THE

BIBLIOTHECA SACRA

ARTICLE I.

THE BIBLICAL CRITICISM OF THE PRESENT DAY.[1]

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In keeping with an ancient custom, it will be a rule at our University that the exchange of the rectorate shall be accompanied by an oration; and it is preferred that each rector shall take a theme from his own department. I also desire to observe this rule, and therefore the *Annale Academici* and the inaugural of the new rector are preceded by this address on Present-day Biblical Criticism, viewed from the point of its dangerous tendency to the church of the living God. I am deeply sensible of the importance of the task imposed on me by this choice of subject; I feel what modesty is demanded of me when I undertake to differ from celebrated and talented colleagues, who are for the most part my superiors; I know my need of greater courage than my own heart prompts, when I raise my hand and voice boldly against current opinions;—but may I refrain when the dangers that threaten the church compel me to speak? And, I add, do you expect anything else, when for several months past a reply has been invited from our side about this cardinal point in the conflict of spirits? It is indeed our conviction which, with an appeal to your

[1] Translated from the Dutch by J. Hendrik de Vries, D. D., Princeton, New Jersey.

considerate judgment but without the least uncertainty, we express,—that the biblical criticism of the present day is destructive of the best interests of the church of the living God, for the reason that it revokes her theology, robs her of the Bible, and destroys her liberty in Christ. Give me your attention as, in the development of these three propositions, I shall show that biblical criticism as it is prosecuted in our times at almost every Protestant university on the continent of Europe, must result in the utter destruction of theology; that it cannot continue without robbing the church of the Holy Scriptures; and that it must end in surrendering her, utterly defenseless, into the arms of the most unbearable, because intellectual, clericalism. And may He, before whose glory I reverently bow and for the welfare of whose church I plead, be in this the inspirer of my word and the judge of my thoughts; while in this sacred task, also, our help is in the name of the Lord Jehovah, the Rock of our strength, and the Strength of our life.

I.

Biblical criticism of the present day *tears the parts of theology out of their relation, violates its character,* and *substitutes for it something which is no theology.* Such is the threefold complaint in which I treat the first part of the subject in hand, as I undertake to prove the proposition that present-day biblical criticism must end in the destruction of theology.

Theology is a science which, if it is analogous to philosophy and psychology, is distinguished from all other sciences by this fundamental point, that it does not occupy itself with the knowledge of the creature, but of the Creator; hence of a God who, as creator, cannot be included in the range of the creaturely. The object of theology, therefore, is God. Not God and something besides which is coördinated with him;

but God alone, and under him the creature is considered only in so far as it either instrumentally reveals the knowledge of God or for his glory takes this knowledge up into itself. In anthropology, man is the centrum, and the Almighty is considered only as the interpretation of the religious sense; but in theology God himself is the centrum, and no mention of man is justified, except in so far as God uses him for his own sake.

Again, in all other sciences man observes and thoughtfully investigates the object, and subjects it to himself, but in theology the object itself is active; it does not stand open, but gives itself to be seen; does not allow itself to be investigated, but reveals itself; and employs thinking man as instrument only to cause the knowledge of his Being to radiate. Hence the confession of God, the Holy Spirit, speaks of him also as Ὁ θεόλογος, *Ecclesiæ Doctor;* "the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God," "for the Spirit searcheth all things. Yea, the deep things of God" (1 Cor. ii. 10); and all real theology is essentially one beautiful building which, in all ages and among all nations, has been reared, according to a fixed plan, by that *Spiritus Architectonicus* whom we, who are called theologians, merely assist as upper servants.

And, finally, theology is not born, like other sciences, from the motive of need or from the impulse after knowledge, but from the impulsion of the Holy Spirit. In giving us a theology, God has a purpose to fulfill. He wills that the knowledge of his Being shall be received by us; and that, having been cast into the furrows of our minds and hearts, it shall germinate; and, having germinated, that it shall bear fruit to the honor of his name. It is therefore a positive science in which object as well as end are not first to be found, but are posited in advance; and in its origin, power of development, and direction it is determined by one and the self-same principle,—the *Self-*

revealing God. As Thomas puts it, *"Deo docetur Deum docet, ad Deum ducet";* or, better still, in the words of one of our own divines: "A theologian is ὁ τὰ τοῦ Θεοῦ ἐκ Θεοῦ ἐνώπιον τοῦ Θεοῦ εἰς δοξὰν Θεοῦ λέγων."[1]

If, therefore, distinction is made between the departments of theology which touch its heart and those which occupy a subordinate place, the division into principal and subordinate departments is determined by the shorter or farther distance of these departments from this theological centrum. Hence the heart of theology is dogmatics, and those lying farthest off are the critical-literary studies, and, in fixed constellation with these, exegesis, pastoral theology, and church history round about the centrum. A just proportion demands that the strength of the best theologians and the best powers of most theologians be devoted to this central, spiritual labor, and that only a part of the strength and a proportionally small part of time be devoted to the purely literary. Thus lies the normal relation of the parts as it is determined encyclopedically, in virtue of her principle, by the nature of theology itself. And this relation is wholly torn apart by the present-day biblical criticism; in the economy of theology it upturns all order; makes that which is subordinate principal; devotes the finest energies to that which lies nearer the circumference; withdraws its best heads and best hours from the central study of theology, and thus occasions the birth of a monstrous hydrocephal. Or, to express the same in a nobler figure, it is like a regal banquet at which all the threads of the table linens have been numbered, and every spot and scratch on the golden goblets have most carefully been recorded; while, to the mortification of the guests, the sparkling wine is wanting.

[1] [This line of thought is worked out more fully by the author in his Encyclopedia of Sacred Theology. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. —Tr.]

May this be tolerated? As the advocates of this vivisection of the Scripture repeatedly assure us, the knowledge of God rises also from the rich life of nature and man. Consequently theology also deals with the creation. But what would we think of the theologian, who, upon arriving at the point of the creation, began at once, without any self-restraint, to spend his best energy in the construction of a geology? Theology posits an Incarnation of the Word; will our theologians, for this reason, preface Christology with broad physiological and gynæcological studies of man's conception and embryonic existence? Human personality also charms and attracts by its diorama; does this make the man who spends his time and strength in anatomical, pathological, and physiological studies a theologian? Must we work through the whole conflict about materialism, chemically and geologically, microcosmically and dialectically, before as theologians we are allowed to count with the soul as existing? Theology makes confession of the resurrection of the body; is she bound, before rejoicing in her hope, to trace chemically the boundary which in our body separates the nutritive from the organic substratum? And, not to mention other points, theology also teaches a coming catastrophe which shall bring about the end of things; must she analyze by spectral analysis the component parts of all the planets, in order that she may speak authoritatively of a burning of the elements at the Lord's return? Would such a conception of study ever form a theologian? Would he who makes these things almost exclusively his studies be permitted to style himself a professional theologian? Could it be said that such studies were governed by the principle of theology? Will it do still to speak of theology, when the interests that should claim the attention subsequent to this elementary analysis are neglected from sheer lack of time?

And, if not, can we still speak of theology when not the Scripture,—which were excellent,—but the introduction to the Scripture, occupies the whole heart and head; when much is said about the Scripture, but ever so little from or upon the authority of the Scripture; yes, when ministers, though they bear the title of theologian, are wholly unacquainted with the spiritual life of their congregations, and, while almost opposing their people's holiest efforts, undertake to satisfy their own sense of honor by covering up these defects in elaborate presentations of what has been argued over and for this Bible as *literary substratum?*

Moreover, this one-sided study of this microscopic analysis disables the eye to see the holy synthesis. A chemist is not commonly a poet. In this way the powers for real theological studies remain undeveloped. They lose their sacred character; they remain barren; and, what is worse, they foster pride rather than humility. Even now nothing is more common than to hear youthful theologians, whose studies have scarcely begun, whose knowledge of language and of antiquity barely suffices to carry them along, and who still owe the world the first proof of their higher ability, deprecate the Scriptures in a way which but betrays that their superficiality echoes what their limited powers fail to grasp.

As results of this, by far the greater part of the theological domain is still untilled ground; the real theological sense is dulled; and most of those who call themselves theologians declare their study already ended when the portal which leads from the outer courts to the *sanctuarium* of the *sancta theologia* still waits their steps.

Though I readily grant, indeed, that there must also be an outer court, by virtue of which these studies may and must assert their relative rights, I enter my protest against

the delusion that these studies render one a theologian; I insist that these elementary studies be relegated back again to their proper spheres; and that no one of us be longer permitted to ignore the atrophy of the higher theology which, of direful necessity, has originated from the hypertrophy of these lower studies.

For, and this was my second complaint, such a disproportionate excrescence is apt to become a constitutional defect, and present-day biblical criticism has, consequently, not only torn theology out of its relation, but has also falsified its character. This could not be otherwise. When we do not regulate with a clear consciousness the course of our studies according to the principle of our science, that course of studies governs us, and subjects us unconsciously to the power of that other principle, from which the impulse to this divergence in the course of studies was born. No accident put upon the study of the Scripture its present-day stamp. It was rather a general disposition of the spirits which, in all the countries of Europe, almost simultaneously raised very similar presumptions against the Scripture. The Schleiermachers and Robertson Smiths, the Kuenens and Colensos, are but the most accurate interpreters, on Scripture grounds, of the spirit which, as a reformer of the once current conceptions, has transposed the entire human consciousness in every department of life; even the revolution in theology, such as we have already witnessed in politics and in social and domestic relations. Encyclopedically this was most sharply declared in the claim that the *locus de S. Scriptura* should be removed from the gable of dogmatics, and be given a place in the transept of the *media gratiæ*. It will not do to say that this merely implied a change of place. Because, in the first place, in dogmatics the *media gratiæ* are

taken officially, hence it is not a doctrine of the Scripture, but a treatise of the *praedicatio Verbi,* which, alongside of the ministrations of the sacraments, appears under this rubric; as foolish, therefore, as it would be to include the whole Christology and soteriology under the *locus de sacramento,* just so untenable is the proposition to fuse the *locus de S. Scriptura* with what dogmatics teaches concerning the preaching of the Word. And, secondly, a still more serious objection presents itself. By taking away the *locus de S. Scriptura* from the entrance (introduction) to dogmatics, the ethical tendency has changed the very nature of the *principium* of theology. Our fathers have ever maintained that the Scripture was not one of many fountains, but the *principium* of our knowledge of God. The fountain of the knowledge of God, they said and very correctly, is God's own self-consciousness alone; is only present with the Creator, and cannot hide in something creaturely; and exists, therefore, exclusively in the *theologia archetypa;* while the *principium* of our knowledge of God, i. e., the principle, the organic beginning, the germ, from which springs all knowledge of God in the order of its parts, and in which of necessity the entire wealth of theology is potentially included, is neither tradition, nor the Christian consciousness, nor yet our higher implanted life, but solely and alone *the Holy Scripture.* Contradictory to this view, the ethical tendency in the present-day study of the Scriptures has made the twofold mistake: first, to locate the real source of the knowledge of God in the implanted life; and, secondly, as a simple consequence, to have that knowledge of God, as far as it is to become conscious, spring from the unconscious mystery of the soul; both these being philosophical ideas, one from Fichte, and the other from Schelling, and in a peculiar setting imported by the giant mind of Schleiermacher into the

theological domain. This attacks radically the work of the Holy Spirit, whose very office it is to reveal to, in, and by the church *conscious* knowledge of God in a form which is adapted to our human consciousness. "The way, the truth, and the life," are in Christ, but the Holy Spirit takes these from that Christ "to show them unto you"; not by impressions on the conscience, or impulses of feeling, neither by the inoculation of a lymph of life; but by the Word, i. e. by the utterance of the self-consciousness of God, interpreted in the form of our human consciousness. Again, this error is a radical subversion of the Divine ordinances, which are as analogous to the realm of nature as of grace. For, as we have the series of a "perception," from this perception a "thought," and from that thought the "word"; so we have, also, the series of a "blade," an "ear" and a "grain of wheat," or, if you like, the series of "inflammable material," "smoke," and "flame." What do you sow? And how do you ignite fire? Can you sow blades of corn, or can you make fire with smoke? Indeed in order that you may quicken the life of the blade, you must needs have the perfectly ripe grain of wheat; and, to ignite fire, you need a glowing spark or flame. In the same way it is the ordinance of God in spiritual things, not to begin with an unconscious perception, but to have the clearly *conscious Word* addressed to you, from which Word the perception shall be the first to germinate, and from which perception the thought shall ripen until at last from the Word a word of your own shall be born within you. In spite of its praiseworthy efforts to maintain the confession of the church, the ethical tendency, under the pressure of the same philosophical revolution-principle from which the present-day biblical criticism borrows its impulse, has altogether changed the face of theology. With us they confess a God who is concious of himself, and consequently

they hold to a *Cognitio Dei Archetypa,* but the knowledge which we derive from the living God is in their system so little like the *Ectypic,* i. e. which has originated by the impress of God's self-consciousness, as to be reached by a slow process from the emotional life of the organs of revelation. Consequently this tendency was forced to take God the Holy Ghost and "the family-spirit of the congregation" to be synonymous, and, by the identification of the otherwise distinguished conceptions of *life, power,* and *word,* to introduce a Babylonian confusion of speech, which strangely mixes up all conceptions, and lends a floating character to every term, and, after the Romish style, allowed a continuous life-revelation to become apparent in the church, which at first took a place by the side of the Scripture, but which even now, with such men as Rothe, has usurped the authority of the Scripture.

The smooth transition, therefore, from *believing* to *modern* ethicals is found with Rothe, von der Goetz, Frank, and Räbiger. Thus far the ethicals still reverenced the rule "to make a separation between the sacred and the profane (Ezek. xlii. 20); and, even in spite of their starting-point, they still confessed faith in an absolute chasm between the holy and the unholy. But, and this is my third complaint, from this same principle, present-day Bible-study has produced a still more bitter fruit with the moderns, and in the place of the disconnected and grievously degenerated theology has given us an entirely other and new science. If there is no *theologia ectypa,* i. e. no communication of truth in a form appropriate to our consciousness, then, it was said, you have no right to value your perceptions as being essentially higher than ours: they do not differ specifically, but at most only in degree of development; in the religious life also there is a

Darwinistic process. And thus the wall of separation between the holy and the profane fell away; the chasm between the sacred and the common was filled in; idolatries were now taken as the religions of the nations; and, together with the sacred writings of other people, the sacred books of Israel were tested by the touchstone of all profane literature. Our theologians then dispersed into four different tents of science: There was a science of philology, and henceforth its priests would take notice of Semitic literature; there was an ethnical science, and the science of religions should henceforth be known as its subdivision; there was a science of psychology, and under its auspices religious feeling would be investigated; and, finally, there was a science of philosophy, whose task it now became to furnish a philosophy of religion. Thus alongside of, and over against, sacred theology, there arose an entirely other and separate science, no longer of God, but of *religion*. And the grievance of the church of Christ is, that this brand-new "science of religion" committed the lamentable act of dishonestly announcing itself by the old name of "theology," and, while expelling sacred theology, which it had at first ignored, altogether from the domain of the state-faculty, now carries itself as though it were the only lawful tenant, yea, owner, of the ancient sacred house. Hence our complaint against you, who, as our brethren making confession of the name of Jesus, have coöperated to effect this change, is not merely that you have mutilated theology and have allowed it to be falsified; but much more that, by the abandonment of dogmatics and practical theology, you have allowed the heart and the brain of the *sancta theologia* to be removed, in order, as a soulless mummy embalmed with spices, to have it laid away in the modern sarcophagus.

See, my brethren, in the name of the Lord, this pains us;

it grieves us that, with your leave, the profane "science of religion" has been allowed to ascend the throne of the *sancta theologia,* and that as willing priests you offer it the services of your splendid talents, and as willing choir-boys bring to it the incense of your homage. For this makes the churches of the living God to suffer loss. If, indeed, you cannot destroy them as churches, you can injure their well-being. And this is being done. According to the Lord's ordinance, a theology belongs to the church in the earth. She cannot live without it. Where she is deprived of it she must languish. She needs a theology that she might grasp the more hidden sense of God's Word; that she might discover the deflection of the line of error; to protect the medical art of the soul from passing into a spiritual quackery; to exhibit the reasonableness of her faith and as apologete to plead for it. The church needs a theology that she might be inwardly edified, and kept from error, and be able to command moral confidence from the learned and unlearned alike. In brief, she needs a theology which, while it differs not specifically, but only gradually, from the knowledge of sacred things on the part of the laity, does not stand outside of it, but in the service of the Holy Spirit, blooms and flourishes with it upon one root; which, joined to her past, directs the course of former thought into the channels of our days; and which, by virtue of that origin, trains ministers who do not move as exalted creatures in an atmosphere above the people, but dwell among them as their spiritual noblemen, who in but purer and finer forms cause to shine forth what is her life and that of her children. And this you withhold from the churches, you vivisectors. By your present-day studies of the Scriptures, you cause the church to be deprived of it. You offer her a science which has no connection with her confession, and you send her pastors who, how-

ever learned and reverend, if in other ways they are serious, must confess shamefacedly their ignorance of the things of the Spirit, and, instead of feeding the church, must needs be fed and warmed by her. And so it is no wonder, that diseases in the church are on the increase hand over hand, that sects are multiplying, that practice does not follow the teaching, and that "shepherd and flock," distrustful of each other, stand mutually opposed, instead of unitedly enjoying the glory of Jesus' name. Even society at large, yes the country, suffers by it. For a spiritual circle which finds its image in a marsh, instead of in a clear lake, throws out of necessity poisonous vapors, which spoil the national spirit. By robbing the church of her theology, she is robbed also of that wonderful power of thought which made us Calvinists for ages together an invincible stronghold in the midst of the land; and, by presenting wandering ethical ideas in the stead of the nourishing bread of practical theology, discipline and order are undermined, and the moral sense of justice is weakened.

And therefore, in behalf of that misappreciated and theology-robbed church, we have planted in this new University a slip of the old plant, with the prayer that God may give it increase. Our aim was not to place a better theology by the side of one less good, but, where there was none, to plant one anew, however imperfectly its form. For consider it well, at the state universities there is no longer any theology. It is lost. A science of religion has taken its place, a science of an altogether other caliber, but which the state, less honestly, at the price of misleading the church of God, carries under the name of the old firm. Hence our faith in our future, whatever storms may be gathering over our heads; but hence also the bitter opposition we meet with from our brethren. For nothing disturbs peace of mind so much as want of courage

to break off from what has become a temptation. And the state-faculties are a temptation; a temptation to all Christian brethren who are not wholly weaned from homage to this officially scientific world; a temptation to Christian parents who, however warm and earnest in their prayers for their sons, are anxious to choose for them the way that is socially safest; and a temptation no less to our young men who desire to become ministers of God's word. For you know that from that "faculty without theology" there runs a path to the church that has been made entirely smooth and straight. While with us, who have reinstated the *sancta theologia* in its former honor, one is to all appearances surrounded by a *wall* without any means of escape.

II.

After the encyclopedic there follows the *dogmatic* side of the question. For the biblical criticism of the present day, according to my second point, does not merely withhold theology from the congregations, but, what is worse, it robs them of their Bible.

When do the congregations have a Bible and when not? Allow me to speak of this holy matter plainly as a day-laborer, because the Holy Scripture is a divine jewel common to the day-laborer and professor. And then, I say it frankly and unhesitatingly, to us Christians of the Reformed faith, the Bible is the Word and the Scripture of our God. When in private or at the family-altar I read the Holy Scripture, neither Moses nor John addresses me, but the Lord my God. He it is who then narrates to me the origin of all things and the calamitous fall of man. God tells me with silent majesty how he has appointed salvation to our fallen race. I hear him himself relate the wonders which he wrought for our deliverance and that of the people of his choice, and how, when that people

rebelled against him, he afflicted them in his wrath, and when chastened restored them again to his favor, the whilst they sought the day of the coming of the Son of his love. In the midst of that sacred history I hear the Holy Spirit singing to my spiritual ear in the Psalms, which discloses the depths of my own soul; in the prophets I hear him repeat what he whispered in the soul of Israel's seers; and in which my own soul is refreshed by a perspective which is most inspiring and beautiful. Till at length, in the pages of the New Testament, God himself brings out to me the Expected One, the Desire of the fathers; shows me the place where the manger stood; points out to me the tracks of his footsteps; and on Golgotha lets me see, how the Son of his unique love, for me poor doomed one, died the death of the cross. And, finally, it is the same God, the Holy Spirit, who, as it were, reads off to me what he caused to be preached by Jesus' disciples concerning the riches of that cross, and closes the record of this drama in the Apocalypse with the enchanting Hosanna from the heaven of heavens. Call this, if you will, an almost childish faith, outgrown by your larger wisdom, but I cannot better it. Such is my Bible to me, and such it was in the bygone ages, and such it is still, the Scripture of the church of the living God. The human authors must fall away; in the Bible God himself must tell the narrative, sing, prophesy, correct, comfort, and jubilate in the ear of the soul. The majesty of the Lord God is the point in question, and that only. If then the Scripture has spoken, all controversy is ended; when it affirms, the latest doubt departs; even the habit of turning to the Scriptures, in times of need or despair, for help and direction from God, seems to me by no means unlawful, but a precious usage. Thus I stand with Augustine, and with Comrie, who entirely along his lines exclaimed: "When I read the Scripture, I

listen to what God speaks to me; and, when I pray, God listens to what I stammer."

This does not mean that the church looks for something extraordinary in that Book as such. A "*vis supernaturalis sacræ scripturæ inhærens,*" such as the Lutheran faculties taught over against Rathman, and such as, alas! among ourselves is maintained by some, is inconceivable for the Calvinist. To him the holy book is as the deep water in the diamond. As long as that precious stone lies on the table in its dark state, the most beautiful diamond can scarcely be distinguished from a worthless piece of glass. Value is imparted to it only by the inshining of the light. In this way the Scripture becomes the Holy Scripture only when the Holy Spirit sends forth his reflections, which causes God, the omnipresent God, to address my soul in and through that book. If the figure of speech were not profane, I would say, that, even as the telephone is a speaking from the distance, such is that book of the Testaments to me. If now I enter into relations with that book, and the Holy Spirit works his illumination, then is my soul joined to my God, and my God to my soul, and the speech of the Eternal One begins. Every idea of a something accidental in the Scripture is thus excluded. It did not originate of itself, but it was brought about after a fixed plan. The eternal counsel of God contained the original, the faint copy of which is given us in the Scripture. "I have known of old," sings the Psalmist, "concerning thy testimonies" "that thou hast established them forever." The soil in which it was to develop itself was expressly prepared; in the germ from which it was to grow lay the protoplasm of its full glory. It is the living stone, firm, solid as stone, and yet seething with life. They who wrote it did not write it for their own sakes, but for the church of God, for which it

was intended. "That not unto themselves, but unto us, they did minister the things" i. e. for the church of God of all ages; so that at the end of the dispensation of miracles, Almighty God would be able to speak to and through his church with indeclinable certainty in the highest form, viz. in that of the *Conscious Word*. I grant you, this is not a definition: at most it is but a refection out of my own soul for the sake of communicating the impression of the Scripture-mystery. For the Scripture-secret is a mystery, equally wonderful and impenetrable as the creation in the beginning, the incarnation in the midst of the ages, and the final catastrophe which still tarries. Wonderful, not for the sake of the book itself, but because here also it is: God touching the finite, and the wave-beat of the eternal broken upon what is devoid of all power that insures continuance of being.

If now the question is raised by what name the church of the living God has been accustomed to designate this mode of origination of the Scripture, we reply: "*Inspiration, theopneusty*, by the Holy Spirit." From the nature of the case this Scripture-theopneusty concerns a somewhat different question from that other inspiration, which was merely the vehicle of revelation. This is not said to evade a difficulty. Candidly spoken, I also belong to those backward ones who stand immovably convinced that God wrote the law himself upon the tables of stone, spake himself with audible voice from Sinai, appeared in the theophanies, sent angels to comfort sinners, and, as the wonderful worker for, to, and in Israel, of wonderful things, surely also foretold to man in prophecy what he, the Almighty One, thought of man, and purposed with the children of men. That all that relates to revelation is passed over in this paper, is therefore done least of all from fear;

but only for the sake of clearness. For revelation could have been given, and could still have been continued, without there ever having been prepared a theopneustic Scripture. Imagine that revelation worked out in its course, without anything more, and there is nothing of the Scripture itself yet existent; then that Scripture is still to come; it is still to come about after a fixed purpose; by a plan which includes also the means by which that Scripture should be wrought and formed, and this wondrous means the church calls "the theopneusty." It is possible, though I do not affirm it, that in olden times still other mighty miracles took place which have not been recorded; it is certain that important, effective prophetical addresses were made, of which the Scripture makes no mention; we know that Jesus spoke and did many things of which we have no report; also that the Apostles spoke and wrote what has not been handed down to us; but all this, however precious it must have been to Israel and the early Christian churches, does not touch the Scripture as *the Scripture of the Church of God.* For the Scripture brings us from that revelation only that much and just so much as was determined by God to be kept in the permanent organism of *the Conscious Word* for the *church of all ages.* No accident regulated what was admitted into it and excluded from it. It was the fixed choice of God which directed itself after the need of the souls of God's elect and the wants of the church of Christ, known from eternity, and therefore satisfying for all ages. It is a mystery of love and comfort which can be explained only when each and every writer, whose inestimable grace and honor it was to record a larger or smaller part of that Scripture, was not his own master in the writing, but only rendered service as an instrument of the Holy Ghost, and was so wrought upon and directed by the Holy Ghost, that the page of Scrip-

ture, which, after pencil and pen had been laid aside, lay before him, contained and was possessed of equal fixedness, as though it had originated by an immediate, divine creation.

How are we to interpret this? Does this mean to say that the Holy Spirit could have used Abiram for this wondrous task as well as Moses, Saul with equal safety as David, Judas Iscariot equally well as John? This is the way in which it has been presented, and, if compelled to do so, I myself would not, even in this, determine a limitation to the almightiness of God. God can raise children unto Abraham also from the stones of the street; and the prophecy of Balaam, the numbering of Saul with the prophets, and the redemption-idea on the lips of Caiaphas, amply show, that, if needs be, the Holy Spirit has this power also at his disposal. But it is quite another question whether the Holy Spirit has willed to work the theopneusty in such a magical way. And this we answer in the negative. On the contrary, theopneusty appears to consist in this, that the Holy Spirit temporarily took away from the human spirit the immediate disposal of the operation of his "spirit, soul, and body"; which he then from within out assumed himself; and in such a way that, in the measure in which man was spiritually disposed, the Holy Spirit operated in and by the human spirit, or even repressed the human spirit wholly. If for a moment I may speak of the human sensorium as the wheels, and the human spirit the axle, then the mystery consists in this, that in theopneusty the Holy Spirit either turned the axle at his pleasure, or lifted that axle out and acted himself in the place of it. Compare Daniel at the Hiddekel with the man of Tarsus, and the distinction I refer to will be clear. No idle speculations on the different styles of the writers or the characters peculiar to their circle of

thought need detain us. By the constant usage of another instrument, the result must be different. And that not by accident, for the Holy Spirit did not chose his instrument for this glorious work only at the given moment, but created and prepared such an instrument already in the succession of the generations, by the forming of heart and brains, in the manner of education, the leading of the daily life, and mostly also by inward grace.

To narrate history, the Holy Spirit used an instrument in which the memory of facts was present, and in whose spiritual periphery, if I may say so, were found the scrolls and documents and all necessary data. To sing psalms for the church of the living God, the Holy Spirit did not employ a prosaic caviler, but a poetic spirit, which itself was deeply shaken, moved, down-trodden, and which heroically lifted itself up in the Spirit. In like manner, for the apostolic gnosis, the Holy Spirit did not choose a Thomas but a Paul; not a Thaddeus, but a Simon Bar-jonas; not an Andrew who stood afar off, but a John whose head reclined on Jesus' bosom. Hence the only point in question, therefore, is that of psychical analysis; whether, indeed, the human person was framed *to serve,* such as he is, with all the knowledge which he himself possesses, *as the organ of another spirit.* And this is possible; people can be possessed of other spirits. A strange spirit can speak through one so possessed. The Gospels tell us this definitely, and I myself have heard this double speaking in one possessed of frenzy. If now our spirits are susceptible to possession by evil spirits, why not also by good; and if by good, why not then by the Holy Spirit? The *"est Deus in nobis, agitante calescimus illo";* all the gifts of genius; all real powers of poetry and art; also the several forms of divination, show that another spirit can achieve something

in ours. Even among us there are sometimes spirits who capture and hold other spirits so entirely in their powers that they use them literally as their own doubles, or who, stronger still, multiply their own spirit a thousand fold in whole companies of men. Think of a Napoleon at Austerlitz. Is it not the spirit of that one man of short stature which there causes the whole phalanx of his generals, and the many thousands of horsemen, to turn as one mighty wheel about the pivot of his will? And if in these several domains, by analogy, it appears possible to render a human psychical and physical being, by the entering in of another spirit in his spirit, serviceable to the will of that other spirit, why then should the possibility be disputed that God the Holy Spirit does this same thing in a divine, i. e. *absolute* sense. "The Holy Spirit," says Jesus, will bring to mind"; is not that an intellectual capacity to employ the memory in one's immediate service? And would not that same Holy Spirit be able equally easily and surely to introduce new and conscious thoughts into the human spirit? You yourself are able to transmit conscious thoughts into the mind of another. To accomplish this you *speak*. But what is "speaking" other than a passing on of the thought from your heart in the vibration of air-waves? and what the voice, and those vibrations of air-waves, other than conductors along which your thought is carried to the auditory nerve of the person addressed? and what is this auditory nerve in turn but a conductor or wire along which your thought is introduced into the spirit of that other man? Your motor-nerves which set in motion the muscle of your organ of speech, the air-waves which were set to vibrate by these muscles, the sensorial auditory-nerves of the ether which were affected by these vibrations and passed them on to his spirit, are altogether nothing else

than leaders which you employ to repeat the impression of your spirit in the spirit of the other, so that the same clear, conscious, and full-orbed thought arises in him which at first was only in you, and which only now has come to him. And why then should not the Holy Spirit, who, after all, is not bound to these intermediate links of nerves, air-waves, and muscles,—why should not the Holy Spirit not be able to do immediately what we are able to do mediately, and, entering in within us, transplant entirely conscious, new, and full-orbed thoughts from himself into our spirit? Hence I take the writers as entirely instrumentally in the service of the Holy Spirit, including everything they knew, together with the entire result of their previous training, even to their surroundings and credentials, and maintain that the Holy Spirit has used this whole person, with everything belonging to him, to remind in and through him, to sift, to purge, to think, to write; but also, alongside of this, that without any intermediaries of motor or sensor nerves, and hence also without inflection of the muscles of speech, or the vibration of the air-wave, the Holy Spirit communicated new, conscious, clear thoughts to them. That God also spoke with audible voice is sufficiently shown by Sinai and Tabor. But this is not the question with the inspiration of the Scripture; this was inspiration by the entering in of the Spirit into the centrum of the personality of the writers, and an absolute subjection of what was in and belonged to them to the sovereignty of the Holy Spirit.

By this the rationalistic pretext which separates between "Scripture" and "Word of God" even as the present-day protest against the inspiration of the *words,* is judged of itself. The Scripture is God's word both as a whole and in its parts. *Synthetically,* because the extent and the content of

the Holy Scripture in its organic resumption has God for their author and is given to the church as type of the incarnation. The Scripture, however, is also God's word *analytically,* i. e. in each of its parts; not because each of these parts brings us a new thought of God in a divine form, but because the actual thoughts of God as well as the thoughts of men, and even those of Satan in so far as the Scripture writes them down for us, yea, every song and every narrative of the Bible, even of what the godless have dared to undertake against God Almighty, is here placed before us, not with the uncertainty of the human, but under the infallible credential of the divine, i. e. of the word of the Holy Spirit. The latest dogmatists in Germany abandon more and more the idea of an inspiration which concerns the *thoughts,* but not the *words.* Rothe declares: "On the whole, words and thoughts are inseparable." There are no thoughts without words; they cannot be expressed and held fast otherwise than in words and by means of words." Even the moderns do not deny this any longer. It was indeed pure "thoughtlessness," as Rothe called it, to advocate an inspiration of the thoughts and to deny the inspiration of the words. He who does this is not a thinker, let alone a psychologist. No, as often as the Holy Spirit entered a human personality, in order to use him as instrument for the writing of a page of Scripture, the end could not be reached save as either the thoughts that were already in him or those that were newly inspired first entered into his human consciousness. No thought can enter into our consciousness but of itself it puts on the garment of representations and conceptions. And again they cannot come forth out of this consciousness upon paper save in the form of words and syntax. If the Holy Spirit gave the thoughts only, and left the task of expression to man, all certainty

would be lost. But, no, the working of the Holy Spirit was not by halves, it went on; and as he was able to enter the spirit of man, he equally governed the human consciousness, and effected the transition from thoughts into conceptions, and from these conceptions into words; and only when his thoughts stood written down on the parchment did the Holy Spirit rest from this his glorious work, and saw that it was good. Hence it was also a verbal inspiration,—not mechanically by whispering into the fleshly ear, but organically by calling forth the words from man's own consciousness, i. e. by employing all those words which were on hand in the spiritual sensorium of the writer. Even as the child of God confesses: "God works absolutely in my personality every good thing (deed, word, and intention), and at the same time I work all things myself, walking in the works which God has prepared for me"; the author of Scripture may confess: "The Holy Spirit inspires absolutely every thought and every word in me, and yet I write every word myself, studying the meaning of the words which God has prepared for his church." It also applies therefore to the form of the Scripture: *οὐκ ἐν διδακτοῖς ἀνθρωπινῆς σοφίας λόγοις ἀλλ' εἰ διδακτοῖς ἁγίου πνεύματος, πνευματικοῖς πνευμτικὰ συγκρίνοντες*, i. e. a content inspired within me by the Spirit, and given back in the words which the Spirit pressed out of me. Hence the result is, that, apart from the question whether the writers realize it or not, by them as instruments a book or song or epistle was written, which in its original form, i. e. as autographon, bare in itself the infallible authority of having been wrought by the Holy Ghost.

And this is the point in question which concerns the church of the living God. There may be some incoherence

in the theory of inspiration, the words employed in describing it may be ill-chosen; all this is nothing as long as the fact of inspiration remains untouched and its result immovable. The divine *fixedness* over against the *uncertainty* of all human ponderings, is chiefly that which makes the Holy Scripture "holy," i. e. a bible for the church of God. Hence the question which, in view of the Scripture-study of the present day, presents itself is not, whether it gathers about itself other hypotheses concerning the mystery of the inspiration of the Scripture, nor whether it modifies the judgment about the Scriptures from the literary view-point, but only and exclusively, whether it leaves us in the possession of such an inspiration of the Scripture, whose result offers us for its entire content the unweakened guarantee of divine certainty.

From the view-point of the modern tendency this is scarcely any longer a question as such. The moderns without distinction antagonize with one accord such a view of the Scripture as a fruit of superstition, and make it a point of honor to impress it deeply upon the congregations that such a Holy Scripture never existed, save in the imagination of the credulous. No further word of them is therefore necessary. But we cannot pass those by who have erected their tent midway between the moderns and ourselves, and whose banner carries the ethical symbol. For with these learned men the strange phenomenon appears that, according to the impression of the church, no less decisively than the moderns, they abolish the Holy Scripture as a book of divine authority, and at the same time personally, in strongest terms and most affectionate assurances, declare to you that the violation of a tittle or jot of God's word is held by them to be a sin before God. Hence the presentation of their ideas demands more than ordinary care. It will be less easy to reach any conclu-

sions from the declaration of their self-consciousness, which renders the test of their declaration concerning the parts of Scripture in particular the more necessary. What they unjustly demand concerning the Scripture, viz, that we should not commit ourselves to what the Scripture says of itself, but to what we observe in it as a whole, will be the only safe guide to help us make our way through the labyrinth of their studies. I call it a labyrinth; for, in sooth, with however much indulgence and brotherly kindness we may judge their labors, the complaint cannot be repressed, that by the indefiniteness which characterizes the definitions of their conceptions, the writers of this tendency both mutually and from themselves, even at times in their self-same books, so differ from each other, and so confuse the representation, that to be ethical of tendency and clear seem never capable of going hand in hand.

To hold myself strenuously to the point in question, I pass the consideration by, whether, in their general starting-point, the ethicals still stand upon the basis of the faith, and confine myself exclusively to the assertion, that, so far as it concerns the particular point of the Scripture-inspiration, they altogether walk the line of the moderns. For though, in the matter of revelation, the ethicals still acknowledge much of what the moderns deny, and even radically depart from the moderns who deny every intervention of the living God in that which has once entered upon being; and while, for the most part, the ethicals accept such a personal role on the part of God in history by manifestation and revelation, by regeneration and illumination, still all this does not touch the Scripture inspiration. Whether, for instance, in his prophecies which he proclaimed on the squares of Jerusalem, Isaiah was operated by the Holy Spirit does not affect the Scripture-question in the

least. With the Scripture the only question concerned is, whether the person who wrote the book that is named Isaiah, was so inspired in the writing of it by the Holy Spirit that he produced a sure and infallible product. For these are two entirely different question, whether in their official activity Moses and the prophets, or the evangelists and apostles, were led by the Spirit and quickened as organs of revelation, or whether the persons who wrote our Bible-books were in the writing itself inspired in the absolute sense. The first may be granted and at the same time the second pertinently denied;—and this is what the ethicals have actually done. They still believe with us in a revelation wrought by God through immediate intervention. Among the elements of that revelation they too accept a certain working of God upon the spirit of prophets and apostles, and are willing to confess with us that in all their official work an Isaiah or a John were men "filled with the Holy Ghost," in their whole personality. But when from this sphere of revelation I pass on to the question of the completion of the Scripture as Scripture, and of the putting-together in a book not only of what Paul and John themselves wrote, but of all the books, including the historic books, which lie before us, and then ask, whether a specifically peculiar and an absolutely sure inspiration governs this act of writing, they definitely deny it, and so deny the real inspiration of the Scripture entirely.

Do we hereby lay anything unlawfully at their charge? Let this be decided by Rothe, who is the brightest, relatively clearest, and most celebrated among the soberer writers of this tendency, and to whose processes of thought no single new element has been added by the later dogmatists of their class,—a man to whom I appeal more gladly because he himself declares: "The opinion which I here write down is none other

than what openly or tacitly is thought and confessed among all believing theologians"; because he valiantly opposes the effort of the ethicals longer to hide their real meaning from the people, and no less because Rothe has likewise dominated and quickened the ideas of the Scriptures current especially among the younger ethicals in the Netherlands.

And Rothe candidly declares, that there is no objection to call our newer representation of the matter "the inspiration of the Holy Scripture, which is the same name given it by the ancient church, and it is deemed lawful to launch it out as such upon the world. This, however, is not well done, and must lead to a confusion of ideas. In truth, our aspect of the matter is of a totally different sort from the church's doctrine of Inspiration." Thus you hear it from his own lips that it is "something of an entirely different sort," and at the end he does not hesitate to reach this serious conclusion: that the Bible which presents its image to the exegete for exegesis is readily different from that which the orthodox theologian and the ordinary believing Christian takes it to be when reverently he takes the Holy Book in hand.

And what is that better and ethical representation according to Rothe? It originates from Schleiermacher, the scholarly philosopher and more than theologian who, half a century ago, at an unhappy hour, posited the fatal principle against whose pricks the whole army of the meditating theologians have kicked their heels, and by which throughout its fatal process of development the ethical tendency was and is governed; from Schleiermacher, according to whom we are to understand by inspiration nothing other than "the activity of the universal mind in the will of the individual for the sake of producing a definite special work." "So that act of composing one of the holy books and the preceding and

fundamental creation of thought in the soul of the Scripture-writer cannot be looked upon as an act of divine revelation." Corresponding to this, Rothe's representation is that there is a church of Christ. From this church a higher life operates outward. She owes this higher life to the Holy Spirit, who pitched his tent in the midst of her, and elevates the sinful life up to a "divine-human" life. This church exists organically. Hence her nobler organs, the apostles, possessed this *Gemeingeist* in a special measure, and under this constellation their enlightenment became higher graded than that of the ordinary laity. And that which in the most pregnant sense caused this illumination to become inspiration, was the fact that for a single time God lifted up the life in their soul by a new touch, which made their consciousness of God more clear, and from this brightened consciousness of God they were able to produce rich and new thoughts. As a result of this, Rothe held that there can be no mention of an infallibility of Scripture; that most of the writers, but never the Scripture itself, can be called inspired; that inspiration differs greatly in degree among the writers severally; and that therefore the explanation given by the apostles of the Scripture of the Old Covenant often seems to him incorrect; that their representation of Christian truth cannot be taken to be normative for us *per se;* and that, which is especially noteworthy, even the image, the picture, given us of the Christ is not of itself possessed of a guarantee of being a faithful reproduction. Rothe therefore abandons altogether the narratives of creation and the fall; views the historical books as collections of records and documents which teem with mistakes; and when the sum-total is reached, there is little more left of his Bible than what, if it be in an imperfect way, has come to us as the result of preceding spiritual reve-

lation in those books, and what we can obtain from it by the criticism of faith. Hence, according to the ethicals, for the church of our day there is alongside of and above the written Word, the living divine revelation, which continues to operate just as it did in earlier days.

Concerning this ethical representation allow me to present three observations: The radical mistake in this representation is, in my opinion, the assertion that "the truth ever bears an ethical character." This certainly applies to its central origin in God, and equally to its effect upon persons; but can by no means hold true of its historical process of manifestation nor of its organs. He who first takes away from the truth everything that is not ethical; makes "truth" to mean a "seeing of the kingdom of God," and then quotes the text "Whosoever is not born again cannot see the Kingdom of God,"—such an one can very easily maintain so incorrect a representation. But since the sensorium of "truth" is not the Will, but the consciousness, we object most strenuously to this maiming of the truth, and this obliteration of the boundary-lines between conceptions which are so specifically different. The *thelamatic* and the *noetic* life form indeed two separate spheres, whose mingling together beclouds our whole representation, and confuses all our thoughts.

The representation derived from the foregoing, that "inspiration" is bound to "regeneration," is equally faulty. This also is an effort to render an altogether different conception ethical, by which that which is beautiful, ordered, and distinguished is melted down chaotically. That which follows from and after regeneration is *illumination,* the enlightenment, which falls to the portion of every child of God, but which, as the case of Balaam clearly shows, differs specifically from inspiration.

No less faulty is their representation that the new elements of revelation which the Scriptures of the prophets and apostles offer us had risen from the depths of their inner lives, whose ethical character has been eminently elevated by the divine touch. Even though it were possible to imagine that they were free from sin, even then life would be quickened by the Word; since, indeed, Jesus does not say: "This is to know thee, that they have eternal life"; but, on the contrary, "This is life eternal, that they know thee";—by the Word is the creation, by the seed of the Word the recreation of our soul. But since, moreover, sin continued to break the harmony in them, the distinction must be the stronger maintained between the ethical and the non-ethical in the revelation-organs. Or is it not so? Souls that are greatly endued with grace are frequently greatly deficient in understanding; while in others who are of large understanding the measure of grace is sometimes almost shamefully unnoticeable. What overtook Rome when, for the sake of having an infallible Christ, they demanded a Mary of an immaculate conception, is the same that has overtaken the ethicals; for, in a similar way, they deny the infallible thought of the Scripture, because ethically the sinless mother of such infallible thought remained wanting in the soul of its writers. In fact, therefore, their "theanthropic," i. e. divine-human life, is nothing but a confusion of conceptions sprung from the same fundamental error. For a "divine-human" life, which communicates itself to the redeemed by tincture, as the theosophists dream, or, if you like, by way of atoms, is a teaching which is altogether unreformed, even rather than, for the sake of the *communicatio idiomatum,* pseudo-Lutheran, founded upon nothing less than a *confusio naturarum,* i. e., a pantheistic mingling of the divine and the human.

And finally an equally great fault is the falsification which is thus introduced into the confession of the Holy Spirit: partly because they continually take the personal Holy Spirit as identical with his quickening reflex in the church, naming him her family-spirit; and partly because, thus limiting the Holy Spirit to the ethical domain (the domain of law and norm, will and judgment), they dispute his right to the honorable title of being the Herald of the deep things of God, i. e. the Communicator and the Inspirer of conscious thoughts.

My second observation concerns equally a confusion, not this time in two different spheres, but in distinguishable periods of development in the same sphere.

The first church, it is said, received the life without the written word, *atqui ergo* it also exists for us independently of the Scripture. This is a conclusion which should be rejected, because the embryonic state differs from the exuterinal specifically in this, that the embryo absorbs within itself the mother-blood immediately, while the adult must prepare the food himself:—a specific difference which can be formulated as follows: that inspiration *produced* something while illumination can only *reproduce*,—the reason why the church cannot get on without a Scripture in which it finds the image to be reproduced delineated in pure outlines. Though we do not deny that with an adult person the ozone from the atmosphere may enter into him through the mouth, nostrils, and ear, and through the pores of the skin, and that in like manner the church of the Lord may drink from the spiritual atmosphere through her spiritual pores, we refuse to stamp this spiritual ozone with the name of *the Word of God,* just as surely as the famishing man would scorn you when, as he called after you for bread, you would undertake to satisfy his hunger with atmospheric ozone.

My third observation is, that in this way the ethical tendency exhibits a theory which glitters indeed very temptingly, but fails of the explanation which it is bound to give.

Rothe himself acknowledges that the apostles of the Lord, and we add the Lord himself, have subscribed, not to the inspiration of the ethicals, but to that one which we defend. He acknowledges that the church of all ages, under the Old and New Covenant, have taught not a looming up of the truth from out the unconscious ethical life, but very truly *a communication of conscious truth;* also, that what the believing Christian feels in this pious reading of the Scripture, is not covered by his, but only by the orthodox theory. He grants, indeed, that the Scripture does not come with this theory to the ethicals, but that the ethicals introduce this theory into the vestibules of the Scripture. And every one perceives that this explains nothing, and simply posits a new imaginary something by the side of the object to be explained. When, for instance, and this is one out of a hundred, Isaiah foretells that Hezekiah is to have another fifteen years added to his life, it is plain that this number fifteen could not have loomed up from the depths of ethical life; so that already, by this single fact, the ethicals are brought to face the painful choice, either to declare that their theory is insufficient, or, worse yet, to minimize Israel, one of the noblest organs of revelation, to a very unethical fortune-teller or an imposter of a low spiritual level.

My last observation is, that to draw a usable conclusion from such imperfect premises, the ethicals themselves appear at length as the judges of their own theory.

What does Rothe assert? This, that the prophets and apostles could not have possessed an "errorless" knowledge of the truth, since they were ethically imperfect; nevertheless, he himself dares to maintain that *(risum teneatis amici)* he,

Rothe, and his ethical friends (who ethically may stand beneath the apostles), are perfectly well capable, with these imperfect pieces in hand, to attain unto "an errorless knowledge of the truth." Thus Rothe readily turns his back upon the theory which rendered it necessary to abandon the infallibility of the apostles, as soon as it touched himself and his congenial allies. In this way thelematic imperfection and noetic accuracy are taken to be compatible with each other, and the common methods of speech of the less "unconscious" people resumes with the ethical scholars again its original right.

Hence, however much we appreciate in the ethical theologians that struggling with both hands to oppose the irresistible impulsive force of the principle, which, as a serpent fostered in their bosom, attacks their faith at the very heart; yet with reference to this question of the theopneusty, their system may not be characterized less harshly than as a cloudy mingling of philosophical theories with gnostic aspirations, covered by the content of a faith-consciousness which belongs to Rome, and not to us; and that complaint must be entered against it, that by this threefold motive it leads to the absolute destruction of the inspiration of the Holy Scripture. Of the Scripture-inspiration, Rothe himself has said: "*Sit ut sit aut non sit,*" and the modern Lipsius expressed it still more clearly, that all effort to save inspiration by the abandonment of the old dogma could result in nothing but self-deception and misguidance of others. And therefore, however much they may classify us in the *corpus virorum obscurorum,* and try to make the church dogma ridiculous by the "*automaten-parodie,*" we hold fast inexorably to the ancient and unweakened theopneusty; in our historical simplicity, or, if you will, in our educational backwardness, still believing that, even though he remain ethically imperfect, an embassador is capable of transmitting without error what his sovereign inspires him with.

ARTICLE IV.

THE BIBLICAL CRITICISM OF THE PRESENT DAY.[1]

BY THE REVEREND ABRAHAM KUYPER, D.D., LL.D.—TRANSLATED BY THE REVEREND J. HENDRIK DE VRIES, D.D.

But some of you may say, Is there no good whatever in the biblical criticism of the present day? Is it merely a stumbling over straws and a game of critical splitting of hairs? Or have you not heard of the very serious charges which are laid against the views of the ancient church? Did not these grave assertions, which, in spite of ourselves, compelled our scientific mind to agree with them, ever disturb your scientific conscience? And, if so, how can you harmonize your beautiful confession with them?

In response to which inquiries, allow me a single word, which, if it does not engage itself with particulars, holds itself true to principle and motive.

First, as it appears to me, the gigantic labor which our critics have devoted to the Scripture, is by no means lost. On the contrary, I have the firm conviction that in the end, and under God's gracious disposal, even the excesses of the most radical Scripture-anatomists will be productive of good. How could it ever be unimportant and to no purpose, as far as principle and reverence allow it, to study the origin of the Holy Scripture in the processes of its entering upon existence; to point out the seams where the pieces of the shining robe have been so beautifully woven together; and in a better way than was ever done before to frame, if not with mathematical cer-

[1] Concluded from page 442.

tainty at least with conjecture, the circle in whose midst, the author by whom, and the time in which, a book of Scripture originated? So little do I aim at the abandonment of these studies, that I would no sooner sanction an official ban upon these vivisectorial excesses and physiological indelicacies with the *Corpus Scripturæ* than with the *corpus humanum.* But if, in the circle of the medical sciences, these vivisectorial excesses and physiological violations of common chastity are not prohibited by law, has not the nobler-minded *medicus* the right, in virtue of the principle itself of his science,—i. e. in the name of the human character that belongs to it, because it has the home for its object,—to protest against these shameful cruelties, and the no less shameful indelicacies, as indecent and unlawful? Or, is it not true that in his bodily appearing man ceases to be worthy of the honor of furnishing an object for a separate science, when, treating the animal cruelly and himself having become bestial, he degrades himself to being little better than a *corpus vile?* And have we no equal rights, when it concerns the *Corpus Scripturæ,* to enter our complaints on the ground of the absence of feeling in the vivisectors and the offensive profanities of the Scripture-physiologists; not in spite, but in the name, of our science; both because, by their actions, the principle itself of theology is violated, and because a patchwork quilt such as they make the Scripture to be does no longer reward the trouble of scientific investigation.

I welcome the finest perception by the senses (αἴσθησις), also, in the domain of criticism. But even as our nerves and brains, the critical organ also can suffer from hyperæsthesis, so that it cannot do other than observe incorrectly; thus reaching that inharmonious condition which makes every noise seem louder, every touch more startling, and every uneven-

ness the rougher to its sense. Such a hyperæsthesis becomes a power that governs the patient, the irresistible impulse of which is heightened by one's very efforts to resist. Wherefore not every one who announces himself needs to be heard, nor is all criticism indiscriminately to be taken into account, but it must first be determined, by the principle of theology itself, whether we deal with a normal observer, or with one who, abnormally excited, is not able to criticise correctly.

Finally, the Holy Scripture condemns the world and the spirit that governs it. Hence nothing can be more natural than that this spirit of the world, which has made itself so strongly felt in this age, should bend its energies toward the breaking-down of the authority of the Scripture. Either it must bend before the Scripture or the Scripture must bend to it, and it cannot be otherwise than that the spirit which inspires the world, must wage inexorable war against the spirit that inspired the Scripture. The antithesis formed by the two is diametrical. And since we also, who are investigators of the Scripture, have drunk of the spirit of the world, the danger is possible that our biblical criticism may adopt a tentative character, whereby, under the mask of honoring it, our study of the Scripture may tend to undermine its authority. This presumption has indeed become a probability by this single fact, that many men who attach no significance whatever to the Scripture, and scarcely believe in it at all, devote to it the best parts of their life and the choicest of their powers.

The principle of theology itself, therefore, must needs watch against the degeneration of her scientific and sacred character, both as regards the extent of the principle, the æsthesis of the investigator, and that which determines the tendency of the investigation. Hence I do not plead for conservatism. If that were my aim, I could readily make my task much

lighter by setting up Reuss against Kuenen, Schultz against Reuss, and the collaborators of Lange's Commentaries against Schultz, in order finally to assume for my own responsibility only so much as the most conservative have yielded to the claim of criticism. But what would this avail? For the sake of secondary considerations, conservatism merely disparages theories whose validity one is bound to honor, and principles to whose spread one is prepared to devote his energies. There is no strength in this. And therefore I make no appeal at the bar of conservatism, but ask the encyclopedia of our science, what the proper principle of theology here both allows and disallows. And when, with respect to this radical question, we grant that theology, as was shown in the beginning of this article, having not the *creaturely* but the *Creator* as object, takes no observations, but, in direct distinction from all other sciences, *becomes* sensible of facts, so that in the science of theology it is not the spirit of the subject but the spirit of the object which is the active investigator, it follows immediately that all study, which, as shown by its results, has ceased to be the instrument in the employ of God the Holy Spirit, falls, *eo ipso,* outside the boundaries of the theological domain. This is a position which, from the nature of the case, is absolutely devoid of strength to our opponents, and therefore is not intended for those, who, after having embalmed theology, i. e. "the science of God," have proclaimed that the science of "Religion" is queen; but which I maintain in its entirety in the face of every one who still professes with us to be priests in the temple of *theology.*

As long as we desire to be theologians, we may never raise the building of our science, save under and in the service of God the Holy Spirit, since he is our only Architect and Master-

builder. Thus if, as a measure of safety, we apply this principle first to another part of this science, we, as theologians, are in duty bound to dismiss the free-will services in the domain of ethics of both Martensen, the mediating theologian, and Van der Goltz, the full-blooded ethical, since the one condoned and called good the violation of an oath, and the other the violation of the commandment of honesty in persons of high station [Von Bismarck was here referred to]. The works of both these masters fall short of the seal of the Holy Spirit, and are as such, *eo ipso,* refused admittance, as contraband, at the theological frontier, where the blade of the cherub glitters, and the *Spiritus Creator* is worshiped as *Omnium Solus Doctor.*

If now we apply this same standard to the study of the Holy Scripture, the leading thought which we reach will be as follows:—

1. That every view, according to which what is holy can appear in the form of a lie, and by which, under the use of the shameful invention of the so-called "pious fraud," the Holy Spirit is made to counteract his own deepest character, must be rejected, as being based upon an erroneous investigation. To pretend, for instance, that in books which one accepts as canonical the Holy Spirit represents myths as history, and places before us a *vaticinium ex eventu* in a false form as prophecy, is to attribute absurdities to that Spirit which are inconsistent with his integrity.

2. Each theory—and this will be considered a little more at length—must equally be dismissed, whose result antagonizes what the Holy Spirit asserts in the Scripture concerning the Scripture.

No one denies that the Holy Scripture comes to us with an absolute principle. It asserts, indeed, that, all "wisdom" of the world is "foolishness"; that only the Spirit, who

speaks of himself as the searcher of all things, can teach us wisdom; and that, for this reason, every creaturely spirit must subject itself in its thinking, speaking, and acting, now and eternally, to that Spirit. This places us before an absolute dilemma; a choice with no way of escape. For this principle must either be contested, by doing which return is made to the wisdom of the world; or this principle must be accepted, and this gives it the right of way across the entire domain of our studies. With those who chose the first member of this dilemma, we can have no further dealings here: for them there exists no longer any Scripture. But of those who made the better choice, and who with joy and with an undivided heart have said "Amen" to this absolute Scripture-principle, we ask in all seriousness, "What claim is made in the Holy Scripture which it announces concerning itself as *Scripture?*"

And here our way separates itself irrevocably from that of the ethicals. For when we reach this point, the ethicals say: "This you must determine from the facts as they present themselves to you in that Scripture; and if you find errors there, it but shows, *eo ipso,* that the Scripture does not pretend to be infallible." This, however, is no correct process of reasoning, and I reject it on these two decisive grounds: (1) because, sanction to pass such a judgment is only conceivable when one is in possession of the autographs themselves,—for, as the case now stands, it is possible that errors have crept in later on in what was written without error; and (2) because the self-witness of the Holy Spirit concerning his own work is far more authoritative than the judgment which you, O fallible man, form on the ground of this work of the Spirit. In a child, indeed, it would be presumptuous and disrespectful if he formed conclusions from his father's doings that are contradictory to the conscious self-witness of the father; and

how can you dare to pass criticism upon the self-consciousness of the Scripture when you have no other standard in hand than that which you assume to find in the Scripture?

And, therefore, I neither ask Rothe nor Räbiger what the Scripture claims to be, but the highest interpreter of the Scripture-organism itself; to-wit, the Christ and his anointed apostolate. If, then, Christ and his apostles declare that the Scripture of the Old Covenant is very really inspired, and that by this inspiration it is of binding authority even to the extent of the individual word; or, to cite a single point in detail, if, with a lifted finger, the Son of God says to me, "Thus and so has Daniel the prophet spoken; my disciples, consider it!" and I, like the ethicals, should form a contrary conclusion notwithstanding, then I would deem that I had forfeited the claim to the name of theologian, and I would consider myself to have entered into a flagrant contest with the real principle of my science, since I contradicted the Holy Spirit in the self-conscious declaration of his absolute interpreters.

3. Every critical study of the Holy Scripture must be rejected as being foreign to theology, which is governed by a philosophical principle which evidently reacts against the principle of the Holy Spirit. And this canon especially interprets a good deal.

Let us consider this in the following four points:—

(1) Indisputably the entire Scripture-study, especially that of the Old Testament, is at this moment governed by the question, whether there was a fall from holy to unholy, or whether there was a gradual ascent from the lower to the pure and holy. This question returns in three stages: First, with Adam; then with Israel in the wilderness; and, finally, with the early Christian church. And because this question is now answered in the negative, the hamartialogy of Genesis iii. must be the

product of phantasy; the nobler parts of the thorah must not be attributed to Moses, but lie at the end of the Israelitish development; and the consciousness of the Christian church must only ripen gradually. And now I ask, "Is there a tendency to be noted here, or not?" And when I know, that the elimination of the fall is at present the principle of all philosophy; that the idea of such a fall is most deeply insulting to the pride of the human spirit; and that the Holy Spirit condemns the wisdom of the world in this very point; that, in giving holy gifts to Adam and to Moses, and graces and powers on the day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit exhibits the divine majesty, and in each subsequent falling away our deep corruption, is it not folly itself for us theologians to be trainbearers of a Scripture-study which at each of these three points secularizes the Scripture?

(2) Seeking an accord with the Holy Spirit, the spirit of the world runs again and again after *Synergism,* in order, by accentuating human activity, God's inworking may not merely be limited, but destroyed, particularly in its absoluteness. Likewise there is a tendency at work in the biblical criticism of the present day to undertake the same contest against the *sovereignty of inspiration* which Arminius waged against the *sovereignty of grace.* For whereupon does the denial of prophecy rest other than upon the denial of God's immovable decree? What is the humanizing of inspiration other than a repeated protest against a grace, which, being irresistible, never fails of its purpose?

(3) The "wisdom of the world" constantly seeks to reduce the immediate work of God in history to ever smaller dimensions, and cannot rest until the factor "God" has entirely disappeared from the same. In like manner, the Scripture also, which lays its witness in the scale against this very process of

the wiping out of God's name, had to be distilled until creation passed away in a Darwinian evolution; the miracle went hiding; inspiration was reduced to an unobservable touch of a soul unconscious of that fact; and, finally, the human author appeared so one-sidedly in the foreground that at length there remained no higher honor for the Divine Author *(Auctor primarius)* than the service of a laudatory editor with the people who still believe.

(4) It has ever been a trait of the wisdom of the world, and it is this especially in our days, to class the idolatries of the nations who do not know God, as very honorable forms of religion under the self-same category with the religion of Jesus. Its philosophical principle, that there is no wall of separation between the sacred and the profane, compelled and still compels it to do this. But this was bound of necessity to overthrow the whole Scripture-study, especially that of the Old Testament. The simple change of the name by which henceforth all idolatry, however defiant its character might be to the only true God, is called "religion," is a criticism on the Old Covenant that condemns its entire world-view. And so it came to pass, that, wholly contradictory to the teachings of Scripture, Israel's religious development was explained to have sprung from the same root as that of the heathen, and, finally, the nobler idolatrous nations were represented as co-operators in the work of establishing what Israel, yes what Jesus, confessed.

Thus we see that this irresistible spiritual impulse of the philosophy of our age to transpose in every way the *"Deus-homo"* into the *"Homo-deus,"* was bound of an iron necessity either disdainfully to cast off the whole Scripture or, when piety refrained from this, to take apart the joining map of that Scripture and put it differently together again, till at

length, in direct opposition to its own principle, the Scripture had guaranteed or subscribed this false hypothesis of the "wisdom of the world" with its seal. This, however, shows to us no less that that theologian tears up his credentials, who, instead of opposing hand to hand this process of roughly pulling out the leaves of this most precious of all the roses of Sharon, is either sufficiently cowardly or thoughtless to allow himself to be carried along by this current of the humanizing of the Scriptures and to present it under pleasing colors to the masses.

That, after the subtraction of all this, there still remains serious objections at several points to the absoluteness of the inspiration of the Scripture, we neither deny nor hide, even though one readily sees to what small dimensions this mountain of insurmountable obstacles has already fallen away. This, however, does not remove the necessity that, so far from passing lightly by the still remaining objections, the scientific theologian must look them squarely in the face, always bearing in mind this fourfold consideration:—

1. That some of these objections flow from the undeniable fact that the perfect autographs do not lie before us, but an imperfect text, which is a text with errors.

2. That the writing down by the Holy Spirit of what was inspired has nothing in common with the protocolization of an authentic official report, but that the several events and truths, yea, the same events and truths in their many-sided significance, have been brought to the canvass by the Highest Artist with a diversion of color and many-sidedness of interpretation which may indeed confuse the near-sighted cabalist, but which by its delightful harmonies fills the master-student, standing at a distance, with heavenly raptures.

3. It remains indeed the calling of apologetics to bring

out the passages of Scripture that sound contradictory to each other, in their real, even though it be covered, harmony. Hence the need of *loci paralleli,* not after the style of the departed supranaturalists,—ah, they, indeed, had no more theology!—no, but in the spirit of the Juniuses and Voetiuses; a spiritual, no narrow-minded Harmonistica; not a pitiful amateur effort, but a logical interpretation of our sense of representation by paying attention to the πότε; πῶς; ὑπὸ τίνος; and κατὰ τίς.

4. If, then, there still remain seeming inexplicables, *cruces interpretum,* in the Holy Scripture, before which not I,—for that implies nothing,—but all confessing theologians stand, even then I do not hesitate a moment to say it in the hearing of the whole scientific world, that, facing the choice between leaving this question unanswered, and with the simple-minded people of God confessing my ignorance, or with the learned ethical brethren from scientific logicalness rejecting the infallibility of the Scripture, I firmly choose the first, and with my whole soul shrink back from the last.

For, to say with Rothe and his followers, that there are myths in the Scripture; the creation-narrative is pious phantasy; phantasy likewise the narrative of the fall; the prophecies are products of a higher-tensioned spiritual life; the testimonies borne by Christ and his apostles concerning the Old Covenant are devoid of normative power; the apostolic representation of the truth is equally little normative and binding; even the image of the Christ which they outline and paint is not fixedly reliable; and then solemnly to declare that the whole Scripture from Gen. i. 1 to Rev. xxii. 21 is their *Word of God,* is more than I can do; it is too bold for me; it looks wonderfully much like a *protestatio actui contraria,* which I hear, but of which I have no understanding. And when, more-

over, I observe that in the circles of these "faithful" ones the modernizing vivisectors are widely known, and that, on the other hand, the orthodox champions of inspiration—such as Gausen not only, but also such men as Hodge and Philippi; yea, even Beck and Mehring—are scarcely known at all, then, in all seriousness, I am filled with apprehension for the future; then I seem to hear the rushing sound as of rapidly falling waters; and I feel the "zeal of God" come over me which compels me to reject a "word of God" so-called but which is fallible, as a *contradictio in terminis,* which exchanges fixedness of principle for half-measures, and which, while ever going backward, with the face turned toward Christ, constantly separates itself but further from the "Christ according to the Scriptures."

And should any one still answer that, judging as I do, I myself am not justified, since I acknowledge errors, if not in the autographa, at least in the texts at our service, then let me remove this latent objection by this other question, whether, if you held in your hand a cup of pure gold but whose edge is slightly damaged, and I held in my hand an entirely perfect cup but of gold which is not real, you would say, "It is all the same to me: I will cheerfully take your imitation in exchange for my *golden cup*"?

III.

As has been shown, the biblical criticism of the present day deprives the church of her *theology,* and robs her of her *Bible.* What remains to be demonstrated is, that it also attacks the church's right to her liberty in Christ, or, if you please, consigns her to the embraces of the worst, because intellectual, kind of clericalism.

A troubled soul, tossed with tempest and not comforted, is

filled with anxiety, and thirsts after certainty. In the heart of one who is so apprehended of the Lord, even though he be a plain day-laborer, the sacred things of the Almighty have found a lodging, and therefore in the depths of his soul the powers of hell antagonize those sacred things. Thus a conflict is waged as of giant-forces in his breast, and that oppresses him; he sees no way of escape; he faints beneath its tension, except He who is compassionate takes compassion on him, and sets him up upon the *Rock of the Word.* Only when he stands on *that Word,* does the oil of gladness drip in his soul instead of mourning, and the garments of praise begin to shine forth in place of the spirit of heaviness, and the man breaks forth in singing the praises of Him who has set him free from bonds; also from those oppressing bonds of dependency upon man, who at best is but a creature of dust. For to obtain real peace, an unshakable faith, and a full development of powers, our soul must, in the depth of depths and forsaken of all men, depend on God Almighty alone. To draw one's being immediately from God's own hand, consciously and continuously, this renders one invincible, enables one to become heroic, and makes us surpass ourselves. This was the secret of the power by which Calvinism once astonished the world. That forms character, steels the will with energy, and sets man, the citizen, the confessor of Jesus, truly free.

But how does the Lord impart this assurance, with and without the intervention of man, to the numbers of his elect, and through them to the church? We should look this question sharply in the face, for there are many reasons, because of which the Scripture, such as the churches and especially the laity have it in these days, in itself falls short of this certainty. In the first place, as far as we know, all the autographa of the books of the Holy Scripture have been lost, and we have

nothing at our disposal save incorrect manuscripts. Again, the number of books belonging to the New Testament has never been absolutely and infallibly fixed; even in the days of the Reformation heated conflicts were waged about the canonicity of more than one book. And, in the third place, what the ordinary layman can have, is never more than a translation of the original, to none of which translation the seal of infallibility is ever attached. If now with regard to the Scripture the church occupied the deistical viewpoint, that, after having created the word, the Holy Spirit abandoned that Word to itself, all the benefit of the inspiration would be lost to God-seeking souls. But this is not the case. Despising every form of deism, the church interprets the relation of the Holy Spirit to the Scripture in the sense of a rich and quickening theism, and the Reformed churches especially, in this also surpassing the Lutheran sister-church, have ever maintained that the Word by itself never amounts to anything, and never produces power other than as the instrument of the Holy Spirit, and hence, in all ages, has *never* been abandoned of that Holy Spirit. Her confession is, that by revelation the Holy Spirit has prepared the material out of which the garment of the Scripture should be woven. When that material was prepared, the Holy Spirit has inspired the individual pieces of Scripture in successive times. After that, through the agency of the church, the Holy Spirit has gathered the books which had been so prepared and finished. Furthermore, the Spirit has watched over the text of the Word which he had inspired. The Holy Spirit has no less irradiated the translations in which that Word was to come to the nations. That same Holy Spirit has ever afterward himself interpreted that Word through the official preaching, and has mingled it with faith in those that are called unto life. And with no one of God's

elect has the Holy Spirit rested, until the Word, infallibly inspired centuries ago, bare fruit equally infallible in that soul, as though it had been inspired for the sake of that soul alone.

The Holy Spirit effects this purpose in two ways; which as *fides humana* and *fides divina* must sharply be distinguished. *Fides humana* which is *fides,* and therefore equally surely proceeding from God, is the reliance which the church places in the authority of the Spirit's work by means of the organism of the church, which aims at the canon, the determining of the text, the translation and the exegesis of the books. Concerning each of these, therefore, a brief word.

What books form the canon, is by itself as unquestionably certain as it is to the anatomist, what members do or do not belong to a normal human body. The Scripture is an organism. Nothing can be added to it or taken away from it. It is complete in the fullness of numbers and entirety of its parts. The question, however, whether at each given moment the church is in the possession of the anatomical tact which is necessary with a firm hand to decide upon each part of the Scripture, or each book that is presented with this claim, must be answered in the negative. That certainty fluctuates as the waters of spiritual life in the midst of the churches swell in volume or contract. But so far from lessening thereby the confidence of the laity, the Holy Spirit has so disposed the parts of Scripture, that those on which the life depends have never been doubted, and in the books that have never been doubted the stream of truth flows in all its fullness; and subsequently the Holy Spirit has directed also this canonical work with so firm a hand, that the generous recognition of by far the most books astonishes us far more than the continuous doubt expressed concerning a very few.

With respect to the text of the Sacred Scripture, the same

confession is in place. There is no official text in the original language for the New Testament, and the *textus receptus* is certainly stripped of much beauty by errors. Of this, however, we likewise confess that that text has not been abandoned to chance, but has been watched over with tender care by the Holy Spirit. It cannot be granted that, when finally, in the counsel of God, the great moment had come in which, some four centuries ago, the Word of God was to enter upon its vast circulation through the press, the text which was then chosen under the appointment of God can have been an indifferent one; a most imperfect and an almost hopelessly impaired and injured one; and it must rather be confessed that it is entitled to a peculiarly prominent place in the front ranks on account of its eminently historical significance. At the hand of other manuscripts the *textus receptus* may and must be subjected to corrections, but, disrobed of its spiritual preference, it never needs to make room for older witnesses as a castaway *per se*. For myself, at least, I have never felt the logical stress of the argument, that a manuscript of the fourth century, *eo ipso,* is a more correct copy of the autographon, than a manuscript of an early origin but perhaps following an older and therefore a purer text.

The direction of the Spirit also included the *translations,* even though it be least of all in absolute measures. Consider it well, that now in the translations alone, and not in the original, the Word *exists* for thousands who thirst after the living God, and who without that Word will never find Him. Even literary men declare that both Luther's version and the Dutch *staten-Bible* are such surprising products of sanctified genius, that, apart from a higher inspiration, they can scarcely be explained. Such translations by the church, as the pillar and ground of the truth, and offered to the laity in the very

prosperous period of her spiritual life, are for this reason the Bible to the people; to theologians indeed ever appealable to the original, and never in itself to be taken as authority, but of so great value nevertheless and of such spiritual significance, that, under the Spirit's leading, the layman is entirely justified who binds his conscience to this translation, and not to a text that was foreign to him.

And, finally, as to the exegesis of the Scripture, here also the Holy Spirit is the real exegete and, in difference of opinion, the *Supremus Judex*. This judicature the Spirit exercises by laying out the lines of the truth in the confessional standards of the churches; by impelling the preaching and the study of the Scripture in those lines; and even when, in the instrumental use of the Word, He accustoms the souls of believers to that fixed course.

But, however much this providence of the Holy Spirit may be able to quicken a *fides humana* in the churches, it does not finish the work of the Holy Spirit. For this human faith can never give absolute assurance, and Calvin himself recognized that an unregenerated man, provided he is a man of thought, cannot be convinced by us of the theopneusty of the Scriptures. The semi-somnolent masses may be held in rein by ecclesiastical authority, but independent, thoughtful spirits never. Not as though there were separate rules for rich and poor, but because, as Twesten correctly observes, "the absolute faith *on* the divine character of the Scripture can never rest other than on the immediately divine witness." For if human reason were ever able to demonstrate the divine, then reason would stand superior to the divine, and thus, *eo ipso,* the divine character of the divine word would be destroyed.

However much our fathers depended upon the theistic and

unceasing activity of the Holy Spirit with the Word, they have never attributed any higher value to the *fides humana* than of being a preparative and directing work, and their real power and actual strength has never sprung from any other source than the immediate Witness of the Holy Spirit. This Witness of the Holy Spirit was not taken in the Lutheran sense, as of a "*Spiritus Sanctus in ipsa Scriptura loquens et testificans,*" and much less still in the heavy sense of our present-day theologians, as a harmony of the reflex of the Spirit in us with the reflex of the Spirit in the Scripture; but a witness of the Holy Spirit which is born, as Calvin puts it, when that same God the Holy Spirit who spoke centuries ago through the mouth of the apostles and prophets enters into my heart, and by a supranatural witness imparts to me the indisputable assurance: I, God-myself, have inspired this Scripture, this divine Word.

This touches the heart of the question. He who has received that witness stands immovable as a wall. He who has not received it, undulates as a wave of the sea. And every effort of man to replace this witness of the Spirit by one's own demonstration, is sinful, falls short of the glory of God, and never accomplishes its purpose. All children of God receive this witness at his appointed time, so surely, that even the ethical theologians who came to life, after they had played through their entire *repertoire* of negations, had to come back to the church and confess that, after all, "this is the Word of our God!" And therefore, it is this witness of the Holy Spirit which breaks the teeth out of the mouth of all clericalism; which, after the removal of every middle-link, binds the soul immediately to God; and thereby enriches each layman with that invaluable right of spiritual liberty, from which heroic courage, firmness of character, and real love of freedom

are born. This is the fulfillment of the jubilant prophecy, that a man need no more say to his brother, "Know the Lord," for that all shall know him, even from the least unto the greatest. Or, if you please, call it the holy, divine, and only real equality which brings the profoundest scholar to his knees by the side of the humblest house-mother, with an assurance in the heart which is absolutely similar and unmovable.

But, and this is our complaint, the newer Scripture-study injures, likewise, this beautifully ordered state of things. It turns loose what was fast; it lifts each piece of the Scripture out of its grooves; and, unwilling and helpless, the laity are delivered into the hands of the men of Semitic and classical studies. Of course nothing remains of the translation, and youthful preachers who have scarcely an elementary knowledge of the original languages will, with appeals to the original text, substitute the translation by their own idea, until the humble layman is forced to exclaim: "What a wretched translation I have! Would that I could read Greek and Hebrew myself!" But even this is not the end, misguided soul; for, hear how they tell you in all varieties of ways that the original text itself is hopelessly impaired, even to such an extent that the manuscripts offer no sufficient result, and turn on turn the conjecture-process must be risked; and then,—oh, the height of self-conceit, of which, drifting with that stream, I myself was guilty,—we see young men coming fresh from the academy who deem themselves fully matured and justified to train their wits by practicing the art of making conjectures at the expense of the Holy Scripture. And even if that were all. But then the poor laity must furthermore be told that *this* narrative is a myth, and the other has come to us from Parseeism; that not only with respect to editorship but also with respect to the *content,* the books of Moses are of much

later origin; that the reports of the creation and of the fall are sacred phantasies; that Daniel was a pious fraud; yea, even that the word of the apostles cannot be normative, neither for our confession nor for the picture which we form for ourselves of the Lord. To all this the laity must listen; and when it concerns the confessional standard, they are told, that God's Word, apart from every formula of faith, is the proper confession of the Reformed Church. And when one asks, "Do you mean by this the Scripture?" the answer runs, "No, but merely God's word in that Scripture." And when further it is asked, "Is it what is there recorded as God's word?" again the answer runs, "No, it is not that. The prophets called it so in a metaphorical sense, but it was really the product of their own thoughts." And this is what the church of God feels deeply hurt about, and against which she rebels with all the intensity of her thirst after liberty and zeal of fidelity to a sacred charge. She smarts under it as under the jeers that impugn the seriousness of her heart, and as under a game at the expense of the needs of her soul. It stings her as the insult of a jeering clericalism, and in the name of the Lord she resents it.

For, though I well know that even thus the Holy Spirit *can* and does work an inward and certain witness in the regenerated soul, by all this the historic consciousness is weakened; —and moreover, aside from the regenerated and the redeemed, there are still the children of the churches, and it makes the blood rush to the face to see how mercilessly and unpardonably cruelly these vivisectors of the Holy Scriptures deal with the souls of our children.

For of course, when the Scripture is open to question as they say it is, a common copy of our version becomes an almost worthless volume; the country-pastor is the only one who can explain it from his books; the Orientalist and the Græcist

become the seers of our days, whom all Israel must counsel; and the specialty in introduction-studies becomes the High Priest of a new-born church, before whose oracle the astonished masses bend their knees.

Add to this that, in consequence of this all-disintegrating criticism, every new preacher has other things to proclaim in the self-same congregation; also, that this theistic, never-ceasing activity of the Holy Spirit is ignored; yea, that above all else the testimony of the Holy Spirit in the same way as inspiration is either weakened after the Lutheran style, or in the Fichtean sense is subjectivated,—and, in all seriousness, I ask, Is it said too much, is it spoken too crassly, when, after having exhibited this vivisection that has presumptuously been applied to the Scripture, as the corruptor of our theology and the annihilator of the Bible, I at length no less seriously brand it as an avenue to clericalism; and that therefore, as a free-born son of a nation which purchased its liberty from Spain and on the ground of this Testimony of the Holy Spirit, I protest against this violation of the right of the churches and this injury worked against the liberty of the laity?

I have come to the end of my task, and my threefold protest against the biblical criticism of the present day has been entered. I find no fault with what is done by those who are outside, nor with what has been done by any in the capacity of Semitic philologians. But I deplore that in the domain of the church of Christ, and in the very temple of the sacred theology, the Holy Scripture has been so roughly handled by those who profess themselves to be Christian theologians, that at their hand the Holy Bible has been recklessly and unsparingly carved and torn loose in its several parts, and has had its organism remodeled after philosophical hypotheses. I think

I have shown with logical accuracy both the encyclopedic, dogmatic, and ecclesiastical ruin which this critical vandalism has perpetrated, and, that I might shun the very appearance of spiritual cowardice, I have boldly and candidly set over-against this my own confession respecting the Holy Scripture. I did this in the still consciousness that, with no cover or fingers over my eyes, I looked the criticism squarely in the face; condoned and mollified nothing; and that with an honest, scientific conscience I stand immovably firm in the confession of the inspiration by the Spirit. I am quite prepared that this will occasion surprise with one, bitterness with another; but why should I be denied the right to speak, when it has come to this pass, that even they who confess the name of Jesus offer the incense of approbation to the most radical anatomists of the Scripture? God the Lord has granted me the courage of my conviction, and though this conviction may seem utter foolishness to our modern Greeks, and to our ethical Israel a stone of offense, I hold myself fast to it, even as all the dear people of God have embraced it these nineteen centuries, as "the Power of God," a power given us of God not for the pleasing of our pride, but for the making sure of our salvation.

And if with this I take my departure both from my modern and ethical opponents, I say to the moderns among my critics, "Even though, as it seems to me, you wander and err, yet with you there is logical consistency; for, as you say, the Scripture is a scripture like other books, entirely human of origin; and therefore there is no inspiration either, no more regard for the elect who call for certainty, and the whole *sancta theologia* is metamorphosed into the science of religion." To the ethicals, on the other hand, who, because they still confess the holy name of the Lord, are still my brethren; to them I say: "Smelt

away the philosophical alloy from the pure gold which still hides in the kernel of your faith. Be done with that limping on two mutually excluding principles. Choose once more a form that will suit the glorious life in which you also desire to lave and satisfy your soul. Above all, have pity, have mercy, upon those who are deeply hurt, because they are the church of the living God." And if the younger among them were to ask, if then they must violate their insight and do violence to their scientific conscience, I would answer, "No; never do that. It is never safe to do anything against the conscience, and no difficulties of conscience may ever be called conquered before they are conquered indeed. But if you would do violence, if you would try your strength against something, oh, then, in the name of the Lord, let me urge you to do violence indeed against the highness of our human thinking, cast your biblical criticism, and not the Bible, into the melting-pot, and, as theologians, and as shepherds of the flocks, cease from aspiring to be anything else, or anything higher than small in your own wisdom and correspondingly more richly endued instruments of the Holy Ghost."