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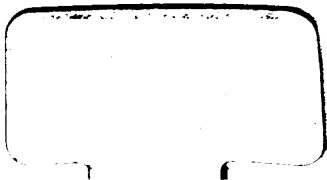
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ARGUMENT

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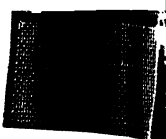
WILLIAMS PRESERVED SMITH

BEFORE THE

COURT OF COMMONS OF CINCINNATI.

CINCINNATI:
ROBERT CLARKE & CO.
1892.

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ARGUMENT

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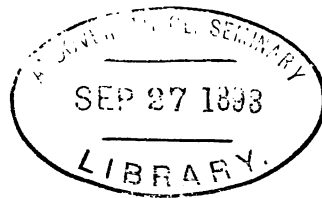
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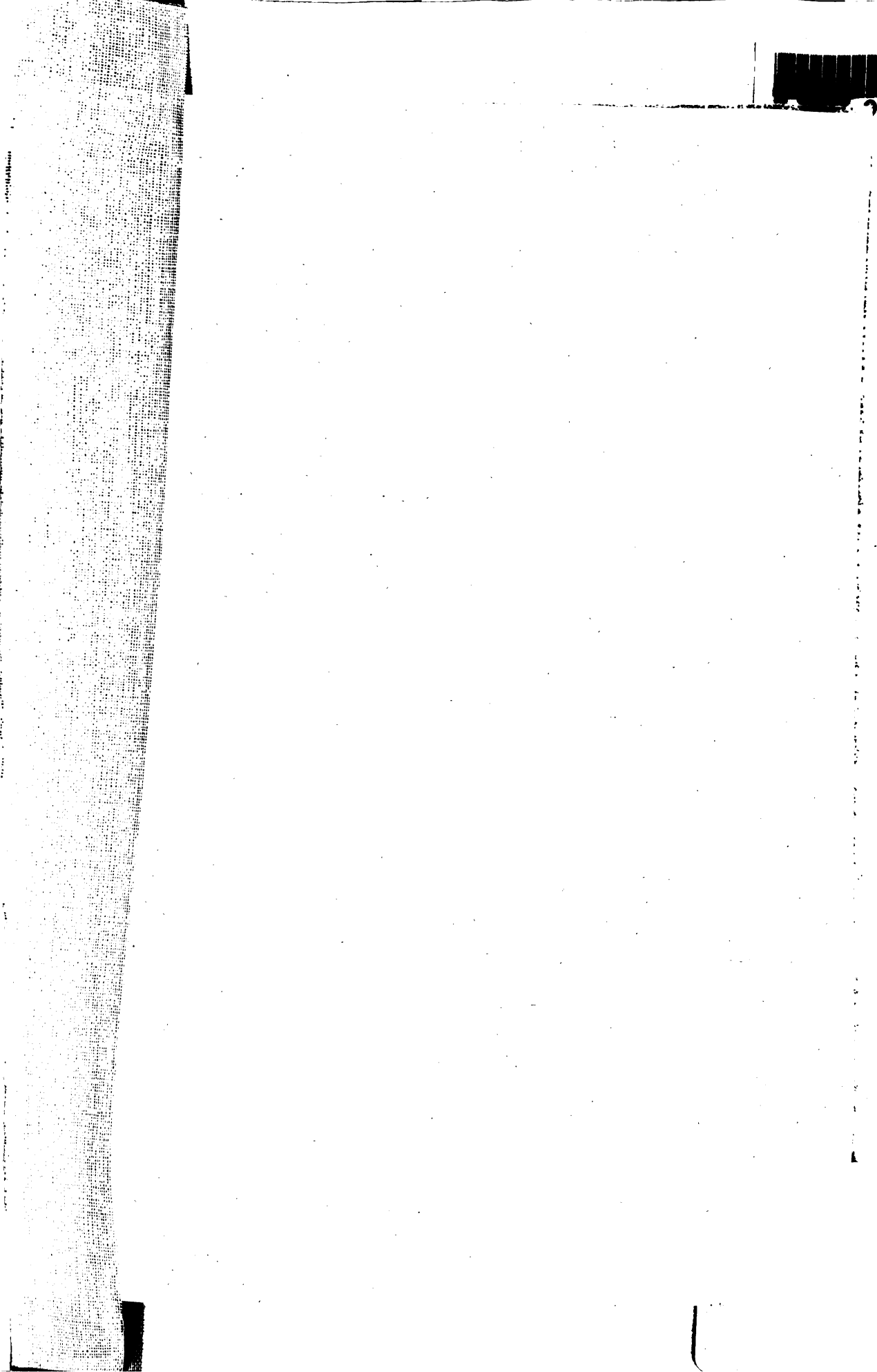
Argument on the Charges.

ON CHARGE I.

The charge is of teaching "that a minister in said Church may abandon the essential features of the system of doctrine held by said Church, and which he received and adopted at his ordination, and rightfully retain his position as a minister in said Church."

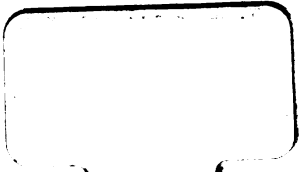
I labor under some embarrassment in arguing this charge, because I still think the charge indefinite in language. One of the prosecutors remarked that I objected to one charge as ambiguous, and then proceeded to argue on it an hour and a half, as if the length of the argument disproved the ambiguity. But it *proves* the ambiguity. For it is obvious that the more indefinite is the charge, the more time must be spent on the inquiry into its meaning. The indefiniteness of this charge was plainly brought out by the very discussion which led to the sustaining of the sufficiency of the charge. For the expressions of the speakers at that time showed wide variety in the apprehension of the charge. Some evidently supposed the offense to be *disloyalty* to the church; some supposed it to be *dishonesty*, or the *teaching of dishonesty*; others took it to be *denial of the right of discipline* and order in the Church; still others supposed it a violation of my vow to study the *peace and purity* of the Church. So there are five possible offenses contained in the charge, and no one knows which is intended. If the five were distinctly specified as five

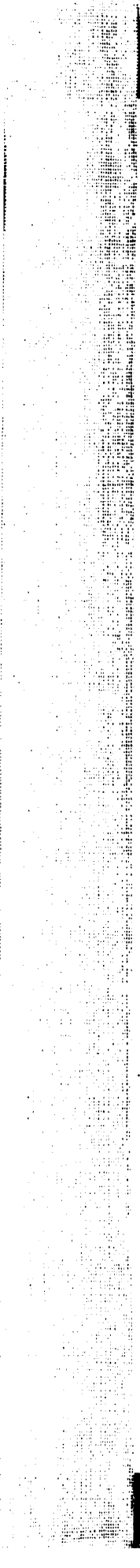
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(1) There is no evidence to show that I impugn **the Westminster doctrine of the Church.**

(2) There is no evidence to show that I assail **the fundamental principles of Church order as set forth in the Form of Government.**

(3) There is no evidence to show that I teach or **encourage disloyalty to the Presbyterian Church.**

(4) There is no evidence to show that I teach that **a lawful contract may be broken or evaded, or that I encourage any to break or evade a lawful contract.**

(5) There is no evidence that I have in any way **injured the peace or purity of the Church.**

And, if any other offenses are implied in the **language of this charge, they are equally unsupported by the evidence.**

ON CHARGES II AND III.

Expecting that the evidence being now before us, we should argue its bearing on the formulated charges and specifications, I was disappointed to have the committee go into alarmist appeals against supposed dangers to the Church. It would perhaps be enough reply to these to say that no evidence appears in their support, and that the appeals themselves are not formulated in the charges. As however, the alarm raised by such appeals is one of the worst enemies to sobriety of judgment you will I am sure bear with me in the endeavor to point out their exact force and applicability to the case.

In the first place the committee say as they have said before that this issue is forced upon them by me. Let us try to get at the exact meaning of this phrase. The committee acknowledge, of course, that I am (so far) a minister in good standing in the Presbyterian Church. They do not deny as I understand it that I suppose myself to hold the system of doctrine contained in the Confession. I, on my part, do not deny

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that they honestly suppose me to have departed from it. There is an honest difference of opinion. If my departure is in their view so wide that my errors strike at the vitals of religion, of course they can not tolerate my presence in the Church. But they are forced by their own consciences not by me. If that is all they mean we need say no more about it. But if I mistake not, they intimate that in some way I am at fault and assume that I am trying to force some doctrine on the Church. But this is no more true than in any other case of discussion. In all such cases the representative of each side tries to show that his doctrine is the correct one. This can hardly be called forcing the doctrine on the Church.

But the committee intimate that it would have been so easy for me to avoid this issue. It would have been easy for me to leave the Church, especially when the General Assembly urged upon all not in agreement with our Church to leave her ministry. And we are told that any company of citizens has a right to associate to defend any absurdity and may determine the objects they will pursue and the terms of their membership. But this comparison seems to forget the very point at issue. The company of citizens who associate in a club to advocate, (let us say), the flatness of the earth will be held by law strictly to its own articles of association. It will not be allowed to expel members at the mere will of the majority. This is the very point in hand. All that I have ever claimed is that being myself convinced that I am in entire harmony with the doctrine of the Church, I can not yield to the resolution of any majority, which assumes to decide that question contrary to the constitution of the Church.

But there is a very much deeper question here than the voluntary association of individuals for some matter of personal interest. The unity of the body of Christ manifests itself in the association of every true Church. The right of the

Church to declare the terms of admission to its communion and the qualifications of its ministers and members, is a right conferred by Christ himself. It is to be exercised as the system of government which He hath appointed. It is to be limited by the rules He has given in the word and by the providential indications of his will. Now let us say in the exercise of this authority a man has been set apart to the Christian ministry in the Presbyterian Church. He has perhaps been born into that Church, has been baptized in it, has been admitted to its communion. As manhood approaches he hears the call of the Master and offers himself to the Presbytery for licensure and then for ordination. The Church is to him the representative of his Lord. Her voice conveys his message and her ordination seals the message with the Master's approval. If such a man is called to the ministry at all he is called by the voice of the Presbyterian Church. But now a majority of the General Assembly supposing him to have departed from the faith thunders at him to get out of our bounds. He asks if this means out of the ministry and is told no—only out of *our* ministry. He asks where he shall go and is told it makes no difference where, only he must go. He finds no providential indication, he sees no call to another denomination, he finds himself in his heart more in harmony with his own denomination than any other. *He dares not go.* He has heard the voice of the Lord in the voice of the Church calling him into the ministry. It may be that the decision of the Church will be that there was a mistake, that he is not called into the ministry. He will listen humbly to that voice, but it surely is not too much to require that the decision shall be rendered according to the forms of law and under the safeguards which the Church has herself thrown around the rights of the individual—rights so apt to be threatened in any community by the zeal or passions of the majority. Of one thing

he is certain. If he was not called into the ministry of Christ by the action of the Presbyterian Church he was not called into it at all. In such circumstances to treat his refusal to leave as a wanton defiance of the voice of the Church, and a willful disturbance of her peace is totally to ignore both the rights of conscience and the principles on which the Church is founded.

But a second informal charge is contained in the argument of the committee. They accuse me of arrogance and contempt of my fellows—pluming myself on my small attainments in scholarship. If this be so I will ask the pardon of the youngest member of this court. If it be so I will accuse myself of worse heresy than any the committee have discovered. “He that hath not the spirit of Christ is none of his.” “He that receiveth not the kingdom of God as a little child shall not enter therein.” If there is any thing I had supposed myself anxious to avoid it is the pride of attainment. If there is any thing I had supposed myself anxious to cultivate it is the habit of viewing things as a believer in Christ, one of his followers, one who sees light in his light. That I have fallen short of my ideal and of yours in this respect I can very well believe. I beg you not to apply to me a standard too high for human attainment. But while I acknowledge the human infirmity which encompasses us all, I can not find in the passage discussed by the committee the evidence of this accusation. What I say (Rejoinder p. 81) is that “for our present inquiry, the testimony of one exegetical scholar is worth more than that of three systematic theologians.” Remember the point of the inquiry. It is whether a particular doctrine is a doctrine of Scripture. Bearing on this the committee introduced the language of systematic theologians. This language did not assume to expound the Scripture passages but to give a philosophical exposition of the doctrine of inspiration. But this was beside the

point. To decide what the exact force of the Biblical passages is, of course the testimony of a Biblical scholar is of greater value than that of any one else. Otherwise there would be no use in having specialists at all. It was with no reference to the superior value of my own department of study that I used this language but on the common ground that expert testimony in the cases which directly call for that testimony must be of the first importance. In this particular instance therefore I can not convict myself of arrogance or of overweening vanity. And I did not reflect on the ability of the court. Nor did I claim that critics could judge better as to the questions before us than can the members of the court.

But the committee give us a third of these informal charges. They now charge more or less distinctly that I am in the lead of a great host of infidels attacking the Church. I am described as in the lead of the assault. The historic faith of the Church is in danger. The views I advocate are in their tendency destructive of Christianity. The Church is forced to struggle for her very life. It is a case of self preservation. And the committee which a little while ago showed extreme delicacy about discovering private matters to the view of the court does not hesitate to begin their proof of this with the report of a conversation known to but two persons. A pastor and professor we are told had a conversation. The pastor invited the professor to go at certain people with a club. The professor only replied with a faint smile. Now when you are invited to go at a man with a club there may be various reasons for declining. There is such a thing as choice of weapons. Not every man knows how to use a club. The implement used with such grace and skill by your committee might not be as effective in the hands of smaller and less agile men. Then there are clubs and clubs. When a man asks you to go at another with a club and hands you the club you are entitled to

say to him that isn't a club but a *boomerang*—a very different weapon you will acknowledge. Let me illustrate this, for I verily believe there is a lesson here for us. Suppose you own a house—an old family mansion. Part of it was built by the first settlers, part by your grandfather, part by your father. You take pride in it of course and are very happy and comfortable in the possession of it. To you comes a stranger and says: I am a builder and a judge of houses. This house is not as old as you think. It is in fact a modern imitation of various styles very badly mixed. Besides it is so badly built that it will fall to pieces in a little while. It is really uninhabitable now. What do you do? Why says the committee—go at him with a club, there is absolutely no other way to deal with such a fellow. Knock him down and drag him out. Very well! I have no objection, though I do not see how that shows the house to be any stronger. But suppose one of your own children comes to you and says: I have been looking at the house and there are some things not quite clear to me about it. I do not think all of the colonial part is as old as we think it, and I believe the part built fifty years ago has had some changes made in it. Yet I confess it has made a very good home for us, and I do not see why we should not continue to live here as we always have lived here. What will you do with such a child? Why, says the committee he is just as bad as the other. There is nothing for it but the club. And so the poor child must be knocked down and dragged out because he is seeking to establish the beginnings of a great system of errancy.

The committee have given you the key to the situation. A party in Presbytery had a club ready for a brother of our own, a member of another presbytery who is not yet convicted of heresy. I did not consent to the use of the club. I believed the club was more dangerous to its users than to the other

party. I believe so still. I could not conscientiously use it and opposed the use of it by others. This is the very head and front of my offending.

I declined to use the club and opposed the use of it by others. Hence I am become the representative of the *Zeitgeist*—that arrogant and overbearing spirit, tolerant of every thing but Christianity, the same which has always hated and persecuted the Church of God. I am become the accuser of the Presbytery charging it with believing in its religion and with being faithful to its vow to defend the peace and purity of the Church. I am become the cross questioner of the Almighty, the advocate of destructive views, the destroyer of the Church. Moderator, are these things so?

“The Lord judge between me and you.”

Charges II and III are substantially one. Both have to do with the inspiration of the Scriptures; for Charge II states the Holy Spirit's *control* of the inspired writers of the Old Testament as the doctrine impugned; Charge III states the doctrine impugned to be the doctrine of inspiration *in the sense* in which it is attributed to the Holy Scriptures by the Holy Scriptures and the Confession. This was defined by the committee of prosecution to be the doctrine that inspiration secures freedom from error—if inspiration does not secure absolute truth of statement there is no inspiration, was in substance the declaration of the committee. It seems to me impossible therefore to separate the two Charges in thought, and if obliged to argue them separately I should be obliged to make the same speech twice.

The main question before us is one of evidence. And this is of course confined to the particular evidence introduced by your committee. On the details of this I remark the following:

Specification 1 (Charge II) is not sustained by the evidence:

SPECIFICATION 1.

In a pamphlet entitled "Biblical Scholarship and Inspiration," published by the said Rev. Henry Preserved Smith, D. D., in different editions in the year 1891, which pamphlet has been extensively circulated with his knowledge and approval, he teaches that the inspired author of Chronicles has asserted sundry errors of historic fact.—Pages 92, 100, 101, and 102.

The citation on p. 92 discusses Dr. Hodge's doctrine of inspiration, and is entirely covered by Specification 2. It contains no assertion concerning the author of Chronicles. P. 100 characterizes the general method of the Old Testament writers and is entirely covered by Specification 4. P. 102 asserts concerning the Chronicler that he inserts from one source what suits his purpose, and omits a good deal which does not answer his purpose while inserting a good deal from other sources. There is nothing about *asserting* errors of fact.

[What the committee mean here is p. 103 which is entirely covered by Specification 3.]

Specification 2 is partially sustained by the evidence :

SPECIFICATION 2.

In the pamphlet referred to in Specification 1, he teaches that the inspired author of Chronicles has suppressed sundry historic truths, owing to inability or unwillingness to believe them.—Pages 104, 105, 107, and 109.

The citation from p. 104 affirms that the Chronicler omitted sundry statements of fact. Whether this can fairly be called "suppressing them" which is generally associated with intentional falsification is doubtful.

Specification 3 is partially supported by the evidence :

SPECIFICATION 3.

In the pamphlet referred to in Specification 1, he teaches that the inspired author of Chronicles incorporated into his narrative

and indorsed by his authority material drawn from unreliable sources.—Pages 101 and 103:

The citations affirm that the Chronicler incorporated into his narrative material drawn from unreliable sources. Strictly speaking this does not sustain the charge, for material from unreliable sources is not unreliable material—and this alone bears on the charge. Moreover the evidence nowhere shows any assertion that the Chronicler *indorsed* any thing *by his authority*. It is doubtful therefore whether so much of the specification as is established by the evidence can be made to sustain the charge.

Specification 4 is discussed in the Response (p. 18). To affirm that historical documents need investigation, discrimination, and sifting is not to assert that they are historically unreliable. The specification therefore can not be said to be established by the evidence. The true Protestant position is, that the Bible will come out all the more evidently divine from the critical tests that are applied to it.

Specification 5 is not clearly established by the evidence:

SPECIFICATION 5.

In the pamphlet referred to in Specification 1, he teaches the historic unreliability of the inspired author of Chronicles to have been such that "the truth of events" can not be ascertained from what he actually asserts, but from what he unwittingly reveals. Pages 100, 108, 109.

The citation from p. 100 says nothing on the subject of this specification. The citation from p. 108 says: "The Book of Chronicles is invaluable to us, not for what it directly teaches, but for the light which it throws *indirectly* upon its own time." We can not understand the New Testament times without this light, though the committee say: "What do we care what the Jews of the Persian period were thinking?"

What I say might be said by the most stringent advocate of inerrancy, and, of course, would not imply historical unreliability. The citation from p. 109 gives the necessary criteria of a real history. It does not deny inerrancy. It only asserts that an inerrant record does not necessarily give us history.

Specification 6 is not established by the evidence offered :

SPECIFICATION 6.

In the pamphlet referred to in Specification 1, he teaches that the historical unreliability of the inspired author of Chronicles extended to other inspired historic writers of the Old Testament. Page 102.

The pamphlet, on p. 102, only affirms that the Chronicler's *method* is that which we suppose to have been followed by other historical writers, namely, compilation from previously existing sources.

Specification 7 still seems to me not proved by the evidence offered :

SPECIFICATION 7.

In the pamphlet referred to in Specification 1, he teaches that the historic unreliability charged by him upon the inspired historical writers of the Old Testament is chargeable, though in a less degree, upon the inspired writers of the New Testament. Page 115.

All that the passage cited affirms is that there are greater *chances* for error in the Old Testament than in the New. This does not affirm that there are errors in either. It might be postulated at the beginning of an inquiry, which should result in establishing absence of error in both. The committee find in it a suggestion that there are errors in both—but it is only a suggestion, not a logical inference. Compare what is said in the Response, p. 18. [Bibl. Schol. and Insp. p. 114. Illustrated by Hodge, Outlines, p. 72.]

Specification 8, as amended, reads as follows:

SPECIFICATION 8.

In the pamphlet referred to in Specification 1, he teaches that the disclosures of religious experience given by the inspired authors of the Psalms are not in accord with the mind of the Holy Spirit, and free from moral defect.—Page 101.*

The first part of the citation from the pamphlet is the following: "The value of the Book of Job lies in the spectacle of a human soul in the direst affliction, working through its doubts, and at last humbly confessing its weakness and sinfulness in the presence of its Maker. The inerrancy is in the truth of the picture presented. It can not be located in any statement of the author, or of any of his characters. The same is true of the Psalms. They present us a picture of pious experience in all its phases. We see every variety of soul in every variety of emotion. The assertions of the authors can not be taken for absolute truth."

The committee, in their citations, omitted the next two sentences: "Nor can the authors, though doubtless all were sincere believers in God, be taken as sinless models for the Christian. Only Christ is that." These two sentences, which I have no doubt the members of the committee also accept as true, are really the key to what precedes, as well as what follows. The prosecutors themselves do not believe that the authors of the Psalms are models for us in the sense in which Christ is a model for us. But if they admit this, they can not hold, it seems to me, that the experiences disclosed to us in the Psalms are *free from moral defect*, which is the point of the charge. Whose experience is free from moral defect?

* The committee in their argument cited also p. 97 on inaccurate titles.

No saint has such an experience. If it be the mind of the Holy Spirit (and I believe it is; there is certainly no evidence to show that I have denied it), to give us the choice experience of picked men in all conceivable circumstances, it can not yet be an experience free from moral defect, because no such experience exists. When the context is taken into consideration, therefore, the thing asserted is no more than the committee themselves believe. But even if this be not so, then the specification is not relevant to this charge, as was shown by the Response, pp. 20, 21. Charge II has to do with truthfulness of statement, this specification has to do with sinless experience.

Specification 9 is not sustained by the evidence cited:

SPECIFICATION 9.

In the pamphlet referred to in Specification 1, he teaches that the assertions made by the inspired authors of the Psalms are not to be relied upon as absolutely true.—Page 101.

The evidence is cited just above. The particular sentence relied upon to sustain this specification is: "The assertions of the authors can not be taken for absolute truth." The most natural meaning of this language is that the truth of the Book of Psalms can be understood only as the statements are taken *relatively*. This is brought out by the passage following which is part of the testimony cited: "The Psalms present us a record of actual experience of believers in the past. We can study and profit by this experience all the more that it has in it human weakness. The subjects of the experience doubtless had the power of correctly expressing their feelings, but that is not the inerrancy which has been claimed for them, and which the theologians desire. The imprecations, which have been such a stumbling-block to some, are enough to prove this point."

If you allow me to interpret this by the context I will say that the point is the difference between a doctrinal statement and a description of experience. The interest of the advocate of inerrancy is mainly with direct doctrinal assertions. Such statements there are no doubt in the Psalms: "The Lord reigneth; he is clothed with majesty." But when you come to search for them it is wonderful how few of these there are. The bulk of the Book of Psalms is of another character. The assertions made are understood only as we enter into the *feelings* of those who speak. Such assertions can not be taken therefore for *absolute* truth. Inerrancy can not be predicated of them at all except as meaning that the subjects correctly express their experiences, and this inerrancy is affirmed in the passage cited. Notice what is said about the Book of Job. It seems to me quite evident that the *absolute truth* of the book in the sense of the committee only means that the dialogue is correctly reported, which I have no where denied. Now this being so, we still have left the more important problem of the truth of the thing uttered. The committee have already declined to guarantee the truth of Satan's sayings. Will they do any more for Job's three friends? I suspect not. Will they justify Job himself as giving a truthful disclosure of an experience free from moral defect? I doubt it. The despair of a good man overcome by affliction, which leads him to curse the day of his birth, doubt the goodness of God and accuse him of injustice, however profitable it may be, can not be called free from moral defect. It is this characteristic of the Books of Job and Psalms, the element of experience in them, which makes it difficult to discover what statements the authors of this charge have in mind when they predicate of them *absolute truth*. Where is the *absolute* truth of such a statement as this: "O daughter of Babylon that art to be laid waste, happy shall he be that rewardeth thee as thou hast served us. Happy

shall he be that taketh and dasheth thy little ones against the rock?" (Ps. cxxxvii, 8, 9). The *absolute* truth is not our interest, but the experience of God's people.

Specification 1, under Charge III, is not established by the evidence cited.

SPECIFICATION 1.

In a pamphlet entitled "Biblical Scholarship and Inspiration," published by the said Rev. Henry Preserved Smith, D. D., in different editions in the year 1891, which pamphlet has been extensively circulated with his knowledge and approval, he teaches that the inspiration of the Holy Scriptures is consistent with the unprofitableness of portions of the sacred writings.

I may here repeat what I said in the Response (p. 14): "Now, it would be easy to challenge the committee to show from the passage cited, or any other, that I teach an inspiration consistent with unprofitableness. The passage cited is an *argumentum ad hominem*. It simply points out that the emphasis of a verse of Scripture often urged against my view is not on *inspiration* but on *profitableness*. It then asks those who insist on a thoroughly verbal inspiration if they are consistent in equally urging the profitableness of every jot and tittle of Scripture. It is in effect saying, 'let him that is without sin among you cast the first stone.' Whether this was a legitimate argument or not, is not here in point. It was simply an argument from premises admitted by my opponents (at that time, I mean), and contains no assertion of any kind on my part."

The committee insist that when I say (p. 116): "This seems to me the *hardest* part of it," I mean it is *harder* than to believe in inerrancy (which I do not believe). But reference to the passage shows that I mean it is harder to believe the profitableness than the inspiration. The latter, however, I firmly believe in.

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To this evidence the committee now add the note on p. 117 of the pamphlet on "Biblical Scholarship and Inspiration." But this note simply affirms that "the profitableness of *all* Scripture is not realized in *ordinary* Christian experience." But later, on the same page, I *affirm* the abundant profitableness of things not ordinarily made profitable in that they help us to a knowledge of the structure of Scripture.

Specification 3 is perhaps supported by the evidence, though it may well be doubted whether it sustains the charge :

SPECIFICATION 3.

In the pamphlet referred to in Specification I, he teaches that the inspiration of the Holy Scriptures is consistent with such unreliability in their utterances that the truth of events can not be ascertained from their utterances themselves.

The question is what the charge means by "not ascertaining the truths of events from the utterances themselves." If the committee mean that the historical facts of Scripture can be ascertained fully without help from outside sources, I think few will agree with them. For example, the historical truth of the creative days in Genesis—is this ascertained from the utterances of the sacred writer themselves? Is not our full knowledge of this historical truth acquired rather from Genesis and geology combined? This seems to me undeniable. The same question might be put with regard to the chronology of various parts of the Old Testament. The data given by the Old Testament writers are more fully understood by the light given by the Assyrian monuments (for example) so that it seems to me quite legitimate to say that in these cases the truth of events is not ascertained from the Old Testament utterances themselves. But this does not necessarily imply unreliability and would be admitted by the strictest advocate of inerrancy as quite consistent with his theory of inspiration.

Specification 4 is supported to a certain extent by the evidence, though its language is grossly exaggerated :

SPECIFICATION 4.

In the pamphlet referred to in Specification 1, he teaches that the inspiration of the Holy Scriptures is consistent with a bias in the inspired writers, rendering them incapable of recording the truth of events because incapable of believing it.

The natural interpretation of this language is that the inspired writers were *all* so biased as *never* to be capable of recording the truth of events. If it be changed to this: that occasionally the bias of the writers shows itself in their narrative, it would be nearer what is conveyed by the evidence cited.

It seems, therefore, that Specification 8, under Charge II, and Specification 3, under Charge III, are not relevant to those charges. Specifications 1, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 9, under Charge II, and Specification 1, under Charge III, are not proven. Specifications 2 and 3, under Charge II, and Specification 4, under Charge III, are mainly established by the evidence, though they are unfortunately worded and ambiguous. The only Specifications fully established by the evidence are 10 and 11 (with the committee's explanation), under Charge II, and Specification 2, under Charge III.

This evidence, therefore, shows that I have asserted the following points: (1) The Chronicler has omitted from his book sundry statements of fact; (2) the inspiration of the Scriptures is consistent with error of fact in their affirmations; (3) the inspiration of the Scriptures is consistent with a bias of the writers which influences their utterances; (4) that a portion of the Book of Isaiah is by another prophet than Isaiah; and (5) it is impossible on the basis of the

facts as we have them to conclude that the Old Testament Scriptures are free from all error of fact.

The other evidence offered shows the circumstances in which these utterances were made to have been as follows: They were made in a discussion before the Ministerial Association and at the invitation of the Association; they were made really, though not formally, as a part of a debate in Presbytery in which the other side was fully represented; they were made under the conscientious conviction that the overture before Presbytery was likely to injure a member of another Presbytery.

The evidence has failed to show that the publication of the address was any thing but incidental to its delivery in the Association.

The negative form of some of the assertions made in the address is accounted for by the fact of its being an argument and not a treatise.

These considerations should be kept in view as bearing in an important sense on the degree of guilt if guilt there be. They show that the question is largely a question of freedom of discussion. The prosecution do not accuse me of teaching any wrong views in the class-room nor of preaching them from a pulpit. My utterances were called out by a debate in which I had a right to take part, and in which it was my duty to take part. The committee have not alleged any desire on my part to make *propaganda*. Their assertion that there was an attempt to *force* these views upon the Church I have already discussed.

The question then is, is it a crime for a minister in these circumstances to argue that inspiration did not so far remove or overcome the bias natural to the human mind as to make every statement of the inspired writers absolutely true? I have already argued at length that this is neither the doc-

trine of the Confession nor of the Scripture. I will not go over these arguments again. While the Confession recognizes the divine element as pervading Scripture, it makes no affirmation as to the human element. It would be absurd to suppose that the authors of the Confession denied the presence of a human element in Scripture.

The precise point at issue is the co-operation of the human and the divine in Scripture. It was at one time thought necessary to affirm that the divine altogether effaced the human. The inspired writers were called the amanuenses, or even the pens of the Holy Spirit. But this point of view has long been given up. It may now be taken as generally conceded that the writers retained their self-consciousness, their individuality of style, and their own mental idiosyncrasies. In fact it is now admitted by the most conservative that the inspired writers drew on the testimony of others, previously existing written documents, their own memories and reasoning powers. I may quote again here from Professors Warfield and Hodge, who say: "Paul and John and Peter largely drew upon the resources and followed the lines of their own personal religious experience in the intuitional or the logical development of their doctrine." The Holy Spirit, therefore, left considerable play to the human faculties of the authors of the Scriptures. *How much* this was is to be established by inductive study of the writings themselves. For it is entirely arbitrary to draw the line at error of statement while allowing every other human imperfection. We must suppose the Holy Spirit to be in himself possessed of all perfections. Did he not limit himself and condescend to the weakness of his instrument he would be as incapable of a mistake in grammar as of a mistake in arithmetic. The Bible, as it came from God, should be as free from one as from the other. Now, hear Drs. Hodge and Warfield

again: "It must be remembered that it is not claimed that the Scriptures, any more than their authors, are omniscient. The information they convey is in the forms of human thought, and *limited* on all sides. They were not designed to teach philosophy, science, or human history as such. They were not designed to furnish an infallible system of speculative theology. They are written in human languages whose words, inflections, constructions and idioms, *bear everywhere indelible traces of human error*. The record itself *furnishes evidence* that the writers were, in large measure, dependent for their knowledge upon sources and methods *in themselves fallible*; and that their personal knowledge and judgments were, in many matters, hesitating and defective, or *even wrong*."

Again: "There is a vast difference between *exactness* of statement, which includes an exhaustive rendering of details, an absolute literalness, which the Scriptures never profess, and accuracy, on the other hand, which secures a correct statement of facts or principles intended to be affirmed. It is this accuracy, and this alone, as distinct from exactness, which the Church doctrine maintains of every affirmation in the original text of Scripture without exception."* It must be evident that these authors make large concessions to the human element in Scripture. The Holy Spirit, in their view, uses the human mind or human powers without removing *many* natural limitations. Why should we suppose that he always overcomes the tendency to mistake? Or rather why should he stop with making the writers correct *inaccuracies* and yet leave *inexact* or *incomplete* statements? There can be no answer to this except that it pleased him so to do. But how shall we know how much it pleased him to do? Evidently we can know this only by an examination of what he

* Presbyterian Review, 1881, p. 238.

has done. As Drs. Hodge and Warfield well say: "The question between ourselves and the advocates of the view just stated is one of fact, to be decided only by an exhaustive and impartial examination of all the sources of evidence, *i. e.*, the claims and the phenomena of the Scriptures themselves" (p. 237).

It can not be wrong, therefore, reverently to inquire into what the Holy Spirit actually has done in this matter of inspiration. This is in fact the only way to determine what it is his will to do. Take the parallel case of the sanctification of believers. We are told that we are the temples of the Holy Ghost. *A priori* might we not expect that the actual indwelling of God himself would necessarily burn out all sin from the Christian heart? But those who have drawn this conclusion have often been allowed to discover their mistake by sad experiences of sin in their members warring against the Spirit dwelling in their hearts. The natural deduction has to be corrected by the facts.

In an inductive inquiry as to the extent to which the human element is allowed to appear in revelation, we must notice that the tendency to mistake in the apprehension and statement of fact is universal. Dr. McKibbin has said here that not even the professional and scientific historian is free from bias. And it has also been said here, that in courts of law, the examination of the most careful and honest witnesses shows discrepancies almost without exception. The human authors of Scripture in themselves considered, were therefore liable to mistake in the statement of fact as well as in style or grammar.

Another principle should be noted here: God's method of working in this world is the method of practical sufficiency not of absolute ideality. What he proposes to do is the measure of the means by which he does it. Now, the only

light he gives us as to his purpose in giving us a Scripture, is his declaration that it is to make us *wise unto salvation*. As John says in his Gospel (xx, 30, 31): "Many other signs therefore did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written that *ye may believe* that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that *believing ye may have life* in his name." God might have given us a much fuller account of our Lord's life had he so willed. The amount of material was limited by the rule of sufficiency. He gave us enough to bring us into life. If it be God's will to give us, by the hands of fallible men, a rule of faith and practice, we may assume that he will overrule their fallibility so as to make the rule *sufficient* for his purpose. We are not entitled to assume more than this. To speak with Mr. Gladstone:

"No doubt there will be those who will resent any association between the idea of a Divine Revelation and the possibility of even the smallest intrusion of error in the vehicle. But ought they not to bear in mind that we are bound by the rule of reason to look for the same methods of procedure in this great matter of special provision of Divine Knowledge for our needs, as in the other parts of the manifold dispensation under which Providence has placed us. Now, that method or principle is one of sufficiency, not perfection; of sufficiency for the attainment of practical ends, not of conformity to ideal standards. Bishop Butler, I think, would wisely tell us that we are not the judges, and that we are quite unfit to be the judges what may be the proper amount, and the just condition of any of the aids to be afforded us, in passing through the discipline of life. I will only remark that this default of ideal perfection, this use of a twilight instead of a noonday blaze, may be adapted to our weakness, and may be among the appointed means of exercising our

faith. But what belongs to the present occasion is to point out that if probability and not demonstration marks the divine guidance of our paths in life as a whole, we are not entitled to require that when the Almighty, in his mercy, makes a special addition by revelation to what he has already given us of knowledge in nature and in Providence, that special gift should be unlike his other gifts, and should have all its lines and limits drawn out with mathematical precision."

Now I want you to bear in mind that this I heartily agree with, or rather, as we are dealing with the evidence presented: The evidence does not show that I deny this *sufficient* inspiration of *all parts* of Scripture. The question is whether, because I do not go on and affirm more than this, I can be found guilty of a crime against the Scriptures and the Confession. And my first point is: If the *facts* of Scripture are against affirming more than this, it can not be wrong not to affirm more. Reasoning on the *phenomena* of the Scriptures is as legitimate as reasoning on their *assertions*. And when we come to examine the facts, we find that even the upholders of inerrancy concede some things with which we must reckon. One of these is the statement concerning the human element in Scripture, already quoted from Drs. Hodge and Warfield. Several similar concessions might be added from the same authors. If my view of inspiration is beyond the pale of the Confession, theirs also must be; for the Confession nowhere makes such concessions as that the language of Scripture shows "indelible traces of human error," or that "the record itself furnishes evidence that the personal knowledge and judgments [of the writers] were in many matters hesitating, or even wrong." Again, Dr. Green says:

"The denial of inerrancy in the *minima* of Scripture, in trivialities which are of no account, and neither disparage the truthfulness of the narrative, nor in any way affect its

doctrinal statements, is compared by Dr. Charles Hodge (Systematic Theology, Vol. I, p. 170) to the detection of a speck of sandstone here and there in the marble of the Parthenon. If this were all, it need create no uneasiness."—Dr. W. H. Green, in N. Y. Observer, April 16, 1891.

And here let me say that the distinction between supposed *minima* and supposed *maxima* in the sphere we have in mind, is not legitimate. If there be inerrancy, it must extend to the smallest as well as to the largest matters. It is, in fact, impossible for us to draw any such line. Who shall say that the chronology of the Old Testament, in which so many conceded discrepancies occur, shall be called a minimum? The only legitimate line is between things essential to the rule of faith and things not essential to the rule of faith. Infallibility in the former is conceded on all hands. Inerrancy in the latter must be judged by a careful induction of the facts.

Now it would seem that an inerrant book should show its difference from other books on its face. Being unlike other books, we ought to have no difficulty in discovering this fact. But as to its human elements, the Bible is abundantly human. Its self-evidencing infallibility is of quite a different order from the appeal to the understanding which inerrancy should make. On the surface of Scripture, as Drs. Hodge and Warfield concede, are undoubtedly found "many apparent affirmations presumably inconsistent with the present teachings of science, with facts of history, or with other statements of the sacred books themselves." The burden of proof, therefore, rests with those who deny the legitimate conclusion from these surface facts. It rests upon them to show, by careful examination, that these apparent errors of statement are only apparent. Can they do this? Have they done it?

It is, of course, not my purpose to give any list of these apparent errors, or any extended discussion of them. Let

me call your attention to one significant fact. If it were the mind of the Holy Spirit completely to overrule natural bias of the writers of Scripture, he would certainly do so in the record of those facts most important to our faith. But he has not done so even here. For example: The two copies of the Decalogue, given respectively in Exodus and Deuteronomy do not *verbally* agree. Besides minor variations, each has in the Fourth Commandment a whole clause not contained in the other. Now here is the very foundation testimony of the Old Covenant. It consists of the words spoken by God himself, and afterward written down on two tables of stone by his own finger. If there ever was a case where diplomatic exactness was important, this is the case. Yet even here the Holy Spirit did not so control the mind of the writers as to make the two copies agree *verbatim*. The case is the same, as we know, with the Lord's Prayer. It was the prayer Christ taught his disciples. Yet in transmitting it to us, the memories of these disciples were not guided into an inerrant report, so that we can know the exact words which our Lord himself used. The case of the inscription on the Cross is too well known to require discussion. If inerrancy was to be made evident to us, it should have been here. What is true of this is true of the words of institution of the Lord's Supper. Now, what I say is this: Had it been the mind of God to *overrule bias*, so as to secure absolute truth in every statement, he would have done it in these passages so fundamental to the being of the Church. That he has allowed variations here, strengthens the presumption that he has not been particular to overrule them elsewhere. Bear in mind that I do not charge unreliability on the witnesses in these cases. All I say is that their variations are the same in kind with those of other *reliable* witnesses. The existence of the variations shows that the human element was not so overruled as to se-

cure absolute accuracy—an accuracy unlike what we find in other cases of honest testimony.

Such instances as these are *prima facie* against the theory of inerrancy. But careful examination shows in the historical portions of the Old Testament much more pronounced facts than these. No one, to my knowledge, has questioned my statement of facts in regard to Kings and Chronicles. I may assume that the facts as I have stated them, are substantially correct. What do they show? They show that the Chronicler made up his book largely by compiling from other sources. In this work he had his own point of view, which influenced his choice of material. Dr. W. H. Green very rightly says, in commenting on I. Sam. xxxi, 10: "Chronicles which was less concerned with what became of Saul than with the transfer of the kingdom to David, makes no mention of the disposition of Saul's body. In this narrative Samuel and Chronicles each contain particulars not found in the other, and thus mutually complete each other. This makes it plain that one was not derived directly from the other, but that both were drawn from a common original, which each abridged in its own way, selecting what was most in accordance with its purpose, and omitting some things which the other retained."* Here we have rightly stated the method in which the human element was allowed to come into the book. The authors are influenced by their own point of view. They meet concrete needs of the hour. They write on particular occasions, and they avail themselves of material already existing in literary form. This is a complex process. Only on the ground of express declarations of Scripture itself can we say that the natural liability to mistake which attends the whole process, is so overruled as to se-

* S. S. Times, September 7, 1889.

cure absolute truthfulness of every statement incorporated in the narrative. Now look at a parallel instance. The Apostles, as we know, had special divine help for their work of founding the Church. They were full of the Spirit. A part of the work of founding the Church was the example of their own Christian life. "So walk," says Paul, "as ye have us for examples." Now, as if expressly to show us that *this* indwelling of the Holy Spirit, which was vouchsafed in so large measure, did not secure absolute perfection, we are told that Peter, in Antioch, was carried away by the example of the Jewish party, and "dissembled with them." Might we not, *a priori*, have reasoned that one of the chief Apostles in his official intercourse with the young Gentile Church would have been divinely guided so as not to be a stumbling block to the new converts? The case seems to me quite parallel to the one we are considering. It was so taken in the early Church, and it caused some of the Fathers as much searching of heart as does the intimation of possible error in the record of Scripture to some Christians nowadays. The case is this: Peter, a recognized Apostle and leader of the Church, came to Antioch. At first he exercised his Christian liberty, and ate with Gentile converts. But when certain came from James who belonged to the stricter Jewish party, and who held on to the Jewish exclusiveness, Peter "drew back and separated himself, fearing them of the circumcision." This example affected the whole Jewish element of the Church, for they "dissembled likewise with him; insomuch that even Barnabas was carried away with their dissimulation." Paul was obliged to interfere with an open rebuke, and resist Peter to the face. In a young and growing Church, which needed next to the direct preaching of the Word, the consistent and edifying example of its divinely commissioned leaders, we see the very reverse. Peter is wavering and hypocritical, the

Judaizing missionaries are narrow and bigoted. Paul and Peter are at variance. Yet all parties have the promise of guidance into *truth*, and truth of word is not sufficient without truth of life. So scandalized were some of the Fathers by this state of affairs that they supposed the whole scene to be *contrived* by Peter and Paul. Peter agreed, that is, that he would join the Judaizers in order to give Paul an opportunity to rebuke them *through him*. Whether this hypothesis betters matters I leave you to judge. I only bring it in here to show the real difficulty in the co-operation of the human and the divine. The Holy Spirit certainly is not *chargeable* with Peter's timeserving, or with Barnabas' unworthy following of a bad example. Yet Barnabas was one of the men *full of the Holy Ghost*. What I am saying is that this case may be parallel with the case of inspiration of the record of Scripture. We can not go upon *a priori* theories in one case any more than in the other. The co-existence of the divine and the human does not make the divine chargeable with the errors of the human in one case any more than in the other. In the one case, as in the other, we must inquire into the evidence of the facts. The evidence of the facts seems to me to justify the conclusion that inspiration secured a *sufficient* infallibility, *i. e.*, an infallibility such as we need in a rule of faith and practice. More than this, we are not authorized to affirm. It has been said that the Holy Spirit is chargeable with the errors of the inspired writers. I can not see it. When Drs. Warfield and Hodge say no one now claims that inspiration secured the use of good Greek, do they charge the *Holy Spirit* with not using good Greek? When the same authors say that the Scriptures are written in human language, whose words, inflections, constructions and idioms bear every-where indelible traces of human error, do they mean that the *language of the Holy Spirit* bears every-where indelible traces

of human error? If we are to assert that where the Holy Spirit is, there can be no imperfection, we shall simply rule the Holy Spirit out of human history, and out of human hearts. To assert that the Holy Spirit is present in the whole history of the Church, is not to assert that human error is absent from the whole history of the Church.

We are looking at the charges and the evidence by which they are supported. My contention is that if the theory of inspiration which is implied in the pamphlet be in accordance with the facts of Scripture it can not be contrary to the statements of Scripture. Let us look at another of these facts, one which was alluded to in the discussion of the sufficiency of the charge. As we all know the Holy Spirit uses the expressions the sun rises, the sun sets and the four corners of the earth. On one notable occasion the sun stood still in the midst of heaven. It is argued that these expressions now deceive no one. But two and a half centuries ago how was it? The plain Christian was then confronted with a new theory concerning the relation of the sun to the earth. He had a right to argue that these expressions on the face of them expressed the old theory. They were so understood when first used, they had always been so understood until a few astronomers had brought forward their new tangled theory. On the ground of inerrancy these Christian people would be right. If the Holy Spirit indorses as his own and therefore as absolutely true, every expression which he uses, then he indorsed the geocentric theory of the universe. The fact that now we have no difficulty with these expressions shows simply that we have adjusted ourselves to them. Such an adjustment is going on all the time. The very fact that it goes on disproves the theory of the prosecution.

Now let me allude to a phenomenon which I venture to say throws additional light on the method of inspiration. If the

theory of inerrancy is verifiable anywhere it must be in the harmony of the New Testament with the Old. The New Testament every-where presupposes the Old Testament and argues from its texts as premises. If the care of God were a literal and verbal accuracy it should be visible in the exact correspondencce of these two—the Old Testament text and the New Testament application. Remember the point at issue. It is not whether there is *material* variation. It is not whether the New Testament writer makes a legitimate application of what he quotes. It is whether the *absolute truthfulness* which according to the committee is secured to every statement of Scripture is verified by the New Testament quotation. Here we must consider such facts as the following :

Matt. ii, 23. "He came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets; he shall be called a Nazarene." The formula used by the Evangelist is the one used elsewhere to introduce quotations from the Old Testament. But no such text is found in the Old Testament. A similar case is James iv, 6, already noticed in my Response. Now if it had been the will of God to give us an inerrant Scripture would he not have made the writers avoid these inaccuracies of reference? In John vii, 38, our Lord says: "He that believeth in me, as the Scripture saith, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living waters." The formula of quotation is the same used elsewhere. But no such passage is found in the Old Testament, and the commentators have difficulty in finding those that remotely suggest it. Whether the Evangelist inserted the words "as saith the Scripture" by a mistake of memory, or whether our Lord gave the substance of some Old Testament promise, makes no difference to us here. On either hypothesis we can not secure more than substantial correctness if even that. But your



committee insist upon *absolute truthfulness* of every statement and will be content with nothing less.

In looking at this and some similar cases one is tempted to say that the advocates of inerrancy do not know the facts of the Bible. The question is whether on the theory of inerrancy the New Testament writers could be allowed to quote an Old Testament passage in a wrong translation. When the Holy Spirit who is omniscient as well as truth itself says *thus it is written*, must he not give us *exactly* what is written? If he is not to allow the play of the human memory he uses even to the extent of some inaccuracy we are shut up to this conclusion. So it is the theory of inaccuracy which charges the error on the Holy Spirit, not the view of the pamphlet which attributes the error to the bias of the human author. For example, Paul says (Rom. xv, 21): "*As it is written, They shall see to whom no tidings of him came, and they who have not heard shall understand.*" The quotation is from Is. lii, 15, where we read: "*That which hath not been told them shall they see; and that which they have not heard shall they understand.*" The sense of the two forms of the passage is entirely different. Paul makes it affirm the spread of the Gospel to *new regions*. Isaiah declares a revelation of *new truths*. Notice no one questions Paul's right to express his thought in any words that are appropriate or to use in illustration of his thought any quotation he chooses. The sole question is whether on the theory of *inerrancy* he can say *it is written*, and then introduce not that which is written but something else. The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews does the same thing. He quotes the Old Testament from the Septuagint even where that differs materially from the Hebrew text. In x, 5, we have an example where we read, "Wherefore when he cometh into the world he saith: Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not. But a *body didst thou prepare* for me." This is a quota-

tion from Psalm xl, 6, where we find "Sacrifice and offering thou hast no delight in, *ears hast thou digged for me.*" The New Testament author quotes the Psalm as the words of Christ and this he had a right to do. There is no question of the aptness of the citation. But on the theory of inerrancy could he introduce a quotation from a messianic Psalm and not give it in the exact meaning of the original? The same author in his second chapter (11-13) puts together three Old Testament passages in these words: "For both he that sanctifieth and they that are sanctified are all of one, for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethern, saying: I will declare thy name unto my brethren. In the midst of the congregation will I sing praise. And again: I will put my trust in him. And again: *Behold I and the children which God hath given me.*" It is this last passage which makes the difficulty. The author evidently makes it an assertion by Christ of his oneness with his disciples. I venture to say that one who had paid no attention to the subject would be nothing less than astounded to turn to the Old Testament original which is Is. ix, 18: "Behold I and the children whom the Lord hath given me are for signs and for wonders in Israel from the Lord of hosts who dwelleth in Mount Zion." Now note the point here. We are not discussing the right of the author to adapt an Old Testament passage to his argument. The question is whether *on the theory of inerrancy* he has a right to quote an Old Testament passage with a meaning which it does not contain. For it is evident that here a fragment of an Old Testament sentence by being broken out of its context is made to say what the original does not say. I say again, if it had been the intention of the Holy Spirit to give us absolute truthfulness of every statement of the inspired writers, he would not have put these stumbling blocks in the way.

But there are some other facts which bear on the subject to which I wish briefly to advert. In the early Church as we know there were especial manifestations of the divine presence called *charismata*, or gifts of the Holy Spirit. They were in some ways analogous to that particular gift of the Spirit which fitted the prophets for their work. If the Holy Spirit never uses the powers of men without overruling all tendency to mistake we should expect to find in connection with these gifts the same complete absence of bias or error which the theory of inerrancy postulates for the sacred writers. And among these gifts that which takes the highest rank is the gift of *prophecy*. Concerning this we should have an especial right to postulate an inerrancy, similar to that which is given to the writers of Scripture. For the possessors of this gift assume the name of the organs of the Old Testament revelation. Their office is said to be the edification of the Church. They are named next to the Apostles among the officers which God has bestowed upon the Church. They are expressly said to receive revelations, 1 Cor. xiv, 30. If the activity of the Holy Spirit must be unmistakably free from the admixture of human error we should expect it to be so here. But when we look at the New Testament intimations we are surprised that this is nowhere asserted. Rather do we find the contrary implied. Paul for example (Rom. xii, 6) cautions the possessors of the gift to let it be according to the proportion of faith. He evidently means that this divine inspiration does not itself determine the measure of its expression; but that the recipient of it needs care and judgment not to let the expression go beyond the assurance given him by his faith in Christ. This assumes the possibility of the human error coming in to the expression of the supernatural revelation. In another passage the Apostle intimates the same possibility when he says: "Let the prophets speak by two or three and let the others discrim-

inate," (1 Cor. xiv, 29). Here what is said by way of revelation is submitted to the judgment of the others present who are allowed to judge how far it is the work of the Spirit. And Paul seems to put himself on the level with these prophets when he says in the text already discussed (v. 37): "If any man thinketh himself to be a prophet or spiritual, let him take knowledge of the things which I write unto you that they are a commandment of the Lord." Confident of the genuineness of his own revelation he submits it fearlessly to their judgment. Elsewhere he protests that even he has not lordship over their faith, (2 Cor. i, 24). Perhaps most significant of all in this connection is the exhortation: "Quench not the Spirit, despise not prophesyings, (*but many MSS*) prove all things, hold fast that which is good," (1 Thess. v, 20, 21).

I am not arguing that these texts directly assert any thing concerning the inspiration of the Biblical writers. But it has been asserted or intimated on the floor of this house that if the Biblical writers ever made a mistake, the mistake was chargeable to the Holy Spirit. It has been intimated by the prosecution that the denial of inerrancy leads logically to blasphemy against the Holy Ghost—that sin which hath never forgiveness either in this world or in that which is to come. It is only proper if this be the case, if we are approaching the brink of that awful crime against our Sanctifier, that we should inquire into the analogies of the Spirit's action. And the nearest analogy is certainly that extraordinary presence of the Spirit in the early Church, which made all its parts to grow up into him which is the head even Christ. Did these extraordinary gifts secure complete immunity from human error even in the communicating of revealed truth? All the indications are against it. The analogy should make us cautious in arguing on the similar gift of inspiration.

One of the prosecution affirmed that inspiration (by which

he meant the inspiration of the Biblical writers) is "such an influence as made the organ of it God's mouth piece. The inspired writers identify their utterances with God's—their right to speak is that they are commissioned by God." The difficulty with this assertion is that the moment we begin to apply it rigidly we are obliged to make exceptions. When Paul says for example: "I thank God that I baptized none of you save Crispus and Gaius; lest any man should say that ye were baptized into my name. I baptized also the household of Stephanas; besides I know not whether I baptized any other," (1 Cor. i, 14, 15)—the human element is too palpable to be explained away. Paul's memory is evidently uncertain on the point he is discussing. His first impression is that he baptized but two members of the Corinthian Church. Afterwards he recalls another household. He is apparently uncertain whether there may not be still others. There is no certain error here. But the human element is so prominent that we can not assert that the utterance of the author is identical with that of the Spirit of God. This single instance is enough to overthrow the theory that the writers of the Bible every-where identify their utterances with God's utterances. The fact that the authors of Scripture are moved by the needs of the hour has already been adverted to. How can we understand Luke's saying that it seemed good to him as well as others who had undertaken to draw up a narrative concerning those matters which have been fulfilled among us, to write them in order, *having traced the course of all things accurately from the first?* Is this *Luke* which studied the documents received from the eye-witnesses and ministers of the Word, or is it the Holy Spirit? Evidently we can not identify the utterances of the two. And when Paul says we know *in part* and we prophesy *in part*, he evidently does not claim for himself the omniscience of the Spirit.

No doubt you all admit the force of these texts to a certain extent. I do not bring them up as conclusive of any theory, but as showing the complexity of the problem. The co-operation of the Spirit of God and the human will is a matter so difficult to understand that it becomes us to be modest whenever we approach it. That the activity of the Spirit overrules *all* limitations of humanity, no one of us believes. To affirm that it allows defects of language and defects of memory to show themselves, and yet to affirm that no trace of *bias* of any other kind is allowed to remain, can be justified only by extremely distinct and unmistakable affirmations of Scripture. And these I claim have not yet been brought to light. And the theory, if true, ought to have the facts of Scripture on its side, as well as the assertions of Scripture.

Among the facts of Scripture which have been discussed of late as bearing on this subject, there is one to which I will advert briefly, for it is as good for purposes of illustration as any other. In the two lists of unclean animals in Leviticus xi and Deut. xiv, we find the coney described as an animal which chews the cud but does not divide the hoof. As no one has yet been able to discover a cud-chewing coney the example has been urged and, as seems to me, successfully urged, against the theory of inerrancy. The only answer I have ever heard from the inerrancists is this: That the coney is an unknown animal and may have been a ruminant. It would probably be answer enough to this to say that the coney is as well known to us as nine-tenths of the animals mentioned in the Old Testament. In fact there can be no reasonable doubt of its identity, and that it is not a cud-chewing animal. But those who thus took refuge in their ignorance overlooked a nearly related fact. Along with the coney the *hare* is mentioned in both passages, and it also is described as chewing the cud. The hare is still abundant in Syria. Its Hebrew

name is the name given to it in Syriac, Chaldee, Arabic, Modern Hebrew and apparently in Assyrian also. There can be no reasonable doubt, therefore, that the Biblical assertion in both passages is incorrect. Where now are the men who assert* that "a proved error in Scripture contradicts not only our [their] doctrine but the Scripture claims and therefore its inspiration in making those claims?" Their doctrine is gone and the claims of Scripture as well; and, as we have heard from this platform, the whole Christian system and even the truth of natural religion goes with it. The absurdity of such a conclusion shows that one of the premises is wrong. The one which is wrong is the one which makes the truth of Christianity depend on the truth of every statement in the Biblical books.

The usual method of evading the difficulty into which the advocates of inerrancy are brought by such facts as these, is to say that the errors may have come in by transcription. This is Mr. Lowe's language: "If there be discrepancies that can not otherwise be explained, they can be accounted for upon the supposition of error in transmission." Now, here is a point which needs elucidation. For there is a science of text criticism. The advocates of inerrancy are inclined to make it the only legitimate criticism. This science is able to judge, with some degree of accuracy, what sort of errors come in by transmission. And I believe I can say that the unanimous judgment of the text critics is that transmission will not account for one in a hundred of the discrepancies on the surface of Scripture. "On the *ipsissima verba* original autograph theory," says Dr. Evans,† "textual criticism, as it restores to us the purer, more original form of the text,

*Hodge and Warfield, p. 245.

†Biblical Scholarship and Inspiration, p. 37.

should tend to eliminate these discrepancies, and to bring the various representatives into closer harmony with each other. What is the fact? The very reverse. The more *corrupt* the text the smoother it is, the more in harmony with itself, the more do we find both of verbal and material assimilation in parallel passages. The older and purer the text the rougher we find it, the more striking are its individualities, the more sharply accentuated are the *differences*, the less conformity do we find to a standard of infallible exactitude." Dr. Evans gives a number of examples which show this very plainly. But we are not dependent on the evidence of the experts. The Revised Version puts into every one's hands a means of judging just what textual criticism will do. For it is morally certain that the Revised Version is considerably nearer the original autograph than is the Authorized Version. In other words, the errors of transcription in the Authorized Version have been largely removed in the Revised Version. Have the discrepancies and apparent errors of statement also disappeared? I know of but one instance in which a real difficulty (to the theory of inerrancy, I mean) has been removed by the return to a purer text, while in a number of instances the difficulty has been brought more sharply into view.

Another statement often made loosely on this subject is that difficulties are disappearing under the light of modern discovery, and we have only to wait for more light, and the absolute inerrancy of the Scriptures will be vindicated. The state of the case here is not unlike what we have seen to be true of textual criticism. Some difficulties have been removed, and the *general* accuracy of that portion of Old Testament history which comes into contact with Assyrian history has been confirmed. But the minute accuracy which inerrancy calls for has been made, if any thing, more doubtful by these discov-



eries. The Old Testament Chronology, for example, has had to be readjusted by the Assyrian data.

In view of these facts you will readily understand that the authors of the pamphlet could not honestly see the Presbytery committed to the theory of inerrancy. But the question raised by the prosecution will be said perhaps to be the narrower one of the doctrine of the Presbyterian Church. What I have been saying bears on this problem also. For it would be suicidal to commit the Presbyterian Church to a doctrine opposed to the facts of Scripture. Not to emphasize this at present, let us now look at the relation of the pamphlet to the Confessional doctrine. And the first point I make is that the pamphlet nowhere directly contradicts the doctrine of the Confession. A polemic is not an all-round treatise. The addresses on "Biblical Scholarship and Inspiration" were not written as a treatise on inspiration, but as an argument against inerrancy. The objections of the committee and others that my doctrine of inspiration is not clear to them, are not well taken. I am not obliged to formulate any doctrine of inspiration. My address was not designed to formulate any such doctrine. As Dr. Roberts pointed out, it would be going beyond my province to formulate a positive doctrine on this or any other department of dogmatic theology. As an exegete it is my duty to deal with the facts of Scripture, and state them. It is the duty of the theologians to make their theory accord with these facts, and if the theory is not in accord with the facts, the fault does not lie with the facts. And, as I have remarked, no one has yet shown that the facts of the Scripture record have been misstated or misrepresented in the pamphlet.

It is only necessary, therefore, for me to affirm the main statement of the Confession that the Word of God is the only infallible rule of faith and practice, and challenge the committee to show any thing in the pamphlet which contradicts this.

They have not done it and they can not do it. What they have done is to affirm that a book can not be an infallible rule of faith and practice without being inerrant in its every statement. But this only brings the committee into hopeless difficulty. For on their own confession there are discrepancies in the present text of Scripture. Its authority as a rule of faith is therefore gone with its inerrancy. I see no escape from this difficulty. The pious opinion that there once existed inerrant autographs is a pious opinion only. It does no harm until it is forced as the doctrine of the Church. It has no practical bearing on the life of the Church, and may be allowed as a harmless but unverifiable hypothesis. But the great fundamental doctrines of the Church are of practical importance. They deal with the present Bible as a rule of present belief and of present life. From this point of view the Confession must be judged. And, first, it is clear that the Confession will have nothing to do with original autographs different from our present Hebrew and Greek texts. The contrary has been intimated, but a glance at the language of the Confession dissipates the delusion.

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

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ship him in acceptable manner, and through patience and comfort of the Scriptures may have hope."

The main interest of the section is evidently in an authentic copy of the Scriptures *for present reference* in controversies of religion. The Roman Catholic Church had directed that the Vulgate version having attained currency in the Church should be the standard in all controversy. It was especially against the Roman Catholic affirmation that this section of the Confession was directed. It emphasizes the present Greek and Hebrew copies as being the fountain-head from which the versions flow. It stands to reason that the fountain is purer than the stream. It was probably with reference to the Vulgate which the framers of the Confession supposed to have been corrupted by the tradition of the Church, that they emphasized also the purity of the Greek and Hebrew texts. The only *originals* they have in mind are the present copies *in the original* languages. This is evident if we try to insert the original autographs. We should then read:

"The original autograph copies being immediately inspired of God *were*, and so far as they can be recovered by text criticism *still are* authentic, so as in all controversies of religion, the Church is finally to appeal to them."

The absurdity of such a statement is seen at a glance. It makes the standard of faith to be an unknown quantity, and makes the decision in all controversies of religion dependent upon the as yet imperfect science of text criticism. I do not know how to make it plainer that the original autographs were never in the mind of the Westminster man as differing from our present Scriptures. Unless the standard of faith is to be impaired, we must affirm with the Confession that the Scriptures have been kept pure in all ages. But in affirming this we all agree that we mean not that *no* error has crept in,

but that the infallibility of the rule of faith has not been impaired. But if this infallibility has not been impaired by error of transmission, it is not absurd to affirm that it may originally have co-existed with error in the autograph.

The doctrine of our Church has been said to be established by the terms of reunion and the action of the Assembly of 1874. But this I deny *in toto*. It is beyond the power of the Assembly to define the doctrine of the Church. What is meant is that these Assemblies declared the majority of the Church to hold a certain view of inspiration. But this does not make it the faith of the Church. The faith of the Church is formulated in the Confession. The Assembly can interpret the Confession by way of judicial decision, not otherwise. The resolution of the last Assembly can not add to the Confession what is not there already.

It comes then to the question : is the doctrine of the committee found in the Confession? Notice, their doctrine is that of the *absolute truth* of every statement of the Scriptures. It is not, as they are now inclined to say, the historic reliability of the whole Bible. The committee seem to think a book can not be historically reliable which is not inerrant. In which case they would not have any reliable history outside the Bible at all. But the question is one of inspiration, and I must make one more attempt to get before your side some distinctions which the committee are inclined to ignore. They object to my definition of *Biblical* inspiration [Response, p. 55], as if I recognized only this inspiration and no other. They quote and misrepresent my affirmation that something is *technically called* inspiration, as if I meant that technical inspiration is not *real* inspiration. I beg you to notice the difference in the use of words. The *Biblical* idea of inspiration and the *theological* idea of inspiration are different. Both may be justified as correct, but they are not the same.

Biblical inspiration, *i. e.*, *inspiration in the Biblical sense* is generally associated with *revelation*. This is what I meant by describing Biblical inspiration as a divine *afflatus* carrying the man along so that he can not resist. I mean, the idea of inspiration which we find in the Bible is here defined for us. Let us look at it a little more closely. The word inspiration, as I have said, occurs nowhere in the Old Testament, and but once in the New Testament. But the thing is often described in the Old Testament. It is the extraordinary activity of the Holy Spirit fitting men to do certain things. So in Judges iii, 10, it leads Gideon to deliver Israel. In Judg. xiv, 6, the Spirit of the Lord comes mightily upon Samson, and he rends the lion like a kid. Bezaleel was filled with the Spirit of God . . . to devise cunning works, to work in gold, in silver, and brass; . . . to work in all manner of workmanship. But its commonest function is to fit the organ of revelation for his work. The *prophet* is distinctly the man of the Spirit. It is unnecessary for me to quote examples. The coming of the Spirit upon the prophet was the method by which God put his words into his mouth. The possessor of this inspiration is for the time being the organ of the divine will. He identifies his utterances with the utterances of God himself. This I say is the Biblical *idea* of inspiration. It always goes with revelation, I do not confuse revelation with inspiration—I distinguish between the Biblical and the theological idea of inspiration. Biblical language always associates inspiration and revelation. At least I have called hitherto in vain for a text which connects inspiration with the activity of the scribe as distinguished from the prophet.

Now theological usage is different. Theology needs a word to connote another activity of the Holy Spirit. It takes the word inspiration for this purpose. This is what I mean when

I say this influence is *technically called* inspiration. There is nothing about a *technical inspiration* which Mr. Lowe supposes to be distinguished from a *real* inspiration. When I say that the technical theological sense of a word is different from the Biblical sense, I do not mean that both senses are not justified by the facts. If we are to discuss the organizing principle of Scripture we must have a name for it. Inspiration is the name the theologians have chosen. What I am concerned to point out is that there are two senses of the word, and that there is a difference between theological and Biblical usage. In theology inspiration is the organizing principle of the books. In the Bible itself inspiration is the activity of the Spirit which fits the organs of *revelation* for their work. Now if this distinction is clearly grasped it shows that a member of the court was mistaken in thinking that I confound inspiration and revelation. To show this let me call your attention to page 31 of the response, where I say:

“Now, up to this point we are all agreed. All parties here acknowledge the following points: (a) The Bible contains a revelation from God. (b) It contains other material not in the proper sense revealed. (c) This material is of importance to us because of its bearing on the history of revelation. (d) This material was chosen and arranged by men acting under a distinct influence of the Holy Spirit, which influence we call technically *inspiration*; and (e) the result is a book which in its totality is the Church’s permanent and infallible rule of faith and life. I say, all parties agree up to this.”

The point in which parties differ is the extent of this activity which *in theology* we call inspiration. It is an activity concerned in collecting (in the parts of the Bible now in view) and arranging literary material from all available sources. It led the writers of the books to make the books. It led them to make the books out of this complex material. Now



I submit that the extent of this activity, the extent to which it overruled natural bias, may rightly be made the subject of inquiry, and that that inquiry must not proceed on the assumption that the material so used is necessarily corrected from error when incorporated in the Biblical book. To take the example of the Chronicler. When he introduced into his narrative statements so seemingly contradictory to those in the books of Kings, did he correct the errors which we may naturally suppose were already in them? I say, we have no reason to think so. This is the point of my question about the Holy Spirit making use of a quotation. I did not allude to the comparatively rare cases in which a Biblical author avowedly quotes from another writer. I meant those cases (like the Chronicler) in which a book is made up by compilation. Can the Holy Spirit not lead a man to compile a book without leading him to correct every mistake in the material which he uses without avowedly quoting? The committee gives a negative answer to this question. This I can not do. And here is just the point of difference. I have no interest in modern Biblical science except to acknowledge honestly the facts it brings to light. Among these facts unmistakably is this—that the historical books of the Old Testament are very largely compilations from previously existing documents. If this be a fact we must acknowledge it and must give room for it in our doctrine of inspiration. But the doctrine as held by your committee refuses to acknowledge this fact. At least it seems to me unable to allow it. This doctrine insists in its full vigor that every affirmation of the Biblical authors is the direct affirmation of God himself. What I say is: we must distinguish. It is only in a secondary sense that we can say compiled books are the works of the compiler. It depends on how extensive his activity was. The theory of superintendence held by Messrs. Hodge and Warfield is as inconsistent

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with the theory of your committee as is mine. Does the Holy Spirit by *superintending* the work of compilation make every affirmation of the book compiled *his own*, so that he is chargeable with the statements of the book? It seems to me not so. But your committee would hardly want to rule me out of the Church by a test that would have excluded the sainted Archibald Alexander Hodge, and would exclude his brilliant successor the present Professor of Theology at Princeton. The only difference between these gentlemen and myself is that they insist on a superintendence that excluded *certain* forms of error (inaccuracies that is) but not other forms of error. How much error it excluded I hold we must fix by *interpretation* as your committee would say.

And now what have I said about the Confession of Faith? Its main interest is in the Word of God in Scripture—this is what I said about it and this I still maintain. Its main interest is in the direct revelation, that is, which forms the heart of Scripture. This is the part most prominently in the mind of the authors when they speak of the Word of God, because without this (the revelation) the Scripture would lose its value. In predicating what they do of all Scripture however they recognize that whatever the Sacred Books contain is by its association with the revelation and its bearing on it also (though in a subordinate sense) the Word of God. This I have never denied. What I have refused to do is to draw the conclusion that human error must be absent from every part because divine truth is present in every part. Where the human and the divine coexist we can not always so conclude. The sinlessness of our Lord which is often held up as an analogue, is abundantly testified in Scripture.

But I wish to notice again the statement I have already made that it is contrary to analogy to affirm a doctrine to be a *fundamental* doctrine of the Confession when it is not clearly

stated in the Confession itself. To take any other ground is to open the door to any amount of arbitrary construction, and to read into the Confession fundamental doctrines without end. The most disastrous principle to the formulation of any creed whatever as a test of doctrine would be this. And in this particular connection I beg your attention to the argument made in the court that the doctrine of the historic trustworthiness (by which in order to the decision of the case before you must be understood the *entire* historic trustworthiness) of the Scriptures "*underlies* the whole Confessional doctrine and requires no explicit and formal statement, just as the doctrine of the divine existence underlies the Scriptures themselves, and does not require a formal statement. For both in the Scriptures and in the Confession there are some things which constitute the bed rock of faith, the statement of which would be mere surplusage." I must dissent from these propositions because they seem to me to ignore the essential difference between Scripture and Confession. In the Scriptures fundamental truth may be under the surface as the foundation, without distinct and categorical assertion. But the Confession exists to *state* doctrine. Its very reason for existence is that it may bring into distinct formulation the doctrines of Scripture. To assert that fundamental doctrine underlies the Confession is to affirm the deficiency of the Confession and its inadequacy to the very purpose that called it into existence.

But more than this may be said. Granting, for the moment, that the divine existence is nowhere affirmed in the Scriptures, but simply underlies them, we can easily show the fundamental character of this doctrine by trying to abstract it from them. Denying the divine existence simply reduces the Scriptures to inanity. Take away that foundation stone and the whole fair structure falls into shapeless heaps of rubbish. But can we say the same of the doctrine of the absolute his-

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toric truthfulness of Scripture in its relation to the Confession? Withdraw this from the foundation; is the building disturbed? It seems to me not. Separate in thought between the rule of faith and the matters of secular interest in the Scriptures and so long as you keep the rule of faith under the Confession, the whole system is unshaken. You may refuse to make this distinction in thought. You may say there can be no rule of faith unless it be inerrant. But that is your individual opinion and can not bind any one who finds himself able to separate the two things. And the question before you is not what you find logical, but the extent to which you can reasonably insist that your doctrine is the only possible basis of ministerial standing. In this light I think you must hesitate to force the acceptance of an *implied* fundamental doctrine upon a man who does not find it implied at all. Even your committee do not insist upon their logic as a test of doctrinal soundness. What I have said on this subject is [Response p. 28]: "It is contrary to all analogy to express a fundamental doctrine by implication. That the Word of God in Scripture is the rule of faith and life, that as opposed to the Roman Catholic doctrine it is the only infallible rule of faith and life; that it contains what is necessary for salvation; that its authority depends upon God, its author—these are fundamental doctrines, and they are plainly set down in the Confession. Not so the doctrine of the committee. Therefore I conclude that it is not fundamental." Now, when we come to look at the doctrine which is said to underlie the Confession, we are unable to say exactly what it is. That the system of doctrine we receive presupposes the historic reality of a revelation we shall all admit. To deny *all* historic truthfulness to the Scriptures is, of course, destructive of Christianity. If the Gospels be myths, if the Acts of the Apostles be a romance, if the Epistles be forgeries—then the historic facts which lie at the basis



of our religion are gone. I hope I need not protest that *this* historic truthfulness is as dear to me as to any one. But the committee have raised an entirely different issue. They affirm that the authors of the Bible were so kept from mistake that their every statement is absolutely true, *i. e.*, free from error when interpreted in its natural and intended sense. Such an historic truthfulness I find nowhere claimed for the Scriptures by the Scriptures themselves or by the Confession. And when such historic truthfulness, as distinguished from the general historic truthfulness which we all admit, is said to *underlie* the Confession, I can not find that it is even suggested.

But it is fair for me to point out that the doctrine I am opposing is dangerous to the faith of the Church, and that it does not accomplish the ends claimed for it. The committee have argued at length on the supposed consequence of my errors to show that they are only evil, and that continually. It is allowable for me to show the results of forcing their doctrine on the Church. Let us suppose ourselves to affirm unanimately with the committee that the Holy Spirit so controlled the inspired writers in their composition of the Holy Scriptures as to make their utterances "absolutely truthful, *i. e.* free from error when interpreted in their natural and intended sense." It is legitimate to point out first that this affirmation does not in itself secure the certainty in belief that we desire. This doctrine has been held, no doubt, more or less consciously by theologians in all ages of the Church. So far from securing doctrinal unity, which is the legitimate test of doctrinal certainty, it has produced the reverse. For, in the seventeenth century, when the doctrine of inerrancy was most stringently held, the doctrinal differences between Christians of the different schools were most tenaciously defended and even emphasized as essential. In the second place, it does not secure the historical trustworthiness you so

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much desire. Historical trustworthiness does not depend upon dogmatic affirmations. Whether you allow it or not the historic trustworthiness of the Scriptures will be tested by historic methods of inquiry. If they can not stand this test they will go down in spite of your most emphatic testimony to your belief in their inerrancy. Here is the vice of this whole matter. It is an attempt to decide a historic question on metaphysical presuppositions. Much has been said here about the danger of new views. The danger is in not meeting new views by right methods. The modern apologetic method is to defend Christianity without the use of the doctrine of inerrancy. The historic trustworthiness of the Scripture is not thereby taken away, but rather established. This is the true Protestant position. The Word of God will stand any tests that are applied to it. When it is claimed that it must go down before such tests, the true answer is to apply the tests boldly and impartially, not to condemn the application on the ground of a dogmatic presupposition which is not even clearly affirmed in your own Confession.

But again, the insistence upon this as a fundamental doctrine of the Church is to encourage doubt and uncertainty in the mind of believers. Suppose this Presbytery decides in the most solemn manner in which it can be called upon to decide—under the charge of the Moderator and as judges of a court of Jesus Christ—that it is a fundamental doctrine of the Church that *every* affirmation of the Scriptures on no matter what subject is absolutely true. Will not every one of your members recall the difficulties that lie on the surface of Scripture? They will begin to argue your doctrine, that one proved error overthrows the Bible, and they will argue it in this way—one apparent error apparently overthrows our faith. If one holding your theory comes to you with an ap-

parent discrepancy and you tell him that it has come in by transmission, you shock his faith scarce less than if you admitted it to be in the original. As Dr. Evans has well said [Biblical Scholarship and Inspiration, pp. 39, 40]:

“But as a matter of fact, where are we? What have we? Have we an infallible revision? Have we an inerrant result? Have we a New Testament or an Old Testament with absolutely no mistake, no inaccuracy from beginning to end? I know of no respectable critic who claims that. Every body will admit that in the processes of transcription and transmission, at least, some error has crept into the book, some contradiction, some inaccuracy, which, as the matter stands, can not be accepted as the exact statement of that particular matter. But is not that virtually to give up the whole position? What is inspiration for? Surely to advantage the reader. But what is the value of an infallible editorship which does not secure a permanently infallible text? Here is an error which has been in the text for fifteen centuries, and which there can not be much doubt will stay there now for all the centuries to come. What difference does it make, so far as the readers of the past fifteen centuries and the readers of all future centuries are concerned, whether the error was in the original autograph or not? How does it affect the value of the record to-day, for you and for me, to say that the error which is there to-day was not there eighteen hundred years ago. Your inerrant autograph is an abstraction; your inerrant text is an abstraction. Does God hang his revelation on an abstraction? Does the present error destroy the inspiration of the Bible as we have it? We all say not. Then why should the original error destroy the inspiration of the Bible as it was first given? If absolute verbal infallibility was essential to inspiration, does not the loss of that infallibility imply the loss of that inspiration?

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If it was essential that the first copy should be inerrant in every possible particular, if without such inerrancy it could have no authority, why is not the same inerrancy essential to every copy? You say: 'A single error breaks down the Bible.' One comes up and points out an apparent error. Drs. Hodge and Warfield are constrained to admit that it has all the appearance of error, but that if we only had the original autograph, etc. He is a busy man, and cares very little for hypothetical abstractions, and replies: 'On your own theory the Bible has all the appearance of being broken down by what has all the appearance of being an error. When you find your original autograph, I shall be pleased to hear from you.' You get the General Assembly to declare that unless God gave an absolutely errorless Bible, he gave no Bible at all. Your people construe that to mean that unless you have an absolutely errorless Bible, you have no Bible at all. What have you or they gained? I thank God that I am not shut up to any such conclusion; and, most of all, I thank God that when an inquiring soul comes to me with his difficulties, I do not have to shut him up to any such conclusion. There are spots on yonder sun; do they stop it being a sun? Why science tells me that they are a part of the solar economy, and that the sun is all the more a sun for the spots. How do I know that it may not be so with the Bible?"

By it he being dead, yet speaketh.

I can hardly add to the force of this presentation. It puts before us with solemn emphasis the danger of putting the infallibility of the Bible not where God puts it but somewhere else. *One proved* error overthrows our Christianity! Alas that the Presbytery of Cincinnati should put it so easily into the power of the enemy to overthrow our religion—the most precious possession given us by God.

But again to emphasize the doctrine of the committee is to change the nature of Christian faith. The citation from the Confession already used on this subject is as follows:

Chap. XIV, Sec. 2. "By this faith, a Christian believeth to be true *whatsoever* is revealed in the word, for the authority of *God himself speaking* therein; and acteth differently, upon that which each particular passage thereof containeth; yielding obedience to the commands, trembling at the threatenings, and embracing the promises of God for this life, and that which is to come. But the principal acts of saving faith are, accepting, receiving, and resting upon Christ alone for justification, sanctification, and eternal life, by virtue of the covenant of grace."

Notice again that this emphasizes whatever is *revealed* in the Word, not *whatsoever* is *contained* in the Word. It emphasizes obeying the commands and embracing the promises. It further lays stress on accepting, receiving and resting upon Christ. Now notice the next section:

"This faith is different in degrees, weak or strong; may be often and many ways assailed and weakened, but gets the victory; growing up in many to the attainment of a full assurance through Christ, who is both the author and finisher of our faith."

The theory of your committee puts a different assurance in place of this. It has been said on the floor of the house that the riper faith is, the more fully it is assured of the absolute truth of the Bible. But the Confession evidently means by the "full assurance through Christ," the assurance of the believer that he is redeemed from sin and accepted in the Beloved. This assurance does not necessarily bring with it the intellectual conviction of the inerrant truth of every statement of Scripture. Nor does the firm resolution to believe the inerrant truth necessarily lead to the full trust in Christ

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as a personal Savior, which alone is of religious value, and which the Confession emphasizes.

Now, moderator and gentlemen of the court, I respectfully submit the case to your judgment. The evidence shows that I admit a bias in the inspired writers sometimes affecting their statements of fact. Your committee have failed to show that this is contrary to the Scriptures or the Confession of Faith.

Your committee have failed to show that I deny the infallibility of the Scriptures as the rule of faith and life.

Your committee has failed to show that my doctrine of inspiration is in any way contrary to that affirmed in the Scriptures and the Confession.

Your committee has failed to show that I advocate *anything* out of harmony with the facts of Scripture or with the statements of Scripture rightly interpreted.

Your committee has failed to show that I have in any way impugned the essential and necessary articles of the Westminster system.

On these grounds I respectfully ask, that in accordance with the law and the evidence, and with my own plea, I may be found *not guilty* of the charges brought by your committee.



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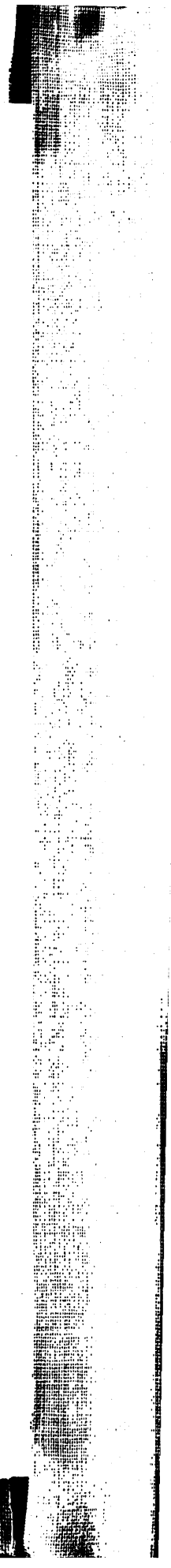
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