Prophets and Apostles to our knowledge, through Printers, translators, grammer, pens, and tongues of men from so many ages, all which are fallible, we are to look to an unerring and undeclinable providence, conveying the Testament of Christ, which in it self is infallible and begs no truth, no authoritie either from the Church as Papists dreame, or from Grammer, Characters, Printers, or translator, all these being adventitious, and yesterday accidents to the nature of the word of God, and when Mr. Goodwin resolves all our faith into a foundation of Christian Religion (if I may call it Religion, made of the credit, learning and authority of men, he would have mens learning and authoritie either the word of God, or the essence and nature thereof, which is as good as to include the garments and cloathes of man, in the nature and definition of a man, and build our faith upon a paper foundation, but our faith is not bottomed or resolved upon these fallible meanes....

"The Scripture resolves our faith on, Thus saith the Lord, the only authoritie that all the Prophets alledge, and Paul, 1 Thes. 2:13. For this cause also thanke we God without ceasing because when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of man (made of mens credit and learning as Mr. Goodwin saith), but (as it is in truth) the word of God.

"Weak, dry, and saplesse should be our faith, all our patience and consolation of the Scriptures, Rom. 15:4, all our hope on the word of God, Ps. 119:49, 50, 52, 54, 55, all our certainty of faith, if it were so as Mr. Goodwin averreth. But we have βεβαιότερον λόγον a more sure word of prophesie, surer than that which was heard on the Mount for our direction, and the establishing of our faith, 2 Pet. 1:19, Joh. 5:39.... Undoubtedly Christ appealeth to the Scriptures as to the onely Judge of that controversie, between him and the Jewes, whether the Son of Mary was the eternall Son of God, and the Saviour of the world, he supposed the written Scriptures which came through the hands of fallible Printers and Translatours, and were copies at the second, if not at the twentieth hand from the first copy of Moses and the Prophets, and so were written by sinfull men, who might have miswritten and corrupted the Scripture, yet to be a judge and a rule of faith, and fit to determine that controversie and all others, and a Judge de facto, and actually preserved by a divine hand from errors, mistakes and corruptions, else Christ might, in that, appealed to a lying Judge, and a corrupt and uncertaine witnesse; and though there be errors of number, genealogies, etc. of writing in the Scripture, as written or printed, yet we hold providence watcheth so over it, that in the body of articles of faith, and necessary truths, we are certaine with the certainty of faith, it is that same very word of God, having the same speciall operations of enlightening the eyes, converting the soule, making wise the simple, as being lively, sharper than a two-edged sword, full of divinity, life, Majesty, power, simplicity, wisdom, certainty, etc. which the Prophets of old, and the writings of the Evangelists, and Apostles had.

"Mr. Goodwins argument makes as much against Christ, and the Apostles, as against us, for they could never in all their Sermons and Writings so frequently, bottome and found the faith on καθὼς γέγραπται as it is written in the Prophets, as David saith, as Isaiah saith, and Hosea, as Daniel saith, as Moses and Samuel, and all the Prophets beare witnesse, if they had had no other certainty, that the writings of the Prophets, that came to their hands, was the very word of God, but the credit, learning and authority of men, as Mr.

Goodwin saith, for sure Christ and the Apostles, and Evangelists, had not the authentick and first copies of Moses and the Prophets, but only copies written by men, who might mistake, Printers and Translators not being then, more then now, immediately inspired Prophets, but fallible men, and obnoxious to failings, mistakes, and ignorance of ancient Hebraismes, and force of words; and if ye remove an unerring providence, who doubts but men might adde a π or subtract, and so vitiate the fountaine sense? and omit points, change consonants, which in Hebrew and Greek, both might quite alter the sense: ... May not reading, interpunction, a parenthesis, a letter, an accent, alter the sense of all fundamentals in the Decalogue? of the principles of the Gospel? and turne the Scripture in all points (which Mr. Doctour [Jeremy Taylor] restricts to some few darker places, whose senses are off the way to heaven, and lesse necessary) in a field of Problemes, and turne all beleiving into degladiations of wits? all our comforts of the Scriptures into the reelings of a Windmill, and phancies of seven Moons at once in the firmament? this is to put our faith and the first fruits of the Spirit, and Heaven and Hell to the Presse. But though Printers and Pens of men may erre, it followeth not that heresies should be tolerated, except we say, 1 That our faith is ultimately resolved upon characters, and the faith of Printers. 2 We must say, we have not the cleare and infallible word of God, because the Scripture comes to our hand, by fallible means, which is a great inconsequence, for though Scribes, Translators, Grammarians, Printers, may all erre, it followeth not that an [un-] erring providence of him that hath seven eyes, hath not delivered to the Church, the Scriptures containing the infallible truth of God. Say that Baruch might erre in writing the Prophetie of Jeremiah, it followeth not that the Prophetie of Jeremiah, which we have, is not the infallible word of God; if all Translatours and Printers did then alone watch over the Church, it were something, and if there were not one with seven eyes to care for the Scripture. But for Tradition, Councells, Popes, Fathers, they are all fallible means, and so far forth to be beleaved, as they bring Scripture with them."—SAMUEL RUTHERFORD, "A Free Disputation Against

pretended Liberty of Conscience," London, 1649, pp. 360–366, 370–371.

"How can we hold, and keep fast, the Letter of the Scripture, when there are so many Greek Copies of the New Testament? and those diverse one from another?" "Yes, well: For though there are many received Copies of the New Testament; yet there is no material difference between them. The four Evangelists do vary in the Relation of the same thing; yet because there is no contradiction, or material variation, we do adhere to al of them, and deny none. In the times of the Jews, before Christ, they had but one Original of the Old Testament; yet that hath several readings: there is a Marginal reading, and a Line reading, and they differ no less than eight hundred times the one from the other; yet the Jews did adhere to both, and denied neither; Why? Because there was no material difference. And so now, though there be many Copies of the New Testament; yet seeing there is no material difference between them, we may adhere to all: For whoever wil understand the Scripture, must be sure to keep, and hold fast the Letter, not denying it" (p. 47). [By "material" difference, Bridge means, not difference of moment, but difference in matter or in sense, as the opposite to difference in letter. For his teaching as to the importance of the letter see the quotation above, p. 206: "Though the Letter of the Scripture be not the Word alone, yet the Letter with the true sense and meaning of it, is the Word.... So if ye destroy the Letter of the Scripture, you do destroy the Scripture; and if you do deny the Letter, how is it possible that you should attain to the true sense thereof, when the Sense lies wrapped up in the Letters, and the words thereof?... If you would have the true knowledg, and understand the Scripture, and so behold this great Light in its full glory and brightness; you must diligently enquire into the true sense and meaning of it: for the true sense and meaning, is the soul thereof" (pp. 46, 47).]—WILLIAM BRIDGE, "Scripture-Light, the Most Sure Light," London, 1656.

"Consider how many copies were abroad in the world. The Old Testament was in every synagoge: and how many copies would men

take of the New? So that it is impossible, but still Scripture must be conveyed" (vi. p. 61). "Admirable is their [the Masorites'] pains, to prove the text uncorrupt, against a gainsaying Papist.... So that, if we had no other surety for the truth of the Old Testament text, these men's pains, methinks, should be enough to stop the mouth of a daring Papist" (iv. p. 20). "It was their great care and solicitousness ... to preserve the text in all purity.... Yet could they not, for all their care, but have some false copies go up and down amongst them, through heedlessness or error of transcribers.... To which may be added, that the same power and care of God, that preserves the church, would preserve the Scriptures pure to it: and he that did, and could, preserve the whole,—could preserve every part, so that not so much as a tittle should perish" (iii. pp. 405–408).—JOHN LIGHTFOOT, "Works" (ed. Pitman).

"The antient Jews preserved the letter of Scripture entire, but lost the sense; as the Papists now keep the text, but let go the truth" (p. 93). "Yet the bible hath been continued" [in spite of persecution] "still by the over-ruling hand of heaven" (p. 107).—JOHN ARROWSMITH, "A Chain of Principles," Cambridge, 1659.

The Interpretation of Scripture

2. Out of the same properties of Scripture follows also, logically, the Confessional doctrine of the interpretation of Scripture. This cuts off at once the greater part of the difficulty of interpretation, by declaring that Scripture has but one sense; and puts the chief instrument of interpretation in the hands of every Bible reader, by declaring that Scripture is its own interpreter, and that more obscure Scriptures are to be explained by plainer Scriptures. Of course, it is not meant that thus all difficulties of Scripture are cleared up; the Confession is not so immediately concerned here with the detailed scientific exposition of Scripture as with its practical and doctrinal use. What is intended is to affirm, in accord with the doctrines of the perfection and perspicuity of Scripture as set forth in sections 6 and 7, that the plain man, by paying heed to the clear passages of

Scripture and by passing provisionally over those of doubtful interpretation, may come to a full and saving knowledge of its teaching in all "things which are necessary to be known, believed, and observed, for salvation." If he stumbles upon dark statements, yet "in some place of Scripture or other" the saving doctrines may be found "so clearly propounded and opened" that he may obtain "a sufficient understanding of them." And this rule, thus commended to the plain man seeking light, is commended also to the scholar seeking his way through the obscurities of the letter. Human learning may give him aid; parallel passages alone will give him infallible guidance: and while the one is not to be neglected, certainly to the other he may be required docilely to bow. Of course, the rule here set forth is that which is known as "interpreting by the analogy of faith," and its foundation is the assumption of the common authorship of Scripture by God, who is truth itself. If we once allow the Confessional doctrine of the divine authorship of Scripture, it becomes only reasonable that we should not permit ourselves to interpret this divine author into inconsistency with Himself, without compelling reason. This is the Confession's standpoint; and from this standpoint the rule to interpret Scripture by Scripture is more than reasonable—it is necessary.

Having quoted Rom. 11:2: "God hath not cast away his people whom he foreknew," Arrowsmith adds: "The infallible meaning whereof may be gathered from that in Peter, Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father (1 Pet. 1:2). And more plainly yet in verse the seventh and eighth of the same chapter."—JOHN ARROWSMITH, "A Chain of Principles," Cambridge, 1659, p. 333.

"The same Scripture hath but one intire Sense. Indeed Papists tel us, that one Scripture hath many Senses; but the Protestants hold, That there is but one Sense of a Scripture, though divers applications of it... Though the sense of the Scripture be but one intire sense, yet somtimes the Scripture is to be understood Literally, sometimes Figuratively, and Metaphorically (but alwaies Spiritually, for when it is taken Literally, it is taken Spiritually) for saies the Apostle; If thy

Brother offend thee, heap coals of fire upon his head: that is not to be taken Literally, but Metaphorically" (pp. 48, 49). "Something you must do by way of Observation; something by way of Practice. [1.] As for Observation, in case you be able, you must consult the Original.... If you would understand the true sense and meaning of a controverted Scripture; then look wel into the Coherence, the Scope, and the Context thereof.... If you would understand the Scripture rightly, then compare one Scripture with another.... And be sure that you swerve not from the proportion of Faith" (pp. 50, 51).—WILLIAM BRIDGE, "Scripture-Light, the Most Sure Light," London, 1656.

"There are that make many senses of Scripture, but upon no sufficient ground, whereas it is apparent, there can be but one true and right sense. Yet we grant that some places may have a proper sense, or a mysticall or allegoricall, as it is called, Gal. 4:24. But if we weigh it well, there is but one sense of the words, which is proper, the other is the sense of the Type expressed by those words, which represents unto us some mysticall thing.... Such Allegoricall senses of Scripture, we must not easily admit, unless the Scripture it self warrant them." Neither must we "obtrude our Allegories upon others, as the sense of the Holy Ghost, much less to build upon them any ground of faith, or rule of life."—JOHN WHITE, "A Way to the Tree of Life," London, 1647, pp. 167, 168.

"The same Spirit which assureth an honest heart, that the Bible is the Word of God, will guide him to finde out the right sense of the Word. The sense of the Law is the Law; and of the Word of God there is but one sense: it is the easier found out, because there is but one sense."—RICHARD CAPEL, "Tentations," (The fourth Part), London, 1655, p. 243.

The Finality of Scripture

3. The whole exposition of the doctrine of Scripture is appropriately closed (section 10) with the assertion that the Holy Spirit, who

speaks in every part of Scripture, is the Supreme Judge in all controversies of religion. This is, of course, nothing more than the application of the property of authority laid down in section 4, to the use of Scripture, which is here in discussion. But there is a sense in which, as Turretin reminds us, this is the palmary point in the whole controversy as to the Scriptures. For with both the Romanist and the Enthusiast, everything else of the Protestant doctrine of Scripture which was brought into dispute—its authority, integrity, purity, perspicuity, or perfection—was brought into dispute only that Scripture might be declined as the Supreme Judge in controversies of religion. The Confession therefore most fitly closes its statement with a perfectly explicit affirmation that religious controversies are to be decided, not on the ground of "decrees of councils, opinions of ancient writers, doctrines of men, and private spirits," under whatever names they may masquerade in the changing modes of speech which the passage of years brings to controversies—whether as traditions, deliverances of reason, the voice of immanent divinity, the "testimony of the Spirit," the "Christian consciousness," private or corporate, or the consensus of scholarship—but on the ground of the unrepealable "Thus said the Lord" of Scripture itself. By this indisputable authority all other assumed authorities are to be tested, and in its "sentence we are to rest."

The mode of expression is worth our notice. The Supreme Judge is not said to be Scripture, but "the Holy Spirit speaking in Scripture." It is not, however, to be imagined that a distinction is here drawn between the Scriptures and the Holy Spirit speaking in them. The phraseology is determined by the form which the controversy with Rome had taken. The Romanists distinguished between the Rule and the Judge, and were ready to allow the Scriptures to be the Rule, though an incomplete Rule, but asserted that a Judge was also required to apply the Rule; and this Judge they argued must be a present and living one. The Protestants rejoined that the Holy Spirit who speaks in Scripture is a Living and the sole Supreme Judge. This language cannot be interpreted, therefore, as if it instituted a distinction between Scripture as a whole and that part of it in which

the Holy Spirit speaks, so that it is only affirmed that He speaks somewhere in Scripture, and His utterances are to be sought out from the mass of human speech in or under which they are buried, and only they held to be authoritative. Nor yet can it be read as if it were intended to say that the Holy Ghost speaks in Scripture only when, by His power, its words are driven home to our hearts and consciences and so "find us"; so that then, and then only, is Scripture a judge in controversies, when our spirits recognize its words as utterances of God. The passage deals with the objective right of Scripture to rule, not with the subjective recognition of that right on our part. Nor, even yet can it be read as Dr. Candlish appears to read it, as if the phrase were intended to express the twofold fact that Scripture is given by the Holy Spirit and our eyes opened to its meaning by the same Spirit; so that it is He, the combined inspirer and illuminator, who is the Judge in all controversies. In accordance with the whole context of this chapter, and with the ordinary Protestant usage as well,⁵⁰ the phrase must be read as asserting that, as a matter of fact, whenever and wherever Scripture speaks, that is the Holy Ghost speaking; and as a matter of duty, every controversy in religion shall be held to be settled by the Word of Scripture, and every other assumed authority shall be brought to the test and sentence of the decisive "It is written."

Nevertheless, the choice of this phrase, as has already been hinted, is not without significance. As Dr. Candlish points out in the article already quoted, Chillingworth, in his "The Religion of Protestants a Safe Way to Salvation," sought to meet the demand of Romish controversialists for a living Judge by suggesting that the Bible is not a dead rule, but the Judge's sentence put on record, and, being plain in all things necessary, is all that we require. The Confession seems to go a step further, and to declare that the living Spirit speaks in His Word, which is "quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword." If this is all that Dr. Candlish means by his language criticised above, then doubtless it is true that the Spirit is conceived of as more than the Word; but it needs to be recognized that it is wholly as in the Word that He is here spoken of, and not as also in

the heart, and that the representation is that the Word of God acts as a living thing because the Spirit is in it, and speaks out from it His decisions in all controversies. The words of Scripture, in brief, are not dead words, but are instinct with life.

"The scriptures ... are the alone rule of all controversies." "So then the only light by which differences are to be decided, is the word, being a full canon of God's revealed will: for the Lord doth not now, as in former times, make himself known by dreams, or visions, or any other immediate way."—EDWARD REYNOLDS, "Works," v. 1826, pp. 152, 153.

"The Scripture makes it self the judge and determiner of all questions and controversies in religion."—SAMUEL RUTHERFORD, "A Free Disputation, etc.," London, 1649, p. 361.

"The holy Scripture is called 'a more sure word' than that voice of God which came from heaven concerning his well-beloved Son, 2 Pet. 1:17–19, and so by parity of reason, if not a fortiori, the written word of God is surer than any voice which can speak in the soul of a man, and an inward testimony may sooner deceive us than the written word can; which being so, we may and ought to try the voice which speaks in the soul by the voice of the Lord which speaks in the Scripture."—GEORGE GILLESPIE, "A Treatise of Miscellany Questions," chapter xxi. 1649: Edinburgh reprint, 1844, p. 110, in "The Presbyterian's Armoury," ii. 1846.

" 'How may Christians inquire of God in their doubtings, as Israel did ... in theirs?' I must answer briefly, and that in the words of God himself, 'To the law and to the testament': to the written word of God, 'Search the Scriptures.' ... There is now no other way to inquire of God, but only from his word."—JOHN LIGHTFOOT, "Works," ed. Pitman, vi. p. 286.

Such is the doctrine of Holy Scripture taught in the Westminster Confession. If it be compared in its details with the teachings of

Scripture, it will be found to be but the careful and well-guarded statement of what is delivered by Scripture concerning itself. If it be tested in the cold light of scientific theology, it will commend itself as a reasoned statement, remarkable for the exactness of its definitions and the close concatenation of its parts. If it be approached from the point of view of vital religion, it will satisfy the inquirer by presenting him with a formula in which he will discover all the needs of his heart and life met and safeguarded. Numerous divergences from it have been propounded of late years, even among those who profess the Westminster doctrine as their doctrine. But it has not yet been made apparent that any of these divergences can commend themselves to one who would fain hold a doctrine of Scripture which is at once Scriptural and reasonable, and a foundation upon which faith can safely build her house. In this case, the old still seems to be better.

IV

THE DOCTRINE OF INSPIRATION OF THE WESTMINSTER DIVINES

"CONTROVERSIALISTS in general," says the late Principal Cunningham, in one of his essays, "have shown an intense and irresistible desire to prove that their peculiar opinions are supported by the Fathers, or by the Reformers, or by the great divines of their own church, and have often exhibited a great want both of wisdom and of candor in the efforts they have made to effect this object." This device has in no sphere of doctrinal discussion been made more use of than in recent controversies concerning the inspiration of the Scriptures. "The theory of a literal inspiration and inerrancy was not held by the Reformers," is the first remark which Dr. Schaff makes in

a recent incidental attempt to controvert this doctrine, and it is the first remark that falls to be made by most writers of his school. It was so good and learned a man as Tholuck who has, as Professor Pieper points out,³ "sit venia verbo—deceived a whole generation of scientific ... theologians" into so unhistorical an assertion. Tholuck misquoted and misinterpreted Luther in the article on inspiration in the first edition of Herzog's "Encyclopaedia," and has been copied ever since.

A certain palliation may be admitted for this particular error. There is a difference between the Reformers' treatment of Scripture and that of the theologians of the seventeenth century, a difference arising from the differing points of view from which they approach the subject. The Reformers, striving for very life, had little time or heart to do more than to insist on the sole divine authority of Scripture, and the facts involved in and underlying that authority. The Systematists of the seventeenth century, intrenching a position already won, sought to give these facts an indefectible foundation in a special theory of the mode of inspiration, the theory of dictation. The Reformers, though using language conformable to, or even suggestive of, the theory of dictation, do not formally present that theory, as do the Systematists of the seventeenth century, as the fixed ground-work of their doctrine of Scripture. They were concerned rather with the facts which the seventeenth century writers put this theory forward to explain and safeguard; and their thinking concerning Scripture appears, indeed, to be rooted in a theory of concursus or synergism rather than in one of dictation. Observing this, over-eager controversialists may be possibly misled into supposing that the Reformers were no more strenuous as to the facts involved—the facts as to the plenary or verbal inspiration and infallibility or inerrancy of the Scriptures—than as to the theory of the mode of inspiration which would best safeguard these facts. It is a prodigious historical blunder so to suppose. The fully developed theory of dictation as applied to inspiration seems to be a product of seventeenth century thought; but the Reformers are as strenuous as the Quenstedts and Buxtorfs as to the facts of detailed divine

authority and inerrancy which that theory was intended to secure. Yet one can at least conceive how such a blunder can be made, especially by men who are accustomed to assert that it is only on a theory of verbal dictation that detailed divine authority and inerrancy can be defended for the Scriptures. For us to understand the origin of their error, gross as it is, it is only necessary to suppose that they imagine the doctrines of verbal inspiration and inerrancy to be corollaries of the theory of dictation, instead of the theory of dictation to be, as it was historically, an attempt to supply for these necessary doctrines a firm and impregnable basis.

It is otherwise with the desperate contention which has lately been put forth by Dr. Briggs that the seventeenth century divines themselves were adherents of the modern "liberal" doctrine of Scripture. Such a contention as this, as the French say, brings us stupefaction. Pressed with the obvious fact that the Westminster Confession teaches the verbal or plenary inspiration and infallibility or inerrancy of the original Scriptures, Dr. Briggs seeks on the one hand to explain away the obvious meaning of the document, and on the other to undermine it by the round assertion that the British theologians of the Westminster age did not believe the doctrine of the verbal inspiration and inerrancy of Scripture. He has given himself repeatedly to the justification of this extraordinary assertion—the assertion, in effect, that the Reformed theologians of Britain were in violent (though assuredly unconscious) opposition to their brethren on the Continent, in the most fundamental postulate of their system. The most formal attempt to supply proof for it is to be found, however, in two sections in "Whither?" entitled respectively "Verbal Inspiration" and "Inerrancy of the Scriptures," where Dr. Briggs represents the doctrines so described as "false doctrines," which are not only extra-confessional, but wholly shift the ground of confessional doctrine. These assertions he supports by quotations from seventeenth century and especially Westminster divines.

As to verbal inspiration, he presents a catena of six quotations under the caption: "We shall give the opinions of a few Presbyterians of the

seventeenth century on this subject, in order to show how far modern divines have departed from the Westminster doctrine of the Bible." It is perhaps not altogether clear to what immediate antecedent the words "this subject" here refer. The subject of the section is "verbal inspiration," and the subject of the immediately preceding sentences is the outcry of certain modern divines against rationalizing critics for destroying the "scholastic theory of verbal inspiration." In any event, the catena of citations is meant to show that the Scriptures were not esteemed by the men who influenced the formulation of the Westminster doctrines of the Bible, as inspired in their "verbal expression"—a mode of statement which Dr. Briggs for himself also declares to be "entirely false." The doctrine of the inerrancy of the Scriptures, he declares to come "into conflict with the historical faith of the Church," on the basis of two quotations. One of these, from Rutherford, is introduced by the statement: "The Westminster divines did not teach the inerrancy of the original autographs. The saintly Rutherford thus expresses their views." The other is from Baxter and is introduced with the statement: "Richard Baxter was the leading Presbyterian of his time. He knew what he was about in his warning"—which is then quoted.

In all these quotations, without exception, Dr. Briggs falls into what has been called the "Fallacy of Quotations," which a recent writer describes as one of the most dangerous of fallacies, because one of the most difficult to detect. It "consists," this writer continues, "in alleging passages from well-known authors as proving some disputed point, when they do not prove it at all, but something resembling it as far as words go, though quite different from it in reality." It may perhaps be worth our while to exhibit the fallacy of these quotations. It might indeed be safely left to the general impossibility of the position asserted, to refute even so formal a presentation of proof. But as it appears that men unacquainted with the history of the doctrine of inspiration, and specifically with the writings of the Puritan divines, may be and have been misled; and as it is in any case a matter of considerable interest to observe how tolerably careful and logically exact writers can be misunderstood and made to testify

against their fundamental convictions; it may be useful to subject Dr. Briggs's proof-passages to a sufficiently close scrutiny at least fully to understand them.

DR. BRIGGS'S QUOTATIONS EXAMINED

Let us take up the catena on verbal inspiration first, and (on the principle of *ex pede Herculem*), let us begin with the last quotation. It is from John Ball's "Catechism," a famous work of great repute among the Puritans, and reads as follows:

"The testimonie of the Spirit doth not teach or assure us of the Letters, syllables, or severall words of holy Scripture, which are onely as a vessell, to carry and convey that heavenly light unto us, but it doth seale in our hearts the saving truth contained in those sacred writings into what language soever they be translated."

In adducing this as a proof that the seventeenth century divines did not believe in verbal inspiration, Dr. Briggs has obviously been misled by his own point of view. For there is a single assumption on which such a passage might seem to assert that only the matter of Scripture is inspired, or, at least, that we can be assured only of so much—the assumption that the sole conclusive evidence that the Scriptures are the word of God, is the witness of the Holy Spirit in the heart. But though this may be Dr. Briggs's point of view, it is not John Ball's. The very object of the passage quoted is rather to guard against this overworking of the testimony of the Spirit: it is one of six rules which are given professedly "to prevent mistaking" in the use of this evidence. The immediately succeeding rule warns us that "the Spirit doth not lead them in whom it dwelleth, absolutely and at once into all truth, but into all truth necessary to salvation, and by degrees" (p. 43); and one of the previous ones warns us not to forget that it is "private, not publique; testifying only to him that is endued therewith" (p. 42). Ball's object, thus, is not to suggest that the Scriptures are not verbally inspired, but only to deny that this can be proved by "the testimonie of the Spirit." By other forms of testimony,

however (he teaches), it can be proved; and resting upon them as giving a "certainty of the mind," he unhesitatingly teaches verbal inspiration. Let us hear his statement of it:

"Q. What call you the word of God?

A. The holy Scripture immediately inspired, which is contained in the Books of the Old and New Testament.

Q. What is it to be immediately inspired?

A. To be immediately inspired, is to be as it were breathed, and to come from the Father by the Holy Ghost, without all means.

Q. Were the Scriptures thus inspired?

A. Thus the holy Scriptures in the Originals were inspired both for matter and words" (pp. 6–8).

Examination of the other quotations given in this catena would lead to similar results. Let us take the first. It is drawn from William Lyford's "Plain Mans Senses Exercised," and runs as follows:

"All language or writing is but the vessel, the symbol, or declaration of the rule, not the rule itself. It is a certain form or means by which the divine truth cometh unto us, as things are contained in words, and because the doctrine and matter of the text is not made unto one, but by words and a language which I understand; therefore I say, the Scripture in English is the rule and ground of my faith, and whereupon I relying have not a humane, but a divine authority for my faith."

Here, again, the fault in quotation arises from the fact that a passage is given in which the writer is not speaking to the specific subject for which he is quoted. Lyford is not here discussing directly the matter of inspiration at all, but is arguing the widely different question of the value of translations of Scripture—whether the word of God, that

is, as he defines it (p. 46), "the Mind and Will of God," is so competently conveyed in translations that the unlearned may have in them a divine foundation for faith. But though he holds that "Divine Truth in English, is as truly the Word of God, as the same Scriptures delivered in the Originall, Hebrew or Greek," he feels bound to add: "yet with this difference, that the same is perfectly, immediately, and most absolutely in the Originall Hebrew and Greek, in other Translations, as the vessels wherein it is presented to us, and as far forth as they do agree with the Originalls" (p. 49). The difference between the originals and the translations arises from the fact that "the Translators were not assisted immediately by the Holy Ghost," while "such extraordinary assistance is needfull to one, that shall indite any part of Scripture" (p. 50). With all his tendency to defend the value of translations, therefore, he does not assimilate the inspiration of the originals to the divine element common to the two.

This enhancement of translations is carried, perhaps, a step higher by another of Dr. Briggs's witnesses, Richard Capel, whom we may take as our third example, representing the middle of the catena. The following is the passage which Dr. Briggs quotes:

"Now, what shall a poor unlearned Christian do, if he hath nothing to rest his poore soul on? The originals he understands not; if he did, the first copies are not to be had; he cannot tell whether the Hebrew or Greek copies be the right Hebrew or the right Greek, or that which is said to be the meaning of the Hebrew or Greek, but as men tell us, who are not prophets and may mistake. Besides, the transcribers were men and might err. These considerations may let in Atheisme like a flood."

The effect of this quotation is somewhat spoiled, as Dr. Briggs gives it, by the omission of the italicizing (restored here), which indicates words borrowed by Capel from his opponent. For Capel is not stating his own view here, as the unwary reader of this extract only might be misled into believing, but controverting another's view. He is inveighing against the carelessness of the welfare of human souls

which is shown by those who dwell upon the uncertainties of copies and the fallibilities of scribes and translators, as if the saving word of God did not persist through all these dangers. It is this mode of procedure which he says "may let in Atheisme like a flood"; the passage quoted by Dr. Briggs being a positing of difficulties which he at once sets himself "to help" by laying down a series of contrary propositions. Accordingly he had said at an earlier point (pp. 38–40):

"I cannot but confesse that it sometimes makes my heart ake, when I seriously consider what is said, That we cannot assure our selves that the Hebrew in the Old Testament, and the Greek in the New, are the right Hebrew and Greek, any further then our Masters and Tutors, and the General consent of all the Learned in the world do so say, not one dissenting, ... All infallibility in matters of this nature having long since left the world.... And to the like purpose is that observation, That the two Tables written immediately by Moses and the Prophets, and the Greek Copies immediately penned by the Apostles, and Apostolical men are all lost, or not to be made use of, except by a very few. And that we have none in Hebrew or Greek, but what are transcribed. Now transcribers are ordinary men, subject to mistake, may faile, having no unerring spirit to hold their hands in writing.

"These be terrible blasts, and do little else when they meet with a weak head and heart, but open the doore to Atheisme, and quite to fling off the bridle, which onely can hold them and us in the wayes of truth and piety: this is to fill the conceits of men with evil thoughts against the Purity of the Originals: And if the Fountains run not clear, the Translation cannot be clean."

Capel's purpose, in a word, is not to depreciate the infallibility of the autographs, but to vindicate the general purity of the transmission in copies and translations. The originals were in his view "the dictates of the Spirit," and their writers being "indued with the infallible Spirit," "might not erre." His tendency was thus not to lower the

autographs towards the level of the translations, but to elevate the translations, so far as may be, towards the originals, claiming, in effect, for them a kind of secondary (providential) inspiration. Accordingly, although he would confess that the transmitters of Scripture had "no unerring spirit to hold their hands in writing," he yet asserted that God so assists them "that for the main they shall not erre," and that God does "so hold the hands, and direct the pens of the translators, so that the translations might well be called the Word of God" (p. 31). No student of the history of doctrine need be told that the affinities of this view are with the highest, even the most mechanical theory of inspiration.

The remaining three quotations in the catena on verbal inspiration, taken from Poole, Vines, and Wallis, are of precisely similar character to those already investigated, and we need not spend time in showing what must now be obvious to every careful reader, that they do not bear at all on the point in support of which they are quoted. Let us turn rather to the passages quoted to prove that the "Westminster divines did not teach the inerrancy of the original autographs." The first of these is from Samuel Rutherford, who proves to be only another representative of the same type of thought that Capel stands for. Indeed, if the reader will read the long passage given in "Whither?" with an eye to the italics which mark the phraseology borrowed from John Goodwin, whom Rutherford is here refuting, or the longer passage given in "The Bible, the Church, and the Reason" (pp. 221, etc.), with the same care, he will not fail to catch a hint of Rutherford's high doctrine. And if he should read with those passages the preceding and succeeding contexts, and the intervening omissions, so as to catch the drift of the whole argument, he would scarcely be able to repress his astonishment that Dr. Briggs could have so misapprehended his author. Rutherford here, in a word, is almost bitterly attacking Goodwin's assertions of the fallibility of the transmission of Scripture; over against which he posits an "unerring and undecidable providence" (p. 363) presiding over it. So far is he from suggesting that the autographs are not inerrant that he is almost ready to assert that all the copies and

translations are inerrant too. He evidently feels himself to be making a great concession, and to be almost straining the truth, when he admits (p. 366) that there may be "errours of number, genealogies, etc., of writing in the Scripture, as written" [i.e. in the manuscript form] "or printed." Though God has used means which, considered in themselves, are fallible in transmitting the Scriptures, yet He has not left the transmission to their fallibility, but has added an unerring providence, keeping them from slipping. He urges that Goodwin's argument "makes as much against Christ, and the Apostles, as against us," for they too had but copies of the Old Testament, the scribes and translators of which were "then [no] more then now, immediately inspired Prophets," and were consequently liable to error; so that "if ye remove an unerring providence, who doubts but men might adde ... or subtract, and so vitiate the fountaine sense? and omit points, change consonants, which in the Hebrew and Greek, both might quite alter the sense?" Yet both Christ and the apostles appeal to the Scriptures freely, with such phrases as "as David saith" and the like, staking their trustworthiness on the true transmission. Nor will he allow the argument that it is the inerrancy of the quoters, not of the text quoted, which is our safeguard in such cases. This, he says, presumes "that Christ and the Apostles might, and did finde errours, and misprintings even in written [i.e. manuscript] Scripture, which might reduce the Church in after ages to an invincible ignorance in matters of faith, and yet they gave no notice to the Church thereof" (p. 367).

To Rutherford, therefore, all the Scriptures, whether in matters fundamental or not, were written by God (p. 373); he quotes them with the formula, "The Holy Ghost saith" (pp. 353, 354 bis); he declares that the writers of the New Testament were "immediately inspired" (p. 368), a phrase of quite technical and unmistakable meaning; represents it as the part of an apostate to deny "all the Scriptures to be the word of God" (p. 349); and looks upon them as written under an influence which preserved them from error and mistake (pp. 362, 366, etc.), and as constituting a more sure word than an immediate oracle from heaven (p. 193). In the immediately

preceding words to those which Dr. Briggs extracts, he declares that "The Scripture resolves our faith on, Thus saith the Lord," which is "the only authoritie that all the Prophets alledge, and Paul"; and adds that, if it were so as Mr. Goodwin averred, "all our certainty of faith" would be gone; wherefore he praises God that "we have βεβαιότερον λόγον a more sure word of Prophesie, surer then that which was heard on the Mount for our direction, and the establishing of our faithe."

It is an interesting indication of the universality of high views of inspiration, that John Goodwin, Rutherford's adversary in this treatise, himself held them. So far as the points we are here interested in are concerned, indeed, the dispute was little more than a logomachy, since Rutherford and his friends admitted that the providential preservation of Scripture is not so perfect but that some errors have found their way into the several copies, and that the translations are only in a derived sense the word of God, and only so far forth as they truly represent the originals; while Goodwin was ready to allow that God's providence is active in preserving the manuscript transmission substantially pure, and that the truth of God is adequately conveyed in any good translation. In Goodwin's reply to his assailants it is made abundantly apparent that he, too, believed in the inerrancy of the autographs, his objection to calling copies and translations the word of God, in every sense, turning just on this—that no one extant copy or translation is errorlessly the word of God.

But what about Richard Baxter? Dr. Briggs tells us that he "was the leading Presbyterian of his time," and that "he knew what he was about in his warning," which is quoted as Dr. Briggs's final proof that "the Westminster divines did not teach the inerrancy of the original autographs." But the passage that is quoted has again really nothing to do with the inerrancy of the autographs. It is only one of Baxter's frequently repeated statements of his sound apologetical position as to the relative value of different portions of Scripture, and the relative importance of the sense and the letter. It is partly on account

of his firm grasp and clear expression and defence of this apologetical position, that we think of Baxter as one of the wisest and soundest writers on the subject of Scripture in his day. Here is the passage:

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

This is admirably said, we say, and despite the fact that it is requoted by Dr. Briggs in "The Bible, the Church, and the Reason," to show that Baxter allows errors in the Scriptures, it really has no bearing on that question. Not that it is at all doubtful what attitude Baxter held on that question. He has been frequently misunderstood and misquoted, but most gratuitously. He did not for a moment doubt the verbal inspiration and autographic inerrancy of Scripture. It is one thing to refuse to make the verbal inspiration of Scripture the ground of all religion; another to deny its reality or importance: and it is the former of these that Baxter did, and the latter that Dr. Briggs says he did. Baxter's chief works are accessible to all in Duncan's London edition of his practical writings, published in 1830, so that

we may content ourselves here with the adduction of a passage or two, which will put his position on the exact point at issue beyond doubt, leaving it to the interested student to work out the details for himself. This is Baxter's pervasive testimony:

"Those that affirm that it was but the doctrine of Christianity that was sealed by the Holy Ghost, and in which they were infallible, but that their writings were in circumstantial, and by passages, and method, and words, and other modal respects, imperfect and fallible as other good men's, (in a less degree,) though they heinously and dangerously err, yet do not destroy, or hazard the Christian religion by it" (xx. p. 95).

"Though the apostles were directed by the Holy Ghost in speaking and writing the doctrine of Christ, so that we know they performed their part without errors, yet the delivering down of this speech and writings to us is a human work, to be performed by the assistance of ordinary providence" (xx. p. 115).

"All the credit of the Gospel and christian religion doth not lie on the perfect freedom of the Scriptures from all error: but yet we doubt not to prove this their perfection against all the cavils of infidels, though we can prove the truth of our religion without it" (xx. p. 118).

"All that the holy writers have recorded is true, (and no falsehood in the Scripture, but what is from the error of scribes and translators)" (xv. p. 65).

"No error or contradiction is in it, but what is in some copies, by the failing of preservers, transcribers, printers, or translators" (xxi. p. 542).

"If Scripture be so certainly true, then those passages in it that seem to men contradictory, must needs be true; for they do but seem so, and are not so indeed" (xx. p. 27).

THE REAL WESTMINSTER DOCTRINE

The Westminster doctrine of inspiration has probably emerged before this from the confusion into which Dr. Briggs's unfortunate quotations would immerse it. Doubtless it will be more satisfactorily visible, however, if we adjoin a clear and succinct statement of it from the pen of some representative writer. Probably no one man has a better right to be quoted as an exponent of the doctrine of the Westminster divines as a body, on this subject, than "the Patriarch of Dorchester," John White. He was chosen by them at the outset of their labors to serve as one of the two assessors, whose activity was expected to supplement the little public capacity of Twisse. His book "Directions for the Profitable Reading of the Scriptures" was introduced to the world by one of the leading Westminster divines, Dr. Thomas Goodwin, in a glowing eulogy. And Baxter¹⁴ names it among the works on the divine authority of the Scriptures which he especially recommends to the English reader. It is, therefore, a truly representative book. We cannot do better than to adduce White's general statement as a fair representation of the prevalent view of his time. He founds his remarks on 2 Pet. 1:20, 21, and writes as follows:

"The Apostle ... describes that kinde of assistance of the holy Ghost, in the delivery of the Scriptures, two ways. First, by way of negation, that they were neither of private interpretation, nor came by the wil of man. Secondly, he describes the same assistance affirmatively, testifying that they spake as they were moved by the holy Ghost.

"In the former of these, wherein he expresseth this manner of delivering the Scriptures by way of negation, the Apostle excludes the working of the naturall faculties of mans mind altogether: First, the understanding, when he denies that the Scripture is of any private interpretation, or rather of mens own explication, that is, it was not expressed by the understanding of man, or delivered according to mans judgement, or by his wisdome. So that not onely the matter or substance of the truths revealed, but the very forms of expression were not of mans devising, as they are in Preaching, where the

matter which men preach is not, or ought not to be the Ministers own that preacheth, but is the Word of truth, 2 Tim. 2:15 but the tearms, phrases, and expressions are his own. Secondly, he saith, that it came not by the will of man, who neither made his own choice of the matters to be handled, nor of the forms and manner of delivery. So that both the understanding, and will of man, as farre as they were meerly naturall, had nothing to doe in this holy work, save onely to understand, and approve that which was dictated by God himselfe, unto those that wrote it from his mouth, or the suggesting of his Spirit.

"Again, the work of the Holy Ghost in the delivery of the Scriptures is set down affirmatively, when the Pen-men of those sacred writings are described, to speak as they were moved or carried by the holy Ghost, a phrase which must be warily understood. For we may not conceive that they were moved in writing these Scriptures, as the pen is moved by the hand that guides it, without understanding what they did: For they not onely understood, but willingly consented to what they wrote, and were not like those that pronounced the Devils Oracles, rapt and carried out of themselves by a kinde of extasie, wherein the Devill made use of their tongues and mouths, to pronounce that which themselves understood not. But the Apostles meaning is, that the Spirit of God moved them in this work of writing the Scriptures, not according to nature, but above nature, shining into their understandings clearly, and fully, by an heavenly and supernaturall light, and carrying and moving their wils thereby with a delight, and holy embracing of that truth revealed, and with a like desire to publish and make known the secrets and counsels of God, revealed unto them, unto his Church.

"Yea, beyond all this, the holy Ghost not only suggested unto them the substance of that doctrine which they were to deliver and leave upon record unto the Church, (for so far he usually assists faithfull Ministers, in dispensing of the Word, in the course of their Ministry) but besides hee supplied unto them the very phrases, method, and whole order of those things that are written in the

Scriptures, whereas he leaves Ministers in preaching the Word, to the choice of their own phrases and expressions, wherein, as also in some particulars which they deliver, they may be mistaken, although in the main fundamentals which they lay before their hearers, and in the generall course of the work of their Ministry, they do not grossly erre. Thus then the holy Ghost, not only assisted holy men in penning the Scriptures, but in a sort took the work out of their hand, making use of nothing in the men, but of their understandings to receive and comprehend, their wils to consent unto, and their hands to write downe that which they delivered. When we say, that the holy Ghost framed the very phrase and style wherein the Scriptures were written, we mean not, that he altered the phrase and manner of speaking, wherewith custome and education had acquainted those that wrote the Scriptures, but rather speaks his own words, as it were in the sound of their voice, or chooseth out of their words and phrases such as were fit for his own purpose. Thus upon instruments men play what lesson they please, but the instrument renders the sound of it more harsh or pleasant, according to the nature of it self. Thus amongst the Pen-men of Scriptures, we finde that some write in a rude and more unpolished style, as Amos; some in a more elegant phrase, as Isay. Some discover art and learning in their writings, as S. Paul; others write in a more vulgar way, as S. James. And yet withall the Spirit of God drew their naturall style to an higher pitch, in divine expressions, fitted to the subject in hand." (Pp. 59–62.)

It is almost pathetic to observe White's efforts to mitigate the effects of his somewhat mechanical conception of the mode of inspiration in the matter of the style of the authors. Others made similar efforts and sometimes with more success. But the time had not yet come when the true concursus of inspiration, by which we may see that every word of Scripture is truly divine and yet every word is as truly human, had become the common property of all. In this, too, White is a fair exponent of his day, and reminds us anew that so far from denying verbal inspiration and the inerrancy of Scripture, the tendency to error of the time was in the opposite direction; and in the strenuousness of its assertion of the fact of an inspiration which

extended to the expression and secured infallibility, it was ever in danger of conceiving its mode after a mechanical fashion. That this was the ruling attitude of the middle of the seventeenth century among the Continental theologians, whether Reformed or Lutheran, everybody acknowledges. It is clear from what we have seen that the English Puritans and Scotch Presbyterians were not an isolated body cut off from the currents of thought of their day; but were in harmony with the best theologizing and highest conceptions of their Continental brethren.

With this result we might fairly close the present discussion as, in a sense, formally complete. We are loath to leave the subject, however, without completing it still further by adjoining a tolerably full exposition of the doctrine of inspiration as it was held by some one of the Westminster men, who was more of a Biblical scholar than a dogmatist. In such a one, if in any one, we might expect to find a different view as to the origin and character of the Bible from that which had become the common property of the Protestant systematists of the day. No one offers himself for such a study more favorably than John Lightfoot, who was probably the greatest Biblical scholar that took any large part in the discussions of the Assembly, and who does not appear to have busied himself much with studies in technical dogmatics. If in any one, in him we might expect, then, to find that lowered view of Scripture which Dr. Briggs declares to belong especially to Biblical scholars, and wishes us to think characteristic of the Westminster men. Certainly Lightfoot's distinguished services to Biblical study should make him an honored teacher to even our later and, we would fain believe, wiser age; while his general eminence, ability, and learning will give us increased confidence in appealing to him to tell us just what was the doctrine of inspiration recognized by students of the Bible in his day as Scriptural.

A subordinate interest in ascertaining Lightfoot's attitude towards and thought of Scripture is added by the facts that Dr. Briggs thinks highly of him as an exegete, and has included his name among those

to whom he bids us look for a lower and (in his view) truer doctrine of inspiration than that which esteems the Scriptures as in the fullest sense the utterances of God, and as such free from all error.¹⁶ "The Westminster divines," Dr. Briggs writes in the latter of these passages, "knew as well as we do that the accents and vowel-points of the Hebrew text then in their possession did not come down from the original autographs, pure and unchanged. They were not in the original autographs at all.... They knew, as well as we know, that there were variations of reading and uncertainties and errors in the Greek and Hebrew texts in their hands.... They knew that there were errors of citation and of chronology and of geographical statement in the text of Scripture. Luther and Calvin, Walton and Lightfoot, Baxter and Rutherford, and a great company of Biblical scholars recognized them, and found no difficulty with them." There are some things about this passage, indeed, which might justify one in paying it no attention. It is not clear from it just what is intended to be asserted as to Lightfoot's view of Scripture and its fallibility. Is it of Scriptures "as God gave them," or of the Scriptures "as we have them" that Dr. Briggs means his final assertion to be taken? The company in which Lightfoot is here placed is certainly a company who did not recognize errors of any sort in the genuine "text of Scripture," but labored to explain all apparent inaccuracies which the enemies of the Bible pretended to find in it—not however without "finding difficulty with them." Moreover, Dr. Briggs himself has elsewhere recognized the fact that Lightfoot held the highest conceivable doctrine of verbal inspiration. "Relying upon these"—i.e. apparently the book Zohar and other Cabbalistic writing—he tells us, "the elder Buxtorf with his great authority misled a large number of the most prominent of the Reformed divines of the continent to maintain the opinion of the divine origin and authority of the Massoretic vowel points and accents. In England, Fulke, Broughton, and Lightfoot adopted the same opinion. These rabbinical scholars exerted, in this respect, a disastrous influence upon the study of the Old Testament." Were our impulse to be taken from Dr. Briggs's representations, therefore, we might be a little puzzled to know what we are bidden to look into Lightfoot to find. He is, however, worthy

of our study for his own sake, and for the sake of the history of the doctrine of inspiration in Britain in the Westminster age; and one of the incidental results of our study will be to inform us which of Dr. Briggs's Lightfoots is the true one—the Lightfoot who freely recognized errors in the text of Scripture, or the Lightfoot who held that even the Hebrew vowel points and accents were from God. At all events, we invite our readers to a tolerably full exposition of Lightfoot's doctrine of inspiration as a proper close to our study of the doctrine as held by the Westminster men. We shall make this exposition by means of a copious series of quotations from Lightfoot's works,¹⁹ arranged in an order which will bring his doctrine of Scripture before us in something of a systematic form.

LIGHTFOOT'S DOCTRINE OF SCRIPTURE

The canon of Scripture, according to Lightfoot's conception, was determined, both in its extent and its details, by the inspiration of God, Scripture being nothing other than the revelation of God's will to man. He says:

"So that the Spirit of God inspired certain persons, whom he pleased, to be the revealers of his will, till he had imparted and committed to writing what he thought fit to reveal under the Old Testament; and when he had completed that, the Holy Ghost departed, and such inspirations ceased. And when the gospel was to come in, then the Spirit was restored again, and bestowed upon several persons for the revealing farther of the mind of God, and completing the work he had to do, for the settling of the gospel, and penning of the New Testament: and that being done, these gifts and inspirations cease, and may no more be expected, than we may expect some other gospel yet to come" (iii. 371).

The Scriptures are thus the product of the energy of God operating on certain selected men endowed for their production. It follows, of course, that they contain all the will of God.

"When the inspired penmen had written all that the Holy Ghost directed to write, 'all truth' was written" (iii. 369).

And it follows equally that no further revelations are to be expected.

"Now was the whole will of God revealed and committed to writing, and from henceforth must vision, and prophecy, and inspiration, cease for ever. These had been used and imparted all along, for the drawing up of the mind of God into writing" (iii. 368).

On this latter matter he was led to speak fully and repeatedly in opposition to the "new spirits" of the sectaries of his day. Thus he writes in another place when commenting on Judges 20:27:

" 'How may Christians inquire of God in their doubtings, as Israel did, here and elsewhere, in theirs?' I must answer briefly, and that in the words of God himself, 'To the law and to the testament': to the written word of God, 'Search the Scriptures.' As you might appeal to Balaam to bear witness concerning the blessedness of Israel, whereas he was called forth to curse them;—so, for the proof of this matter,—viz. that there is now no other way to inquire of God, but only from his word,—you may appeal to those very Scriptures, that they produce, that would maintain that there are revelations and inspirations still, and that God doth still very often answer his people by them.... To speak fully to this matter, I should clear this,—I. That, after God had completed and signed the Scripture-canons, Christians must expect revelations no more.... II. I should show, that the Scripture containeth all things necessary for us to know or to inquire of God about" (vi. 286–287).

He did speak "fully to this matter" in his disputation for the Doctor's degree, delivered in 1652, in which he defended the thesis, *Post Canonem Scripturæ consignatum, non sunt novæ Revelationes expectandæ* (v. 455 sqq.). As to the sealing of the canon, he treats the three matters of the canon that is sealed, and the time and the mode

of its sealing. The time of the close of the canon, he teaches, was determined by the withdrawal of the inspiring Spirit; which also determines the mode in which it was done: "quod nempe ipsa ultimi calami, per ultimum hunc Spiritus Sancti amanuensem, Scriptis inspiratis appositio, fuerit ipsissima consignatio" (p. 457). The canon had been written at the impulse of God, through instruments selected from time to time for the revelation of His will; and as they wrote it, it gradually grew to its completion.

"Prophetæ sancti, et divino Spiritu afflati, in unoquoque sæculo a Deo ad conscribendum sacrum canonem ordinati et edocti, ab impiis et nefariis hominibus licet pro ludibrio et derisu haberentur, a piis tamen et Deum timentibus pro veris prophetis et habiti sunt, et honorati. Quæcunque ergo illi ex dictamine Spiritus Sancti conscripserant, in manus piorum hominum ab ipsis tradita, pro divino verbo et canone ab illis recepta, æstimata et servata" (v. 457).

So, too, with the New Testament: "When the last of the theopneustic writers had applied the last pen to his writings, the canon was, as it was completed, so also by this very act, sealed" (p. 457). Thus "the New Testament grew gradually, just as the Old Testament had grown" (pp. 457–458). The whole truth was therefore written, the canon of Scripture sealed, and revelations were no longer to be expected, "cùm ... scripsissent illi omnia ea, quæ ab iis scribi voluit Spiritus Sanctus" (p. 458). This happened, as a matter of fact, when John wrote the Apocalypse, which Lightfoot makes the latest-written of New Testament books, while yet placing its composition before the destruction of Jerusalem. He says:

"The last of those celestial writers was John the Evangelist and Apocalyptist. He wrote the Apocalypse last of all his writings; and when it was completed as a crown, the canon of the New Testament was perfected and sealed, and that of the whole Scripture as well" (p. 459).

It necessarily results from this doctrine of the canon, as we have already seen, not only that no new revelations are to be expected, but also that it is to Scripture itself, and to it alone, that we are to go for spiritual guidance; and that we are to treat it with due reverence and to approach it with all confidence:

"Divinæ Scripturæ oracula pro oraculo colimus, extra quod nihil vel sciscitandum, vel expectandum, vel æstimandum, quod ad fidem pertineat, aut mores, aut bonam conscientiam. Sacrosanctum hunc canonem veneramus, ut verum, solum, perfectum omnium fidei articulorum penuarium, perfectam omnium actionum nostrarum regulam et normam" (p. 460). "Illi [i.e. Pontificii] 'ecclesiam' statuunt, nos 'ipsam Scripturam': atque hoc non sine summa ratione, ac summa ipsius Scripturæ autoritate. Ad hoc nempe oraculum, quasi ab ipso Dei digito, diriguntur homines ad omnia quærenda et cognoscenda, quæ ad Deum cognoscendum, et ad salutem acquirendam, faciunt" (p. 461). "At nos firmissimum habemus verbum Scripturæ, ad omnia hæc, quæ nobis scitu opus est, detegenda, et aptum, et datum" (p. 462).

Inspiration having been thus made the principle of the canon, it becomes at once the criterion of canonical books. An instructive passage occurs when Lightfoot is commenting on the prologue of Luke's Gospel:

"From these men's sermons and relations, many undertook to write gospels, partly for their own use, and partly for the benefit of others: which thing though they did lawfully and with a good intent, yet because they did it not by inspiration, nor by divine warrant; albeit what they had written, were according to truth, yet was the authority of their writings but human, and not to be admitted into the divine canon. But Luke had his intelligence and instructions 'from above' (ἀνωθεν, ver. 3)" (iii. 19).

This criterion is applied of course, however, especially to the exclusion of the apocryphal books:

"The Apocrypha speaks for itself, that it is not the finger of God, but the work of some Jews. Which got it so much authority among Christians; because it came from them, from whom the lively oracles of God indeed came also. But the Talmud may be read to as good advantage, and as much profit, and far more" (ii. 9).

"The words of the text are the last words of the Old Testament,—there uttered by a prophet, here expounded by an angel: there concluding the law, and here beginning the gospel.... Thus sweetly and nearly should the two Testaments join together, and thus divinely would they kiss each other, but that the wretched Apocrypha doth thrust in between.... It is a thing not a little to be admired, how this Apocrypha could ever get such place in the hearts and in the Bibles of the primitive times, as to come to sit in the very centre of them both.... But it is a wonder, to which I could never yet receive satisfaction, that in churches that are reformed, they have shaken off the yoke of superstition, and unpinned themselves from off the sleeve of former customs, or doing as their ancestors have done,—yet in such a thing as this, and of so great import, should do as first ignorance, and then superstition, hath done before them. It is true, indeed, that they have refused these books out of the canon, but they have reserved them still in the Bible: as if God should have cast Adam out of the state of happiness, and yet have continued him in the place of happiness" (vi. 131–132).

The unity of the canon which is touched on in the last extract is in another place largely dwelt upon. He is commenting on Luke 9:30, 31:

"Remember that Moses here is the law, and Elias the prophecy; and you have here an emblem of the Scriptures, which is, that 'lex atque

omnis prophetarum chorus Christi prænotat passionem.' ... Marcion, the heretic, did once maintain, that the Old Testament was given by one God, and the New by another; the Old, by a God of cruelty,—the New, by a God of mercy.... If he will but take the Bible and read, he himself shall evince his own conscience of this truth,—that both Testaments breathe from one Spirit; that both mainly aim at one thing; though the letter of the Old be different from the letter of the New, as death from life, yet, that the Spirit of both is the same, as there is a life under death; that the Old is the New under a cloud, and the New is the Old with sunshine; that not only upon this mount, but even throughout the Old Testament, Moses and Elias, law and prophecy, talk to Christ, 'and speak of his decease, which he should accomplish at Jerusalem.' ...

"Moses's law is the ground of all divinity; so was it to Israel, so must it be to us: the rest of the Old Testament was a divine exposition of Moses's law; so was it to Israel, so must it be to us. The New Testament is a sweet commentary upon both; so should it be to us, and so in time shall it be to Israel. God, when he had left in writing as much as his divine wisdom knew to be necessary for Israel's salvation under the law; and when the Holy Ghost (for his familiar expressions) ceased from Israel, and departed; when now they had neither vision nor prophecy to instruct them, till he should come who should seal vision and prophecy,—God, by his last prophet, sends them back to remember the law of Moses.... These [the five books of Moses, the Prophets, and the Hagiographa] were Israel's evangelists, instructing them concerning Christ, and all things of Christian religion necessary for their salvation. And all these were not only written for them, but also for us, upon whom the ends of the world are come; even as they, so must we, lay herein Moses and Elias, law and prophets, the groundwork of all our religion, and in Christ, or the gospel, finish it: in the law to make the seed-plot of all doctrines necessary to salvation; in the prophets, to water it,—and in the gospel, to gather the increase. God himself hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what the law doth

require of thee in the manner of reading of Scripture, even by his matter of writing it. As Moses, or the law, begins, so the gospel ends; and as Elias, or prophecy, ends, so the gospel begins; 'Atque in se solvitur,' God rolling the Scripture even in itself, and showing us Moses, and Elias, and Christ, talking together on the outside of the tabernacle; much more do they within.... Thus God, even by his own method, hath showed thee, O man, what is good, and what method the Lord requireth of thee in thy reading of the Scriptures; he brought Moses and Elias to talk to Christ in Scripture, even before Christ came; he set Moses, and Elias, and Christ, to talk together in person upon this mountain; and he hath left Christ to talk with Moses and Elias in Scripture again ever since, and 'Quos Deus conjunxit, nemo separet'; and 'those whom God hath thus joined together, let no man put asunder.' As oft as thou takest the Scripture in hand to read, thou goest up into a mountain to see Christ in glory; if Moses and Elias talk not to him there, if thou seest him in glory, thou seest more than did his own disciples. Thou mayest hear them talk together if thou wilt; for God hath put them together" (vi. 200–205).

The nature of the inspiration which Lightfoot thus made the principle of the canon of Scripture must already have appeared in general outline in the extracts which have been given. We have seen him speaking of it as a special gift to specifically chosen men: "The Spirit of God inspired certain persons, whom he pleased, to be the revealers of his will" (iii. 371), who, therefore, wrote what He directed to be written (iii. 369), at His dictation (v. 457). The Scriptures are thus naturally looked upon as the "drawing up of the mind of God into writing" (iii. 368), and the writers as the "amanuenses" of the Spirit (v. 457); their work is the "finger of God" (v. 461, ii. 9), and God's oracle, He having "committed to writing what he thought fit to reveal" (iii. 371), or "left in writing as much as his divine wisdom knew to be necessary" (vi. 203). Let us look a little more narrowly at Lightfoot's conceptions thus brought before us. In his doctorate thesis, of which we have already spoken, he dwelt largely on the two contentions, that inspiration was a gift to specially

chosen men, and that it was specifically different both from sanctifying grace and that illumination of the Spirit common to Christians by which God leads them into truth, and which may be loosely called "revelation." We may have new illumination of Scripture doctrine, he taught, but not by immediate revelation, but only through deeper study of Scripture; we are certainly given the same Spirit of wisdom and of revelation which the apostles possessed, but not to make new revelations through us, but only to quicken divine knowledge in us through the medium of the word; we are to have to the end of time the guidance of the Spirit, but not by means of direct revelations of duty to us, but only through the prescriptions of the written word—for, "nos firmissimum habemus verbum Scripturæ, ad omnia hæc, quæ nobis scitu opus est, detegenda, et aptum, et datum" (v. 462). This distinction is necessarily much emphasized in opposition to the pretensions of the sectaries of the day to "inner light." It is very strongly asserted in the following passage:

"I might observe, 'obiter,' how great diversity there is betwixt the spirit of prophecy and revelation, and the Spirit of grace and holiness. The same Spirit, indeed, is the author of both; but there is so much diversity in the thing wrought, that a Balaam, a Caiaphas, have the spirit of prophecy, who are as far from having the Spirit of sanctification, as the east is from the west, hell from heaven" (vii. 308).

The need of revelations is superseded by the gift of the Scriptures, for
—

"As the great Prophet, he [Christ] teacheth his church himself, by giving of the Scriptures, and instructing his holy ones by his Spirit" (vi. 261).

The whole case is argued at length at vi. 235 sqq., from which we extract as much as will serve our purpose:

"For the prosecuting this argument, you must distinguish between the false pretence to the Spirit of sanctification, and to the spirit of revelation. By the former, men deceive themselves, —by the latter, others.... I shall strip this delusion naked, and whip it before you, by observing these four things:—I. No degree of holiness whatsoever doth necessarily beget and infer the spirit of revelation, as the cause produceth the effect.... I clear this.... First; From the nature of the thing. The Spirit of holiness and revelation are far different; therefore, the one is not the cause of the other.... 1. They are impartible to different subjects:—holiness, only to holy men; the spirit of revelation, sometimes to wicked men. So it was imparted to Balaam; so likewise to Judas and Caiaphas. 2. They are bestowed upon different ends:—holiness for the good of him that hath it; revelation, for the benefit of others. 3. They are of different manners and operations. The Spirit of sanctification changeth the heart; Paul is a Saul no more: revelation doth not; Judas is a Judas still. 4. They are of a different diffusion in the soul: sanctification is quite through,—revelation, only in, the understanding. 5. They are of different effects: sanctification never produceth but what is good; revelation may produce what is evil; knowledge puffeth up.... II. The spirit of revelation is given indeed to saints, but means little that sense, that these men speak of, but is of a clean different nature.—The apostle prays, Ephes. 1:17, 'That God would give unto them the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him.' And God gives this spirit; but in what sense? Not, to foresee things to come; not to understand the grammatical construction of Scripture without study; not to preach by the Spirit: but the apostle himself explains, ver. 18: 'The eyes of their understanding being enlightened; that ye may know, what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints.' So that the revelation, given to the saints, is this,—that God reveals the experience of those things, that we have learned before in the theory from Scripture,—a saving feeling of 'the hope of his calling, and the riches of the glory of his inheritance.' Here let me speak three

things:—1. To feel the experience of grace, is not by new light, that was never known before, but by application of what was known before.... As common grace is called grace, because it is above the ordinary working of nature,—so this is called revelation, because above the work of common light. 2. How do men come to assurance of pardon and salvation? Not by the spirit of revelation in their sense; not by any immediate whispers from heaven; but another way: as in Rom. 15:4, ... In Scripture is your comfort, and in your own conscience; and in them is your assurance. A saint makes this holy syllogism:—Scripture, major, 'He that repents, believes, loves God, hath the pardon of his sins.' Conscience, minor, 'Lord, I believe; Lord, I love thee.' Saint, from both, makes the conclusion, 'Therefore, I am assured of the pardon of my sins, and my salvation.' ... 3. I may add, A saint in heaven finds nothing, but what he knew before in little.... III. There is no promise in Scripture, whereupon the spirit of revelation is to be expected after the fall of Jerusalem.... At the fall of Jerusalem, all Scripture was written, and God's full will revealed; so that there was no farther need of prophecy and revelation.... IV. The standing ministry is the ordinary method, that God hath used for the instruction of his church." (vi. 236–242, cf. vi. 211.)

The common distinction between revelation and inspiration, in the stricter senses of those words, which confines the former to the direct impartation of truth from God, and the latter to the divine work of securing the correct communication or record of the truth, is not drawn by Lightfoot. The obvious distinction which this usage of the words is intended to express, is not, however, overlooked by him; he draws it in his own way as follows:

"But we may observe a double degree in rapture; as inspired men may be considered under a double notion; viz. those that were inspired with prophecy, or to be prophets and to preach,—and those that were inspired to be penmen of divine writ, which was higher. John [in Revelation] hath both ..." (iii. 334).

This may not mean, precisely, that "inspiration" is a higher notion than "revelation" in the now current senses of those words: but it does mean that there was a superadded grace of the Spirit above the impartation of the truth, when it was granted to one to fix the truth in written form for the instruction of all ages. The dignity of Scripture as the word of God fixed in written form, is the underlying conception; and Lightfoot is never weary of insisting on this. Take but a single example. When commenting on John 5:39, he says:

"In what he addeth, 'They are they that testify of me,' the emphasis may not be passed unobserved. He saith not only, 'they testify of me,' but 'they are they that do it': as intimating, that the Scriptures are the great, singular, and intended, witnesses of Christ, the fullest and the highest testimony of him (As, 2 Pet. 1:19)... And thus doth Christ read unto us, 1. The dignity of the Scriptures, as his choicest witness. 2. The end of them, himself. 3. Their work, to bring men to him. And, 4. The fruit of all, eternal life" (v. 273).

Upon this conception of the origin of Scripture, the matter of it is looked upon as a dictation from heaven. This comes out repeatedly. For example, when speaking of the prologue of Luke's Gospel, he writes:

"He maketh his own undertaking of the like nature with theirs, when he saith, It seemed good 'to me also':—but he mentioneth these their writings, as only human authorities (undertaken without the injunction of the Holy Ghost), which his divine one was to exclude.... Verse 3: 'It seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from above.' For so might Ἀνωθεν be best translated; and so it signifieth, John. 3:3, 31, and 19:11; James 1:17, &c. And, thus taken, it showeth Luke's inspiration from heaven, and standeth in opposition to the many gospels mentioned ver. 1;—which were written from the mouths and dictating of men, ver. 2; but his intelligence for what he writeth, was 'from above' " (iv. 114–115).

Here inspiration is made to include an injunction from God to write, and the reception from above of what is to be written; so that the writing is "from the mouth and dictating" of God. This is the conception everywhere cropping out more or less fully, e.g.:

"Now, why the three evangelists should be so unanimously silent in so great a matter, for so long a time, needs not be questioned, since the Holy Ghost hath provided, that, by a fourth, that should be supplied which they had omitted" (iv. 386).

"Neither can I see, nor dare I think of, any such superiority and inferiority in the writings of the evangelists" (iv. 429).

On 1 Kings 15:14: "A human chronicler is not able to say, 'Such a one's heart was perfect with God'; because he is not able to discern, what the heart is. He writes the story of a man's actions; he cannot write the story of his heart, because he cannot know it. But he that held the pen, and wrote these sacred chronicles, the Holy Ghost, saw the carriage of all actions, saw the secret frame and temper of all hearts; and he was able to give judgment of them, whether they were good or evil; and he could not but give true judgment" (v. 376)... "That his heart was so, is confirmed by the mouth of two witnesses, the Book of Kings and Chronicles; and the mouth of the Holy Ghost hath spoken it twice over, here and there; and his word is truth, and no falsehood in it" (v. 378).

The conception here is of course not merely an inspiration of the matter of Scripture, but such a divine gift of Scripture that it is in its matter and form alike, down to its words and even letters, from God. This is constantly illustrated in Lightfoot's writings. Take such a passage as the following as an instance. He is speaking of Balaam, in 2 Peter 2:15, and animadverts on the fact that he is called the "son of Bosor," whereas the Old Testament has it "son of Besor." He says:

"Those that are apt to tax the originals of Scripture of corruption and interpolation, may chance to think it is so here; and that some carelessness or unhappy dash of the pen made it Bosor here, when it should have been Beor." He then adduces the Chaldee sentence in Jer. 10:11, saying that it "came not into the Chaldee tongue by chance, or any inadvertency, but by sacred wisdom," and so it is here. "The change of the name Beor into Bosor relishes of the Chaldee language too, ... And our apostle doth neither mistake himself in so pronouncing the name, nor hath any transcriber miswritten it after him; but he uttered it according to the Chaldee idiom and propriety; and, by this very word, gives intimation, that he was in Chaldea, when he wrote this Epistle." From this he draws three observations, of which the second and third are the following: "Secondly; That no tittle in Scripture is idle, but ought to have its consideration; according to the saying of the Jews, 'That there is no tittle in Scripture, but even mountains of matter hang upon it': and, as our Saviour saith, 'one jot or tittle of the law shall not perish'; so, not one jot or tittle in Scripture, but hath its weight. Here is one poor letter, which, one would think, was crept in by some oversight, yet that carries with it matter of important and weighty consideration. Thirdly; How necessary human learning is for the understanding and explaining of Scripture, which is so much cried down and debased by some ..." (vii. 79–81).

There are a number of points brought out in this extract which should interest us. We perceive that Lightfoot was not unfamiliar with the science of textual criticism, though he himself was a critic of conservative tendency. We see that he was zealous for the value and necessity of human learning in the interpretation of Scripture, as over against the enthusiasts who expected to accomplish all by the inner aid of the Holy Ghost. But our present concern is to observe that his doctrine of inspiration led him to attribute everything in Scripture to the Holy Spirit, whose inspiring influence extended to the very words, and even to the several letters in them. To Lightfoot the Spirit of God was, in the highest and strictest sense, the author of Scripture; and therefore everything in it, down to the very letters,

was held to be significant and important. Let us observe, somewhat in detail, how he deals with Scripture under this conception. One of the commonest of his locutions is to quote the Scriptures as the words of the Holy Ghost. Here are a few scattered examples which will exhibit his usage:

"Search and study the Scriptures, because it is the Scriptures, the writing of God, ..." (vii. 207).

"The Holy Ghost, that gave the Scriptures, ..." (vii. 212).

"The Holy Ghost hath spoken ... Rev. 13:2, ..." (vii. 109).

"The Holy Ghost, in that story, bids us look on him," i.e. Cain (vii. 339).

"And the Holy Ghost doth point, as it were, with the finger," quoting Rev. 7 (vii. 356).

"And here the Holy Ghost, to hint his distaste of such idolatry, blots out his children, to the third, nay, fourth, generation, out of the line and genealogy of our Saviour" (vii. 357).

"In reading of the New Testament, never take your eye off the Old; for the New is but again that in plainer phrase. God himself hath taught us by the writing of the Scripture, what is the best way to read: for he hath folded the two Testaments together; so that, as the law begins, so the gospel ends; and as the prophets end, so the gospel begins; as if calling upon you to look still for the one in the other" (ii. 43-44).

"Notwithstanding, the Holy Ghost would conclude the story of their offering altogether" (ii. 125).

"The Holy Ghost doth tell us, when it was that he [Hezekiah] began his reign ..." (ii. 258).

"The Holy Ghost setteth a special mark upon these forty years of his [Jeremiah's] prophesying, Ezek. 4:6" (ii. 275).

"And the Holy Ghost tells us," Psalm 73:5, 6 (v. 292).

"When you rehearse this, 'The Holy Catholic Church,' in the Creed,—let your thoughts first recoil to your Bibles, and see how the Holy Ghost pictures them there.... Nay, yet the divine limner lays on more precious colours" (vi. 51–52).

"And so I have given you the sense of this place; and, as I conceive, the very sense of the Holy Ghost" (vi. 175).

"As it was foretold by the Holy Spirit in the prophets, ... so was it also foretold by the same Spirit, ..." (vi. 230).

"And thus you have the words unfolded to you, and I hope according to the meaning of the Holy Ghost" (vi. 260).

"For so doth the Holy Ghost himself explain it," Rev. 19:8, and 7:14 (vi. 296).

"It is not unprofitable to observe, how the Holy Ghost, at the story of great actions, doth oft intimate the Trinity. 'Let us make man.'—'Let us confound their language.' And, at Gen. 18, you read of three men, that stood by Abraham, who are called afterwards Jehovah. And, at the setting of the service of the tabernacle, the form of blessing that was prescribed to the priests to use, intimated a Trinity.... But to spare more instances, at Christ's entry into the ministry, the Trinity is at his baptism; and now, at the end of it, he proclaims it, and enjoins it to be professed at every baptism" (vi. 405).

"The Holy Ghost intendeth, in this book [the Acts], to show ... The Holy Ghost should tell us.... The Holy Ghost, which in all the Bible never ... no, not when he was intentionally writing of ...

should do it now, when he is purposely upon a story of ..." (viii. 71).

"The second Psalm, which owns not its author in the title, the Holy Ghost ascribeth here to David" (viii. 74).

"That the Holy Ghost, reckoning the porters as they were disposed after the return," 1 Chron. 9:23, 24 (ix. 231).

This constant usage exhibits the fact that, to Lightfoot, to say the Scripture says, was equivalent to saying the Holy Ghost says: the two locutions were convertible. This identification of the Scripture and the Holy Spirit comes out very plainly in cases where he passes from the one to the other mode of speech, as it were, unconsciously. Thus when speaking of the anticipation in the narrative at Joshua 15:8, he says it was "because the Holy Ghost ... would take special notice of ...," while just below, on the same page, with reference to a similar difficulty, his mode of speech is that it was "because the text would give account of their whole inheritance together, now it is speaking of it" (ii. 141). Hence also such passages as the following:

"The Holy Ghost hath given a close intimation, that Uzziah's befel him in the last year of his reign, and not before, 2 Kings. 15:30 ... Why, here is the hint that the Holy Ghost giveth of the time of Uzziah's being struck leprous ... for here, by this very expression, is showed; ... and the text plainly expresth the occasion, ..." (ii. 247–248).

"Therefore, the Holy Ghost, in the New Testament, sets himself to speak to this thing, and to show who these 'sons of God' are. John shows who are, and who are not ... (John. 1:12, 13) ... The Holy Ghost sets the regeneration, in opposition to natural generation" (v. 323).

"Unless the Spirit of Christ himself in Scripture tell us ..." (vi. 10).

"Behold, a greater than Aristotle is here, and sets me a copy,—and that is the Holy Ghost in the mouth of Joshua; Josh. 24:19, 'Ye cannot serve the Lord' (saith Joshua)" (vii. 211).

"The evangelist hath done it [i.e. written Acts] with a divine pen." "How sparing the Holy Ghost hath been through all that book, to express the circumstance of the time, with the relation of the things" (viii. pp. iv. and v.).

No wonder then that Lightfoot calls the Scriptures "the divine oracles," and cautions men not to pick and choose among them or read their own fancies into them (vii. 288): to him they were all, in all their elements and parts, the utterances of the Holy Ghost. Observe how he ascribes every element and detail of Scripture to the Holy Spirit.

Is he studying the chronology of the Bible? It is cared for by the Spirit:

"For the Holy Ghost reckons by round sums,"—quoting Daniel 12:12, 13 (vii. 217).

"The Holy Ghost draws up a chronicle of times from the creation to the redemption, ..." (vii. 221).

"See how the Holy Ghost reckons the year of the flood, ..." (ii. 4).

"The Spirit hath given undoubted helps," to draw up a chronological order (ii. 4).

"Now the Holy Ghost reckoneth from that date, rather than from any other, because, ..." (ii. 244).

"For I cannot but conclude, that the Holy Ghost, naming the several years of these kings hitherto, intendeth ..." (ii. 326).

"Here is the standard of time that the Holy Ghost hath set up in the New Testament; unto which, as unto the fulness of time, he hath drawn up a chronicle-chain from the creation: and from which, as from a standing mark, we are to measure all the times of the New Testament, if we would fix them to a creation date" (iii. 34).

"When he shall also see (and that, I suppose, not without admiration) the wondrous and mysterious, and yet, always, instructive style and manner of accounting, used by the Holy Ghost, in most sacred majestickness, and challenging all serious study and reverence" (iv. 98).

"The Holy Ghost chooseth rather to reckon by holy Jotham in the dust, than by wicked Ahaz alive" (iv. 108).

"The Jews reckoned their year by the lunary months.... This computation made their years to fall eleven days short of the year of the sun: and this the Holy Ghost seemeth to hint and to hit upon, when, in reckoning the time of Noah's being in his ark, he bringeth him in on the seventeenth day of the second month, and bringeth him out on the seven-and-twentieth day of the same month, on the next year; and yet intendeth him there but an exact and complete year of the sun, but reckoned only by lunary months" (iv. 135–136).

Or is it a question of the order of the narrative? This, too, in all its flexions, is attributed directly to the Holy Ghost. In the preface to the "Harmony, &c., of the New Testament," for example, he writes:

"I shall not trouble the reader with any long discourse, to show, how the Scripture abounds with transposition of stories; how the Holy Ghost doth, eminently, hereby show the majesty of his style and divine wisdom; how this is equally used in both Testaments; what need the student of Scripture hath carefully to observe those dislocations; and what profit he may reap, by reducing them to their proper time and order" (iii. p. vi.).

So, elsewhere:

"The Holy Spirit hath, in divers places, purposely and divinely, laid stories and passages out of their proper places, for special ends" (ii. 3).

"The same Spirit, that dictated both the Testaments, hath observed this course in both the Testaments alike: laying texts, chapters, and histories, sometimes out of the proper place, in which, according to natural chronical order, they should have lain. And this is one of the majesticknesses, wherewithal the Holy Ghost marcheth and passeth through the Scriptures. Not that these dislocations are imperfections,—for they ever show the greatest wisdom: nor that to methodize these transposed passages, is to correct the method of the Holy Ghost;—for it is but to unknot such difficulties, as the Holy Ghost hath challenged more study on: nor that it is desirable, that our Bibles should be pointed in such a methodized way, and such Bibles only to be in common use,—for the very posture of the Bible, as it now lieth, seemeth to be divine, and that the rather from Luke 24:44 ..." (ii. p. lxii.).

Accordingly, in his detailed explanations of the order of Scripture, he uniformly ascribes it to the Holy Ghost, and seeks a divine reason for it. For example:

"The Holy Ghost, as soon as he hath related how Shimei had obtained his pardon, comes and relates this conference betwixt David and Mephibosheth;" ... giving us a "hint, by this strange placing of this story." ... "This is not done at random and by any oversight, as if the Holy Ghost had forgot himself, as we poor fumbling creatures are many times lost in our tale; but the sacred Spirit hath purposely thus methodized the story with such a dislocation, for our own more narrow observation and clearer instruction ..." (vii. 203).

"But about this we need not much to trouble ourselves; since, as to the understanding of the stories themselves, there can be little

illustration taken from their time.... We shall not, therefore, offer to dislocate the order of the stories, from that wherein they lie; the Holy Ghost, by the intertexture of them, rather teaching us, that some of them were contemporary, than any way encouraging us to invert their order" (iii. 207, on Acts 12 and 13).

Arranging Exod. 18 between Num. 10:10, 11, he says: "Now, that the Holy Ghost might show that Jethro, ..." (ii. 127).

"Now the reason why the Holy Ghost hath laid these stories, which came to pass so soon, in so late a place, may be supposed to be this ..." (ii. 150).

"But the Holy Ghost hath laid it in the beginning of his [Solomon's] history, that ..." (ii. 199).

"Because the Holy Ghost would mention all Solomon's fabrics together ..." (ii. 201).

Jer. 39:15–18 is placed after the story of the taking of the city, though Jeremiah prophesied it before, "because, when the Holy Ghost hath showed the safety of Jeremiah in the destruction, he would also show the safety of Ebed-melech, according to Jeremiah's prophecy" (ii. 296).

The institution of the Sabbath is mentioned before the fall of Adam, "partly, because the Holy Ghost would mention all the seven days of the first week together ..." (vii. 378–379).

The principle thus employed in the matter of the order of the narrative is extended to all the phenomena of Scripture which may cause the reader difficulty; they are all part of the majesty of Scripture, and occur by design of the Holy Ghost for good and sufficient reason. Thus we are told in a comment on 2 Peter 3:15, 16:

"He citeth Paul's Epistle to the Hebrews, and giveth an honourable testimony to that, and to the rest of his Epistles: but acknowledgeth, that, in some places, they are hard to be understood, and were misconstrued by some unlearned and unstable ones, to their own ruin; yet neither doth he nor Paul, who was yet alive and well knew of this wresting of his Epistles, clear or amend those difficulties, but let them alone as they were: for the Holy Ghost hath so penned Scripture as to set men to study ..." (iii. 327).

"It became the Holy Ghost, the penner of Scripture, to write in a majesty." ... "If the Holy Ghost wrote the Scriptures, we must needs conclude, that he wrote them like the Holy Ghost, in a divine majesty ..." (vii. 212).

Just because, however (as this last extract expresses it), the Holy Ghost is "the penner of Scripture," who "wrote the Scriptures" in His own way, not merely the special disposition of the matter and the general contents and mode of presentation is from Him, but the very style is determined by the Holy Ghost. This is very clearly brought out in a passage parallel to one already quoted, based on Peter's commendation of Paul's epistles:

"The Holy Ghost hath purposely penned the Scriptures so as to challenge all serious study of them,"—quoting Matt. 24:15 ... "Peter tells us, that there are divers things in Paul's Epistles hard to be understood; and why did the Holy Ghost dictate them so hard by Paul?... Because the Holy Ghost hath penned Scripture so as to challenge all serious study. He could have penned all so plain, that he that runneth, might have read them; but he hath penned them in such a style, that he that will read them, must not run and read, but sit down and study" (vii. 208).

"Observe that passage, Matt. 1:8; and see whether the style of the Holy Ghost do not hint the very same thing" ... "These and other things of the like nature, may be observed in the very style

and dialect the Holy Ghost useth in Scripture. Whereby he setteth a brand upon idolatry, ..." (vii. 357).

The "style and dialect" of Scripture is the Holy Ghost's, because He dictated Scripture. Accordingly, the very words of Scripture are the words of the Holy Ghost. This is, of course, capable of copious illustration:

"The helps, that it [i.e. Scripture] affords for explaining of itself, are various. The first to be looked after, is the 'language': the Spirit of God, upon the same occasions, using the same words in the original" (ii. 3).

"The Holy Spirit seldom or never using these [i.e. other languages than Hebrew or Greek, as, e.g. Chaldee], but intimating something of note, if our eyes be but serious." For example, in Hosea 5:5, "He [i.e. the Spirit] useth the Chaldee form, to teach where that affliction and seeking must be" (ii. 3).

"Abijah is also called 'Abijam'; and his mother is called both 'Maachah' and 'Michah'; and his grandfather, by his mother's side, is called 'Absalom' and 'Uriel.' Such changes of names are frequent in Scripture: and sometime so altered by the Holy Ghost, purposely to hint something to us concerning the person; and sometimes so altered by the people, among whom such persons lived, ..." (ii. 209).

"The Virgin had obtained the highest earthly favour that ever mortal did, or must, do,—to be the mother of the Redeemer: and the Holy Ghost useth a singular word to express so much."—Luke 1:28: iv. 161.

On the word "repentance": "The word which the Holy Ghost hath left us in the original Greek, μετανοεῖτε, is exceeding significant and pertinent to that doctrine and occasion." ... "Now, the Holy Ghost, by a word of this significancy, doth give the proper and true character of repentance, both against the

misprisions which were taken up concerning it, by their traditions in those times, and those also that have been taken up since." (v. 156–157).

"So, when the Holy Ghost proclaimeth in the words of the text,"
John 5:16 (vi. 331).

The very letters are from the Spirit. We have already quoted from vii. 79–81, a passage so asserting with reference to the spelling of "Bosor" in 2 Peter 2:15 (see above, p. 290). The following is a similar one. Speaking of Ezra 9 and 10 he says:

"This matter was done in the seventh year of Darius, ... as the text seemeth to carry it on; unless, by the strange writing of the word לדריוש ver. 16, the Holy Ghost would hint Darius's tenth.—Let the learned judge" (ii. 324).

Indeed, Lightfoot goes further, and attributes directly to the Holy Spirit the very pointing of the Hebrew text, as it stands in the current copies:

"It cannot pass the eye of him, that readeth the text in the original, but he must observe it, how, in [Deut.] chap. 29, ver. 29, the Holy Ghost hath pointed one clause, לנו ולבנינו 'to us and to our children belong the revealed things,' after an extraordinary and unparalleled manner; to give warning against curiosity in prying into God's secrets; and that we should content ourselves with his revealed will" (ii. 137).

He expresses disbelief in the vowels and accents having been invented by the Massorettes (iv. 20), and argues their antiquity (iv. 50), adducing our Lord's declaration that not "one iota shall pass away" as evidence that the vowels were there in His day, and urging that it would be beyond the skill of man to point the Ten Commandments, the "pricking" of which would puzzle the world. At a later point he expresses himself on the last matter thus:

"I omit the exquisiteness of the pricking of this piece of Scripture of the commandments extraordinarily: some special thing is in it" (iv. 84).

He even doubts if "the marginals," i.e. the various readings placed by the Massorettes in the margin of the Hebrew Bible, "are not only human corrections" (iv. 21; cf. 11:103).

The primary fact in Lightfoot's doctrine of Scripture is, then, that it is God's word, in such a sense that the Divine Spirit is the author of it in its minutest detail. On this hangs all his thought concerning the Scriptures. It is because they are divine that they are authoritative. The authority of Scripture is to him incontestable, and is allowed by Christ Himself, though He was God. In commenting on Matt. 4:4, "It is written," he writes:

"This is the first speech, that proceeded from our Saviour's mouth, since his entrance into his ministerial function, that is upon record; and, though it be very short, yet is it very material for observation of these things:—

1. That the first word, spoken by Christ in his ministerial office, is an assertion of the authority of Scripture.
2. That he opposeth the word of God, as the properest encounterer against the words of the devil.
3. That he allegeth Scripture, as a thing undeniable and uncontroulable by the devil himself.
4. That he maketh the Scripture his rule, though he had the fulness of the Spirit above measure" (iv. 362).

This authority of the Scriptures rests on nothing else than on their divine origin and character.

"The Scriptures are to be believed for themselves, and they need not fetch their credit from anything else. Dan. 10:21.... They are the truth.—See John 5:39.... Observe the bent of Christ's discourse.... He concludes in Scripture, as the most undeniable testimony.... See also 2 Peter 1:17–19.... A voice from heaven might possibly deceive; the Jews feigned such; but the word of prophecy is sure; that is a 'more sure word.' The reason of the Scriptures' credibility is, because they are the word of God: 1 Thess. 2:13.... They received it as the word of God. How knew they that? From the Scriptures themselves.—Therefore it is said, that they are the formal object of faith, as well as the material. They contain what is to be believed, and the reason why to believe them; and that is especially twofold:—I. The majesty of the Spirit of God speaking in them. II. Their powerful working. I. The majesty of the Spirit of God speaking in them such things, as man cannot speak.... 1. How impossible is it for man to reveal the deep mysteries of salvation, i.e. the mind of God! 1 Cor. 2:16.... In Scripture we have it; and ver. 7–9 of that chapter. 2. The majesty of the Spirit in Scripture appears, in that it reveals the very thoughts, and commands the very heart of man (Heb. 4:12).... 3. The majesty of the Scriptures appears, in that it discovers the very subtilties of Satan.... Thus doth the Scripture reveal itself to be the very word of God, by its divine majesty, wherein it speaketh,—and by the wisdom, wherein it shows itself. II. In its powerful working; breaking hearts, converting souls, conquering the kingdom of Satan.... Thousands of experiences have showed, what the divine word of God in Scripture can do against him [that is, the devil]. And thus do they evidence themselves to be the word of God, and so to be believed for themselves, because they are the word of God" (vi. 56–59).

After asking whether the Church gives us the Scriptures, and answering that the Church of Rome rather sought to hinder us from having the Scripture, he continues:

"No, it was the work of the Lord, and the mercy of the Lord; and it is marvellous in our eyes.... As far as we owe our receiving of Scripture to men, we are least beholden to the Romish Church. They put us off with a Latin translation, barbarous and wild. But we have a surer word, the sacred Hebrew, and divine Greek. And the Hebrew we owe to the Jews, and the Greek to the Greek Church, rather than the Roman. 'Unto them (the Jews) were committed the oracles of God.' And from them we received the Old Testament: and not from them neither; for could they have prevented, we had not had it. Consider how many copies were abroad in the world. The Old Testament was in every synagoge: and how many copies would men take of the New? So that it is impossible, but still Scripture must be conveyed. Could all the policy of Satan have hindered, he had done it: for the word of God is his overthrow; so that it was owing to a divine hand. And our faith stands not on the church to believe the Scriptures; but God hath carried the authority of them from age to age" (vi. 61).

"It is not proper to say, We believe Scriptures are Scriptures, because of the church, without distinguishing upon believing. As Austin's, 'Non credidisse Scripturis,' &c. 'I had not believed the Scriptures, had not the church told me'; that is, while he was unconverted. But we may satisfy this by an easy distinction, betwixt believing that Scripture is Scripture, and believing that the church all along hath taken them for Scripture.... A good soul desires to build up itself by the rule of faith and life. He finds, that the church hath counted Scripture so; and that he believes. But as yet he believes not they are Scriptures upon that account: but he reads, studies, meditates on them, finds the divine excellency, sweetness, power of them; and then he believes they are the word of God. And that now is not for the church's sake, but for themselves. The church of England, in the thirty-nine articles, hath determined such books canonical. Why? Because the church hath ever held them so? That is some furtherance to their belief, but not the cause of it. They first believed the church held them so, but they saw cause and reason in the books

themselves to believe they were so ... so we believe the church owns the Scriptures; but he is but a poor Christian, that believes the Scriptures are the Scriptures upon no other account" (vi. 62–63).

"God gives his word; and whether men will hear, or whether they will forbear, it is, and will be, the word of God forever. And if men will not believe it, God will not be beholden to them to believe it: let them believe it at their own peril. A Papist will not believe the divine authority of the Scriptures for themselves; God and the Scripture will never be beholden to him to believe it: ... but let him look to it, if he do not believe it.... When God gave the Scriptures, he never intended they should stand at the courtesy of every curious carping atheist, whether they should be of authority, and be believed or no: but God gives them in their divine authority and majesty: and laid them a sure foundation in Sion, elect, precious, and glorious; that he, that will build upon them, may build and prosper. But if any cross, or quarrelsome, or wilfully blind, Bayard, will stumble at them, where he might walk plain,—let him take his own hazard, and stumble, and fall, and be broken, and snared, and taken: while, in the mean while, the foundation of God remaineth sure, and the divine Scriptures will be the divine Scriptures, and retain their truth and Author, when such a wretch is dashed all to pieces.... 'God will be God, whether thou wilt or no': as Scripture will be Scripture, whether thou believest it or no" (vi. 351–352).

That is, as Lightfoot held the doctrine of inspiration which was universally taught by the Reformed theologians of his day, so he held likewise the common Reformed doctrine of the authority of Scripture, founded on its divine origin and character. The extracts we have just given teach the precise doctrine taught in the Confession of Faith, i. 4 and 5, and constitute an excellent commentary on those sections, from the pen of one of the Westminster men.

To him and them, the Bible, and the Bible only, is the religion of Protestants. We have found him so saying in his Doctorate disputation:

"Illi [pontificii] 'ecclesiam' statuunt, nos 'ipsam Scripturam': atque hoc non sine summa ratione, ac summa ipsius Scripturæ autoritate. Ad hoc nempe oraculum, quasi ab ipso Dei digito, diriguntur homines ad omnia quærenda et cognoscenda, quæ ad Deum cognoscendum, et ad salutem acquirendam, faciunt" (v. 461).

So again he writes:

"The other [i.e. the Church of Rome] brags of antiquity, universality, visibility, succession, and other bravadoes; whereas the Protestant church hath but this to glory of (and it is enough), That she is built upon the prophets and apostles. Ingenious was that picture: in one scale you see all the trinklements of Popery, and the pope and friars hanging on; in the other, the Protestants put the Bible, and it outweighs. This is the glory and sure friend of a church, to be built upon the Holy Scriptures, although there be no visibility of that church to the eyes of men at all.... That church that is built more on traditions and doctrines of men, than on the word of God, is no true church, nor religion.... The foundation of the true church of God is Scripture" (vi. 44–45).

The infallible truth of Scripture which is thus strongly insisted on is treated everywhere as a first principle (see above, pp. 289–290):

"It is not all, to believe the thing is true; but farther to believe so, as the soul may have advantage. Take one instance: one of the first things in religion to be believed is, 'That the Scriptures are the word of God, and divinely true.' This, who believes not? The devil himself cannot deny it: nay, he cited Scripture, as the word of God, to our Saviour. And there are thousands in hell, that never made a doubt of this. Therefore, the believing of this must

have a farther reach, that the soul may receive benefit upon so believing" (vi. 50).

"Whosoever speaks not according to the truth of God in Scripture, he is but a liar, and the truth is not in him. You understand, that I speak of things of faith and religion. In historical, natural, civil, moral things, we deny not, but that they speak much truth. But that is to be tried by our reading and reason. But in the things of divine concernment, there is no truth, but that of Scripture, or what speaks agreeable to it" (vi. 59).

This is, of course, the common Reformed doctrine of the completeness, perfection, or sufficiency of the Scriptures as taught in the Westminster Confession, i. 6, or Q. 2 of the Shorter Catechism. In full harmony with these formularies, Lightfoot teaches:

"The Scriptures contain all things needful for faith and life; as that in Isaiah 8:19, 20 ... so may I say also in this case; if they say to you, Seek to councils, fathers, canons, determinations of the church,—'To the law, and to the testimony'; to Scripture and holy writ, that contains every thing you need to inquire after for salvation; what to be believed, and what to be done.... Whithersoever you need to walk for the pleasing of God, doing your duty to men, or to your own souls, the word of God is a light sufficient.... Prophecy was then ceasing. People might complain, 'What shall we do for instruction?'—Why, go to the word of God, which you have in your hands, to the law of Moses, that will teach you.—Dives desires Abraham to send one from the dead to teach his brethren, that they might escape that place of torment. No, that needs not: Moses and the prophets will teach all things needful.... The Apostle speaks this fully, 2 Tim. 3:16, 17" (vi. 54–55).

He, of course, also held and teaches the common Reformed doctrine of the perspicuity of Scripture. "Scripture," he tells us,

"is plain" (vi. 10). But he is more concerned, in opposition to the sectaries of the time, with the other side of this doctrine—the need of careful interpretation. In harmony with the Confession of Faith, i. 9, he holds that Scripture is to be interpreted by Scripture: "But the Scripture, which is ever the sure expositor of itself" (iv. 215). And he lays down several rules of interpretation, as e.g.: "The Scripture word is to be interpreted according to the Scripture idiom" (iv. 217); "It is the best rule to come to the understanding of the phrases of Scripture, to consider, in what sense they were taken in that country, and among that people, where they were written" (iv. 414). Here are two sound and scholarly rules which Lightfoot, the Talmudist, was especially bound to dwell on. The scholar Lightfoot is also very naturally concerned to show against the sectaries, the need of human learning in interpreting Scripture. He says, for example:

"The greatest difficulties of the Scripture lie in the language: for unlock the language and phrases, and the difficulty is gone. And, therefore, they, that take upon them to preach by the Spirit, and to expound the Scripture by the Spirit, let them either unlock to me the Hebrew phrases in the Old Testament, and the Greek in the New, that are difficult and obscure,—or else they do nothing. Now, to attain to the meaning of such dark and doubtful phrases, the way is not so proper to put on them a sense of our own, as to consider what sense they might take them in, to whom, and among whom, the things were spoken and written in their common speech" (vi. 335).

In expounding John 10:22, 23, he goes into the whole question of the need of human learning in interpreting Scripture, very fully:

"To the expounding of which, the very way that I must go, cannot but mind me to observe this to you:—That human learning is exceeding useful, nay, exceeding needful, to the expounding of Scripture. The text gives the rise of this observation, and it gives the proof of it. Here is the mention of the feast of dedication, and not one tittle else

in all the Scripture concerning it. And so there is the bare mention of Solomon's porch; and, indeed, it is mentioned once again, in Acts 3:11; but neither here nor there any more than the bare name. Certainly, the Holy Ghost would never have mentioned these things, if he would not have had us to have sought to know what they meant. But how should we know them? The Scripture gives not one spark of light to find them out; but human learning holds out a clear light of discovery.... Here is a text fallen into our hands occasionally (a thousand others of the like nature might be produced); let any of those that deny human learning to be needful in handling of divinity, but expound me this text without the help of human learning, and I shall then think there is something in their opinion. Two things lead them into this mistake:—1. Because they conceive the New Testament (which part of the Bible Christians have most to deal withal) is so easy of itself, that it needs no pains or study to the expounding of it. 2. And the less, Because, say they, the Spirit reveals it to the saints of God, and so they are taught of God, and can teach others. Give me leave, partly for our settlement in the truth about this point, and partly for the stopping the mouths of such gainsayers, out of many things that might be spoken, to commend these four to you:—

"I. That, in the time when prophecy flourished, the standing ministry, that was to teach the people, were not prophets, but priests and Levites, that became learned by study.... It is but a wild thing now, when prophecy has ceased so many hundreds years ago, to refuse learning and a learned ministry, and to seek instruction, we know not of whom.

"II. There is no ground in Scripture to believe, nor promise to expect, that God doth, or ever will, teach men the grammatical or logical construction of the Scripture-text.—It is true, indeed, that he gives to a gracious saint, 'the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Christ'; as it is Ephes. 1:17. But how? Revealing to him, by experimental feeling, that which he knew, indeed, before in Scripture, but only by bare theory. As,

for example,—a man, before his conversion, knows, by reading and hearing, what faith and repentance are in their definitions; but, when he comes to be converted, the Spirit of grace reveals these to him in feeling and experience. And farther, revelation, as to the understanding of Scripture, there is not the least groundwork in Scripture whereupon to expect it.

"III. When God had committed the New Testament to writing, he had revealed all that he would reveal to men on earth, of his will and way of salvation....

"IV. The main difficulty of the New Testament requires study to unfold it, rather than revelation.... The main difficulty of the New Testament is in the language; unlock that clearly, and the sense ariseth easy.... Now, certainly, it is more likely to obtain understanding of languages by study, than to attain it by revelation; unless any one will yet expect that miraculous gift of tongues,—which, I suppose, there is none will make himself so ridiculous, as to say he expects" (vi. 210–212).

On the preservation, or the integrity, of the Scripture-text, Lightfoot also teaches the ordinary Reformed doctrine, as it is formulated, for instance in the Confession of Faith, i. 8. He was conservative, as a critic of the text; but as the fellow-worker of Walton in the preparation of the great Polyglot, he was in no ignorance of the facts as to the transmission of Scripture. He knew that no one copy of Scripture was perfect; but he believed that the correct text could not be lost. "Consider," he says:

"Consider how many copies were abroad in the world. The Old Testament was in every synagogue: and how many copies would men take of the New? So that it is impossible, but still Scripture must be conveyed. Could all the policy of Satan have hindered, he had done it: for the word of God is his overthrow; so that it was owing to a divine hand" (vi. 61).

But though it was by the "singular providence" of God alone that Scripture has been preserved pure, yet God has accomplished its preservation through means, and we can observe the suitability of the means to the end. When speaking of the scribes, he tells us of the care they exercised in the preservation of the text:

"They were the men, that took upon them to copy the Bible for those, that desired to have a copy. For so great and various is the accuracy and exactness of the Scripture text in the mystical and profound significances of letters, vowels, and accents, that it was not fit that every one should offer to transcribe the original, or that every vulgar pen should copy things of so sublime speculation. Therefore, there was a peculiar and special order of learned men among the Jews, whose office it was to take care of the preservation of the purity of the text, in all Bibles that should be copied out, that no corruption or error should creep into the original of the sacred writ: ... some set apart for this office, which required profound learning and skill;—namely, to be the copiers of the Bible, when any copy was to be taken; or, at least, to take care, that all copies, that should be transcribed, should be pure and without corruption ..." (iv. 222).

He praises the work of the Massorettes, and looks upon their methods and exactness as the guarantee of the text. Apropos of the nun inversum, at Num. 10:35, he remarks concerning such phenomena:

"If they show nothing else, yet this they show us,—that the text is punctually kept, and not decayed; when these things (that, to a hasty, ignorant beholder, might seem errors) are thus precisely observed in all Bibles" (iv. 19).

"Admirable is their [the Massorettes'] pains, to prove the text uncorrupt, against a gainsaying Papist... So that, if we had no other surety for the truth of the Old Testament text, these men's pains, methinks, should be enough to stop the mouth of a daring Papist" (iv. 20).

The marginal readings may, no doubt, "seem to tax the text of so many errors." But these readings are only variant readings of different copies; and though Lightfoot is inclined to doubt if "these marginals are not only human corrections," yet he treats them with sobriety:

"A second question might follow concerning Keri and Kethib: and a suspicion might also arise, that the text of the law was not preserved perfect to 'one jot and one tittle,' when so many various readings do so frequently occur. Concerning this business, we will offer these few things only ... It is, therefore, very probable, that the Keri and Kethib were compacted from the comparing of the two copies of the greatest authority, that is, the Jewish and the Babylonian: which when they differed from one another in so many places in certain little dashes of writing, but little or nothing at all as to the sense,—by very sound counsel they provided, that both should be reserved, so that both copies might have their worth preserved, and the sacred text its purity and fulness, while not 'one jot' nor 'one tittle' of it perished" (xi. 103–104).

That this result was attained, he thinks is attested by our Lord in Matt. 5:18. For though he considers it plain that our Saviour "did not only understand the bare letters, or the little marks that distinguish them" in this declaration, yet—

"It appears enough hence, that our Saviour also so far asserts the uncorrupt immortality and purity of the holy text, that no particle of the sacred sense should perish, from the beginning of the law to the end of it" (xi. 99–100).

He argues stoutly that the Jews could not, in the nature of the case, have corrupted the Scripture:

"1. It was their great care and solicitousness ... to preserve the text in all purity and uncorruptness....

2. Yet could they not, for all their care, but have some false copies go up and down amongst them, through heedlessness or error of transcribers....

3. In every synagogue, they had a true copy: and it was their care every where to have their Bible as purely authentic as possible....

4. Had they been ever so desirous to have imposed upon Christians, by falsifying the text, they could not possibly do it. For—

"First," every synagogue having a true copy, and many Jews being converted, it could not be done. "Secondly," there were so many learned men in the Christian Church that detection would have been certain.

"5. To which may be added, that the same power and care of God, that preserves the church, would preserve the Scriptures pure to it: and he that did, and could, preserve the whole,—could preserve every part, so that not so much as a tittle should perish" (iii. 405–408).

We have already remarked that Lightfoot was a very conservative textual critic. He speaks somewhat impatiently of the bold critics, "that are apt to tax the originals of Scripture of corruption and interpolation" (vii. 79); who, whenever for want of knowledge they are "not able to clear the sense," "have been bold to say the text is corrupt, and to frame a text of their own heads" (iii. p. xvi.). And he consistently refuses to assume a textual corruption, at Matt. 27:9 for example, in order to ease the difficulty of the text (iii. 157 and xi. 344). An example of his methods and powers as a textual critic may be found in the several passages where he discusses Mark 1:2 (iv. 246 and xi. 377). In the former of these passages he argues against the reading "in Isaiah" on five grounds; and in the latter he conjectures as to the origin of the various readings, that the Jewish Christians introduced the reading "in Isaiah" in order to conform the mode of

quotation to the Talmudic rules of quoting. His use of internal evidence is exhibited again, in a comment on Acts 3:20, "Which before was preached unto you":

"The very sense of the place confirmeth this reading: for though Beza saith, that all the old Greek copies that ever he saw,—as, also, the Syriac, Arabic, and Tertullian,—read it, προκεχειρισμένον, 'fore-ordained'; yet, the very scope and intention of Peter's speech, in this place, doth clearly show, that it is to be read, προκεκηρυγμένον, 'which before was preached to you,'—namely, by Moses, or the law; and by all the prophets" (viii. 66).

The same qualities and methods as a critic came out in several defences of the genuineness of the pericope of the adulteress intruded into John's Gospel (iii. 112; vi. 302–303; xii. 312). In the former passage he says:

"The Syriac wants this story: and Beza doubts it; a man always ready to suspect the text, because of the strangeness of Christ's action, writing with his finger on the ground: 'Mihi, ut ingenue loquar (saith he) vel ob hunc ipsum locum suspecta est hæc historia.' Whereas it speaks the style of John throughout, and the demeanour of the scribes and Pharisees, and of Christ, most consonantly to their carriage all along the gospel" (iii. 112).

In another place he accounts for its omission as follows:

"There is hardly any commentator upon the gospel, or this chapter, but he will tell you, that this story of the adulterous woman was wanting, and left out of some Greek Testaments in ancient times, as appears by this,—that some of the fathers, setting themselves to expound this Gospel, make no mention at all of any part of this story. So Nonnus, turning all this Gospel into Greek verse, hath utterly left out this whole story; and so hath the Syriac New Testament, first printed in Europe; and so,

Jerome tells us, did some old Latin translations. When I cast with myself, whence this omission should proceed, I cannot but think of two passages in Eusebius. The one is in his third book of Ecclesiastical History, the very last clause in that book,—where he relates, that one Papias, an old tradition-monger, as he characterizes him, did first bring in this story of the adulterous woman, out of a book called the 'Gospel according to the Hebrews.' For so is that passage of Eusebius commonly understood. The other is in his fourth book of the Life of Constantine; where he relates, that Constantine 'enjoined him, and committed to his trust, to get transcribed πεντήκοντα σωματία' ... Now, if Eusebius believed, that this story was introduced by Papias, as he seems to do,—you may well conclude, that he would be sure to leave out this story, in all his 'fifty copies,' ... as having no better authority, than the introduction of it by such a man. Or, if the ages before Eusebius were of the same belief with him in this matter, you may see, why this story might also be wanting in those times. But I shall not trouble you about this matter, which is now past all dispute. For I believe, it is hardly possible in all the world, to find now a printed New Testament, either in the original Greek, or in any other language, either eastern or western, wherein this story is not inserted without any question. Nor had the thing been ever disputed, if the story itself had been searched to the bottom; for then, of itself, it would have vindicated its own authority, to be evangelical and divine" (vi. 302–303).

It is apparent that, though of an extremely conservative temper, Lightfoot was a remarkably well-furnished and able critic for his day. The school of criticism to which he would belong, indeed, has scarcely advanced beyond him in either resources or capacities since his time; and all that was known of the state of the text or of materials for its study in his day was in his easy control.

The difficulties of Scripture formed, in a sense, the main matter of Lightfoot's studies. He has, indeed, formally treated the subject in a

single sermon only (vii. 201–216). But all his Talmudic studies were undertaken and are justified by the light which he hoped and found that they would throw upon the obscurities of the Biblical text; and his several expository treatises are specially busy with expounding the difficult passages of Scripture. In fact, his chief interest, after the determination of what may be called the background of the Scriptural revelation—the chronology, topography, geography, historical consecution, and the like, of the Biblical story—seems to have been what he would call the "clearing of scruples" in the text of Scripture. There is hardly a difficulty which had been started, from a harmonistic, chronological, or historical point of view, which he has not treated, sometimes more than once. In a study of his doctrine of Scripture, his treatment of these Scriptural difficulties cannot be neglected. On the contrary, they exhibit his conception of Scripture in action; and a review of them will enable us to look upon his conception of Scripture in the most searching light that can be thrown upon it.

Lightfoot is very far from denying that difficulties exist in Scripture. If he is at fault in any respect here, it is in exaggerating their number and their intractableness. Nevertheless, he does not allow that these difficulties are really errors of Scripture, or even blemishes on the divine face of Scripture. Not only are all of them capable of satisfactory explanation; but each several one of them has been purposely introduced into Scripture by the Holy Ghost for a high and good end, and this end is discoverable by the careful and diligent student. The difficulties of Scripture are thus transferred from blots into beauties; from obstacles into aids to faith; from marks of human infirmity into examples of divine wisdom. In the preface to his "Harmony, etc., of the New Testament" (iii. pp. vi.–viii., xvi.), he speaks as follows on the general subject:

"I shall not trouble the reader with any long discourse, to show, how the Scripture abounds with transposition of stories; how the Holy Ghost doth, eminently, hereby show the majesty of his style and divine wisdom: how this is equally used in both testaments; what

need the student hath carefully to observe those dislocations; and what profit he may reap, by reducing them to their proper time and order....

"I have not set myself to comment; but, in a transient way, to hint the clearing of some of the most conspicuous difficulties,—and that, partly, from the text itself,—and, partly, from Talmudical collections.... Multitudes of passages are not possibly to be explained, but from these records. For, since the scene of the most actings in it, was among the Jews,—the speeches of Christ and his apostles were to the Jews,—and they Jews, by birth and education, that wrote the Gospels and Epistles; it is no wonder if it speak the Jews' dialect throughout; and glanceth at their traditions, opinions, and customs, at every step.... Though it be penned in Greek, it speaks in the phrase of the Jewish nation, among whom it was penned, all along; and there are multitudes of expressions in it, which are not to be found but there, and in the Jews' writings, in all the world. They are very much deceived, that think the New Testament so very easy to be understood, because of the familiar doctrine it containeth,—faith and repentance. It is true, indeed, that it is plainer as to the matter it handleth, than the Old, because it is an unfolding of the Old:—but for the attaining of the understanding of the expressions that it useth in these explications, you must go two steps farther than you do about the Old;—namely, to observe where, and how, it useth the Septuagint's Greek, as it doth very commonly;—and where it useth the Jews' idiom, or reference thereunto, which indeed it doth continually.... The greatest part of the New Testament might be observed to speak in such reference to something or other commonly known, or used, or spoken, among the Jews; and even the difficultest passages in it, might be brought to far more facility than they be, if these references were well observed. There are divers places, where commentators, not able to clear the sense for want of this, have been bold to say the text is corrupt, and to frame a text of their

own heads; whereas the matter, skilfully handled in this way, might have been made plain" (iii. pp. vi. vii. viii. xvi.).

In his sermon on the "Difficulties of Scripture," he tells us that the Holy Ghost purposely introduced difficulties into Scripture to challenge serious study of them; that they are all capable of solution; and that it is our business, and it will be our profit, to search out the solutions and their lessons.

"The Holy Ghost," he says, "hath purposely penned the Scriptures so as to challenge all serious study of them." ... "Peter tells us, that there are divers things in Paul's Epistles hard to be understood; and why did the Holy Ghost dictate them so hard by Paul?... Because the Holy Ghost hath penned Scripture so as to challenge all serious study. He could have penned all so plain, that he that runneth, might have read them; but he hath penned them in such a style, that he that will read them, must not run and read, but sit down and study" (vii. 208).

Accordingly these difficulties, which belong to the majesty of the Scriptures (vii. 212), both can be and are to be understood, for—

"God never writ the difficulties of the Scripture only to be gazed upon and never understood; never gave them as a book sealed, and that could never be unsealed" (vii. 216).

They may be great and numerous, so great that the Old and New Testament may now and again seem to be "directly contrary," "as if the two Testaments were fallen out, and were not at unity among themselves" (vii. 210). Yet this is but an incitement to the discovery of the underlying unity, and Light foot has nothing but scorn for those who

"have taken upon them[selves] to pick out some places in the Bible, which, they say, are past all possibility of interpreting or understanding" (vii. 211).

These principles are repeatedly insisted upon. After enumerating such difficulties in another place, he continues thus:

"For resolution of such ambiguities, when you have found them, the text will do it, if it be well searched.... This way, attained to, will guide you itself in what else is agreeable to profitable reading; as in marking those things that seem to be contradictions in the text, or slips of the Holy Ghost (in which always is admirable wisdom), ... Strange variations, yet always divine.... Admirable it is to see, how the Holy Spirit of God in discords hath shewed the sweet music. But few men mark this, because few take a right course in reading of Scripture. Hence, when men are brought to see flat contradictions (as unreconciled there may be many in it), they are at amaze, and ready to deny their Bible. A little pains right spent will soon amend this wavering, and settle men upon the Rock; whereon to be built is to be sure" (ii. 8, 9).

In Peter's reference to the difficulties in Paul's epistles, he thinks he sees a proof of the intentional character of them:

"He citeth Paul's Epistle to the Hebrews, and giveth an honourable testimony to that, and to the rest of his Epistles: but acknowledged, that, in some places, they are hard to be understood, and were misconstrued by some unlearned and unstable ones, to their own ruin; yet neither doth he nor Paul, who was yet alive and well knew of this wresting of his Epistles, clear or amend those difficulties, but let them alone as they were: for the Holy Ghost has so penned Scripture as to set men to study" (iii. 327).

A few examples of his dealing with these difficulties will be instructive. The following are some Old Testament cases:

"Divers psalms in the original are alphabetical; but few of them have the alphabet true, for some reason or other admirably

divine: so one letter, in Jeremy's alphabetic Lamentations, is altered constantly, for secret and sweet reason" (ii. 39).

"Men frame intricacies and doubts to themselves here [Gen. 11 on the age, birth, and call of Abraham], where the text is plain, if it be not wrested" (ii. 88). He proceeds to solve the several difficulties.

On 2 Kings 24:8, 9, and 2 Chron. 36:9, as to the age of Jehoiachin when he began to reign: "Now, in expressions that are so different, propriety is not to be expected in both; but the one to be taken properly, and that is, that he was eighteen years old when he began to reign; and the other, that he was the son of the eighth year, or fell in the lot of the eighth year, after any captivity of Judah had begun: for the beginning of his reign was in the eighth year of Nebuchadnezzar; and in the eighth year of the seventy of captivity. And so the Holy Ghost dealeth here, as he doth about Ahaziah, as was observed there" (ii. 288–289).

Accordingly, when speaking of 2 Kings 8:26, as compared with 2 Chron. 22:2, he had said: "The original meaneth thus, 'Ahaziah was the son of the two-and-forty years,'—namely, of the house of Omri, of whose seed he was, by the mother's side; and he walked in the ways of that house, and came to ruin at the same time with it" (ii. 227).

Whatever we may think of the reasonableness of such harmonizing, its serious presentation exhibits Lightfoot's conviction of the harmonizable character of the whole Old Testament text, and shows how far he was from readiness to allow that it contained errors.

Let us note now a few cases from the New Testament:

"Only there is some difference betwixt Matthew and Luke, in relating the order of the temptations: which Matthew having laid down in their proper rank, ... Luke, in the rehearsing of them, is not so much observant of the order (that being fixed by Matthew before), as he is careful to give the full story; and so to

give it, as might redound to the fullest information. As our mother Eve was tempted by Satan, ... so, by these, had it been possible, would the same tempter have overthrown the seed of the woman.... Luke, for our better observing of this parallel, hath laid the order of these temptations answerable to the order of those" (iii. 41; cf. iv. 348).

On Luke 5:1–12; Matt. 4:18–22; Mark 1:16–20: "In the order of Luke, there is some difficulty:—1. He relateth the calling of these disciples differently from the relation given by the other.... They say, he called James and John at some distance beyond Peter and Andrew; but he carrieth it, as if he called them all together. But this is not contrariety, but for the more illustration; they all speak the same truth, but one helps to explain another.... 2. A second scruple in the order of Luke is this,—that he hath laid the two miracles of casting out a devil in Capernaum-synagogue, and the healing of Peter's mother-in-law, before the calling of these disciples; which, apparently, by this evangelist, were after. But the reason hereof may be conceived to be, especially, this ... having an eye, in that his relation, rather to the place than to the time. And so we shall observe elsewhere, that the very mention of a place doth sometimes occasion these holy penmen to produce stories out of their proper time, to affix them to that their proper place" (iii. 52–53). "And thus the scope of his [Luke's] method is plain. And here again we see an example of what was said before,—namely, that the mention of a place doth oftentimes occasion these holy penmen, to speak of stories out of their proper time, because they would take up the whole story of that place all at once, or together" (iii. 58).

As to the Gadarene miracle: "The main doubt lies in this; that, whereas Mark and Luke speak but of one possessed, Matthew speaks of two. So I observe, that Matthew speaks of two blind men begging at Jericho, whereas Mark speaketh but of one; and so likewise Matthew speaks of both the thieves mocking Christ, whereas Luke speaks but of one of them so doing." He gives

several possible views of the harmony and then continues: "But, the other examples adduced, where Matthew speaking of two, Mark and Luke speak but of one, it is plain and satisfactory, that these two latter, writing after Matthew, and he having given the story before them, numbering the persons concerned in it,—they have not been curious so much to specify the number of persons, on whom the miracles were wrought, which he had done before, as careful to record the miracle done,—that none of Christ's workings might be left unrecorded, as to the nature of the thing done" (iii. 84).

As to the place of singing the hymn at the Passover: "Which, indeed, is neither contrariety nor diversity of story, but only variety of relation for the holding out of the story more complete" (iii. 151).

On Mark's "third" hour and John's "sixth": "Mark, therefore, in that calculation of the time, takes his date from the first time that Pilate gave him up to their abusings; and his phrase may be taken of so comprehensive an intimation, as to speak both the time of his first giving up, 'at the third hour' of the day, and the time of his nailing to his cross, 'the third hour' from that. And, much after the same manner of account that our Saviour's six hours' suffering, from Pilate's first giving him up, to his dying, are reckoned, so the four hundred and thirty years of sojourning of the children of Israel in Egypt (Exod. 12), are computed; namely, the one half before they came into Egypt, and the other half after" (iii. 163).

On the inscriptions on the cross: "In the expression of which, the variety of the evangelists shows their style, and how when one speaks short, another enlargeth, and what need of taking all together to make up the full story.... Their variety is only in wording this for the reader's understanding" (iii. 165).

On Luke 5 and its parallels: "Now, though there seem to be these different, yea, contrary circumstances in the evangelists' relation, yet is the story but one and the same, but only related more largely by Luke than by the other" (v. 149).

One of the most common internal difficulties in the Scriptures arises from what Lightfoot calls "transposition and dislocation of times and texts." Of this he speaks as follows:

"The same Spirit, that dictated both the Testaments, hath observed this course in both the Testaments alike: laying texts, chapters, and histories, sometimes out of the proper place, in which, according to natural chronical order, they should have lain. And this is one of the majesticknesses, wherewithal the Holy Ghost marcheth and passeth through the Scriptures. Not that these dislocations are imperfections,—for they ever show the greatest wisdom: nor that to methodize these transposed passages, is to correct the method of the Holy Ghost;—for it is but to unknot such difficulties, as the Holy Ghost hath challenged more study on: nor that it is desirable, that our Bibles should be pointed in such a methodized way, and such Bibles only to be in common use,—for the very posture of the Bible, as it now lieth, seemeth to be divine..." (ii. p. lxii.).

An example or two should be given also of Lightfoot's mode of dealing with historical difficulties in Scripture:

Of Cyrenius: "Either Cyrenius came twice into Syria to lay taxations, as Funccius concludeth; or else Josephus faileth here, as he doth not seldom elsewhere, in chronology" (iv. 193).

Of Theudas, more fully: "This were a very ready and easy interpretation of these words of Gamaliel, if this great scruple did not lie in the way:—namely, that this Theudas, mentioned by Josephus, was about the fourth or fifth year of Claudius; but this Theudas, mentioned by Gamaliel, was before Judas the Galilean, which was in

the days of Augustus. There is a great deal of ado among expositors what to make of these two stories, so like in substance, but so different in time. Some conceive, that Josephus hath missed his chronology, and hath set Theudas's story many years later than it fell out. Others refuse Josephus's story, as not applicable to this Theudas of Gamaliel (though they hold that he hath spoken true in it), because the time is so different; but they think Gamaliel's Theudas was some of those villains, that so much infested Judea in the times of Sabinus and Varus,—Joseph. Ant. lib. 17. cap. 12; though Josephus hath not there mentioned him by name. A third sort conceive that Gamaliel's Theudas was not before Judas the Galilean, who rose about the birth of Christ, but a long while after,—namely, a little before Gamaliel speaketh these words: and they render *πρὸ ἡμερῶν* in the strict propriety,—namely, that it was but 'a few days before'; and *μετὰ τοῦτον*, not 'post eum,' 'after him,'—but 'praeter eum,' 'besides him.' In these varieties of opinions and difficulties, it is hard to resolve which way to take; and it is well that it is a matter of that nature, that men may freely use their conjectures in it, and be excusable" (viii. 82–83). He goes on to give it as his own opinion that Josephus' and Gamaliel's Theudas are not the same, but two different men; the second possibly a disciple of the other. This was published in 1645. In a posthumous book he adopts another opinion, as follows: "Josephus makes mention of one Theudas, an impostor, whose character indeed agrees well enough with this of ours; but they seem to disagree in time.... Those that are advocates for Josephus, do imagine there might be another Theudas, besides him that he mentions: and they do but imagine it, for they name none. I could instance, indeed, in two more of that name; neither of which agrees with this of Gamaliel, or will afford any light to the chronology of Josephus.... Can we suppose now, that Gamaliel could have either of these Theudas in his eye? Indeed, neither the one nor the other has any agreeableness with that character, that is given of this Theudas, about whom we are inquiring. That in Josephus is much more adapted; and grant only that the historian might slip in his chronology, and there is no other difficulty in it. Nor do I indeed see, why we should give so much deference to Josephus in this matter, as

to take such pains in vindicating his care or skill in it. We must (forsooth) find out some other Theudas, or change the stops in the verses, or invent some other plaster for the sore,—rather than Josephus should be charged with the least mistake; to whom yet, both in history and chronology, it is no unusual thing to trip or go out of the road of truth. I would therefore think, that the Theudas in Josephus is this same in Gamaliel; only that the historian mistook in his accounts of time, and so defaced a true story by false chronology" (viii. 401–403).

The difficulties that arise from the quotation of the Old Testament in the New furnished Lightfoot, naturally, much material for the exercise of his harmonistic skill. We give a few examples of his dealing with them.

With reference to the application of the Old Testament passages in the New:

On Matt. 2:15 and 18: "The two allegations produced here out of the Old Testament ... are of that fulness, that they speak of two things apiece, and may very fitly be applied unto them both, and show that the one did resemble or prefigure the other" (iv. 231). "The Holy Ghost, therefore, doth elegantly set forth this lamentation, by personating Rachel" (iv. 232).

On Acts 1:16: "Now the application of these places so pertinently and home to Judas, showeth the illumination and knowledge, that the breathing and giving of the Holy Ghost had wrought in the disciples" (viii. 36).

With reference to the New Testament dealing with Old Testament facts:

Commenting on Acts 7:4 and 7: "The Holy Ghost, indeed, hath ascribed the conduct of this journey to Terah, ... This clause [Acts 7:7] is here alleged by Stephen, as if it had been spoken to Abraham; whereas it was spoken to Moses four hundred years

after. But the Holy Ghost useth to speak short in known stories; as Matt. 1:12; 1 Chron. 1:36; Mark 1:2, 3, &c." (viii. 110, 111; cf. 112).

On Luke 11:51, on Zecharias, son of Berachias, whom he identifies with Zechariah, son of Jehoiada, referring to 2 Chron. 24 (cf. 11:288): "If any one hesitate about the changing of the name, let him say by what name he finds Jehoiada recited in that catalogue of priests set down in 1 Chron. 6.... If by another name, you will say (supposing he be also called Barachias) he was then a man of three names. This indeed is no unusual thing with that nation for some to have more names than one: nay, if you will believe the Jewish doctors, even Moses himself had no less than ten" (xii: 123).

With reference to the freedom of quotation by the writers of the New Testament from the Old:

"The evangelists and apostles, when they take on them to cite any text from the Old Testament, are not so punctual to observe the exact and strict form of words, as the pith of them, or sense of the place, as might be instanced in many particulars; so that the difference of the words would not prejudice the agreement in sense, were there not so flat difference [between Mark 1:2 and its Old Testament original] of person as me and thee." He then argues that this variation is intentional, not "to cross or deny," but to explain and illustrate: "The majesty of Scripture doth often show itself, in re quoting of places, in this,—that it allegeth them in difference of words and difference of sense; yea, sometimes in contrariety.... Wherein the Holy Ghost, having penned a thing in one place, doth, by variety of words and sense, enlarge and expound himself in another" (iv. 247–248).

On Luke 1:17, from Malachi: "But, first, The Holy Ghost is not so punctual to cite the very letter of the prophet, as to give the sense" (iv. 155).

On Matt. 2:6, he notes the differences and undertakes to investigate them clause by clause. On the substitution in the first clause of "in the land of Juda," for "Ephratah," he remarks: "First; there are that give this general answer to all the differences in this quotation, that the scribes and the evangelist tie not themselves to the very words of the prophet, but only think it enough to render his sense. And this answer may be very well entertained, and give good satisfaction, especially since that, in allegations from the Old Testament, it is usual with the New so to do,—but that the difference between the text and the quotation is so great, that it is not only diverse, but even contrary. Some, therefore, Secondly, ..." attribute the change to the error of the scribes, whom the evangelist accurately represents; but Lightfoot rejoins that the scribes knew their Bible too well to fall into such an error ... "Thirdly; Whereas some talk of a Syriac edition, which the Jews used at that time more than the Hebrew, and which had this text of Micah as the evangelist hath cited it ..." he objects that this rests on two unsupported conjectures, and finally determines as follows: ... "The scribes, or the evangelists, or both, did thus differently quote the prophet, neither through forgetfulness, nor through the misleading of an erroneous edition, but purposely, and upon a rational intent"—viz., to convey their meaning better to Herod. The variation in the second clause, "but not the least," is met by an exegesis of the Hebrew, showing it to be consonant; then, "The text of the prophet, then, being rendered in this interpretation, this allegation of the evangelist will be found, not to have any contrariety to it at all, but to speak, though not in the very same words, yet to the very same tenor and purpose ... And thus doth the evangelist express the prophet's mind, though he tie not his expression to his very words, alleging his text to its clearest sense, and to the easier apprehension of the hearer ..." The change in the third clause, "princes," is shown to be, with a difference of words, the same sense; and so with the fourth clause: "But here again doth he differ from the letter of prophet,

but cometh so near the sense, that the difference is as no difference at all" (iv. 225–231).

On Matt. 4:10, where "only" is inserted: "But, first, our Saviour applies the text close to the present occasion.... Our Saviour doth reduce it to such a particular, as was most pertinent and agreeable to the thing in hand. And so parallels might be showed in great variety; where one place of Scripture, citing another, doth not retain the very words of the portion cited, but doth, sometimes, change the expression to fit the occasion: as Matthew. 2:23, translates Netzer,—'a branch,' in Isa. 11:1,—'a man of Nazareth.' ... Secondly; Although the word only be not in the Hebrew text, yet is it in the Septuagint, ... and it is most ordinary for the evangelists to follow that copy. And that translation hath warrantably added it, seeing (as Beza well observeth) so much is included in the emphatical particle hun; and is also understood by comparing other places" (iv. 346).

The complication of the problem of New Testament quotation, through the use of the Septuagint, alluded to in the last extract, is always kept in mind by Lightfoot. Thus:

"The apostle there [in Heb. 11:21] follows the LXX; that, in their unpricked Bibles, read 'matteh,' 'a rod,' for 'mittah,' 'a bed' " (ii. 107).

One of the most striking cases of the New Testament's agreement with the Septuagint text concerns the insertion of a second Cainan in the genealogical tables, which appears also in Luke's genealogy of our Lord. This is repeatedly referred to by Lightfoot:

On Gen. 11:11, 13: "Arphaxad.... The Septuagint makes him the father of Cainan, which never was in being; and yet is that followed by St. Luke, for special reason" (ii. 90).

On Luke 3:36, he speaks of the insertion of Cainan, of there being no mention of him in the Old Testament genealogies; "nor, indeed," he adds, "was there ever any such a man in the world at all"; and remarks that it is easy to see that Luke obtained him out of the Septuagint. Then he adds: "But when this is resolved, the greater scruple is yet behind,—of his warrantableness so to do, and of the purity of the text, where it is so done." "And from hence [the Septuagint] hath St. Luke, without controversy, taken in Cainan into this genealogy,—a man that never was in the world; but the warrantableness of this insertion will require divers considerations to find it out." He sets forth that the Seventy were forced to translate the Bible against their will, and did it as ill as they could, using an "unpricked Bible" as one device to mislead; and that they inserted the "said name," Cainan, as one of their tricks. God used the Septuagint "as the key for admission of the heathen, and as a harbinger to the New Testament." Luke writes with a universal interest and intent. Now, he argues:

"This being the intent of the pedigree's placing here, as the very placing of it doth inevitably evince, it is not only warrantable, but also admirably divine, that Luke taketh in Cainan from the seventy. For, first, writing for heathens, he must follow the heathens' Bible in his quotations. Secondly, In genealogies, he was to be a copier, not a corrector. Thirdly, and chiefly, In following this insertion of the Seventy, he embraceth not their error, but divinely draweth us to look at their intent.

"When Jude mentioneth Michael's striving with Satan about the body of Moses, he approveth not the story as true, which he knew to be but a Talmudic parable; but, from the Jews' own authors, he useth this as an argument against them, and for their instruction.

"So, though Luke, from the Seventy, the Bible of the heathen, have alleged Cainan the son of Arphaxad, he allegeth it not as the truth more than the Hebrew; but, from the Septuagint's own authority, or from the matter which they inserted in distaste of the calling of the

heathen, he maketh comfortable use and instruction to the heathen concerning their calling.... Thus are the censers of Korah and his company, though ordained for an evil end by them, yet reserved in the sanctuary for a good by the command of God" (iv. 325–330).

The same argument, in essence, is repeated much more fully in another passage; and as the matter is important to help us to estimate Lightfoot's methods, we shall quote it pretty much at large. He is sure that Luke here follows the Septuagint:

"I cannot be persuaded by any arguments, that this passage concerning Cainan, was in Moses's text, or, indeed, in any Hebrew copies, which the Seventy used ... But now if this version be so uncertain, and differs so much from the original,—how comes it to pass, that the evangelists and apostles should follow it so exactly, and that even in some places, where it does so widely differ from the Hebrew fountain?

"Ans. I. It pleased God to allot the censers of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, to sacred use, because they were so ordained and designed by the first owners:—so doth it please the Holy Ghost to determine that version to his own use, being so primarily ordained by the first authors.... So the Greek version designed for sacred use, as designed for the Holy Bible,—so it was kept and made use of by the Holy Ghost.

"II. Whereas the New Testament was to be wrote in Greek, and come into the hands chiefly of Gentiles,—it was most agreeable,—I may say, most necessary, for them, to follow the Greek copies, as being what the Gentiles were only capable of consulting; that so they, examining the histories and quotations that were brought out of the Old Testament, might find them agreeing with, and not contradicting, them....

"III.... Object. But the clause, that is before us (to omit many others), is absolutely false: for there was neither any Cainan the son of

Arphaxad; nor was Jesus the son of any Cainan, that was born after the flood.

"Ans. I. There could be nothing more false as to the thing itself, than that of the apostle, when he calleth the preaching of the gospel $\mu\omega\rho\iota\alpha\nu$, 'foolishness,' 1 Cor. 1:21; and yet, according to the common conceptions of foolish men, nothing more true. So neither was this true in itself, that is asserted here; but only so in the opinion of those, for whose sake the evangelist writes. Nor yet is it the design of the Holy Ghost to indulge them in any thing, that was not true; but only would not lay a stumbling-block at present before them. 'I am made all things to all men, that I might gain some.'

"II. There is some parallel with this of St. Luke and that in the Old Testament, 1 Chron. 1:36: 'The sons of Eliphaz, Teman, and Omar, and Zephi, and Gatam, and Timnah, and Amalek.' Where it is equally false, that Timnah was the son of Eliphaz,—as it is, that Cainan was the son of Arphaxad. But far, far, be it from me to say, that the Holy Ghost was either deceived himself, or would deceive others! Timnah was not a man, but a woman; not the son of Eliphaz, but his concubine; not Amalek's brother, but his mother, Gen. 36:12. Only the Holy Ghost teacheth us, by this shortness of speech, to recur to the original story, from whence those things are taken,—and there consult the determinate explication of the whole matter: which is frequently done by the same Holy Spirit, speaking very briefly in stories well known before.

"The Gentiles have no reason to cavil with the evangelist in this matter; for he agrees well enough with their Bibles. And if the Jews, or we ourselves, should find fault, he may defend him from the common usage of the Holy Ghost, in whom it is no rare and unusual thing, in the recital of stories and passages well enough known before, to vary from the original, and yet without any design of deceiving, or suspicion of being himself deceived; but according to that majesty and authority that belongs to him, dictating and referring the reader to the primitive story, from whence he may settle

and determine the state of the matter, and inquire into the reasons of the variation. St. Stephen imitates this very custom, while he is speaking about the burial of the patriarchs, Acts 7:15, 16; being well enough understood by his Jewish auditory, though giving but short hints in a story so well known.

"III. It is one thing to dictate from himself,—and another thing to quote what is dictated from others, as our evangelist in this place doth. And when as he did, without all question, write in behalf of the Gentiles, being the companion of him, who was the first apostle of the Gentiles,—what should hinder his alleging according to what had been dictated in their Bibles?

"When the apostle names the magicians of Egypt, Jannes and Jambres, 2 Tim. 3:9, he doth not deliver it for a certain thing, or upon his credit assure them, that these were their very names, but allegeth only what had been delivered by others, what had been the common tradition amongst them, well enough known to Timothy, a thing about which neither he nor any other would start any controversy.

"So when the apostle Jude speaks of Michael contending with the devil about the body of Moses, he doth not deliver it for a certain and authentic thing; and yet is not to be charged with any falsehood, because he doth not dictate of his own, but only appeals to something that had been told by others, using an argument with the Jews, fetched from their own books and traditions."

In IV. he argues that if fault is to be found for adding Cainan, it is to be found with the Seventy and not with Luke. (xii. pp. 55–62.)

In estimating the meaning of such a passage as this, we must remember that, for our present purpose, the question is not whether Lightfoot succeeds in saving the credit of the sacred writers, on the grounds which he alleges; but whether he considered himself to succeed in doing so. We are not investigating the real value of his

arguments; but the value which he placed upon them. We may possibly ourselves think that the method which he here adopts, and the explanations which he offers, will leave the New Testament writers chargeable with faults and errors, which impinge upon their infallibility; but it is quite evident that Lightfoot did not think so. On the basis of the explanation which we have just quoted, he felt able to say that there "never was in the world" such a man as Cainan mentioned in Luke's genealogy of Christ, that the story of Michael's striving with Satan for Moses' body was "but a Talmudic parable," that Jannes and Jambres were but invented names of the Egyptian magicians; and yet to declare in the same breath that the whole of the books which make mention of them, in all their parts and words and letters, were the dictation of the Holy Ghost, who is incapable of error. He declares that Luke's following the Septuagint in the insertion of Cainan was "not only warrantable, but admirably divine," and that in doing so "he embraceth not the error, but divinely draweth us to look at the intent." In such matters the Holy Ghost acts "according to that majesty and authority that belongs to him"; and the sacred writers are not to be "charged with any falsehood" on their account.

The principles on which Lightfoot bases these explanations are those of accommodation and of the *argumentum ex concessis*. He supposes that the sacred writers, in making use of such material, do it in order to avoid arousing the opposition of their readers or to refute and convince them out of their own mouths; and that this use of such material does not commit the sacred writers to its truth. There can be no question that the *argumentum ex concessis* is a legitimate form of argument; and none that the sacred writers make use of it: and if Lightfoot can succeed in subsuming the present instances under this argument, he has no doubt succeeded in his explanations of them. The point of doubt is whether these are cases of this kind of argument. He held that they are. He argues this indeed with iterated persistency. Let us gather some of the chief passages together:

"Whence had the apostle their names [Jannes and Jambres]? From the common-received opinion and agreement of the Jewish nation, that currently asserted, that the magicians of Egypt were called by these names.... So that the apostle takes up these two names, neither by revelation, as certainly asserting that the sorcerers of Egypt were of these names; but, as he found the names commonly received by the Jewish nation, so he useth them.

"Such a passage is that of the apostle Jude, about 'Michael contending with the devil about the body of Moses': which he neither speaketh by inspiration, nor by way of certain assertion, —but only citing a common opinion and conceit of the nation, he takes an argument from their own authors and concessions" (vii. 90).

Commenting on Jude, 9th verse, elsewhere: "Not that ever such a dispute was betwixt Michael or Christ, and the devil about Moses's body; but the Jews have such a conceit and story, and we meet it in their writings; and the apostle useth an argument from their own saying to confute their doing" (vii. 179).

"In citing the story of 'Michael the archangel contending with the devil about the body of Moses,' he doth but the same that Paul doth in naming Jannes and Jambres; namely, allege a story, which was current and owned among the nation, though there were no such thing in Scripture; and so he argueth with them from their own authors and concessions.... His alleging the prophecy of Enoch, is an arguing of the very like nature; as citing and referring to some known and common tradition, that they had among them, to this purpose.... And in both these he useth their own testimonies against themselves; as if he should thus have spoken at large: ' "These men speak evil of dignities," whereas they have and own a story for current, that even "Michael the archangel" did not speak evil of the devil, when he was striving with him about the body of Moses, &c. And whereas they show and own a prophecy of Enoch, of God coming in

judgment, &c.; why, these are the very men, to whom such a matter is to be applied,' &c. It is no strange thing, in the New Testament, for Christ and the apostles to deal and argue with the Jews upon their own concessions" (iii. 328–329).

This "useful principle of interpreting" is further illustrated in connection with a former passage (vii. 178) by an exposition of Acts 7:53, where Lightfoot translates "unto the disposition of angels."

"As if Stephen did rub their own opinion upon them, as is frequently done by the apostles, and that his meaning should be this: 'You say, and conceive, that the very receiving of the law did translate and dispose them, that heard it, into the very predicate and state of angels; and yet this brave law you have not kept. The law, that, you conceit, made others angels ... hath had no good effect upon you at all; for ye have not kept it' " (vii. 178–179).

He then cites another case of the apostles arguing thus, "to confute them from their own opinions and tenets," viz., 1 Cor. 11:10, which, indeed, may be a case in point.

Whether we can follow Lightfoot in looking upon all these cases as cases of arguments *ex concessis* or not, we can at least understand that his thinking so gave him an explanation of them which enabled him to contend at the same time that the facts involved were not true, and yet that the Biblical writers were absolutely infallible or inerrant: they did not put them forward as facts. And on this general principle, he was inclined to deal with all testimonies borrowed by the writers of the Bible from sources of authority among their readers; in such cases they were "copiers, not correctors." Thus:

"Jacob goeth down into Egypt with seventy souls.... The Septuagint have added five more ... from 1 Chron. 7:14, 20, &c.; followed by St. Luke, Acts, 7:14" (ii. 104).

Matthew took "the latter end of his genealogy," and Luke "the beginning of his," from the "public registers," "having then the civil records to avouch for them, if they should be questioned" (iv. 172–173).

So Matthew took Rahab's marriage to Salmon, "from ancient records" (iv. 174; cf. 177).

There are other instances also in which Lightfoot's explanations may not seem to us to be satisfactory or indeed suitable. For example, there is a case of quite extreme application of the principle of accommodation in his explanation of the parable of the rich man and Lazarus. He supposes that Christ framed the parable according to the common Greek opinion as to Elysium and Tartarus; which empties the whole mass of details in the story of its value as a revelation of the future state. And there is a case also in which two inconsistent explanations are offered, the latter of which suggests something very similar to the modern critical theory of "re-working,"—though, of course, with a difference. He is discussing Psalm 89 which he considers to be by Ethan, son of Zerah, "penned many years before the birth of Moses," in the "bondage and affliction of Egypt"; and he raises the difficulty that David is often mentioned in it, to answer it thus:

"Answer. 1. This might be done prophetically; as Samuel is thought to be named by Moses, Psalm 99:6: for that Psalm, according to a rule of the Hebrews, is held to have been made by him. 2. It will be found in Scripture, that when some holy men, endued with the Spirit of God, have left pieces of writings behind them, indited by the Spirit,—others, that have lived in after-times, endued with the same gift of prophecy, have taken those ancient pieces in hand, and have flourished upon them, as present, past, or future occasions did require. To this purpose, compare Psalm 18 and 1 Sam. 22; Obadiah, and Jer. 49:14; and 1 Chron. 16 and Psalm 96 and 105; and 2 Pet. 2 and the Epistle of St. Jude, ver. 18. So this piece of Ethan being of incomparable antiquity, and singing of the delivery from Egypt,—in

after-times, that it might be made fit to be sung in the temple, it is taken in hand by some divine penman, and that groundwork of his is wrought upon, and his song set to a higher key; namely, that whereas he treated only of the bodily deliverance from Egypt, it is wound up so high as to reach the spiritual delivery by Christ; and, therefore, David is so often named, from whence he should come" (ii. 356–357).

In these passages we have probably Lightfoot at his worst. Acute, learned, full of expedients, and always reverently bearing in mind, before all things, that the Scriptures are literally the word of God, in which there can be no error; he yet is overtaken by the fault which so often attends the harmonist, and overreaches himself with unnatural subtleties which raise more difficulties than they lay. It would be a blunder to suppose that this type of explanation is characteristic of Lightfoot. Were our purpose to estimate his ability and his resources as a harmonist, there would be quite a different body of examples to be adduced, far more characteristic of him and far more worthy of his great learning and good judgment. But as our object is to investigate his attitude towards Scripture, we have been forced to adduce rather those instances that have fallen under our eye, in which his dealings with Scripture might be misapprehended by a careless reader as involving the admission of errors in the text of Scripture. It will be only fair, however, that we shall set over against these instances of overstrained subtlety at least one example of his more satisfactory exposition; and we shall choose for this his treatment of that crux of interpreters—Matt. 27:9. He discusses this text twice, and to the same effect in both instances; we quote the substance of both passages:

"And here a quotation of Matthew hath troubled expositors so far, that divers have denied the purity of the text ... whereas those words are not to be found in Jeremiah at all; but in Zechariah they are found. Now Matthew speaks, according to an ordinary manner of speaking, used among the Jews, and by them would, easily and without cavil, be understood, though he cited a text of Zechariah,

under the name of Jeremy: for the illustration of which matter, we must first produce a record of their own." He proceeds to quote the well-known passage in Bava Bathra fol. 14, f. 2, on the order of the books in the Old Testament, in which the "Prophets" stand thus: Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Isaiah, the Twelve, and continues: "And thus, in their Bibles of old, Jeremiah came next after the Book of Kings, and stood first in the volume of the prophets. So that Matthew's alleging of a text of Zechariah, under the name of Jeremy, doth but allege a text out of the volume of the prophets, under his name that stood first in that volume: and such a manner of speech is that of Christ (Luke 24:44) ... in which he follows the general division that we have mentioned,—only he calleth the 'whole third part,' or 'hagiographa,' by the title 'the Psalms,' because the Book of Psalms stood first of all the books of that part. In that saying, Matt. 16:14, ... there is the same reason, why Jeremiah alone is named by name,—viz. because his name stood first in the volume of the prophets; and so came first in their way, when they were speaking of the prophets" (iii. 157–158).

"How much this place hath troubled interpreters, let the famous Beza, instead of many others, declare: 'This knot hath hampered all the most ancient interpreters; in that the testimony here is taken out of Zechariah, and not from Jeremiah; so that it seems plainly to have been ἀμάρτημα μνημονικὸν, "a failing of memory," as Augustine supposes in his third book, "De consensu evangelistarum," chapter the seventh; as also Eusebius in the twentieth book Ἀποδείξεω, "of demonstration." But if any one had rather impute this error to the transcribers, or (as I rather suppose) to the unskilfulness of some person, who put in the name of "Jeremiah," where the evangelist had writ only, as he often doth in other places, Διὰ τοῦ προφήτου, "by the prophet,"—yet we must confess, that this error hath long since crept into the Holy Scriptures, as Jerome expressly affirms,' &c.

"But (with the leave of so great men) I do not only deny, that so much as one letter is spurious, or crept in without the knowledge of the evangelist, but I do confidently assert that Matthew wrote 'Jeremy,' as we read it,—and that it was very readily understood and

received by his countrymen. We will transcribe the following monument of antiquity out of the Talmudists, and then let the reader judge" ... quoting Bab. Bava Bathra, folio 14, 2.... "You have this tradition, quoted by David Kimchi in his preface to Jeremiah. Whence it is very plain, that Jeremiah, of old, had the first place among the prophets: and hereby he comes to be mentioned above all the rest, Matt. 16:14, because he stood first in the volume of the prophets, therefore he is first named. When, therefore, Matthew produceth a text of Zechariah under the name of Jeremy, he only cites the words of the volume of the prophets under his name, who stood first in the volume of the prophets. Of which sort is that also of our Saviour, Luke 24:44; 'All things must be fulfilled, which are written of me in the law, and the prophets, and the Psalms.' 'In the Psalms'; that is, in the Book of Hagiographa, in which the Psalms were placed first" (xi. 344–345).

Surely this is a very admirable specimen of harmonizing. The fact appealed to is an indisputable one; and the usage of quoting a section of the Scriptures by the name of its first book is shown to be a New Testament usage. The only fault to be found with the treatment is that Lightfoot is a little too sure that his explanation is the only possible one. Plausible and satisfactory as it is, we should rather see the whole case put in a properly apologetical form, and their full weight allowed to all the possibilities; somewhat thus: 1. It is not absolutely certain that Matthew wrote "Jeremiah," and not "Zechariah." 2. It is not certain that a passage in Zechariah might not be properly quoted under the title "Jeremiah." 3. It is not certain that a passage in Jeremiah might not have been intended, as well as the passage in Zechariah which supplies some of the words cited. But we are not now discussing the errorlessness of the Scriptures, but Lightfoot's obviously firmly-held belief that they are errorless. And it is clear that he found no error in the citation in Matt. 27:9, which has been in all time, and is now afresh in our day, made to do duty as the plainest of all the errors found in Scripture.

Here we may bring our study of Lightfoot to a close. It is perfectly evident that his fundamental conception of Scripture was that it is the Book of God, the "dictates of the Holy Spirit," of every part and every element of which—its words and its very letters—God is Himself the responsible author. It is perfectly evident that he would have considered it blasphemy to say that there is anything in it—in the way of falseness of statement, or error of inadvertence—which would be unworthy of God, its Author, who as Truth itself, lacks neither truthfulness nor knowledge. It is perfectly evident, in a word, that he shared the common doctrine of Scripture of the Reformed dogmaticians of the middle of the seventeenth century. It is perfectly evident also, we may add, that his doctrine of Scripture is generally that of the Westminster Confession; and that he could freely and with a good conscience vote for every clause of that admirable—the most admirable extant—statement of the Reformed doctrine of Holy Scripture. It is a desperate cause indeed, which begins by misinterpreting that statement, and then seeks to bolster this obvious misinterpretation by asserting that men like Lightfoot, and Rutherford, and Lyford, and Capel, and Ball, and Baxter, did not believe in the doctrines of verbal inspiration and the inerrancy of Scripture. If they did not believe in these doctrines, human language is incapable of expressing belief in doctrines. Is it not a pity that men are not content with corrupting our doctrines, but must also corrupt our history?

V

THE PRINTING OF THE WESTMINSTER CONFESSION

I. IN BRITAIN

THE history of the printing of the Confession of Faith presents some rather curious features. It was no less than four times privately printed—once in part and thrice in whole—before it was published. It was first published not in England where it had been made, but in Scotland. It probably had been published in no less than three editions, before its publication was authorized by the legislative body by the direction of which it was drawn up, and to which it was presented only as "humble advice." It has always continued to be published—with the single exception of the normative edition issued by Parliament (June, 1648)—not in the form authorized by that body, but in the form in which it was set forth prior to that authorization. Though its use has extended to the very ends of the British Empire, its publication for that Empire up to to-day continues very much a Scotch monopoly. Only a single edition has been issued in England since the early years of the eighteenth century (1717). It has never been printed in Ireland. It has never been printed in the Dominion of Canada. No Welsh translation of it has ever been made. Some vernacular versions of it have, to be sure, been issued in India—which are, however, with one exception (made by missionaries of the Irish Presbyterian Church), the work of American missionaries. With the exception of these, throughout all the colonies and dependencies of Great Britain, it is only in Victoria and New Zealand⁴ that the Confession of Faith has even up to to-day been put into print. As the vigorous bodies of Presbyterians planted in these several lands all trace their origin back to Scotland, so they still draw the needed

supply of their symbolical books from the printing presses of Scotland.

The manner in which the Confession of Faith first got into print deserves a full description. Its first issues were private editions, printed strictly for the use of the bodies concerned with its formulation or authorization. The earliest of them contained only its first nineteen chapters. These were sent up to the House of Commons, September 25, 1646, in response to an order issued September 16, and received by the Assembly of Divines September 18. They were read in the House on Friday, October 9, and ordered to be printed, after the Divines should have "put in the margin the proofs out of the Scripture to confirm what they have offered to the House in such places as they shall think it most necessary." This order was brought to the Assembly by Mr. Tate on October 12, and a Committee was appointed "to consider of this order how obedience may be yielded thereto." On the next day the Committee reported, deprecating the requirement of the addition of proof-texts before printing. This was made known forthwith to the House of Commons, whereupon it was "Resolved, etc., That five hundred copies of the Confession of Faith be forthwith printed for the service of the Houses, without annexing of the texts of Scripture for the present: Yet, notwithstanding, the House does expect that the Divines should send in the texts of Scripture with all convenient speed." This reply was brought by Mr. Marshall to the Assembly on October 14, and it was forthwith "Ordered—That the scribes do take care of the exact printing of the Confession of Faith." Accordingly the first nineteen chapters of the Confession were at once put to press and appeared duly in a small quarto volume under the title, "The humble advice of the Assembly of Divines, Now by Authority of Parliament, sitting at Westminster, Concerning part of a Confession of Faith, Presented by them lately to both Houses of Parliament."

Meanwhile the Divines continued their labors on the remaining chapters, and by November 26 were able to record in their Minutes, "The Confession of Faith was finished this day," and to resolve that

"the whole Confession of Faith shall be transcribed and read in the Assembly, and sent up to both Houses of Parliament." By December 4 this final reading and adjustment of the text was completed, and on that day it was sent up to the Commons, and on December 7 to the Lords. On December 10 an order was brought from the House of Commons directing that 600 copies of it, and no more, be printed for the service of the two Houses and the Assembly, and that the care of the printing be devolved on the Assembly. It was accordingly ordered, as in the earlier instance concerning the first nineteen chapters, "that the Scribes take care of the exact printing of the Confession of Faith." The work was prosecuted so rapidly that Baillie could write on December 24, 1646, "All is now printed," and was able to carry up the printed book with him to Scotland, and to present it to the Commission of the General Assembly at their January meeting (January 21). It is a small quarto volume bearing the title, "The Humble Advice of the Assembly of Divines, Now by authority of Parliament sitting at Westminster, concerning a Confession of Faith, presented by them lately to both Houses of Parliament."

The work of preparing proof-texts in pursuance of the order of the House of Commons was fairly set on foot on January 6, 1647, and on April 5 following the entry was made again in the Minutes, "The Confession was finished," i.e. in Committee. It was not until the 26th, however, that the proof-texts could be ordered to be sent to the Houses; they were presented to them on April 29. On the same day the Commons ordered, "That six hundred copies, and no more, of the Advice of the Assembly of Divines concerning the Confession of Faith, with the quotations and texts of Scripture annexed, presented to this House, and likewise six hundred copies of the proceedings of the Assembly of Divines upon the Nine-and-thirty Articles of the Church of England, be forthwith printed for the service of both Houses and of the Assembly of Divines; and the printer is enjoined at his peril not to print more than six hundred copies of each, or to divulge or publish any of them. It is further Ordered—That no person presume to reprint, divulge, or publish the said Advice or proceedings, or any part of them, till further order be taken by both

or either of the Houses of Parliament." This order was on the same day (April 29, 1647) reported to the Assembly of Divines, and it would appear that the work was carried through, in obedience to it, "with all speed as may be." The resultant volume was a small quarto similar to the former issues, and bearing the title, "The humble Advice of the Assembly of Divines, Now by Authority of Parliament sitting at Westminster, Concerning a Confession of Faith, with the Quotations and Texts of Scripture annexed, Presented by them lately to both Houses of Parliament."

As we have already seen, the second of these issues—the complete Confession without proof-texts—was carried up to Scotland by Baillie, who left London probably in the last week of December, 1646 (before the 2d of January, 1647); and was presented to the General Assembly's Commission at their January meeting (January 21). The third issue—the complete Confession with proofs—had found its way to Scotland before the meeting of the General Assembly, which convened on August 4, 1647. Probably it was brought up by Gillespie, who took his leave of the Westminster Assembly on July 16. At the third session of this General Assembly a Committee was appointed "for examining the Confession of Faith, Rouse's Paraphrase, Catechisme, etc., and to receive any scruples and objections, and to report"; and an invitation was given at the fourth session to "all that had objections against any thing in the Confession, to repaire to the Committee"; while at the fifth session (August 9) there was passed an "Act for Printing 300 Copies of the advise of the Assemblie of Divines in England, Concerning a Confession of Faith, for the use of the Members of the Assembly." This volume, also a small quarto, was accordingly printed by the King's printer, Evan Tyler, with the same title as before—"The Humble Advice of the Assembly of Divines ... concerning a Confession of Faith, etc."—and bearing the order of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland providing for the printing of "three hundred copies and no more." It must have appeared during the sessions of the General Assembly, at the twenty-third session of which, August 27, 1647, an act of approbation of the Confession was passed.

So far the Confession had issued from the press only as a privately printed and, presumably, carefully guarded pamphlet. By the Act of the General Assembly of August 27, however, it had become the public Confession of Faith of the Church of Scotland. It was naturally, therefore, at once published. The first published edition was equally naturally a reprint of the copy printed for the use of the Scottish Assembly. It also bears the imprint of Evan Tyler, at Edinburgh, 1647; and like its privately printed predecessor it is a small quarto of fifty-six pages. Meanwhile matters dragged in the English Parliament, which had busied itself with a review of the text of the Confession that had resulted in some slight changes dictated by the growing Independent influence; and it was not until the 20th of June, 1648, that it was "Ordered—That the Articles of Christian Religion" (the Parliament's new name for the document) "... be forthwith printed and published"; while on the next day it was "Resolved, That the texts of Scripture be printed with the Articles of Faith." Not till midsummer of 1648, therefore (June 27 at the earliest), was the Confession, under this new title and with certain alterations of text, consisting chiefly in the omission of chapters xxx. and xxxi. and parts of chapters xx. and xxiv., with some less important changes in chapter xxiii., published by the authority of Parliament. It is far from unlikely that there had already appeared in the interval not only a Scotch edition, bearing the imprint of "Edinburgh, 1648," but without the name of printer or publisher, which is notable as the first edition which contains in a single volume the Confession and the Catechisms; but also a London edition of the Confession by itself, printed in 1648 for Robert Bostock, under the old title of "The Humble Advice of the Assembly of Divines, etc." It is certain, in any case, that this Parliamentary edition came into the world as an untimely birth, and that all subsequent editions derive from the Scotch edition of Evan Tyler as their editio princeps, and not from the authorized Parliamentary "Articles of Christian Religion." Already in 1649 even the earlier title, "The Humble Advice to both Houses of Parliament," had given way to the simpler "The Confession of Faith ... agreed upon by the Assembly of Divines at Westminster," to which is added in the Scotch editions (and by 1652

in the English also), "And now appointed by the Generall Assembly of the Kirk of Scotland to be a part of Uniformity in Religion between the Kirks of Christ in the three Kingdoms."

The book thus put into the hands of the public proved a very popular one, and became at once the object of a great demand. Before the end of the seventeenth century, at least as many as forty separate editions had been printed, seventeen of which were English and twenty-three Scotch; and, besides, translations had been made into Doth German (1648) and Latin (1656), and of the Latin version at least nine editions had been issued. By the time its first century was completed these forty editions had been at least doubled, and there had been added to the extant versions an Irish (Gaelic) translation (1725), which had already attained its second edition (1727), and was almost ready for its third (1756). The large popular call for the book, attested by the rapidity with which edition thus followed edition, is further illustrated by what may be called the evolution of the volume in which it was contained. This was such as to adapt it more and more to popular use and fit it ever more fully to meet purely popular needs.

As at first published the volume contained nothing but the bare text of the Confession of Faith, accompanied by supporting references to the Scriptures. Thus the reader was "remitted to the Bible" for even the matter of the proofs: which, as Dunlop truly says in the Advertisement to his critical edition, was "troublesome to him, and in so far equivalent to the not printing the Scriptures at all." It was inevitable, therefore, that in the better adaptation of the book to popular use these references should be expanded into the adduction at large of the proof-passages themselves. It is rather odd that this was first done in a translation—in that early German version (1648) whose authors speak feelingly of the Confession as "a tractate rich in all particulars of the divine wisdom and teaching, drawn almost word for word from the Holy Scriptures," and as "a brief compend of the wholesome Word," out of which "shines brightly and clearly the light of the truth, for the comforting and strengthening of believing

hearts." It was not till ten years later (in the Rothwell editions of 1658) that the same extension was made in English, "for the benefit," it is quaintly said, "of masters of families": on the same occasion, for the further lessening the labor of using these texts, an attempt was made to point their lessons by emphasizing what was thought to be the salient words in them. By whom this expansion of the texts was done is not known: but the texts as thus first extended held the ground up to 1719, when for the first time they were subjected to critical scrutiny and reduced to more precise and scholarly shape by William Dunlop for his notable "Collection"—the earliest attempt (and it may almost be said the last as yet) to produce a scientific as distinguished from a popular edition of the Confession of Faith.

Meanwhile the volume was attracting to itself similar documents, and was ever growing in compass. Two principles of development early exhibited themselves. The one (and the weaker) tended toward making out of it a more complete ecclesiastical manual. The other (and more powerful) tended to make of it an ever more richly furnished popular book of religion. The two Catechisms were early added, as documents too closely similar to the Confession to be kept apart from it. The first edition containing them appeared at Edinburgh in 1648, and by 1649 they may be said to have already established themselves as its inseparable companions. Already in 1649 there was added to these three documents the Divines' "Humble Advice concerning Church Government and Ordination of Ministers" (Bostock's second edition [1649]; see also the London editions of 1650, 1651, and again 1658). But the force of the stream was setting in the other direction: in 1650 "The Sum of Saving Knowledge" first appears in the volume (Edinburgh: Gedeon Lithgow), and at the same time the Directory for Family Worship and the Solemn League and Covenant (the same, alternative copies; cf. London and Edinburgh editions of 1652). After a while the two streams united, and, after the fashion of popular books, the effort of publishers seemed to be to supply as comprehensive a collection as possible. Examples of these developed editions may be found in the Dutch-printed edition of 1679, and the so-called "fifth" London

edition of 1717—the latter of which characteristically boasts on the title-page that it contains "all the other additions that have hitherto been printed." The former of these two issues already contains, besides the Confession and Catechisms, the Sum of Saving Knowledge, the National and Solemn Covenants, the Acknowledgment of Sins, the Directory for Public Worship, Propositions concerning Church Government, and the Directions for Private Worship. The latter contains, in addition to these, the Ordinance for calling the Assembly of Divines together, the Vow taken by its members, the Advice on the ordination of ministers, and certain brief notes, including the Parliamentary order for the reestablishment of Presbytery in England, etc. In 1728 this evolution completed itself in an edition printed at Edinburgh by Thomas Lumisden and John Robertson, which is the first to contain the precise series of documents which have since become the invariable contents of the standard Scottish editions of "The Confession of Faith."

The regular contents of the Scottish editions, thus attained, embraces the following documents:—1. Preliminary matter, consisting of two introductory letters and a number of Ordinances and Acts. The introductory letters are (a) the Commendatory Letter "to the Christian Reader, especially Heads of Families," signed by forty-four Puritan Divines, and (b) "Mr. Thomas Manton's Epistle to the Reader." The Ordinances and Acts include: (a) The Ordinance of the Lords and Commons, July 12, 1643, convening the Westminster Assembly; (b) the Act of the Scottish Assembly, August 19, 1643, appointing Commissioners to the Westminster Assembly; (c) the Promise and Vow taken by the Members of the Westminster Assembly; (d) a List of the Divines who met at that Assembly, and of the Commissioners of the Church of Scotland; (e) the Act of the Scottish Assembly, August 27, 1647, approving the Confession of Faith; (f) the Acts of Parliament, February 7, 1649, and 7th June, 1690, ratifying the Standards. 2. The Text of the Confession and Catechisms. 3. Adjoined matter, viz.: (a) The Sum of Saving Knowledge, with the Practical Use thereof; (b) the National

Covenant; (c) the Solemn League and Covenant; (d) the Acknowledgment and Engagement; (e) the Directory for Public Worship; (f) the Form of Presbyterian Church Government; (g) the Directory for Family Worship. Lastly, 4. The "Table." That the main contents of the volume—the Confession and Catechisms—may not be lost amid the accretions gathered about them, it is usual to put them into larger type than that used for the preliminary and adjoined matter, although the opening Commendatory Letter and the Form of Government are also ordinarily accorded the honor of this larger type.

Since the publication of the edition of 1728 little has been done for the Confession of Faith on British ground. The critical work of Dunlop in 1719 had prepared the definitive text and the final form of the proof-texts and even of the "Table"—i.e., so to speak, had done the textual work. The edition of 1728 set finally, so to say, the canon of the collection. The British Churches holding to this Confession have ever since been content to do no more than repeat without intentional change the results thus registered for them. A single set of stereotyped plates—not quite of a sort to leave nothing to be desired on the score of either beauty or accuracy—now supplies the whole world of British Presbyterianism with its "Confessions of Faith." The only exception to this that needs be recognized probably is the carefully edited reprint of the text of the edition of May, 1647, along with the variations of the Parliamentary edition of 1648, which Mr. William Carruthers has issued in a small pamphlet through the press of the Presbyterian Church of England. Even the edition published at Melbourne for the Presbyterians of Victoria—almost a unique attempt among the British Colonial Churches to supply their own demand—proves to be from the same plates. The same languidness has taken the place also of the early zeal to provide versions of the Confessions for peoples of other tongues. The Scottish missionaries seem not to have been accustomed to give the Confession to their converts in their several languages. Even in the British dependencies they have left this to others. As far as we are informed only a single missionary translation of the Confession has

been prepared in our day by British hands—the Gujarati version made by the missionaries of the Irish Presbyterian Church. Scotch Presbyterians seem to have come to look upon their Confession much as they do on the sun and the rain—as a Divine blessing with which they have nothing to do but to receive and enjoy it, not without "some murmurings and disputings."

There have come under our notice something less than one hundred and fifty British editions of the Confession of Faith. The time through which our search has been protracted has been too limited and the circumstances under which it has been carried on too unfavorable for us to venture to hope that we have met with more than, say, about half the whole number. We print the list therefore merely as notes toward a bibliography of the Westminster Confession.

II. IN THE UNITED STATES

The Westminster Confession was slow in finding its way into print in America. This was not because it was distasteful to the American Churches: the Puritanism of the Colonists was doctrinally the same as that of England, and they gave a hearty welcome to this Puritan formulary. It was due in the first instance to the lack of facilities in the Colonies at that early day for printing: and afterward to the Independency of the New England Churches, which naturally preferred the "Savoy Declaration," put out by the English Congregationalists in 1658, to the original "Westminster Confession," now become distinctively the creed of the Scottish Presbyterians.

When the Westminster Confession was first given to the public (1647), there was but a single printing press in the Colonies. This had been brought out in 1638 and set up at Cambridge, where from the beginning of 1639 it had been kept busy, under the supervision of the Rev. Henry Dunster, the first President of Harvard College. The actual printer up to about 1649 was one Stephen Day, who had come out with the press in 1638 for the purpose of operating it, but whose

works do not accredit him as a skilled handicraftsman. He was succeeded in 1649 by Samuel Green, the first of a family of printers who for many years carried on their work in New England; but he was apparently without training in the art, and only gradually acquired ability to turn out good work. A new press and equipment were sent out, indeed, during the course of the years 1654–1658 by the Corporation for Propagating the Gospel among the Indians, and in 1660 the same Corporation sent out the first skillful printer to come to New England, Marmaduke Johnson—to assist Samuel Green in printing the Indian Bible. By these accessions the Cambridge establishment was greatly improved in capacity and efficiency. It enjoyed an absolute monopoly in the Colonies until 1674, when John Foster's press was set up in Boston; and indeed during the latter portion of this period it was protected in this monopoly by a law which forbade printing within the jurisdiction of the General Court of Massachusetts, "except in Cambridge" (1664). In none other of the Colonies was a press established for yet ten years more. In these circumstances, the reprinting of British books in America was not to be thought of. American books were rather customarily sent to England to be put into type, and the best that could be done in America was to overtake in some form or other the absolutely necessary local demands. Accordingly when the Cambridge Synod of 1646–1648 had done its work, only its "Platform of Church Discipline"—which was original with it—was printed (and exceedingly rudely printed) by Samuel Green (1649) at Cambridge; while the Confession of Faith adopted by it—which was accepted from the hands of the Westminster Assembly—was expected to be imported from abroad.

The Westminster Confession, it will be remembered, though previously privately printed (in whole or in part) three times in London for the use of members of Parliament and the Assembly itself, and once in Edinburgh for the use of the members of the Scottish Assembly, was not published until after the rising of the Scottish Assembly in the latter part of August, 1647, and then only in Edinburgh and without authorization from the English Parliament.

It was not until June 20, 1648, that the Parliamentary edition was given to the world; and the earlier issue in that same year at Edinburgh and London of what must be looked upon as surreptitious editions can have antedated this but a few weeks. It may be held as quite certain, therefore, that no copies of the Confession had found their way to New England by October 27, 1647, when the General Court of Massachusetts added to the duties with which the Cambridge Synod, in session that year, were already charged, the additional task of preparing a Confession of Faith; and appointed a Committee to draw up a draft of it against the next meeting of the Synod. Before the Synod reconvened, however (midsummer, 1648), copies of the Westminster Confession had arrived, though not (we may feel sure) copies of the Parliamentary issue of June 20th of that year: and it proved so satisfactory to the delegates that the Synod was enabled to decline the labor of preparing a Confession of its own in favor of a simple acceptance of this. The story is told by John Cotton in the Preface to the "Platform." We read:

"Having perused the publick confession of faith, agreed upon by the Reverend assembly of Divines at Westminster, and finding the summ and substance thereof (in matters of doctrine) to express not their own judgements only, but ours also: and being likewise called upon by our godly Magistrates, to draw up a publick confession of that faith, which is constantly taught, and generally professed amongst us, wee thought good to present unto them, and with them to our churches, and with them to all the churches of Christ abroad, our professed and hearty assent and attestation to the whole confession of faith (for substance of doctrine) which the Reverend assembly presented to the Religious and Honorable Parlamēt of England: Excepting only some sections in the 25 30 and 31. Chapters of their confession, which concern points of controversie in church-discipline; Touching which wee refer our selves to the draught of church-discipline in the ensueing treatise. The truth of what we here declare, may appear by the unanimous vote of the Synod of the Elders and messengers of our churches assembled at Cambridg, the last of the sixth month, 1648: which joyntly passed in these words;

This Synod having perused, and considered (with much gladness of heart, and thankfulness to God) the cōfession of faith published of late by the Reverend Assembly in England, doe judge it to be very holy, orthodox, and judicious in all matters of faith: and doe therefore freely and fully consent thereunto, for the substance thereof. Only in those things which have respect to church government and discipline, wee refer our selves to the platform of church-discipline, agreed upon by this present assēbly: and doe therefore think it meet, that this confession of faith, should be cōmended to the churches of Christ amongst us, and to the Honoured Court, as worthy of their due consideration and acceptance. Howbeit, wee may not conceal, that the doctrine of vocation expressed in Chap, 10. S. 1. and summarily repeated Chap, 13. & 1. passed not without some debate. Yet considering, that the term of vocation, and others by which it is described, are capable of a large, or more strict sense, and use, and that it is not intended to bind apprehensions precisely in point of order or method, there hath been a generall condescendency thereunto."

The Court acquiescing in this decision and desiring to incite the languid churches to make their returns to its request for their judgment, by a vote passed June 19, 1650, desired.

"yt euery church will, by the first oppertunity, take order for the p'cureinge of that booke, published by the synod at London, concerninge the doctrine of the gosple, that the churches may consider of that booke, also, as soone as they can be gotten."

This, it will be observed, is an order for a wholesale importation of copies of the Westminster Confession. We cannot press the phraseology that designates the volume to be imported as "that booke, published by the synod at London." The whole language of the order is popular and general, rather than technically precise: and as a matter of fact no edition of the Confession of Faith was in the strict sense "published by the synod at London." The Parliamentary edition of 1648, entitled "Articles of Christian Religion," was

adjusted to Independent opinion, and would doubtless have been most acceptable to the feelings of Congregationalist New England: but there is no reason to believe that this edition was especially in the mind of the Court, as it certainly was not in the mind of the Synod, seeing that they made exception to Articles not contained in this edition: and the early printed copies of the Confession which have been preserved in the libraries of New England to our day are not of this edition. By 1650 some thirteen issues of the Confession had already been made in Britain; but besides the privately printed issues and the Parliamentary edition of 1648, only three of these had been published at London, viz., the two Bostock editions of 1648 and 1649 and an edition of 1650. It was probably from these editions that the Massachusetts Churches were expected to supply themselves; though doubtless they actually purchased whatever editions were most easily procurable in the London markets. These were all, of course, at least ultimately, of Scotch origin. The authors of the Preface to the "Savoy Declaration" in 1658 make it a matter of complaint that "that Copy of the Parliaments, followed by us, is in few mens hands; the other as it came from the Assembly, being approved of in Scotland, was printed and hastened into the world before the Parliament had declared their Resolutions about it; which was not till June 20. 1648. and yet hath been, and continueth to be the Copy (ordinarily) onely sold, printed and reprinted for these eleven years."

So things went on for a generation until the Reforming Synod of 1679 and 1680 met at Boston, charged, among other things, with the task of setting forth the faith of the new generation. In the interval the English Independents had issued (1658) their modification of the Westminster Confession—the so-called "Savoy Declaration"—based on the Parliamentary "Articles of Christian Religion" of 1648; and it was but natural that the New England Congregationalists should now wish to give their adherence rather to this than to the unaltered Confession of Westminster. This was rendered the more inevitable by the fact that Mather and Oates, the two leading members of the Committee appointed by the Synod to draw up a Confession of Faith, had been in England in 1658, and were on terms of personal

friendship with the Independent Divines who had framed the "Savoy Declaration." Accordingly it was the Savoy Declaration, only slightly but significantly altered (and that in a sense the direct opposite to the mind of the British Independents in the point of the relation of the Civil Magistrate to the Church) that was reported to the Synod May 12, 1680. On June 11, 1680, the General Court ordered it published: and it appeared in the same year at Boston, from the press of John Foster, and was several times reprinted subsequently. The Churches of Connecticut adopted the same document at the Saybrook Synod of 1708. They say:

"We agree that the Confession of faith owned and Consented unto by the Elders and Messengers of the Chhs assembled at Boston In New England May 12 1680 being the Second Session of that Synod be Recomend to the Honble the Genll Assembly of this Colony at the next Session for their Publick testimony thereto as the faith of the Chhs of this Colony."

In October of that year the General Court of Connecticut accordingly enacted this Confession as the Confession of Faith of Connecticut, and this it continued legally to be until 1784. At its next session, May, 1709, the Court provided for its printing. It appeared at New London in 1710—the first book printed in Connecticut—and again in 1760; and it has repeatedly been published subsequently. Thus the "Savoy Declaration," which exerted no influence and wrought out no history in England, was given, in a slightly modified form, life and influence in America, and even bade fair entirely to supersede in this land the original Westminster Confession.

In these circumstances it is not strange that the Westminster Confession in its unaltered form had to wait until near the close of the first quarter of the eighteenth century before it found its way into print in America. The circumstances which secured its printing in the first instance even then are obscure. Possibly there had arisen a demand for it among New England Congregationalists themselves; it is certain that it was the Westminster Confession, and not the Savoy

modification of it, which was in use among the English Independents of the time; and there is no reason why many in New England may not have wished (to say nothing more) to have in their hands the formularies of their English brethren. It is of course possible, however, on the other hand, that the demand which it was sought to supply by the publication of the book arose from the Presbyterian Scotch-Irish, who were now beginning to make themselves felt as an element in our Colonial life. In any event, the earliest American-printed edition of the Westminster Confession we have met with, is an octavo volume of 161 pages containing the Confession and Larger Catechism (the Shorter Catechism being omitted, doubtless, because otherwise fully accessible), printed in Boston in 1723 by the eminent printer Samuel Kneeland, for the still more eminent bookseller Daniel Henchman, who was probably the most enterprising American publisher prior to the Revolution. As the title-page suggests, it is taken not from the current Scotch editions, but from that rather peculiar series, published chiefly though not exclusively at London, which began with the Rothwell issues of 1658, and proceeded in subsequent issues called the "[second edition]," 1658, "third edition," 1688, "fifth edition," 1717, all published in London—while the two forms of the so-called "fourth edition" alone of the series are Scotch (Glasgow, 1675, Edinburgh, 1708). This circumstance undoubtedly raises a degree of probability for the Congregationalist origin of this edition.

It can hardly be doubted, on the other hand, that the second American edition which we have met with, was called out by a purely Presbyterian demand. This was issued in 1745 at Philadelphia, from the press of Benjamin Franklin, and was a finely manufactured 16mo volume of 588 pages, following the type of the normative Edinburgh edition of Lumisden and Robertson of 1728, and containing all the documents included in that edition and ever subsequently constituting the fixed contents of Scotch editions. It came from the press, it will be observed, the year of the formation of the Synod of New York, and it may well be that the disruption of the Synod of Pennsylvania, and the controversies out of which that disruption

grew and which had been disturbing the Church since 1740, were the occasion of its preparation. That only these two editions were issued in America until, as the century was drawing to a close (1789, 1799), the two greater Presbyterian bodies established in this country began to publish their amended editions of the Confession, is readily accounted for by the continued dependence of Presbyterians at large on Scotland for their supply of Confessions. This dependence is attested by the very large number of Scotch Confessions bearing dates in the eighteenth century which are found scattered through America to-day. There are even traces of prominent pastors acting as something like regular importing agencies for greater or smaller communities, and busying themselves with seeing that the Confession of Faith was circulated as widely as possible among their own and contiguous flocks. Benjamin Chestnut, for example, seems to have added this to the many other good works by which he fulfilled the office of a bishop for the whole of South Jersey. Some of the smaller branches of Presbyterianism in America to this day seek much or all of their supply abroad, though reprints of the Scotch book, containing the whole series of documents which have found their way into it, have also continued to be issued in America up to to-day.

The real history of the publication of the Westminster Confession in America begins thus in 1789. The infancy of Presbyterianism in the New World, and even its lusty youth, was then already a thing of the past; and it was celebrating the attainment of its majority by constituting a General Assembly and preparing a complete Constitution for its future direction. The Doctrinal Standards embodied in this Constitution were borrowed from those prepared by the Westminster Assembly, with only such alterations in their teaching as to the relation of the civil magistrate to the Church and to spiritual things, as were thought necessary to adapt them to a free Church in a free State. But the American Church looked upon them, as thus adjusted, as distinctively its own Standards, in contradistinction to the Standards of the Church of Scotland, and consistently spoke of them and acted toward them as such. The

whole process of the framing of a Constitution was begun by raising a Committee, which was instructed to "take into consideration the Constitution of the church of Scotland and other Protestant churches, and agreeably to the general principles of Presbyterian government, to compile a system of general rules for the government of the Synod, and the several Presbyteries under their inspection, and the people in their communion." And the completed series of documents was set forth, at the end, as unitedly composing "the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America," thus consciously differentiated from all other Churches in Christendom. The printing of this distinctive Constitution was in these circumstances a matter of course: and for a while the Assembly retained the publication and diffusion of it entirely in its own hands. There were issued in this way, directly by the Assembly, four editions —one in 1789 from the press of Thomas Bradford (a new impression was issued in 1792), one in 1797 from the press of Robert Aitken, one in 1806 from the press of Jane Aitken, and one in 1815 through the publishing house of W. W. Woodward. There were 1000 to 1500 copies issued in the first of these editions, possibly increased by another 1000 by its second impression; 4000 copies in the second; 5000 in the third; and doubtless quite as many more in the fourth. The book had meanwhile been improved, by a careful and expert revision and the adjunction of proof-texts, in the second edition; and by exquisite typographical skill in the third. Meanwhile the demand for it had become sufficiently great to tempt private enterprise, and "unauthorized editions," the ventures of booksellers on their own account, began to appear as early as 1801. In these circumstances the Assembly was led after the issue of its fourth edition (1815), to adopt the new policy of committing the publication of its "Constitution" to private initiative, only reserving the right of revision and certification of the text as issued, and claiming a percentage on the value of the issues. From 1821, when the first edition under this new arrangement appeared, until 1839, when it was receded from, there were sent forth at least fifteen editions, all except the first of which (Finley, 1821) appear to come from a single set of stereotyped plates.

How many copies were thus put into circulation we can only conjecture; but we presume 20,000 would be a low estimate.

In 1838 the great division of the Church into Old and New School bodies took place, and each division went its own way in the publication of the "Constitution" common to the two. The Old School branch at once withdrew the general permission to booksellers to print its book, and placed it exclusively in the hands of the Board of Publication, which it had adopted from the Synod of Philadelphia (1839). Stereotyped plates were at once made; and a new set again in 1853—a somewhat unfortunate set, from the point of view of accuracy of text. From these the Board issued during the years intervening between the Division and Reunion (1870) no less than 80,000 copies, besides 2000 copies of an edition de luxe. In the same period it issued also 37,000 copies of the Confession in a cheaper (pamphlet) form; and 2750 copies of a German translation of it. During this same period there had been issued under the auspices of the New School branch of the Church at least six editions (from 1845); and at least three issues had been put forth by private enterprise. Moreover, the new division of the Church consequent on the Civil War had created a vigorous Church in the Southern States, which had put forth a first edition of its Standards, early in the '60s, of some 20,000 copies. After the reunion of the Old and New School Churches in 1870, the old plates of the Board of Publication were continued in use to supply the united Church, and 40,500 copies were printed from them up to 1891, when they were happily supplanted by a carefully corrected new set, from which there have already been printed, up to 1900, 10,000 copies. To these must be added 500 copies of the edition de luxe issued in 1884; 1000 copies of the German version, issued in 1872–1873 and 1891, and 50,250 issues of the Confession in pamphlet form. The grand total of copies put out by the Board of Publication from 1839 to 1900 thus aggregates no fewer than 224,000 copies. To this must be added 35,818 copies issued by the Southern Church, as well as those issued between 1839 and 1870 by the New School branch and private enterprise. So that it can scarcely be thought excessive to suppose

that more than 325,000 copies of the Confession have been put into circulation by the Presbyterian Church since 1840: and perhaps it would not much overshoot the mark to say that throughout its whole history, from 1789 to 1900, there have been put into circulation not many fewer than a half-million copies of the Confession of Faith in the form given it by the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America.

What the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America did for its "Constitution" in 1789, that the Associate Reformed Church did for its in 1799. The first edition of its Constitution, containing the Confession of Faith as modified by the Associate Reformed Synod to the same general effect as had been done by the sister Church ten years before, appeared in that year, and introduced a new series of issues of the Confession of Faith which still continues to be put forth to-day—both in simple reprints of the original Associate Reformed book (still issued by the Associate Reformed Synod of the South), and in the form given it by the United Presbyterian Church in issues beginning in 1859. We have met with only seven editions of the Associate Reformed book; and with only five editions of the United Presbyterian book. But we cannot suppose these to do more than represent a series of much more numerous issues which have escaped our search; and we cannot doubt that a very considerable addition to the total number of copies put into circulation by the American press has been contributed by this series of editions.

The purpose for which the Westminster Confession of Faith has been printed in America has ever been distinctly an ecclesiastico-practical one. Very little scientific interest has intruded itself in the preparation of either the text or its accompaniments. The first editions issued by the several Churches have apparently been taken from whatever texts lay conveniently at hand. In the case of the Southern Presbyterian Church this was unfortunately the unusually inaccurate text then (since 1853) current in the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America; in the case of the other Churches it was the current British texts of the time. Now and then, however, an

effort has been made to produce a corrected text. An early instance of this is afforded by the text of the edition of 1797 (Robert Aitken), in which important textual corrections were made. A very notable instance is supplied by the care taken in correcting the text by the Committee of the New School Assembly to which was committed the task of preparing the edition issued by that body in 1850 +. And the editions published by the Presbyterian Board of Publication and Sabbath-School Work since 1891 are the product of a very exact scrutiny and reach the high-water mark of accuracy of printing in the American editions. But even in this text there are conserved a number of readings which have originated rather in printers' slips than in ecclesiastical revisions, and which have been retained in the revised text apparently as distinctively American readings. One would think that it would be better to restore the text in all points, where direct ecclesiastical warrant for change cannot be adduced, to the text of the princeps—i.e. the edition of Evan Tyler of 1647.

The history of the accompaniments of the text runs parallel with that of the text itself. The proof-texts, for example, in the reprints of the British editions made for the smaller branches of the Church, and as well in the editions deriving from the Associate Reformed book of 1799, do not intentionally vary from those of Westminster, and are taken uncriticised from the current British editions. The first edition of the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church of the United States of America was printed without proof-texts. And when, shortly afterward, it was proposed to add them, the work was characteristically undertaken as if it were an independent enterprise of a new Church. There was no reference made to the Westminster proofs in the initiation of the work or in the appointment of the Committee to prepare the new texts; and no open profession was made on the part of the Committee of having based their work on the Westminster proofs, or indeed of having even consulted them. It was only when the new proofs were submitted to a new Committee for revision that directions were given that they should be compared with the Westminster proofs. The new proofs cannot, however, be a posteriori spoken of as prepared in independence of the Westminster

proofs: nor can they be thought an improvement upon the Westminster proofs. A peculiar feature connected with them is the inclusion among them of certain footnotes, of an expository or even argumentative character. Some of these—particularly that on the word "man-stealing" in the 142d Question of the Larger Catechism—were of inordinate length and polemic in character, and subsequently gave trouble and were officially removed from the margin of the Standards in 1816. Nevertheless, these hastily prepared and unsatisfactory proof-texts—with only the removal of the above-mentioned objectional notes, accomplished in 1816—held their place in the Standards of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America from 1797 to 1896, and still hold their place in the Standards of the Presbyterian Church of the United States until today. Since 1896 they have been replaced in the Standards of the former of these two Churches by a new and much improved set of proofs, which were prepared by a Committee appointed in 1888, and were approved by the Assembly in 1894. In the whole period from 1789 to 1896, moreover, the Shorter Catechism as published in the "Constitution" of these Churches was unprovided with proof-texts, a note advising the reader to turn for them to the corresponding Questions of the Larger Catechism. The current form of the Westminster proofs was accustomed to be printed with the Shorter Catechism as separately published by these Churches. Since 1896, however, the Shorter Catechism as published by the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America has been provided with its own appropriate texts, prepared by the Committee of 1888–1894.

After a history of about a century and three-quarters, at the opening of the twentieth century the Westminster Confession is still in wide circulation in America, and is accessible in several forms. Copies of the British edition are still imported, especially perhaps those issued by T. Nelson & Sons, with a New York as well as British imprint. Reprints of the Scotch book are still made by the Associate Presbyterian Board of Publication, with a Philadelphia imprint, but doing business at Eau Claire, Pa. The old Associate Reformed book is still issued by the Publication Committee of the Associate Reformed

Synod of the South, at Atlanta, Ga. But especially three great publishing houses are engaged in supplying a large Presbyterian public with the Confession of Faith, in several different forms: the Presbyterian Board of Publication and Sabbath-School Work, at Philadelphia; the Presbyterian Committee of Publication, at Richmond, Va.; and the United Presbyterian Board of Publication, at Pittsburgh, Pa. From these three houses several thousands of copies of the Confession are put into circulation annually. Little has been done in the meantime to supply the multitudinous foreign population that has crowded to our shores with the Westminster Confession of Faith in their own tongues. A German translation was published by the Presbyterian Board of Publication in 1858, and is still kept on sale. A Spanish translation, based on an earlier one published in Mexico, is now issued at Albuquerque, N. M. But what are these among so many? American Presbyterian missionaries have, on the other hand, been especially faithful in translating and circulating the Confession among the peoples to whom they have carried the Gospel: but this is not the place to speak of these rather numerous versions made and printed outside of the United States.

In the search we have been able to make we have met with some eighty-eight editions of the Confession of Faith printed in the United States. We suppose ourselves to have catalogued almost a complete list of the editions issued by the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America. We cannot suppose ourselves to have been so fortunate, however, in the case of the issues of other Churches: no doubt we have missed quite the half of these. We are able to print, therefore, nothing more than notes toward a bibliography of the American editions.

III. IN TRANSLATION

The history of the diffusion of the Westminster Confession by means of translation is sufficiently obscure, but by no means lacking in points of curious interest. The work was certainly begun betimes. The Westminster Confession was not published until the autumn of

1647 (in Edinburgh); and not until the next spring did a surreptitious edition of it appear in London, while the authorized Parliamentary edition lingered until midsummer. Within a year of its first appearance, and so hot on the heels of its first publication in London that it must be treated as contemporaneous with the Parliamentary edition itself, a German translation had already appeared in Germany (1648). And by the opening of the next year (January 18, 1649)—before any further effort had been made to circulate the Confession in English—official steps were already taken looking to the preparation of a Latin version, which, however, did not appear until several years afterwards (1656). But with this first burst of enthusiasm the primitive zeal for translation seems to have exhausted itself. It was not until the Confession was three-quarters of a century old that it was given the clothing of yet another speech (Gaelic, 1725), and after that all effort so to diffuse it ceased for more than a century. Toward the latter half of the nineteenth century, however, it once more showed a tendency to find its way into the divers tongues of the earth; and by the close of the first two hundred and fifty years of its life it was to be read in at least fifteen different languages.

It is remarkable how little is discoverable of the origin of the earlier versions. Of the German version of 1648 absolutely nothing seems to be known except what can be inferred from the unique copy of it that has been preserved in the Royal Library of Berlin. Without father, without mother, this Melchizedek of versions simply is: it had passed entirely out of the memory of men when it was brought to light again by the description given by Niemeyer in 1840 of the only remaining copy of it. Similarly all record of the making of the Latin version of 1656 has perished: only the initials "G. D.," at the foot of the little preface which introduces it, remain to quicken conjecture as to the personality of the scholar who was so much afraid that his reputation for writing fluent Latin would be spoiled by the spissitude of the material with which he had in this case to deal, his capacity for rhetorical ornament be thrown into doubt by the exceeding gravity of its style. These two versions differ from the whole series of their

successors, moreover, in that they can scarcely be thought the product of missionary zeal, but were rather intended, probably, to give information to their Continental brethren of the teaching of the Churches of Britain. The first properly so-called missionary version—that is, the first version the sole purpose of which was to extend the distinctly ecclesiastical use of the Confession—was the "Irish" translation of 1725, which was prepared by the Synod of Argyle, at the instance of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, for the benefit of the Gaelic-speaking Scots. It was also the last version prepared by the Church of Scotland or under its auspices: and indeed the last but one which has hitherto emanated from a British source. Missionaries of the Irish Presbyterian Church have in our own day put forth a version in one of the languages of India (Gujarati, 1888): but with this exception it seems that there has been no translation of the Confession made by British hands since 1725.

The task of giving the Confession to the world in its several languages has been taken up since 1842, however, with some energy by the American Presbyterians; and eleven versions have been made by them during the last sixty years. One of these has been intended to meet needs arising on the home field itself—the German version of 1858. The rest are the product of distinctly foreign-mission zeal and mark so far the planting of the Church in virgin soil. Two are, to be sure, into languages which have long ago learned to speak with a Christian accent—Portuguese and Spanish. But the remainder are incursions into heathen precincts, and offer this textbook of pure and undefiled Christian truth to the study of those to whom Christianity itself is a novelty. These all are the product of American workers, lisping no doubt in these strange tongues; but by the grace of God they may plant seed which shall hereafter bear a harvest of Christian thinking, by means of which whole nations may be blessed.

The eleven versions prepared by American missionaries during the last sixty years are, in the order of their date, the following: Hindustani, 1842; Urdu, 1848; German, 1858; Siamese, 1873; Portuguese, 1876; Spanish, 1880; Japanese, 1880; Chinese, 1881;

Arabic, 1883; Benga, 188—; Persian, 189— . Some of them, such as the Spanish and Portuguese and Urdu, have already been thoroughly revised, and either sent forth or at least prepared to be sent forth in better literary form for wider influence. Several are being diligently used in the instruction of ministers of the Word. And though some of them, such as notably the Japanese, have been permitted to fall into desuetude, and others have scarcely yet been launched (such as the Arabic, Persian, and Benga), it is to be hoped that root will ultimately be taken by all and that many more will shortly be added to their number. The Presbyterian Churches owe it to their own sincerity to see that their doctrinal Standards, embodying, as they profess to believe, the very truth of God which is revealed in the Scriptures, are put in the possession of all whom they can reach with their propaganda. Otherwise, how shall they give an account of the "talents" entrusted to them?

Meanwhile it is something that the Westminster Confession now exists in some fifteen languages. It is true many of the more cultured and influential languages are lacking from this list. There does not seem to exist any version of the Westminster Confession in Dutch or French or Italian or any of the tongues of northern or eastern Europe. It must needs be confessed, further, that the versions that exist in the languages of culture are not always couched in the language of culture, and can proffer little claim to a place in the "literature" of those languages. How different in this respect is the history of the translation, say, of Calvin's "Institutes." Every version of the "Institutes" was literature, the product of a master in the idiom in which he worked: the Italian poet Giulio Cæsare Paschali; the English scholar, jurist, and statesman Thomas Norton; the Spanish litterateur Cypriano de Valera; the Dutch scholar Charles Agricola; the Bohemian hymnist George Strejc—these names are but examples of the class: in every tongue the "Institutes" flowed out from the hands of master craftsmen. On the other hand, the translations of the Confession have almost never proceeded from writers "to the manner born." For the most part they are the work of foreigners,

handling the language with stiff and inflexible—often, no doubt, with bungling—fingers.

We may even go farther and note that the several versions of the Confession have ordinarily failed to find entrance not merely into the literature but even into the regular channels of the book-trade of the several languages into which it has been rendered. The experience of Niemeyer, astonishing as it is, and in his case indicative chiefly of the disgraceful insularity of German scholarship a half-century ago, would be more legitimately the experience of the average seeker after knowledge in most of the book-marts of the world. He had published his "*Collectio confessionum in ecclesiis reformatis publicatarum*" (Leipzig, 1840) without the Westminster formularies; and he actually tells us in the Preface to an Appendix he added nine months later, for the purpose of including them, that he had sought them in vain and had "taken it very hard" that he could never lay his hand on a single exemplar of the Westminster Confession! Of course he needed only to send to Edinburgh or to Philadelphia to get a cartload of exemplars of current issues; and a man of learning, engaged in the scientific study of symbolics, ought to have known that. And his friend Reboulius seems to have had no difficulty in turning up even in the Royal Library of Berlin a German and three Latin copies, which appear to have been lying there for the inspection of any one who cared to look at them. But the incident certainly illustrates how little the Westminster Confession had found its way into the channels of ordinary information and trade of the Germany of 1840—though there had been in existence for two hundred years a German translation, and a "literary" version at that. There has been a Spanish version in existence since 1880, a Portuguese one since 1876; but the chances of a Spanish or Portuguese reader coming accidentally across a copy in the most frequented book-shops of Madrid or Lisbon—or shall we not even say of Mexico or Rio de Janeiro?—or even succeeding in "unearthing" a copy by diligent inquiry in the most enterprising book-shops of these cities, would probably be very small. The Westminster Confession may exist at the opening of the twentieth century in fifteen languages; but it is

another matter whether it can be said to be very much in evidence in these fifteen languages, or even, in any broad sense of the word, accessible in them. Or, perhaps we should rather say, in any one of them—even in English. We were credibly told, a couple of years ago, that a copy of it was sought in vain in the largest book-shops of Glasgow! It is obviously very easy to overestimate the significance of the existence of the Westminster Confession in fifteen languages.

It is also very easy to underestimate it. That it has found its way into these languages, for the most part, without finding its way into their literature or book-marts is a feature of its history which it shares with the Scriptures themselves, and, indeed, is paralleled by the mode of entrance of Christianity itself into the world. It belongs, in short, to the "servant-form" of Christianity. Christianity has always propagated itself by appeal, in the first instance, to the humble, whose interest has been in content rather than form: and its "literature," in the first instance, has in every race sought none of the ornaments of literary elaboration to give it wings. The very characteristic of the first literature of Christianity, in the eyes of the philologist, is just its "formlessness": and it was all the product of alien pens. The same has been true of it ever since, as it has found entrance into this or that land. It is the idea that seeks to make its way into the mind of a nation first of all; and this idea is planted as seed, in the first instance, in the hearts of the humble who occupy no great place in the world. It is only after a while, when it takes root and grows, that it blossoms spontaneously into beauty. It has been, therefore, not only inevitable but fully in accord with the fitness of things—with that "servant-form" which our Lord Himself took when he came into the world and offered Himself to the babes and sucklings—that the Confession too has only struggled into other languages, transferring itself into new tongues by the painful efforts of men born aliens to them; and has been put into circulation only among those simple ones who have by their very simplicity been prepared for it. Thus and thus only will it ever find a path into a nation's heart. And it should not in the least discourage us to see it only thus making its way in the world.

What seems discouraging is that several of the fourteen translations which have been made of the Confession do not seem, for one reason or another, to be receiving that opportunity to plant themselves in the hearts of even the "simple" which alone we expect or crave for them. The Latin version of course was not intended for popular use and is now no longer in any sort of circulation. The old German version has perished, and only a single exemplar of it is known to remain in existence; while the modern German version (1858) is practically confined in its use to the German-speaking Presbyterians of the United States. The Japanese version has been given no real opportunity of life, and is no longer to be had. The Siamese version is almost out of print. The Arabic, Persian, and Benga versions have never been published; and although the two latter are locally in use they can hardly be said to have been given to the world. The use of the Gaelic version must necessarily grow less and less extensive. There remain only the versions in Spanish and Portuguese, Chinese, Hindustani, Urdu and Gujurati, for which we can hope for a future of growing usefulness. An increase of zeal may add new ones or resuscitate old ones—such as the Japanese and Siamese—but at the moment there are, after all, only seven or eight versions (including the German and Gaelic) which are really "in circulation." Even after the comparatively energetic work of the last sixty years, the Presbyterian Churches have no reason to blame themselves for undue zeal in propagating their professed doctrines by means of translations of their Confession.

In the following notes we have brought together the information we have been able to gather as to the translations of the Confession. We have included in the list even those versions which have, because produced either in Britain or the United States, been already mentioned in the lists of editions published in these countries. Thus the list contains the full series of versions brought to our attention. There may well be others which have escaped our search: but it is likely that we have been able to include nearly all.¹⁷

IV. IN MODIFICATION

It is not merely in its pure form, as it came from the hands of the Assembly of Divines, that the Westminster Confession has been put into circulation. Perhaps we may even say that during these later years it is not in its pure form that it has been most widely influential. If we wish to attain a complete view of the extent of its dissemination we must attend therefore as well to the modifications of it which have been published. With the nature of these modifications we have here nothing directly to do. We have merely to note the formal fact that modified forms of the Westminster Confession have been produced and sent out into the world.

These modified forms are not very numerous; but they began to be made very early in the history of the document, and they have usurped its place in the case of a very large portion of its constituency. Indeed, it was only in a modified form that the Westminster Confession received the authorization of the very body at whose behest it was prepared. That it was put into circulation in an unmodified form at all was due to the Scotch Church "stealing a march," so to speak, on the English Parliament. And it might almost be said that it is only in a modified form that it is in use to-day outside the limits of immediate Scotch influence. In all the large American Presbyterian Churches, for example, it is not the Westminster Confession precisely as the Assembly of Divines framed it, but the Westminster Confession in some respects modified, that has been adopted as their standard of faith. We must certainly bear in mind that there are modifications and modifications. Some may merely touch the periphery of the circle of doctrines which the document teaches, and may affect even its external form in only a minute manner. Some, while introducing a considerable amount of change in its form, may penetrate very little or not at all into the substance of its doctrine. Others may profoundly affect its whole point of view and revolutionize its whole teaching. As a matter of fact, the Westminster Confession has been made the subject of modifications of all these sorts. But it is chiefly the less serious varieties of modification that have been introduced into it; and it is

in its most slightly modified forms that its wider influence has been gained.

The production of modified forms of the Westminster Confession is of course the result of the existence from the very time of its publication of bodies of Christians who felt that it was expected of them to adopt it as the expression of their faith, but who found it in this or that point unacceptable to them, and were led to cut the knot by so far modifying it as to adapt it to their uses. It must be remembered that the Westminster Confession was the product of a national, or perhaps it would be speaking more properly to say of an international, movement. It was not the construction of a chance body of Christians voluntarily gathered together with a view to formulating their peculiar tenets. It was drawn up by a Synod appointed by the Parliament of England and assisted by delegates from Scotland, the task of which was to prepare a scheme of uniformity in religion for the Three Kingdoms. It came into the world, therefore, as a national Confession. As such it was adopted by the Church of Scotland, and as such it was published by the Parliament of England. It was impossible for any body of Christians in the Three Kingdoms to avoid attending to it.

Moreover, it did in effect express the reasoned faith of the great mass of British Protestants. It was impossible for any body of them to refuse to take some account of it without bringing their orthodoxy under the suspicion of their brethren. A certain moral pressure was thus brought to bear upon the Protestant bodies of Great Britain and its colonies by the confessed excellence and generally representative character of the document, which almost compelled them to give it at least a modified acceptance. But fairly representative as it was of the substance of the general Protestant faith, there were minor points of teaching in the document against which this or the other party was bearing passionate protest. It was the very essence of the Independent contention that was struck at in the Westminster doctrine of Church organization and government. And what was the distinction of the Christian congregations who spoke of themselves

as those "baptized upon profession of their faith," except their peculiar views on the subjects and mode of baptism? As it was inevitable that these Christians should have to face the unspoken demand that they should orient themselves with respect to the Westminster Confession, it was equally inevitable that they should wish to set forth forms of it in which their peculiar views should find recognition or at least meet with no open contradiction. Thus, from the first, Independent and Baptist recensions of the Westminster Confession, at least, were foregone conclusions—unless, indeed, the document should fall dead from the press. And the early production of these recensions is the proof that, despite the untoward turn of circumstances which rendered impossible of attainment the main object of the Assembly of Divines—the institution of uniformity of religion in the Three Kingdoms on a sound Reformed basis—the Westminster Confession did not fall dead from the press. Every great branch of Non-Conformists in England adjusted itself to it and gave it, in a form adapted to its special opinions on minor matters, the cordial testimony of public acceptance. Thus the Westminster Confession in its substance became in fact practically the common Confession of the entirety of British non-prelatical Christianity.

The earliest modification of the Westminster Confession was the work of the English Parliament itself, acting in the Independent interest, and was produced even before the Confession was authoritatively published in England. It was thus and thus only in fact that the Confession was offered to the English Churches by the constituted authorities. The edition of the Confession published by Parliament at the end of June, 1648, under the title of "Articles of Christian Religion, Approved and Passed by both Houses of Parliament, After Advice had with the Assembly of Divines, by Authority of Parliament sitting at Westminster"—the only edition of the Confession published by the authority of the State—is in effect the Independent recension of the Confession. The growing Independent influence had sufficed to secure that all that was offensive to that party should be excised from the document before it was put forth as the lawfully ordained public Confession of

Faith of the Church of England. The chief bone of contention here concerned, of course, the organization of the churches into a Church, provided with a series of courts clothed with authoritative jurisdiction. With this was involved the whole subject of Church discipline. And more remotely there came to be connected with it the question of a limited toleration, not so much of divergencies in doctrine as of differences in Church organization, government, and forms of worship. To meet the case thus raised the Parliament simply struck out of the document the whole series of sections treating of Church government and discipline. Other changes were made: but they were minor and in a true sense incidental.

It was accordingly upon this Parliamentary recension that the Independent Divines built when, ten years later (1658), they met at the Savoy to frame a Declaration of their faith. They introduced many minor variations in phraseology, recast a whole chapter—that on Repentance—and indeed inserted a whole new chapter—on the Gospel; and here and there they sharpened or heightened the expression of the doctrines taught in the document. But only in the two points of Church government and "discipline" and of "toleration" did they modify greatly its teaching. Their modified Confession had little prolonged circulation or influence, it is true, among the Independent Churches of England; these are found generally continuing to use the unaltered Westminster formularies. But in the New World it made for itself a richer history. Adopted both by the Massachusetts (1680) and Connecticut (1708) Churches as their standard of belief, it constituted for many years the public Confession of American Congregationalists, and indeed lighted the pathway of these Churches down almost to our own day. It is interesting to observe, however, that the American Congregationalists in adopting the Savoy recension resiled from its introduction into the document of the principle of "toleration," thus bidding us to take note that its introduction by the English Independents was rather incident to their position than a settled principle of Independent belief. Independents suffering disabilities and Independents in position to inflict disabilities for religion's sake,

took opposite views of the relation of the civil magistrate to religious teaching. It was reserved to Presbyterians, after all, to make the "intolerant" teaching of the Westminster Confession a really constraining ground for modifying the document. The Independent modifications turned, as on their hinge, rather on matters concerned with Church courts: all else was incidental to this and liable to variations and the shadows cast by turning.

Meanwhile the English Baptists had been defining their relation to the Westminster Confession and had published a modification of it of their own (1677). As good Independents, they naturally took their start from the Savoy Declaration (1658), still further interpolating and filing it, and, of course, incorporating into it their own views as to baptism. It cannot be said that this Baptist recension exhibits quite the same degree of skill and learning that characterized the work done by the Savoy Synod: but it does exhibit equal fervor of religious feeling and equal devotion to the Reformed faith. In it the influence of the Independent recension of the Westminster Confession attained its height, and through it perhaps the Westminster teaching itself has reached its widest dissemination. For no more than its parent document did this Baptist recension remain the property of its English framers: it too crossed the sea, and in 1742 became the standard expression of the faith of the American Baptists, who have grown into a great host. If the Westminster Divines had done nothing else than lay down the lines upon which the great Baptist denomination has built its creed, its influence on the Christian faith and life of the masses would have been incalculably great.

In the new conditions of political life in free America the definition of the Westminster Confession of the relations of the civil magistrate to the Church could not fail to be thrown forward into a fierce light. As we have seen, the English Independents had already, somewhat incidentally, excised the "intolerant" features of the Confession and had been followed in this by the Baptists: though the American Congregationalists, occupying themselves the seat of the civil

magistrate, had restored the objectionable principle. The fact is that in the seventeenth century "toleration" was rather a sentiment of the oppressed than a reasoned principle of Christian ethics: while unrestricted "religious liberty" had scarcely risen on the horizon of men's thoughts. Whatever was done toward freeing the Westminster Confession from "intolerant principles" in that age was therefore fitful and unstable, and rather a measure of self-protection than the consistent enunciation of a thoroughly grasped fundamental principle. Thus it happened that the American Presbyterians were the first to prepare modifications of the Westminster Confession which turned on the precise point of the duty of universal toleration, or rather of the fundamental right of unrestricted religious liberty. The first of these modifications in the interests of the principle of religious freedom and the equality of all forms of religious faith before the law, was that made by the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America in 1789. The Associate Reformed Church followed in the same pathway in 1799; and the United Presbyterian Church has continued this testimony in its own way ever since its formation in 1858. Thus it has come about that practically the whole body of American Presbyterians has cleansed the Westminster Confession from every phrase which could by any form of interpretation be made to favor intolerance and has substituted the broadest assertion of religious liberty.

It will have been observed that no one of the modifications thus far adverted to in any way affected the scheme of doctrine of the Confession. The Independents, Baptists, American Presbyterians alike gave the heartiest assent to the Reformed faith as set forth in this Confession; and it was only because they recognized in its form of sound words the expression of their fundamental belief that they busied themselves with adjusting it in minor matters to their opinions and practices. The opening nineteenth century saw the rise, however, in what was then the extreme western portion of the United States, of a body of Christians who by inheritance were so related to the Westminster Confession that they found it difficult to discard it altogether, but who in their fundamental theology had drifted away

from the Reformed faith, to which it gives so clear and well-compacted an expression. By this combination of circumstances there was produced at last a modification of the Westminster Confession, which was directed not to the adjustment of details of teaching that lay on the periphery of its system of doctrine, but to the dissection out of it of its very heart. An Arminianized Westminster Confession is something of a portent: yet it is just this that the Cumberland Presbyterians sought to frame for themselves (1814), and to which, having in a fashion framed it, they clung for nearly three-quarters of a century.

Of course the Confession thus formed was never satisfactory even to its framers. To Arminianize the Westminster Confession with any thoroughness would leave to it only the general literary tone of its phraseology and its outlying definitions of secondary importance, while all that is really distinctive of it as a Confession of Faith would be extirpated. It required, however, about seventy years for the Arminian leaven placed in the Confession by the Cumberland Presbyterians to leaven the whole lump. The first reworking they gave it, though definitely directed to eliminating from it its formative doctrine—the Reformed doctrine of the sovereignty of God—left the larger part of the document intact. Every direct statement of the doctrine of the divine determination of human destiny was expunged, but the general tone of the document remained untouched. The result was felt by the Cumberland Presbyterians themselves to be eminently unsatisfactory. They perceived that the casting out of what they called "the boldly defined statements" of foreordination was insufficient for their end, and only succeeded in bringing the document into conflict with itself; for, as they truly said, "the objectional doctrine with its logical sequences pervaded the whole system of theology formulated in that book." They perceived equally that their own Arminianizing principle was not given its full logical development by the substitution of statements announcing it for the Reformed statements expunged from the Confession. It was thus inevitable that the Confession prepared by them in 1814 should sooner or later be further "modified," and the revolution then begun

be made complete. The time seemed to be ripe for this early in the ninth decade of the century: and in 1883 an entirely new Confession was adopted by the Cumberland Presbyterians which is so drastic a "modification" of the Westminster Confession as to retain nothing of its most distinctive character and very little even of its secondary features. In this document "modification" has stretched beyond its tether and become metamorphosis.

In the course of the two hundred and fifty years that have elapsed since its formulation the Westminster Confession has thus been sent out into the world in some half-dozen modifications. Some of these modifications concern so small a portion and so subordinate an element in the document that it becomes doubtful whether the publications in which they are embodied should not be rather treated as editions than as modifications of it. The Parliamentary edition of 1648 and the Confessions of the American Presbyterian Churches belong to this class: and we have accordingly listed them among the editions of the Westminster Confession in the bibliographies published in *The Presbyterian and Reformed Review* for October, 1901, and January, 1902. That we include them also in the list of modifications presently to be given is in the interests of a complete enumeration of these modifications in one place, and need create no confusion. Others of these modifications, while so far transforming the document that they cannot be treated as mere editions of it, are yet fully conservative of the whole system of doctrine taught in it and retain its general structure and the greater part of its very phraseology. In this class belong the Savoy Declaration of 1658 and its descendants in the Boston Confession of 1680 and the Saybrook Confession of 1708, on the one hand, and in the Baptist Confession of 1677 on the other. The Cumberland Presbyterian recensions stand in a class by themselves as an extreme case of modification, striking at the very heart of the Confession and able to result in nothing other than its destruction.

In the following notes we have brought together as full an account of these several modifications as seemed necessary in order to trace the

diffusion of the Westminster Confession in the new forms thus given it. We have not attempted to record all the editions in which the several modifications have been issued; but have contented ourselves with referring the reader, when possible, to sources of information in which they can be traced. Only in the case of the Cumberland Presbyterian Confessions, whose history has not hitherto been thoroughly worked out, have we sought fulness of record.

VI

THE FIRST QUESTION OF THE WESTMINSTER SHORTER CATECHISM

NO Catechism begins on a higher plane than the Westminster "Shorter Catechism." Its opening question, "What is the chief end of man?" with its answer, "Man's chief end is to glorify God and to enjoy Him forever"—the profound meaning of which Carlyle said grew to him ever fuller and richer with the years—sets the learner at once in his right relation to God. Withdrawing his eyes from himself, even from his own salvation, as the chief object of concern, it fixes them on God and His glory, and bids him seek his highest blessedness in Him.

The Shorter Catechism owes this elevated standpoint, of course, to the purity of its reflection of the Reformed consciousness. To others, the question of questions might be, What shall I do to be saved? and it is on this plane that many, or rather most, of the Catechisms even of the Reformation begin. There is a sort of spiritual utilitarianism, a divine euthumia, at work in this, which determines the whole point of view. Even the Heidelberg Catechism is not wholly free from this

leaven. Taking its starting point from the longing for comfort, even though it be the highest comfort for life and death, it claims the attention of the pupil from the beginning for his own state, his own present unhappiness, his own possibilities of bliss. There may be some danger that the pupil should acquire the impression that God exists for his benefit. The Westminster Catechism cuts itself free at once from this entanglement with lower things and begins, as it centers and ends, under the illumination of the vision of God in His glory, to subserve which it finds to be the proper end of human as of all other existence, of salvation as of all other achievements. To it all things exist for God, unto whom as well as from whom all things are; and the great question for each of us accordingly is, How can I glorify God and enjoy Him forever?

When we ask after the source of this question and answer, therefore, it is an adequate response to point simply to the Reformed consciousness. It is not merely in this place that this consciousness comes to peculiarly clear expression in the Westminster formularies, which the time and circumstances of their composition combined to make the most complete and perfect exposition of the Reformed mode of conception as yet given confessional expression. It is interesting, however, to go behind this general response and seek to trace the influences by which the literary form of this expression of the Reformed consciousness has been determined. If we ask after its source, in this sense, it is quite evident that we must say that its proximate source is the corresponding question and answer in the Larger Catechism, the preparation of which immediately preceded that of the Shorter Catechism, and a simple—and often most felicitous—condensation of which the Shorter Catechism, in its general structure and specific statements, is largely found to be. The question in the Larger Catechism takes the form, "What is the chief and highest end of man?" and the answer, correspondingly, "Man's chief and highest end is to glorify God, and fully to enjoy Him forever." This differs from the statement of the Shorter Catechism only by an expansion of the simple idea by means of phrases which, while meant to strengthen and enrich, perhaps rather weaken the

effect—illustrating aptly Emerson's dictum concerning the fat and the sinew of speech.

The ultimate source of the declaration is almost as easily identified as its proximate source. This must undoubtedly be found in John Calvin, who, in his "Institutes" and in his "Catechisms" alike, placed this identical idea in the forefront of his instruction. One of the first duties to which Calvin addressed himself on coming to Geneva was to provide the Church there with a brief compend of religious truth, drawn up on the basis of his "Institutes," which had been published the year before. This compend was already in 1537 made public in its French form, and it was rendered into Latin in the spring of the following year.³ Its first section bears the heading: "That all men are born to know God"; and its first paragraph runs as follows: "Since there is no one of men to be found, no matter how barbarous and altogether savage, who is not touched by some religious notion,⁵ it is clear that we are all created to this end, that we should know the majesty of our Creator; and knowing Him, should hold Him in esteem, and honor Him with all fear, love and reverence." And its last paragraph runs as follows: "It is necessary, then, that the principal care and solicitude of our life should be to seek God and to aspire to Him with all affection of heart and not to rest anywhere save in Him." However catechetical in intention, this document, it will be perceived, was not at all what we know as a catechism in form. It requires mention here, however, as the foundation-stone in the edifice of Reformed catechetics; although it was soon supplanted in Geneva itself by the document which has for three hundred and fifty years been known affectionately throughout the whole Reformed world as "Calvin's Catechism." This new formulary was published in French and Latin in 1545 and entered at once upon a worldwide mission. Translated into Italian, Spanish, English, German, Dacian-Roumanian, Hungarian, and even Greek and Hebrew (including German-Hebrew), it rapidly penetrated every corner of the Reformed world. At least thirteen editions of it in English had been printed before the Westminster Assembly convened. This is the way its opening questions stand in the old-

English translation: "What is the Principall and chief end of mans life? To know God. What moveth thee to say so? Because he hath created us, and placed us in this world to set foorth his glory in us: And it is good reason that we employ our whole life to his glorie, seeing he is the beginning and fountaine thereof. What is then the chief felicitie of man? Even the self same; I meane to know God, and to have his glorie shewed foorth in us. Why doest thou call this mans chiefe felicitie? Because that without it, our condition or state were more miserable than the state of brute beastes. Hereby then wee may evidently see, that there can no such miserie come unto man, as not to live in the Knowledge of God? That is most certaine. But what is the true and right knowledge of God? When a man so knoweth God, that he giveth him due honor. Which is the way to honor God aright? It is to put our whole trust and confidence in him; to studie to serve him in obeying his wil; to call upon him in our necessities, seeking our salvation and all good thinges at his hand; and finally to acknowledge both with hearte and mouth that he is the lively fountaine of all goodnesse." Here the knowledge of God is presented as the chief end and highest good of man;⁹ and this knowledge of God is resolved into the glorification of God in us, which again is resolved into our trusting Him, appealing to Him, seeking salvation in Him and finding all good things in Him. That is as much as to say that we exist but to glorify and enjoy Him. What is common to both forms of Calvin's catechetical instruction is, thus, that they alike open with the declaration that men have been created for the very end of knowing God, and in knowing Him of glorifying Him, and in glorifying Him of finding their happiness in Him. Here is the root which has borne the fruit of the opening question of the Westminster Catechism.

The late Dr. A. F. Mitchell has, indeed, suggested that we may go behind even Calvin. "The first question or interrogation," he says, "which does not seem to have appeared in the former draft of the committee, is taken from the old English translation of Calvin's Catechism, 'What is the principal and chief end of man's life?' " But the source of the answer to this question he does not consider so

simple. "The answer to this question," he suggests, "may be said to combine the answers to Question 3rd in the Catechisms of Calvin and Ames, 'To have his glory showed forth in us,' and 'in the enjoying of God,' and it may have been taken from them; or the first part may have been taken from Rogers, Ball, or Palmer, and the second from one of the earliest catechisms of the Swiss Reformation, viz., that of Leo Judæ, published at Zürich before 1530." If this answer goes back to a period before 1530, it goes, of course, behind Calvin, the earliest of whose Catechisms was not published before 1537, and the first edition of whose "Institutes" itself not before 1536.

It is quite tempting indeed to refer it to Leo Judæ's Latin Catechism, the citation from which given by Dr. Mitchell is strikingly like the Shorter Catechism definition. It runs as follows and Dr. Mitchell is fully justified in speaking of it as important in this connection: "Q. Tell me, please, for what end was man created? A. That we may recognize the majesty and goodness of God, the Creator, all good, all great, all wise; and finally enjoy Him forever." But quite apart from the reference of the Shorter Catechism definition to this response as its source, Dr. Mitchell's dating is at fault. We do indeed owe to Leo Judæ the first important Catechism produced by Reformed Switzerland. This was not, however, his Latin Catechism from which Dr. Mitchell quotes, but his Larger German Catechism, which does not contain anything corresponding to these words. Nor was even it published "before 1530," but not before January, 1534,¹⁴ while the Shorter German Catechism (1541) followed upon the Latin Catechism¹⁶ and derives from it. The Latin Catechism¹⁶ was prepared for the use of the youth in the Latin School at Zurich, and Leo Judæ quite frankly explains, in a dedication prefixed to it addressed to Johannes Fries, the rector of that school, that he has freely used in compiling it, "certain Institutes of the Christian religion lately (nuper) composed by John Calvin," that is to say, Calvin's earlier Catechism, which was published under this title. On the strength of the word "lately" in this dedication, it has been usual to assign this Latin Catechism to 1538, or at latest 1539. There can be no question, therefore, that Leo Judæ derives the sentence which Dr. Mitchell

quotes from him from Calvin's first Catechism, which he here reduces to catechetical form¹⁸ and redacts to suit his purpose. What interests us most is to observe how, in doing so, he falls upon a form of words which was almost exactly repeated by the Westminster Divines a century later. For the rest, it is also interesting to observe how the same ideas appear in the Shorter German Catechism which was in preparation simultaneously with this Latin Catechism, although it seems not to have been published until a couple of years later. Here they are very much expanded, but preserve the same tone. The Catechism opens with the question, "Since thou art a rational creature, that is to say, a human being, tell me who made thee?" to which the answer is returned: "God made me." Then follows: "How and whereto?" "When I had no existence, He made me, out of goodness and grace, moved thereto by nothing but His unspeakable goodness, that I might be partaker of His great riches and all His goods." And after a lengthy and very beautiful exposition of what it is to be made in God's image, the question is returned to (Q. 7): "To what end did God make thee?—that thou shouldst be always here in this world?" and the answer is given: "The end for which man was created is God,—that he should learn to know Him, love Him alone above all things, and, after this time, enjoy Him forever, in eternal life. Wherefore I should with my heart rise above all creatures, and cling alone to God my Creator." Certainly, if Leo Judae rests on Calvin, he knows how to give the richest expression to the thoughts derived from Calvin, and quite justifies his own description of himself as a bee which, going from flower to flower, gathers the honey for himself. By this beautiful description of the destination of man we are prepared to arrive shortly (Q. 18) at this equally beautiful definition of God, which also has its roots in Calvin: Q. 18. "Tell me what is God?" A. "God is an inexpressible, inexhaustible fountain of all that is good. What we lack we should seek in Him alone; of what afflicts us we should complain to Him alone; to Him alone should we flee in all times of need, in Him alone should we seek help, comfort, shelter and defence. As He has promised to be our God, that is that He will give us all that is good

and save us from all that is evil, we should hold and recognize Him as such and trust Him for it."²¹

It is not to be imagined, of course, that these ideas were the invention of Calvin. They were the property of every Christian heart and especially of all who had learned in the school of Augustine—which is as much as to say of all the leaders of the Reformation movement, whether of high or of low degree. It could not be but that they should find some expression, therefore, apart from Calvin, and even before Calvin, in the numerous catechetical manuals which the new teachers prepared for the instruction of the people. We find, therefore, among the large number of catechisms which begin with questions bringing out what it is to be a Christian, now and then one which carries back the thought to creation itself and begins with making an effort to explain to the people what it is to be a creature of God. "A little book in questions and answers" was printed, for example, somewhere in the middle of the 'twenties (1522–1526), by a certain Petrus Schultz, possibly for the people of Lemgo—but we really know nothing of the man or his flock—which opens as follows: "What art thou? I am a creature. What is a creature? What is made out of nothing. Who made thee? He who is almighty and eternal. For what did He make thee? For His kingdom and to do His will." About the same time—or a little later—a school-master of Rothenburg, Valentin Ickelsamer by name, was printing beautiful dialogues for the instruction of children in the great art of knowing themselves and living worthily. One of these, a dialogue between Margaret and Anna, opens thus:²³ "Margaret: What art thou? Anna: A rational creature of God, a human being. M.: How didst thou become a human being and come into existence? A.: God made me and placed a living soul in my flesh, that in this house of exile, born on the earth, it might long after God its creator and apprehend Him."²⁵ Sometimes the two lines of thought are united, with more or less felicity. Thus no less a man than Johannes Brenz, in no less a book than that which has sometimes (though, of course, with only relative accuracy) been called "the first Protestant Catechism"—the "Fragstück des Christlichen Glaubens" of 1528, designed for young children, and

hence called the "Catechismus Minor"—begins thus: "What art thou? According to the first birth, I am a rational creature or human being, made by God; but according to the new birth, I am a Christian."²⁷ And this opening is almost exactly repeated in a later Catechism of Kaspar Gräter's (1537): "What art thou, my dear child? According to the first birth I am a rational creature or human being, made by God, but according to the new birth, I am a Christian"; as also, in a still later one by Johann Meckhart (circa 1553+): "What art thou, my child? According to the first birth, I am a rational creature, a human being, made by God, but according to the second and new birth, I am a Christian."³⁰ In Bartholomeus Rosinus' "Short Questions and Answers," printed in Regensburg in 1581, this double answer still stands, but is diverted from its original purpose and conformed in both elements to the current soteriological motive: "Dear child, what art thou? By reason of the bodily birth, I am a condemned sinner, but by reason of the spiritual re-birth, I am a saved Christian."³² We may perhaps look upon this as a reminiscence of the old Brentzian formula, rephrased under the influence of the prevalent method of catechizing. Other examples of the mixture of the two motives may be found in the Catechisms of Kaspar Loener (1529) and Jacob Other (1532), in both of which the idea of the likeness of God is emphasized. The former of these begins as follows: "What art thou? I am a Christian man and a child of God. Whence is man? God made man out of the earth, after His image. How is man God's image? When he is righteous. What man, however, is righteous? He who does righteousness and avoids unrighteousness." The latter begins as follows: "What art thou? I am a human being. How dost thou know this? Thus, that I am unrighteous, a sinner and nothing worth. Who made thee? God the Almighty who made the heavens and earth and all things. How did He make thee? After His image. What is the image of God? It is righteousness, holiness, truth, eternal joy and blessedness." Instances such as these of the utilization of the conception which dominates Calvin's Catechisms are clearly more interesting than significant. It may possibly be that Leo Judae knew some of these earlier efforts to prepare spiritual food for the babes of the flock. He was a very busy bee and ranged far for his honey:

Bullinger, in the preface he prefixed to Leo Judae's earliest Catechism, tells us that "he did not despise the work of other true and learned servants in the Gospel of Christ"; and "made no shame of transcribing and adopting from them into his own what he found most suitable, as indeed not only the most learned of the ancient doctors did, but also the holy prophets." One would like to think he may have known the dialogues of Valentin Ickelsamer, and one can scarcely doubt that he knew the Smaller Catechism of Brenz: and if he knew them he may well have more or less drawn from them. But it is clear that his main source for these questions, not only in his Latin, but also in his Shorter German Catechism, was Calvin. And we can scarcely suppose that Calvin, who obviously is going his own way, was influenced by these earlier manuals.

Calvin, then, it is evident, is the ultimate source of the opening question and answer of the Westminster Shorter Catechism. If Leo Judae is to come into consideration at all, it is only as an intermediary between Calvin and the Westminster formularies. Leo Judae is not, however, the only intermediary which must come into consideration when we begin to ask whether the language of the Westminster Catechisms may not be modified by some of Calvin's successors. There are, for example, the series of Catechisms which were published by John à Lasco in London, and which present very interesting modifications of Calvin's treatment of this topic. Three of these are of interest to us. The first was prepared by Laski for the Friesian Church as early as 1546, but was first printed, in Dutch, by Jan Utenhove, an elder of the Foreign Church of London, in 1551. The second—a much briefer one—was the production on Laski's model of another of Laski's London helpers, Marten Microen (Micronius), and was first printed, in Dutch, at London in 1552. The third, which was in effect an abridgement of the Catechism of 1551, was prepared for the Church at Embden and was first printed in the autumn of 1554, continuing in use until our own day. The opening words of the first of these Catechisms,³⁶ which we may call the Friesian Catechism, run as follows: "Why has God created man and endowed him with such great gifts of understanding above all other

creatures? That he might learn to know aright his God and Creator, love, fear, laud and praise Him and so become sharer in all His goods." In the second, Micronius', or, as we may perhaps call it distinctively, the London Catechism,³⁸ they run: "Whereto hast thou been created by God and placed in the world? In order that my life long I may know and serve God according to the right teaching, and finally may live with Him in heaven forever." And in the third, or, as we may call it, the Embden Catechism,⁴⁰ they run: "Whereto hast thou been created a man? That I should be an image of God, and should know, praise and serve my God and Creator." What is most striking in these Catechisms is that in both of the forms which were issued in London for the use of the Dutch Church there—as in Leo Judae's Latin Catechism—the two items of glorifying and enjoying God are brought together: man is on earth primarily to know and serve God, but also to become partaker in His glory and to live with Him forever. It is clear that already by the middle of the sixteenth century there was a tradition growing up in the Catechetical manuals deriving from Calvin's fundamental statement to emphasize these two items: as indeed faithfulness to Calvin's statement required should be done. We need not feel surprise, then, that Dr. A. F. Mitchell⁴² is able to quote Italian and Spanish examples the language of which comes very close indeed to that of the Westminster Catechisms. "To what end was man created?" is asked in the Italian one; and the answer is: "To know and love God and enjoy Him forever"; and the Spanish answer is almost as striking.⁴⁴

We are naturally more interested, however, in the tradition as it manifested itself in England and Scotland, where, as we have seen, Calvin's Catechism was much used, and indeed in Scotland formed part of the recognized formularies of the Church. This tradition is very rich, and takes many variations upon itself in the hands of the several teachers who attempted to draw up manuals for the instruction of youth. In Scotland, from the Reformation down, there was in use in the grammar schools a "Summula Catechismi," designed for the training in piety of the youths gathered there, which is supposed to have been the work of Andrew Simpson, master of the

grammar school of Perth both before and after the Reformation and first Protestant minister of Dunbar. Its opening questions run: "Who created man? God. How did He create him? Holy and sound and with dominion over the world. For what end was he created? To serve God."⁴⁶ Less richly the shorter form of John Craig's Catechism begins by asking, "What are we by nature?" and after answering, "The Children of God's Wrath," proceeds, "Were we thus created of God?" to respond, "No, for he made us to his own image." The essence of the matter, however, is still preserved there. The tradition of Andrew Simpson's manual, however, appears to dominate Scottish Catechetics: his method of putting things at least reasserts itself in the Westminster period in a couple of documents issued almost or quite with authority in the Scottish Church. "The A, B, C, or A Catechisme for yong children appoynted by act of the church and councell of Scotland To be learned in all families and Lector Schooles in the said Kingdome" seems to have first appeared in 1641. It opens thus: "Who made man? God. In what estate made he him? Perfectly holy in body and soule."⁴⁸ The "New Catechisme according to the Forme of the Kirk of Scotland"—which, as Dr. Mitchell says, "was published in England, just before the Assembly entered on this part of its labors"—that is, in 1644—"and (I can hardly doubt) in the hope that it might tend to facilitate them"—begins thus: "Who made the Hevins and the Earth, and all things contened in them? God. Whereof was man created? Of the earth. To what end was he made? To serve God."⁵⁰

The English tradition takes a slightly different form and keeps closer, on the whole, to Calvin's example. In most of the manuals which begin, after the fashion of Calvin's Catechisms and the best Reformed tradition, with the end of man's existence, the stress is laid on the glorifying of God: and when there is an addition to this it ordinarily takes the form of reference to the securing of salvation. Occasionally the soteriological motive seems to absorb all interest. Thus, for example, in Dr. William Whittaker's "Short Sum of Christianity delivered by way of Catechism" (London, 1630) we read: "What is the only thing whereunto all our endeavors ought to be directed? To seek

everlasting felicity or salvation in this life, that we may fully enjoy it in the life to come. What is salvation? Perfect happiness of soul and body forever." More frequently we have the glorification of God set forth alone as the end of all human existence. Thus, for example, in Dawson's "Short Questions and Answears, etc.," of 1584, the opening question and answer are: "Wherefore hath God made, sanctified, and preserved you? To seek His glory, Romans 11:30"; and in a list of "Articles very necessarie to be knowen of all yong schollers of Christe's School" appended to "Certaine Necessarie Instructions meet to be taught the yonger sort before they come to be partakers of the Holy Communion," emanating obviously from the same Puritan circles, the first is "that the end of our creation is to glorify God." More striking still, considered as a forerunner of the Westminster Catechisms, are the first question and answer in another formulary published in London in 1584, under the title of: "The Ground of Christianity, composed in a dialogue between Paul and Titus, containing all the principall poyntes of our Salvation in Christ." These run: "What is the chiefest duety of a Christian man in this life? The chiefest duety of man, and not of man onely, but of all the creatures in the world in their nature, is to set forth the glory of God." The very method of statement of the Westminster formularies is here. Later examples of the same mode of statement are provided by Paget's "Summe of Christian Religion" and Openshaw's "Summe of Christian Religion": "Wherefore hath God made ... you? To seek His glory." When there is a double statement it is sometimes, to be sure, in the form given it by Thomas Sparks in his "A Brief and Short Catechism, etc.": "To what end hath he made man? To the setting forth of his own glorie, and that man should serve him."⁵⁴ But more frequently, as we have said, at least in seventeenth century documents, the double statement draws together the glorifying of God and the salvation of the soul. One of the most influential of the Catechisms of this type was undoubtedly the Short Catechism of John Ball, which was published in his early ministry, and had reached its nineteenth impression in 1642 and its forty-fifth in 1657. Its opening question and answer are: "What ought to be the chiefe and continuall care of every man in this life? To glorifie God and save

his soule." Similarly we read in William Syme's "Sweet Milk of Christian Doctrine" (1617): "What is the chief and principal end of our being, etc.? That we may glorify God, and work out our own salvation." And again, in "A Short Catechism for Householders," published in London, 1624: "What should be the chief desire and endeavour of every Christian in this life? To seek the glory of God and to obtain happiness and salvation of his own soul."⁵⁷ No two Catechisms, probably, are of more significance for the preparation of the Westminster Catechisms than those of Herbert Palmer (ed. 1, 1640; ed. 4, 1644; ed. 6, 1645) and of Ezekiel Rogers (1642). The former of these was not only the work of that member of the Westminster Assembly who had most to do with its catechetical labors, but obviously supplied a starting point for them. And the latter, Dr. Mitchell thinks, is on the whole, in its general structure, most like the Westminster Shorter Catechism of all earlier manuals. Both belong to the class we have now under view. Palmer's begins: "What is a man's greatest businesse in this world? A man's greatest businesse in this world is to glorifie God and save his owne soule. How shall a man come to glorifie God and save his owne soule? They that will glorifie God and save their own soules must needs learn to know God and believe in him and serve him." Here is again the very flavor of the Westminster Catechisms. Rogers' begins: "Wherefore hath God given to man a reasonable and an immortall soul? That he above all other creatures should seek God's glory and his own salvation. Where is he taught how this is to be done? In the Scriptures or Word of God."⁵⁹

There was tradition enough, then, beneath the Westminster Divines as they sat down to frame the first question and answer of their Catechisms: and we cannot fail to see that they were floating on the bosom of this tradition. The tradition does not, however, quite account for their first question and answer. They must themselves be taken into consideration for that. The third question and answer of Calvin's Catechism was undoubtedly in their minds, and from it they no doubt directly derived the question. It would seem that they got the first half of the answer directly from Palmer. But the second half

of his answer they improve on. Whence did they draw their improvement? From the third question of William Ames's Catechism, "in the enjoying of God"—as Dr. Mitchell thinks possible? Or "from an Italian catechism of the sixteenth century," as Dr. Mitchell thought worth suggesting in 1886?⁶¹ Or from Leo Judae, as he thought more likely in 1897? Of the three suggestions the most plausible seems to us to be William Ames, whose work was certainly in the hands of the Divines, and may have suggested this heightening and broadening of the current: "and to save his soul." But, in any event, this heightening and broadening conception was already present in Calvin's Catechism; and it may very well be that there was no conscious dependence here on any intermediary, but that the Westminster Divines simply did what Leo Judae, Gagliardi, and Ames had done before them—found a felicitous brief expression for Calvin's thought. Or, if we must seek some intermediary between Calvin and the Westminster Divines, it would seem enough to bear in mind that Ball's "A Short Treatise" was in the hands of all the members of the Assembly, and provided them with language which asserted it to be the chief duty of man "to glorify God" and "infinitely to desire the enjoyment of God's presence in heaven."

The peculiarity of this first question and answer of the Westminster Catechisms, it will be seen, is the felicity with which it brings to concise expression the whole Reformed conception of the significance of human life. We say the whole Reformed conception. For justice is not done that conception if we say merely that man's chief end is to glorify God. That certainly: and certainly that first. But according to the Reformed conception man exists not merely that God may be glorified in him, but that he may delight in this glorious God. It does justice to the subjective as well as to the objective side of the case. The Reformed conception is not fully or fairly stated if it be so stated that it may seem to be satisfied with conceiving man merely as the object on which God manifests His glory—possibly even the passive object in and through which the Divine glory is secured. It conceives man also as the subject in which the gloriousness of God is perceived and delighted in. No man is truly Reformed in his thought,

then, unless he conceives of man not merely as destined to be the instrument of the Divine glory, but also as destined to reflect the glory of God in his own consciousness, to exult in God: nay, unless he himself delights in God as the all-glorious One.

Read the great Reformed divines. The note of their work is exultation in God. How Calvin, for example, gloried and delighted in God! Every page rings with this note, the note of personal joy in the Almighty, known to be, not the all-wise merely, but the all-loving too. Take, for example, such a passage as the exposition of what true and undefiled religion is, which closes the second chapter of the First Book of the "Institutes." He who comes really and truly to know God, we are here told, rejoices that God is the governor of all things, and flees to Him as his guardian and protector, putting his whole trust in Him. "Because he knows Him to be the author of all good things, whenever he is in distress or want, he flees at once to His protection, sure of His aid; because he is persuaded that He is good and merciful, he relies on Him with assured confidence, doubting not that in His clemency there is prepared a remedy for all his ills; because he recognizes Him as his Lord and Father, he is determined to acknowledge His government in everything, to revere His majesty, to promote His glory, to obey His mandates; because he perceives Him to be a just judge whose severity is armed for the punishment of iniquities, he keeps His tribunal always in view and in fear restrains himself from provoking His wrath. But he is not so terrified by the sense of His justice as to wish to withdraw from it, even were escape possible: he rather loves Him not less as the punisher of the wicked than as the benefactor of the good, since he understands that it belongs to His glory not less that punishment should be visited upon the impious and abandoned than that the reward of eternal life should be conferred on the righteous. And moreover, it is not alone from dread of punishment that he restrains himself from sinning, but because he loves and reverences God as his Father, and honors and worships Him as his Lord, and even though there were no such thing as hell would abhor offending Him."

It is not, however, Calvin who first strikes this note, and there is another in whose thought God is even more constantly present—Calvin's master, Augustine. This is the burden, for example, of Augustine's "Confessions," and its classical expression is to be found in that great sentence which sums up the whole of the teaching of that immortal book: "Thou hast made us for Thyself, O Lord: and our heart is restless till it finds its rest in Thee." For there is nothing the soul can need which it cannot find in God. "Let God," he exhorts in another of those great sentences which stud his pages—"Let God be all in all to thee, for in Him is the entirety of all that thou lovest." And then, elaborating the idea, he proceeds: "God is all in all to thee: if thou dost hunger He is thy bread; if thou dost thirst He is thy drink; if thou art in darkness, He is thy light; ... if thou art naked, He is thy garment of immortality, when this corruption shall put on incorruption and this mortal shall put on immortality." Delight in God, enjoyment of God—this⁶⁴ is the recurrent refrain. of all Augustine's speech of God: delight in God here, enjoyment of God forever. Would we know the way of life, he tells us—in words which his great pupil was to repeat after him—we must come to know God and ourselves, God in His love that we may not despair, ourselves in our unworthiness that we may not be proud.⁶⁶ And would we know what the goal is—what is that but the eternal enjoyment of this God of love? "When he who is good and faithful in these miseries shall have passed from this life to the blessed life, then will truly come to pass what is now wholly impossible—that a man may live as he will. For he will not will to live evilly in the midst of that felicity, nor will he will anything that shall be lacking, nor shall there be anything lacking which he shall have willed. Whatever shall be loved will be present; and nothing will be longed for which shall not be there. Everything which will be there will be good, and the Supreme God will be the supreme good, and will be present for those to enjoy who love Him; and what is the most blessed thing of all is that it will be certain that it will be so forever."

The distinction of the opening question and answer of the Westminster Shorter Catechism is that it moves on this high plane

and says all this in the compressed compass of a dozen felicitous words: "Man's chief end is to glorify God and to enjoy Him forever." Not to enjoy God, certainly, without glorifying Him, for how can He to whom glory inherently belongs be enjoyed without being glorified? But just as certainly not to glorify God without enjoying Him—for how can He whose glory is His perfections be glorified if He be not also enjoyed?

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