

THEOLOGICAL QUARTERLY.

VOL. XVIII.

APRIL, 1914.

No. 2.

HISTORY OF THE MODE OF BAPTISM.

About three years ago THEOLOGICAL QUARTERLY (Vol. XIII, No. 4) published an article on the various baptisms practiced by the people of God under the old dispensation. The article in question was part of a paper read before a pastoral conference. The resolution of said conference that the paper be published in its entirety in this periodical has not fully been carried out by the essayist chiefly because of the great length of the paper. This second installment contains the history of the mode of baptism from the beginning of the second century to the beginning of the Reformation. The reader will notice that the right to speak has in the main been given to literary and monumental evidence.

In the year 1873, Bryennios, then Metropolitan of Serra, discovered a very old volume in the monastery of the Holy Sepulcher. This ancient treatise bears the title *Didache ton Dodeka Apostolon*, that is, the "Teaching of the Twelve Apostles." Many critics place its date between A. D. 90 and 100, and none later than 165. In a chapter on Baptism the *Didache* directs: "If you have not living water, baptize into other water; and if you cannot baptize in cold water, do so in warm; but if you have neither, then pour out water on the head three times in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."¹) This oldest evidence regarding the

1) Ἐὰν μὴ ἔχης ὕδωρ ζῶν, εἰς ἄλλο ὕδωρ βάπτισον· εἰ δ' οὐ δύνασαι ἐν ψυχρῷ, ἐν θερμῷ· ἐὰν δὲ ἀμφοτέρω μὴ ἔχης, ἔκχεον εἰς τὴν κεφαλὴν τρεῖς ὕδωρ εἰς ὄνομα πατρὸς καὶ υἱοῦ καὶ ἁγίου πνεύματος. (Chap. VII, p. 23.)

“MECHANICAL INSPIRATION” THE STUMBLING-BLOCK OF MODERN THEOLOGY.

(Concluded.)

17.

Modern theology declines an errorless Bible, not only in the sense that the Bible which we now possess is without error, but also in the sense that the Bible ever was without error. And the plenary, or verbal, inspiration is denounced as “mechanical inspiration” for this additional reason that such an inspiration would make the inspired penmen inerrant. We had reserved this point for the conclusion of this paper, because it exhibits with the most striking clearness the unhappy animus of modern theology, and the flagrant injustice which modern theology does to the old advocates of verbal inspiration.

18.

Gibson devotes an entire chapter¹⁾ to the argument that God, though perfect Himself and able to express His mind perfectly, could not perfectly speak to imperfect men. “Let us

43) Stanley, *Eastern Church*, p. 117.

44) Guenther's *Populaere Symbolik*, § 107.

1) Chap. XI (“Necessary Limitations—Earthen Vessels”) in *The Inspiration and Authority of the Holy Scriptures*, pp. 147—159.

suppose it possible that a document could be constructed in heaven which would have been a perfect revelation of the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, desirable for man to know on all the subjects which concern him here and hereafter. What mortal could have read it? For it must have been in a perfect language; and there never has been any such language upon earth, so it must have been in an unknown tongue. And even if that difficulty had been overcome, which of the sons of men would have been capable of seeing and understanding and appreciating the authentic product of heaven's high literature? There would need to have been not only a miraculously constructed book, but a miraculously reconstructed humanity to take it in; and wherein would that have been different from the annihilation of the human race as it is, and the creating of another?" Even if God had sent a whole army of angels fully inspired with heavenly truth, they could not have made known the heavenly truth to all sorts and conditions of men. "As soon as they employed any language under the sun, that moment would their message be involved in the imperfections—crudities, barbarisms, inconsistencies, obscurities, and what not—inseparable from the very best of earth's languages. And if it be supposed that it might be possible for them to supplement the words they spoke by the lives they lived, would they not be out of touch with us, and would it not be quite impossible for us to enter into lives so wholly diverse in nature and in circumstance from ours? And if they came upon us with the impact of superhuman power, would not human freedom be abolished?" Gibson goes on to describe three reasons that placed limitations upon God from which there could be no escape even for Him, because He had, in giving His revelation, adopted the method of speaking by men to men: 1. Man's free agency must be respected. 2. Both the Hebrew and Greek languages were incapable of expressing the divine thought. 3. Literature develops its forms gradually, beginning in its rudimentary state with the legend. Gibson is convinced that even in the case of Paul, for whom he

admits sudden revelations, "there is no evidence of such a miraculous influence upon him as would lift him above the possibility of error." Paul, after his conversion, was indeed an inspired man, and "his inspiration was far more than what we call the ordinary guidance of the Spirit; but even in his case it was not such as to interfere with the natural working of mind and heart, and so reduce him to a mere organ of another's inspiration." The last remarks, in particular, are characteristic of the whole argument: To believe an inspiration that yields an errorless product is to believe an inspiration that reduces the inspired writers to—fountain-pens in the hands of the Spirit.

19.

Dr. Terry²⁾ holds that the belief of the inerrancy of the Bible "has obvious logical relationship to the necessitarian philosophy of human action, and was, accordingly, adopted by the leading churches of the Reformation, which accepted the Calvinistic creed." This means, to believe an inerrant Bible is to believe coerced writers of the Bible. Dr. Terry gloats over the Helvetic Confession with its claim of the inspiration of Hebrew vowel points. This piece of confessional fervor is made to do yeoman's service for modern theology. Dr. Terry damns it by praising it as the "logical conclusion from the postulates of the monergistic theology and the necessitarian philosophy." He rejects the postulates and the conclusion as "a mischievous leaven in the realm of Christian thought," and regrets that "many who reject the necessitarian theology are so accustomed to the use of words and phrases which had their origin in notions of positively secured human actions that they have unwittingly imbibed the theory of the verbal inerrancy of the entire volume of Holy Scriptures." It "involves a distorted notion of the Bible" to speak of it as "an infallible book." "It is apt to convey to the popular mind the notion of an inerrant, infallible monarch, uttering nothing but categorical propositions of what is right and what is wrong. It

2) *Biblical Dogmatics*, pp. 23 ff.

ignores the fact that the Scriptures are a body of various kinds of literature, made up of composite narratives, songs, fables, riddles, parables, allegories, visions, and dreams. In the interpretation of all of these there has never been uniformity of opinion, nor is there likely to be for ages to come. Strong, sweeping abstract assertions of the equal authority of all portions of this multiform volume go for nothing in the face of opposing facts which appear in the various books, and the contents of many of these books are the farthest possible from the nature of a set of authoritative utterances on matters of doctrine or on questions of conscience. It requires only the slightest attention to the facts to see that the entire Scriptures cannot be accepted in all their parts as so many final and infallible decisions of doctrine, valid alike for all times and for all men. The greater part of the Mosaic legislation, that veritable Holy of holies in Jewish estimation, is obsolete to-day for the faith and practice of the Christian world." If this writer, now, regards anything in the Bible as "final and infallible," how does he arrive at such a conviction? We wish to point this fact out here, because it shows that an argument like this proves nothing because it proves too much.

20.

Dr. Strong³⁾ says: "Inspiration did not guarantee inerrancy in things not essential to the main purpose of Scripture." He concedes to Miss Cobbe "that inspiration consists with imperfection," and quotes with approval the remark of Dr. Broaders that the difference between "This is my beloved Son" in Matt. 3, 17 and "Thou art my beloved Son," in Luke 3, 22, should make us cautious in theorizing about verbal inspiration. (It is small comfort to be assured that there are no "essential errors" in Scripture.)

21.

Prior to these American writers is Van Oosterzee, who held:⁴⁾ "As Theopneustia had different grades, so also had it

3) *Systematic Theology*, I, 215 f.

4) *Christian Dogmatics*, I, 202.

its own limits. This too has been forgotten when the holy men have been conceived of as omniscient, at least as infallible in every respect. 'Il nous faut suffire qu'un chapitre, ou une chose fasse partie des Ecritures pour la croire divinement bonne; car Dieu a prononcé sur elle, comme sur la création: J'ai vu tout ce que j'ai fait, et voilà tout était bon.' (Gaussen.) Few things perhaps have been more prejudicial to the existence of a rational belief in Scripture than such an assertion, which conflicts with the most indisputable facts. In this hypothesis of an absolutely unlimited inspiration, the Sacred Writers at last cease to be men; and a number of contradictions, not merely apparent, but real, presenting themselves in Scripture, can only be removed by an almost desperate mode of harmonizing. It is an important step in advance that even the most believing Scripture expositors of our age candidly confess they are not able to maintain the absolute infallibility of the Sacred Writers *in every particular*. Augustine, indeed, declared long before, in regard to John: *Nec ipse dixit ut est, sed ut potuit, quia de Deo homo dixit; et quidem inspiratus a Deo, sed tamen homo.* 'Nor did he speak of things as they are, but as he was able to express them, because as a man he spake of God; and that indeed as being inspired by God, but yet as a man.' This is the only tenable theory of limited inspiration; necessarily limited by the finite condition, and at the same time by the fallibility of man in regard to all which belonged not to the sphere of God's Saving Revelation."

22.

Dr. Brown, too, evidently stumbles at the claim of an errorless Bible. When noting his objection to the "dictation doctrine,"⁵⁾ this grievance of modern theologians against the "mechanical inspiration" was indicated to us somewhat veiledly. For Dr. Brown holds that the claim of inerrancy does not grow out of anything that the Bible says concerning itself, but this claim is either aprioristic, that is, it is a foregone conclusion

5) See § 13 of this paper.

from a premise that is necessarily assumed, or it is pragmatical, that is, it is an argument based on the practical usefulness of the Bible. In the former case, [an errorless Bible is demanded *a priori*, because it is manifestly inconsistent with the veracity of God, the Author of the Bible, to admit errors of any kind in the Bible; in the latter, an errorless Bible is demanded, because a Bible containing error could not serve as a standard of truth in teaching nor as a trustworthy guide in directing man's conduct.] In other words, the advocates of "mechanical inspiration" had to reduce the inspired writers to automatons in order to get them to be inerrant. And this, again, was necessary because of the personal honor of the inspiring God and because of the practical value of the inspired product. Inerrant writers of the Bible were needed, accordingly such writers were decreed, and thus a leading humanity of the writers of the Bible was stamped out—for *errare humanum est*—and these writers became impassive instruments, or machines.

There is sarcasm in the remark of Dr. Brown that the errorless Bible thus produced by inerrant human machines is "a Bible which no man has ever seen." This is the rather ungracious reply to the perfectly relevant teaching of verbal inspirationists that the inspirational activity of the Holy Spirit, which produced a Bible free from error, was exercised only when the autographs, or original copies of the sacred writings, were produced, and is not claimed in the same degree for the apographs, or transcriptions made later by copyists.

23.

Quenstedt devotes an entire chapter to this subject:⁶⁾ "An S. Scriptura sit infallibilis veritatis, omnisque erroris experta?" With his customary care he elaborates, by means of a series of distinctions, the exact point in controversy, and arrives at this thesis: "Holy Writ in its canonical and original form possesses the character of infallible truth and is free from every error, or, what comes to the same thing, there is

6) *l. c.*, pp. 77—82.

in the canonical Holy Scriptures no lie, no false statement, no error ever so small, both as regards facts and terms, but each and everything that is handed down in Scripture is quite true, whether it refers to doctrines, morals, history, chronology, topography, or names, and no ignorance, thoughtlessness, or forgetfulness, no slip of memory can or must be charged against the penmen of the Holy Spirit while writing down the sacred letters."

By his remark about the canonical writings in their original form Quenstedt carries the debate about the inerrancy or infallibility of the Bible to the point where it ought to start. This is no evasion of the issue, no asking a change of venue, no flight into a remote region whither few men can follow, but this is stating the real issue. What orthodox teachers have meant when they spoke of the plenary inspiration and inerrancy of the Holy Scriptures has always referred, and could only refer, to the original copies of the sacred writings that were produced under the influence of the Holy Spirit. To what extent the copies of the original manuscripts are faithful reproductions of the original is plainly a separate question. This question cannot, indeed, be neglected by a theologian, nor have those theologians who have taught the inerrancy of the original manuscripts neglected the study of the condition of the copies. (But this question must be settled along different lines.) Most modern theologians meet the claim of the old dogmaticians that the *original* Bible is inerrant with an appeal to the *existing copies*. They either ignore the reference of the dogmaticians to the original, or they ridicule it, as does Dr. Brown. This procedure is so manifestly unfair that self-respecting men would shrink from adopting it in any other business. It is a common rule of justice that you must meet an opponent on his own ground. Every shot that is not fired at the real position of the enemy is a waste and a sham. You may create a great impression of valor on people who do not see through the maneuver, but you weary earnest seekers after the facts in the case.

Even modern theological science acknowledges the existence of a canon of Scripture. It is a very ancient and venerable fact. Modern theologians often magnify the importance of the canon, but they seem to forget its importance at this point. For [one of the determining factors for the admission or non-admission of a certain writing to the collection of sacred oracles was the absence or presence of error in it. When the words of the Lord came to the people who first received them, they came as "pure words, as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times."⁷⁾ They were self-authenticating. They bore the stamp of the divine Author. They warned men against error, falsehood, frauds, deceptions. They offered themselves as a rule for determining truth and error. And so they were received as the infallible Word of God, and declared the canon.]

If now, after four thousand years, we are mistaken in claiming inerrancy for the original Scriptures, certainly the recipients of those Scriptures also were mistaken. Yea, the Scriptures themselves are mistaken in setting up the claim that they are "the Word of Truth."⁸⁾ And the saints of all ages have been mistaken who have always held the belief which Augustine expressed: "Cedamus et consentiamus auctoritati S. Scripturae, quae nescit falli et fallere."⁹⁾ The men who in our day attack Quenstedt for his untenable theory of the inspiration and its effect of inerrancy must consistently attack the men who discovered the difference between canonical and apocryphal writings. For if they accepted the canonical books only because of the amount of religious truth which they detected in them, there is no reason why they should not, on that basis, have accepted also the apocryphal writings. The difference would have been only one of degree and quantity, both as regards the truth and the errors contained in either kind of writings.

7) Ps. 12, 6. Comp. 2 Sam. 22, 31; Ps. 18, 30; 19, 8; 119, 140; Prov. 30, 5.

8) Ps. 119, 43; 2 Cor. 6, 7; Eph. 1, 13; Col. 1, 5; James 1, 18; John 17, 17.

9) *De peccatorum meritis* etc., chap. 22.

24.

The claim of Quenstedt and the class of theologians whom he represents on this matter, *viz.*, that the inerrancy of the Scriptures is predicable only of the original manuscripts, is not meant to depreciate our present Bible. The dilemma which the negative Bible criticism of our days has constructed against those who still hold to the old doctrine of inspiration: Either you must throw away the Bible you have; for you admit that the errorless Bible in which you profess to believe no longer exists; or you must drop your claim of the inerrancy and infallibility of the Bible—this argument misses the point which Quenstedt makes by his distinction between the autographa and apographa of Bible manuscripts. This distinction grants the existence of errors in copies made from the original manuscripts and in versions made from the original text. Speaking particularly of the versions, Quenstedt says: “Versiones omnes alicujus lapsus saltem possibilis accusari possunt, nec ulla earum, quaecunque tandem illa sit, ab omni omnino errore libera est.” The purpose of the distinction is to determine the cause of these errors and, if possible, to correct them. / In the copies made from the original manuscripts, and in versions from the Hebrew or Greek texts we have before us purely human products. / No believer in the old teaching regarding the inspiration of the Bible has any qualms in conceding, on general principles, that it is likely—*saltem possibilis*—that the imperfections common to the producers will appear in their products; for here the saying is indeed true: *Errare humanum est.*

A respectable science — textual, or lower, Bible criticism — has been busy for two centuries collating the existing Bible manuscripts and eliminating spurious or palpably erroneous texts or parts of texts. Lardner, Bengel, Tregelles, Scrivener, Tischendorf are some of a long list of scholars who have labored, with remarkable perseverance, to give to the world the original Bible text. They have proceeded on strictly objective grounds

and collected evidence for or against this or that reading, just as evidence is collected and the truth established in regard to other matters that are in doubt. Wherever the evidence has not been convincing, they have suspended their judgment. In this way many things that had perplexed Bible-readers have been lighted up. This is a fair way of dealing with the apographa. Says Dr. Enoch Pond: "It has been thought by some that this whole question of inspiration amounts to but little, since we have naught in our hands at present but transcripts and translations, the original copies, which alone were inspired, having long been lost. But we do think it of great importance to have had an *inspired and infallible original*. From such an original all the existing copies and versions came; and though we have not the autographs with which to compare them, still we can compare them one with another; we can judge of differences when they exist; we can judge wherein they differ, if at all, from the original copies, and can thus approximate, at least, to the true standard.} The original copies of the ancient classics have all passed away; yet we like to know that there *were* such copies, and by careful revision, comparison, and criticism we can measurably restore them. A copy of the Scriptures, or a version, is a proper subject of criticism. We may properly inquire, not whether the original writers made mistakes, but whether mistakes have not occurred since; whether the copy or the version conforms to the original. Thus far may human criticism lawfully go in this direction, but no further. If it may transcend this limit; if it may go to the original itself, or to what is decided, on sufficient grounds, to have been the original, to pass upon mistakes and errors there, — then we have no standard left. The criticism of copies and versions has come to be a science of well-defined principles, which has been rewarded with most important results. 'But,' as one has well said, 'the criticism of prophets and apostles, the sitting in judgment upon those who preached and wrote by inspiration, and to whom the Spirit of God brought all things to remembrance — this is a new science, one upon which

we do not care to venture, and the results of which we should distrust and dread.'”¹⁰⁾

This appeal, then, of modern theologians to the lost autographs of the Bible is an *argumentum ad populum*; it is for stage-effect; it is an appeal to the prejudice against the Bible already existing in the carnal mind of the masses. It will not, as its advocates claim, lead the masses to a “proper valuation” and “intelligent respect” of the “real Bible,” but it will feed the dislike and nurse the contempt of the Scriptures which already prevail. And, we repeat it, it is not fair thus to treat the Bible. Dr. Pond calls attention to the lost autographs of the classics. We might add the entire science of archeology. What Schliemann has done at Troy, what others have done at Pompeii, at Niniveh, at Thebes, etc., what historical research is doing the world over, — is it not all actuated by the

10) *Lectures on Christian Theology*, pp. 110 f. — “How is it that we are convinced we have the genuine productions of Homer, Xenophon, Tacitus, Virgil, and other ancient writers? Is it not by the transmission of authentic documents, copies, and translations of original works, the genuineness of which is sustained by a stream of collateral evidence, placing the question beyond rational doubt? The Holy Scriptures challenge this proof, independently of other evidence derived from prophecy, miracles, and internal excellence. The facts which exhibit this proof are of the same kind in sacred as in profane literature; but as Isaac Taylor, an accomplished scholar and writer of the present day, remarks in his admirable work on *The Transmission of Ancient Manuscripts*: ‘The integrity of the records of the Christian faith is substantiated by evidence in a tenfold proportion more various, copious, and conclusive than that which can be adduced in support of any other ancient writings; and if only the justice of the case were regarded, the authenticity of the Jewish and Christian Scriptures would never be controverted till the entire body of classical literature had been proved to be spurious.’” “One word in reference to the various readings in versions and manuscript copies of the original text. As Horne observes, ‘by far the greater number of various readings relate to trifles, many of which cannot be made apparent in a translation.’ We have verbal variations in the different editions of our printed Bibles, but they do not materially affect the sense, neither does one-hundredth part of the various readings in the original. Dr. Kennicott devoted thirty years to the examination of Hebrew manuscripts, but states that he found no variation which in the smallest degree affected any article of faith or practice.” Dr. William Cooke, *Christian Theology: Its Doctrines and Ordinances Explained and Defended*. Fourth edition. pp. 70. 73.

same desire—a healthy and legitimate desire—to get back to originals? How much of the credibility of secular events and the authenticity of non-religious personages of history could be ruled out of existence, or rendered questionable by such sweeping assertions as that about the uselessness of inquiring into the character of the Scriptures since its originals are lost?

"Errors" in our present Bible will remain the subject of investigation to the end of days. When Quenstedt makes the admission which we noted above in reference to the Bible-versions, he does not rest the case there. In a dozen chapters on the style, the clearness, the sufficiency, etc., of the Scriptures and on the laws of Bible-interpretation he sheds much light on hundreds of difficulties of the Scriptures. That is a useful way of taking hold of the "errors." Dr. Terry's way is wholly useless. He speaks of errors in a general way, and touches now on this difficulty in the Bible, now on that. But he does not try to explain any one of them. Why, every one of us knew that before. We all experience in regard to all the Scriptures what Peter said about the epistles of Paul (2 Pet. 3, 15. 16). Therefore, we can have no respect for these loud declamations in our day against the errorless Bible. We have respect, however, for those sturdy and honest defenders of the God-given Book who, when they met with a *crux* in the sacred text, went down on their knees and prayed for illumination of their darkened mind and increase of their limited knowledge, and then wrestled with the difficulty like a man. What a mountain of literature could be piled up out of books on the "errors" of the Bible! How much is still going to be written on this subject! [In this class of literature we have special studies on special facts, and the combined effects of all these studies is sufficient to hush the sweeping assertion of the erroneousness of the Bible and the flippant remarks about an error here and an error there.¹¹⁾]

11) A good aid for studying the method of meeting the claim of errors in the Bible can be found in Strong's *Systematic Theology*, I, 223—242; also in Thesis II of Dr. Stoeckhardt's series of articles: *Was sagt die Schrift von sich selbst?* L. u. W. 32, 281 ff.

25.

It is true that Quenstedt, in his arguments for the inerrancy of the inspired writers, appeals to the character of God, and to the purpose which the inspired writings were to serve. He does this when he establishes his thesis that the Bible is free from every error: "III. Ab absurdo. Quodcunque *σφάλμα* et mendacium, quicunque error aut lapsus memoriae prophetis et apostolis tribuitur, non sine blasphemia ipsi Spiritui S. qui per eos locutus est, et scripsit, imputatur. Deus autem Spiritus S. per infinitam suam scientiam nihil ignorare, nullius oblivisci; per infinitam veracitatem et infallibilitatem suam, ne in minimo quidem errare, falli aut fallere; et per infinitam denique bonitatem suam nemini imponere, neminem in fraudem et errorem inducere potest. Labe factatur etiam per illam sententiam Scripturae *ἀδθεντία* et auctoritas, perit fidei nostrae certitudo et infallibilitas. Si enim quaedam in Scriptura occurrunt dubia, incerta, erronea, falsa, unde de caeterorum auctoritate, certitudine aut veritate constabit? 'Si de uno loco dubitare licet, cur de omnibus dubitare non liceat?' inquit ipse Socinus. Et nisi de fidei principio infallibiliter certi reddamur, quomodo fidei *ἐπόστασις*, Ebr. 11, 1, salutis certitudo, et conscientiae tranquillitas demum consistet?" Quenstedt considers it an absurd thing to believe in a Bible that contains error. So do we; and so, in the bottom of his heart, does Dr. Terry, and Gibson, and Oosterzee, and the whole array of modern opponents to "mechanical inspiration." It is a specious display of admiration for the Bible which we observe in these men. From their own premises they cannot regard the Bible as divine, except in a very wide sense. They may deceive themselves as to their belief in the Bible, but they cannot deceive others.

We are now face to face, in Quenstedt, with that aprioristic and pragmatistical argument which we heard Dr. Brown and Dr. Gibson denounce before. Quenstedt holds that any deception and lie, any error or slip of memory that is charged against the prophets and apostles is attributed ultimately to

God the Holy Spirit, who spoke through them; and that would be blasphemy. "In God the Holy Spirit there cannot be ignorance of anything nor forgetfulness of anything, because of His infinite knowledge; He cannot be mistaken or deceived, nor can He deceive any one in the smallest matter, because of His infinite truthfulness and infallibility; and He can work no imposition or fraud on any one, nor lead any one into error, because of His infinite goodness." This is, indeed, a necessary thought, if we accept any direct operation of God in the production of the Bible. We may admit a condescension and an accommodation on the part of the Holy Spirit to the intellectual level of the human agents whom He employed in writing down His utterances, but we cannot conceive of an accommodation to error on the part of God. If this reasoning in behalf of the inerrancy of the inspired writers is aprioristic, what is the character, *e. g.*, of Dr. Gibson's reasoning? Is it not just as aprioristic to reason that, since no human mind could take in the sublime and immense thoughts of God, therefore God could not have offered such thoughts to man? Or, if He did offer them, these thoughts had to deteriorate in the process of transmission because they had to pass through human channels, and obtain their final expression in inadequate human terms? In the matter of transferring knowledge and understanding from a higher to a lower intelligence, this world has witnessed, and is still witnessing, some remarkable achievements of the genius of man. No doubt, before Laura Bridgman and Helen Keller found their trainers, their case had been pronounced hopeless by most intelligent people. Deaf-mutes, feeble-minded persons, epileptics have been considered beyond the line up to which one human mind can communicate with another. It was thought at a time that every approach to the mind of these unfortunate people was blocked by insurmountable obstacles. Yet, what have human sympathy, ingenuity, and patience accomplished with them? And that without coercion. Against most forbidding odds men have succeeded in rousing interest in minds that had sunk into absolute mental apathy and lethargy,

not by reducing those minds to an impassive state, but by tenderly fostering them, and tutoring their feeble efforts. To adduce less formidable instances, a mother is not deterred by the limited understanding of her child, which is beginning to lisp, from speaking to him, and with him. When the abecedarian comes to school for the first time, his teacher bravely takes hold of his feeble understanding and tells him a Bible-story, to which the little fellow may listen open-mouthed and amazed, because there are many things in it that exceed his power to grasp. But he will come and tell his mother that the teacher said thus and so. And if we ascend to the higher educational domain, we find the lecturer in the university on philosophy and the sciences at a great remove intellectually from the students who listen to him, and he is conscious while he lectures that he may not be fully grasped by them. He must tell them facts, too, which they have to accept, at least for the time being, on his authority, but he goes on with his lecture undismayed, and his students afterward repeat the truths he has told them, and discuss them wonderingly among each other. So much man can do in approaching the mind of man without stamping out anything that is in another's mind, rather by quickening every power that resides there. Now, put God in the place of the human mother, trainer, teacher, lecturer. On what reasonable grounds can it be asserted that He cannot communicate such things as He chooses to communicate to men, and make them understand that He wants them to write them down? Surely, the holy writers have expressed their wonder and amazement at the deep things which were spoken to them. God's thoughts were very profound; they were past finding out. But they uttered them, and uttered them as intelligent beings. It is a perversion of the position held by the old dogmaticians to speak of the inspired penmen as "omniscient," as Van Oosterzee does. No defender of the verbal, or plenary, inspiration of the Bible in the age of the Reformation or to-day ever has claimed omniscience for the prophets and apostles. Nor has permanent inerrancy been claimed for them, also out-

side of the moments of inspiration. Quenstedt distinctly says: "Distingue inter apostolos, consideratos ut homines, qui labi et errare possunt, Rom. 7, 15, et spectatos in officio suo apostolico, sive quatenus a Spiritu S. impulsus et agitati sunt et scripserunt, 2 Pet. 1, 21." Only in this latter capacity they had the "privilegium non errandi," and their writings are unquestionably true.

As regards the pragmatism argument, Quenstedt, it is true, holds that the authority of Scripture would be shaken, and our faith in its reliability and infallibility would perish, if the claim that God gave men a Bible not free from error were admitted. "If," he says, "there are in the Bible some things that are doubtful, uncertain, erroneous, false, how are we to be assured of the authority, certitude; and truth of the rest?" He quotes, in favor of his position, the arch-rationalist of the age of the Reformation, Socinus, who says: "If we are permitted to entertain a doubt regarding one passage, why not regarding all?" And he points out the practical consequences of the belief that the Bible contains error: If we cannot be assured concerning the principle and basis of faith,—which the Bible is,—how can there be substantial faith such as Hebr. 11, 1 describes? How can there be assurance of our salvation and peace of conscience?

A pragmatism interest is charged against this position. But is the position, *e. g.*, of Dr. Terry, anything but the sheerest pragmatism? It is just because he and his modern colleagues do not want to acknowledge the authority of the Bible in all things that they attack the *verbal* inspiration and the *inerrancy* of Scripture. It is for this reason that he is pained to see that people will cite particular Bible texts on a given occasion with the evident intention of proving a certain matter correct or false. Modern theology simply would be stopped and put out of business in its scientific elucubrations of what is revealed truth and what not if this "mechanical" way of quoting Bible-texts is to be permitted. A Sunday-school pupil can upset a university professor in two seconds by confronting him with

a. text. O yes, pragmatism! On what side is there the coarsest and most unblushing pragmatism?

The defenders of the plenary inspiration of the Holy Scriptures are out of harmony with our times. Our age has decreed that they are theological back-numbers. Be it so. The further back the better. We have wondered whether Quenstedt, too, did not derive comfort from the fact that he knew his teaching and that of his dogmatic confrères to agree with the orthodox past. He concludes the exposition of his thesis on the errorless Bible with a few fine sayings from the fathers. He remembers that Augustine wrote to Jerome: "It seems to me a most destructive belief to hold that anything in the sacred books is a lie, that is, that those men through whom Scripture was ministered unto us have lied in any point in their writings"; and that in the same correspondence occur these words: "I have learned to give only to those books of Scripture which are called canonical that reverence and honor to believe with the utmost firmness that none of their authors have erred in any matter." He concludes with these words of the same author: "If you once admit a lie against such eminent authority, not a particle of those books will remain that could not be questioned." European theology in our days is working very hard to fulfill this prediction of the Bishop of Hippo. American theologians, too, are becoming marshaled in increasing numbers on the side of that teaching which regards the Bible as a human and imperfect production, containing more or less divine elements. Much reverence is still expressed for the Bible, much deference is still shown to its statements. Yea, it is claimed that the new estimate of the Bible is more conducive to faith in it and to piety than the old view. This is, at best, a sad and fatal self-delusion which the advocates of the new view of the Bible practice upon themselves. The manifest spread of infidelity and immorality in the so-called Christian countries of the world in our days is plainly traceable, as to their cause, to the assaults that have been made upon God's Book. Modern theology has started by

taking God out of the Bible, and is ending its fatal mission by taking God out of the lives of men. Even among the conservative churches of Great Britain and America one has to go back almost two generations, to find a testimony like this:¹²⁾ "What God declares must be true. [T]o maintain that his teachings are mixed with error is to charge God either with ignorance or a design to impose upon his creatures, which is absurd and blasphemous. To ascribe any error to the *sacred writers* does not mend the argument. It shifts the difficulty, but does not remove the inconsistency; for the inspired writers do not speak in their own name, but in the name of God. If they *did* speak under inspiration, their word is true, infallibly true; if they did *not*, their honesty is impeached, and their testimony is false as well as erroneous, deceitful as well as fallible. The fallibility and inspiration of the Scripture testimony are terms which cannot stand together—they involve two contradictory propositions which mutually destroy each other. If fallible, they are *uninspired* and *false*; if inspired, they are *infallible*."] "
