

HERMENEUTICS  
OF THE  
NEW TESTAMENT  

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# MANUAL OF HERMENEUTICS

FOR THE

WRITINGS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

BY

J. J. DOEDES, D.D.,

PROFESSOR OF THEOLOGY, UNIVERSITY OF UTRECHT.

*Translated from the Dutch*

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## TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.

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IN order to supply the want, so often experienced by students, of a 'Manual' of Sacred Hermeneutics, the translation now offered to the public was undertaken. If it is not calculated to supersede any of the existing treatises on the subject, it will at any rate afford the student the means of obtaining a clear and more concise view of the subject than is offered by any other compendium at present in general use. It recommends itself, moreover, by being full of many very suggestive hints thrown out in the author's peculiar way. The method adopted in the treatment is perfectly natural, and, comprising as it does as much as could be expected within its limited space, we are emboldened to lay it before the public as an excellent compendium of Sacred (New Testament) Hermeneutics.

I have been led to speak thus in recommendation of the book, by the consideration that it is from the pen of an author hitherto unknown to the English public. Dr. Doedes is Professor of Divinity in the University of Utrecht. In the struggle between Rationalism and Orthodoxy, that but lately distracted Holland and called forth such able advocates of revealed truth, we

find Professor Doedes taking a prominent part. Throughout, we find him maintaining the dignity, earnestness, zeal, and accuracy, which are the special characteristics of our author; and but lately one of the most noted assailants of Christian truth bore *tacit* witness to his powerful reasoning and dialectic skill. His pamphlets on the possibility and credibility of the miracles as related in the New Testament, assign him a high place among the defenders of gospel truth. In the province of textual criticism, too, he appears as the author of a voluminous and valuable treatise. This may suffice as an introduction of the author of this manual to his English readers. The translator only hopes, that whatever blemishes may attach to his work, they may not be of such a nature as to obscure the merits of the original, or prevent indulgent readers from finding an excuse for defects in the always difficult work of translation.

G. W. S.

EDINBURGH, *July* 1867.



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# HERMENEUTICS

FOR THE

WRITINGS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.



## INTRODUCTION.

### SECT. I.

HERMENEUTICS, or the theory of the art of interpretation, sets forth the method of procedure with regard to the exegesis or interpretation of a person's words.

*Obs.* Hermeneutics, ἡ ἑρμηνευτική, viz. τέχνη, from ἑρμηνεύω, I set forth, explain, interpret, translate; also, to express one's thoughts in writing or orally. Hermeneut (one who instructs others in Hermeneutics, or the theory of interpretation), ἑρμηνευτής, an interpreter, one who explains. Hermeneutical (hermeneutical standpoint, hermeneutical laws), ἑρμηνευτικός, belonging to, suited to interpretation or explanation. Ἑρμηνεία, properly, expression of the thoughts by means of words; explanation, interpretation; also, a commentary on a writing. So also διερμηνεύω, etc.

While Hermeneutics is thus properly the art of τὸ ἐρμηνεύειν, or of ἡ ἐρμηνεία, the word is now generally used to indicate the theory of that art, or the doctrine of what is to be observed in τὸ ἐρμηνεύειν.

Exegesis, ἐξήγησις, from ἐξηγέομαι, to lead on, be a leader, conduct, point out; to set forth, explain, narrate,—especially used of diviners and priests. Ἐξηγητής, one who points out anything, explains anything, interprets it,—specially used of a guide who points out to strangers the noteworthy objects of a place. At Athens ἐξηγηταὶ were those who had to observe signs and portents, and give instruction in the sacred rites. Ἐξηγητικός (exegetical, exegetics = the art of τὸ ἐξηγεῖσθαι, the theory of that art), pertaining to ἐξήγησις: τὰ ἐξηγητικά, books on the interpretation of omens: ἐξήγησις, explanation, interpretation; also, the interpretation of a book, a commentary.

In the New Testament one meets with ἐρμηνεύω (to translate), John i. 39, 43, ix. 7, Heb. vii. 2; ἐρμηνεία (interpretation or explanation), 1 Cor. xii. 10, xiv. 26. Further, διερμηνεύω (to translate), Acts ix. 36; (to interpret or explain), Luke xxiv. 27, 1 Cor. xii. 30, xiv. 5, xiii. 27; διερμηνευτής (interpreter), 1 Cor. xiv. 28.

Ἐξηγέομαι (explain) occurs in John i. 18; (narrate), Luke xxiv. 35, Acts x. 8, xv. 12, 14, xxi. 19.

## SECT. II.

In order to be able to explain any one's words to others, one must understand them himself, otherwise

he cannot render them intelligible to others. One understands another's words, when by means of them he thinks as did the speaker or writer, and as he wished one should think. Thus one explains another's words rightly to others, when he enables them to think precisely what the speaker or writer thought and wished to be thought.

*Obs. 1.* In order to understand any one's words, to comprehend a writer or speaker, one must explain to himself his words. For which purpose, one stands in need of Hermeneutics as much as when one would explain anything to others.

*Obs. 2.* In the interpretation of any writing, it has not to be inquired, what the readers for whom it was destined thought, but what, according to the intention of the writer, they should have thought in reading it. The object of the interpretation is, the thoughts of the writer or speaker, in as far as he has expressed them in words for others. This does not take away, that it often is of great importance to the interpretation of one or more sayings, to inquire how the hearers understood them. But this has not to be considered here.

*Obs. 3.* What is subsequently said with regard to the understanding and explaining of any writing, of the words of any writer, applies also to the understanding and explaining of the words of a speaker, who in any written document is introduced as speaking.

## SECT. III.

If it be inquired whether in Hermeneutics a distinction has to be made between explanation and interpretation (between *explicare*, ἐξηγεῖσθαι, and *interpretari*, ἐρμηνεύειν), the answer is: that to *explain* properly signifies the unfolding of what is contained in the words, and, to *interpret*, the making clear of what is not clear by casting light on that which is obscure. Very often one interprets by means of explaining, namely, when, by unfolding the sense of the words, light is reflected on what is said or written; but it cannot be said that one explains by interpreting. While explaining generally is interpreting, interpreting, properly speaking, is not explaining. But we do not usually observe this distinction in making use of these terms, and may without harm use them promiscuously.

*Obs.* 1. As regards ἐρμηνεύω and ἐξηγέομαι, both verbs signify to explain, and to interpret; but ἐρμηνεύω is also, to translate, and ἐξηγέομαι also, to narrate; ἐρμηνευτῆς and ἐξηγητῆς are both used of one who explains and interprets, and ἐρμηνεία as well as ἐξήγησις is used of a commentary on a writing. One might accordingly employ the term Exegetics instead of Hermeneutics. ('Hermeneutice, ars interpretandi, non differt ab Exegetice:?' Clarisse.) Strictly to distinguish between these two is perfectly arbitrary.

*Obs.* 2. While explanation cannot well be conceived



of otherwise than as interpretation, the latter can easily be conceived of without explanation. The ἐξηγητής explains and interprets, according as either is required, with the object of rendering the words intelligible. But often explanation without interpretation, or interpretation without explanation, would not be satisfactory, and their combination becomes necessary.—Cf. Matt. xxvi. 39; John i. 18.

## SECT. IV.

The doctrine of interpretation (Hermeneutics) of the books of the New Testament is the theory of the art of interpretation expounded with a view to those books, and applied to them. It teaches what has to be specially observed in the interpretation of the books of the New Testament. What is prescribed by the general doctrine of interpretation continues to be of force in the Hermeneutics of the books of the New Testament; whatever is peculiar in it must be explained out of the peculiarity of those books, that, viz., which distinguishes them from other writings. This difference, however, does not consist in this, that the authors of those writings thought in an entirely different way, and expressed their thoughts (as regards the form) quite differently from other men. If such were the case, we would needs have to despair of a true interpretation being given by any one else but the writers themselves. That this, however, is not the case, appears from the fact that they have adhered

to the universally established laws of speaking and writing.

*Obs. 1.* Since Hermeneutics for the writings of the New Testament is the application of the general doctrine of interpretation, and so the application to a particular case of that which is universally established, it is not to be expected that the Hermeneutics for the writings of the New Testament will approve what the general doctrine condemns, or condemn what it rightly prescribes. The general doctrine is carried into practice, more or less, every day in common intercourse, by every one who endeavours to understand others, and comprehend their meaning. No social intercourse, no conversation with our fellow-men would be possible without a notion of, and respect for, what is laid down by the general doctrine of interpretation.

*Obs. 2.* To the question, whether the Hermeneutics for the writings of the New Testament cannot suitably be combined with that of the Old Testament, it may be answered, that no insuperable objection to the union exists. But as the writings of the New Testament differ from those of the Old Testament in more than one respect (language, kinds of books, views, partly also historical circumstances, etc.), and as neither the Hermeneutics of the books of the New Testament nor that of the writings of the Old Testament suffers when separately treated, it is preferable so to treat the Hermeneutics of the books of the New Testament.

*Obs. 3.* Christopher Wolle was the first who treated

the Hermeneutics of the books of the New Testament separately, in his *Hermeneutica N. F. acroamaticodogmatica certissimis defecatæ philosophiæ principiis corroborata eximiusque omnium Theologiæ Christianæ partium usibus inserviens*, Lips. 1736, 4to (as an appendix to Blackwall's *Auctores Sacri classici defensi et illustrati, s. Critica Sacra N. T.*, translated by him from the English).

## SECT. V.

While the doctrine of interpretation of the books of the New Testament has to treat of the method of interpretation, the way in which a writing has to be explained, it has by no means to give instruction in all those branches of science, with which the interpreter must be acquainted in order to accomplish his task according to the requirements of the case. To the matters to be treated of by Hermeneutics, those acquirements cannot be reckoned, which are indeed otherwise to be considered as indispensable for the interpreter, but cannot be considered as requiring to be placed in the foreground when we treat of the *methodological preparation for the interpreter and for exegesis*. Hermeneutics is nothing else indeed, but also nothing less, than this.

*Obs.* Hermeneutics bears the same relation to exegesis as Catechetics to catechising, Homiletics to preaching, Apologetics to the apology, and in general, as theory to practice.

## SECT. VI.

The methodological preparation for the exegesis of the books of the New Testament is intended :

*a.* To point out to the interpreter, of whom it is to be supposed that he is provided with the requisite knowledge, the way of explaining those writings to others in such a manner as the authors themselves would have done it for them.

*b.* And accordingly to acquire such a method of treating those writings as shall ensure the rendering of perfect justice to their authors,—nothing foreign being imputed to them, and no violence being done them.

*c.* And thus to guarantee them, on whose behalf these writings are interpreted, that the thoughts expressed by the authors in their writings are fully developed for them.

## SECT. VII.

The preparation intended by the Hermeneutics of the New Testament is necessary for those who profess themselves interpreters of the writings of the New Testament :

*a.* Because much that seems to be natural enough, and to lie on the surface, still is often forgotten or lost sight of by not a few ;

*b.* Because a difference continues to exist between some interpreters with regard to the hermeneutical

principles and method, and between many interpreters touching the interpretation of numerous places, as may be seen from the different interpretations given of not a few passages ;

*c.* Because the authority ascribed by many to the writings of the New Testament does not unfrequently tempt the interpreter to attach a sense to the words not possessed by them, so that he does not educe the sense, but introduces his own.

*Obs.* 1. Without due training in the school of Hermeneutics, the task of an interpreter cannot be properly performed. That it be properly performed is of great importance for theology, as well as for the Christian church. In textual criticism, exegesis is indispensable ; for often the context has to determine the value of readings. In historical criticism, thorough exegesis is of great importance. The authenticity of a book, the credibility of an account, can often not be decided without accurate exegesis. In writing the biography of Jesus, one is constantly busy with exegesis. In the so-called Biblical theology, it is exegesis all through. Any one imperfect in exegesis cannot possibly treat Biblical theology properly. For he must reconstruct the results of the exegesis ; and how could he give a good representation of the type of doctrine of Jesus and the apostles, if the New Testament has not been thoroughly interpreted ? The minister of the gospel has constantly to act in the church as interpreter of the sacred writings, in his

preaching of the gospel and catechetical instruction, as well as where he has with discretion to correct the almost numberless erroneous opinions in the congregation on various passages of the New Testament. How could he properly interpret the New Testament unless, provided with the requisite acquirements, he be also hermeneutically well trained?

*Obs. 2.* That the way is not so readily found, but has to be pointed out, appears from the different interpretations given to many passages of the New Testament; which different interpretations, with a few exceptions, go to prove that all do not occupy the same standpoint, or are not strictly obedient to the rules of Hermeneutics. A review of the schools to which interpreters, by their interpretation of the writings of the New Testament, belonged, will show that not all rendered themselves a perfect account of the duty of an interpreter, and of the justice he should do the writer. Such a review is necessary for the hermeneut in order to direct attention to the bye-ways that must be avoided, and to the chief cause of the conflict in which one sees the interpreters of earlier and later times involved with regard to the interpretation of numerous passages.

*Obs. 3.* It is by no means surprising that they who ascribe great authority to the sacred writings of the New Testament, take most pleasure in finding those writings in accordance with their own views and ideas. The temptation is then very strong—not to adapt themselves to those writings; that is, indeed, too seldom

done by those who are so zealous for the authority of the sacred writings!—but, to give an interpretation of the sacred writings, by means of which they bring the Scriptures into harmony with their own notions and ideas. In other words: one does not in that case modify his dogmatics according to the Scriptures, but allows himself to be governed in his interpretation of Holy Scripture by his own dogmatics. Had we not to deal with writings to which such high, such decisive authority—though some rather decide for themselves—is assigned, we would, as a rule, be more free, far less partial, and far less prejudiced with regard to them. It cannot be denied, that if no one has any interest in what a writer says or does not say, one would much less think of making him declare something that one wishes him to say, than when one himself assures us that he will certainly respect his sayings as truth. The so-called ‘believing exegesis’ is, forsooth, not always the most faithful and unprejudiced exegesis; and to the interpreter who sets out with the assurance, that what is written in the New Testament, on that very account is truth for him because it is written there, and who so solemnly declares that he finds and honours God’s word in the Scriptures, to him especially we may say: Be very careful, then, lest you make those Scriptures say what you would like to find in them. The honour of being considered the *norma credendorum* has often proved to the Scriptures the honour of martyrdom. What have people not extracted from that New Testament? *i.e.* what have

people not introduced into it? That which entitled Werenfels to say of the Bible :

‘Hic liber est, in quo sua quærit dogmata quisque,’

paved the way for what entitled him to add :

‘Invenit et pariter dogmata quisque sua.’

This also that has just been discussed must be considered in Hermeneutics.

### SECT. VIII.

The place that must be assigned to the Hermeneutics of the writings of the New Testament in the Encyclopædia of Christian Theology, or rather, the place it occupies there, is to be sought under Literary Theology. The period at which one should begin its study, is the commencement of the theological course ; while one must never suppose that it will not be necessary afterwards to be reminded in the school of Hermeneutics what are the task and duty of the interpreter.

*Obs.* 1. Hermeneutics must be brought under the head of Literary (exegetical, philological) Theology, or the science of the sources of our knowledge of Christianity, that is, if it be granted that the entire organism of Christian theology consists of Literary, Historical, Dogmatical, and Practical Theology. Of course, they who combine Literary (exegetical) and Historical Theology, range it under Historical Theology. Others, again, differently.

*Obs.* 2. Only he can be a good interpreter, who,



while prosecuting his other studies, does not neglect the study of Hermeneutics.

## SECT. IX.

The Hermeneutics of the writings of the New Testament is by no means a science of very recent date. Though it received a separate treatment only since the first half of the eighteenth century, it nevertheless has a history that commences much earlier, as, before that period, it was combined with the Hermeneutics of the Old Testament, and was embraced in the so-called Sacred or Biblical Hermeneutics. Its commencement is to be sought in the first centuries of the Christian church. The history of Hermeneutics for the New Testament may be divided into three periods: that of preparation; that of the first efforts; that of increasing scientific treatment.

*First Period.*—Here special mention should be made of: Origen (4th book of his work *περὶ ὑποχῶν*), Jerome (*Ep. CI. ad Pammachium, de optimo genere interpretandi*), Augustine (particularly in his work *de doctrina Christiana*, the 2d and 3d books, cf. *Institutionem herm.-homil. ex August. libris IV. de doct. Christ. conquisitam, illustratam atque ad usum accomm.*, edidit J. J. Breithaupt, 1685); of later date, Nic. de Lyra (the Prolegomena to his *Postillæ perpetuæ s. commentaria brevia in univ. Biblia*) en Joh. Gerson (*Propositiones de sensu literalī S. S. et de causis errantium*).

*Second Period.*—In which we meet with the labours

of Matt. Flacius Illyricus (*Clavis Script. Sacr.* 1567, best edition 1675, the 2d vol. of it), Joh. Gerhard (*Tractatus de legitima Scrip. S. interpretatione*, 1610, behind his *Loci Theologici*), W. Franz (*Tractatus theol. novus et perspicuus de interpretatione Sacr. Script. maxime legitima*, 1619), Andr. Rivetus (*Isagoge ad Script. S. Vet. et Nov. F.* 1627, partly), S. Glasius (*Philologia Sacra*, 1623, later *inter al.* in 1776, especially the 2d book), D. Chamier (1629), J. C. Dannhauer, A. Pfeiffer (*Hermeneut. sacra*, 1684), and others. Besides A. H. Francke and J. Lange, special mention must here be made of J. J. Rambach (*Institutiones hermeneuticae*, 1723), J. A. Turretinus (*de S. S. interpretandæ methodo tractatus bipart.*, published without the author's knowledge in 1728, by W. A. Teller in 1776; specially with a view to the Old Testament); and besides the above mentioned Chr. Wolle, S. J. Baumgarten (*Ausführl. Vortrag der bibl. Hermen.* (1742), 1767), J. J. Wetstein (*Libelli ad crisin atque interpretationem Nov. Test.*, edited by Semler, with a preface and notes, in 1766), J. S. Semler (particularly in his *Vorbereitung zur Theol. Hermeneutik*, 1st part, 1760), not to mention others.

*Third Period.*—To which must be reckoned: J. A. Ernesti (*Institutio Interpretis N. Test.* 1761, reprinted several times), S. F. N. Morus (*Super Hermeneutica N. Test. acroases academicae*, 1797,—lectures on Ernesti's *Institutio*), G. L. Bauer (1799), G. F. Seiler (*Biblische Hermeneutik*, 1800, translated into Dutch with additions by J. Heringa E. Son, 1804), Chr. D. Beck

(*Monogrammata Herm.* 1803), W. G. Bretschneider (1806), C. A. T. Keil (1810), J. J. Griesbach (1815), F. Lücke (1817), G. Ph. C. Kaiser (1817), W. Stark (1817), F. H. Germar (1828), G. C. R. Matthäi (1831), F. Schleiermacher (*Hermeneutik und Kritik mit besonderer Beziehung auf das N. Test.*, edited by Lücke, 1838), M. Nicolas (1838), H. N. Klausen (*Hermeneutica des N. Test.*, translated into German from the Danish 1841, important chiefly on account of the historical part), C. G. Wilke (1843), L. G. Pareau (*Hermeneutica Codicis Sacri*, 1846), J. E. Cellérier (*Manuel d'Herméneutique biblique*, 1852), W. A. van Hengel (*de betrekking van het gevoel tot het uitleggen van den Bijbel inzonderheid van de Schriften des N. Test.* 1853), A. Kuenen (*Critices et Hermeneutices librorum N. F. lineamenta*, ed. 2da, 1859).

Of Roman Catholic theologians of later times, mention may here be made of : J. Jahn (*Enchiridion Hermeneuticæ generalis tabularum Vet. et N. F.* 1812), J. B. Gerhauser (*Bibl. Herm.* 1829), J. Ranolder (*Hermeneut. biblicæ gen. principia rationalia*, 1839), V. Reichel (*Introd. in Hermeneut. bibl.* 1839), J. M. A. Loehnis (1839), J. Kohlgruber (1850), J. B. Güntner (1851).

*Obs.* 1. On the history of Hermeneutics for the New Testament and its literature, we may consult : The preface of H. C. A. Eichstädt to the *Acroases Academicæ* of Morus, pp. 9-48 ; G. W. Meyer, *Geschichte der Schrifterklärung seit der Wiederherstellung der Wissenschaften*, 1802, etc., 5 vols., especially those sections

which treat of the history of the theory of Scripture interpretation, or of Hermeneutics; J. L. S. Lutz, *Bibl. Hermen.* pp. 15–35; E. Reuss, *Die Geschichte der Heil. Schriften N. Test.* 4th Edit., sec. 501, etc.; G. B. Winer, *Handb. der Theol. Lit.* i. p. 104, etc.; K. R. Hagenbach, *Encyclopædie*, sec. 52, etc.; J. Clarisse, *Encyclop.* pp. 272, etc.

*Obs. 2.* The history of Hermeneutics for the writings of the New Testament must be distinguished from the history of the exegesis of those writings, as well as from the history of the various exegetical schools to be met with in the province of exegesis. The history of exegesis teaches, what interpretations have been given. The history of the exegetical schools teaches, what principles have been adhered to or not. The history of Hermeneutics teaches, how the theory of the art of interpretation has been treated scientifically; while Hermeneutics itself teaches, how one has to act as interpreter.

#### SECT. X.

In order that the hermeneut may set forth the doctrine of the interpretation of the writings of the New Testament agreeably to the demands which Hermeneutics must satisfy, he must do so keeping in view the exegetical schools that have arisen in the interpretation of the writings of the New Testament. It is therefore necessary first to review those exegetical schools, so as after that to expound the doctrine of the interpretation of the writings of the New Testament.

## FIRST PART.

REVIEW OF THE DIFFERENT EXEGETICAL SCHOOLS  
WHICH HAVE EXERCISED AN INFLUENCE ON THE  
INTERPRETATION OF THE BOOKS OF THE NEW  
TESTAMENT.

### SECT. XI.

THE history of the writings of the New Testament shows that different courses have been adopted in the interpretation of those writings—that interpreters have diverged in various directions. The different tendencies (or schools) may, as regards their common character, be reduced to *three*. They who must be considered as belonging to the first of these three, have this in common, that they do not allow themselves to be fettered by what is written, and of which they have to give the interpretation that accords with the intention of the author, but treat it (though they do not intend it) arbitrarily, as if they had not merely to confine themselves to the inquiry as to what the author wished to communicate in his writing. By not restricting themselves to what is written, they are *unrestrainedly arbitrary*. They who belong to the second class have this peculiarity, that they are not free with regard to

what is written, but allow themselves to be governed by a foreign influence, and not by the writing itself which they have to interpret. They are not free with regard to it, are not prepared to surrender themselves entirely to what is expressed in it, without introducing anything foreign. They are the slaves of a system which determines beforehand what the writing more or less contains. These are, with regard to what is written, *slavishly fettered*. They who belong to the third class consciously refuse to be bound in the interpretation of those writings by anything than what is written, and which they desire to interpret without being governed by any external influence, and without any caprice whatsoever. They may be considered to be *legally free*, being fettered by no bond whatever from without.

*Obs. 1.* While we have to distinguish between an unrestrainedly arbitrary, a slavishly fettered, and legally free tendency in the exegesis of the writings of the New Testament, we must at the same time keep in mind, that by no means all interpreters, not even those of earlier times, can be considered as belonging exclusively to one of these tendencies; for sometimes it happens that we find one and the same interpreter following now this and then that tendency, or belonging in theory more to one, and in practice more to another. ;

*Obs 2.* In the consideration of these three tendencies, we shall proceed so as to review them first in the period preceding the Reformation of the sixteenth century, and then in that following it.

## CHAPTER I.

THE THREE DIFFERENT EXEGETICAL SCHOOLS AS  
THEY EXISTED BEFORE THE REFORMATION OF  
THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY.

### SECT. XII.

WE meet the *unrestrainedly arbitrary* tendency before the Reformation, there where men applied the allegorical mode of interpretation, or in general, held a plurality of senses.

That exegetical school is to be represented as unrestrainedly arbitrary, which does not consider itself restricted to the only plain sense that the writer or speaker himself attached to the words, but allows an allegorical interpretation, *i.e.* treats as allegory what is no allegory. The allegorical method of interpretation formerly adopted, not only by the Greeks, but also by the Jews with regard to the writings of the Old Testament, was even in early times applied by the Christians to the writings of the New Testament. Besides the literal sense, apparent to all, men held with Clemens Alexandrinus a deeper sense, not apparent to all, not accessible to all, and mystical. The allegorical mode of interpretation met with favour especially in the

Alexandrian school, and was greatly promoted by it, although it by no means neglected the true grammatical interpretation. Origen held a threefold sense. Just as a distinction was made in man between body, soul, and spirit (1 Thess. v. 23), so he thought he ought to distinguish in Holy Writ between the literal or historical sense (τὸ ῥητόν, τὸ σωματικόν), the moral sense (ἡ τροπολογία), and the mystical sense that unveiled itself only to believers, the τέλειοι (τὸ ἀπόρρητον, ἡ ἀλληγορία, ἡ ἀναγωγή). In allegorizing, the most arbitrary imaginable mode of interpretation, since there are no limits fixed, and every one's inventive faculties have ample scope, we find indulging, among others, Hilary Pict., Ambrose, Augustine (whose hermeneutical rule, 'quidquid in sermone divino neque ad morum honestatem, neque ad fidei veritatem proprie referri possit, figurate dictum esse censeas,' necessarily opened the flood-gates to the most unlimited caprice), and Cyrillus Alex. Gregory the Great also held a threefold sense (historical, typical, and moral; 'primum,' he says, 'fundamentum historiæ ponimus, deinde per significationem typicam in arcem fidei fabricam mentis erigimus, ad extremum per moralitatis gratiam ædificium colore vestimus'). We may, however, by no means here forget, that some of those just mentioned did not entirely neglect the grammatical interpretation. But that does not take away that they must, on account of having held more than one sense, be considered as having afforded ample scope to exegetical caprice. But ere long a threefold sense became



insufficient. While holding a mystical sense, they generally added a distinction between the allegorical and anagogical sense. In the fifth century, if not earlier, a fourfold sense had been acknowledged—the historical, allegorical, tropological (ethical), and anagogical,—the meaning of which becomes clear to us from the well-known

‘*Litera gesta docet, quid credas allegoria,  
Moralis quid agas, quo tendas anagogia.*’

(‘*Triples modus intelligentiæ—viz. besides the modus historicus—ut per tropologiam habeamus notitiam agendorum moraliter, per allegoriam credendorum veraciter, per anagogiam desiderandorum delectabiliter.*’ Bonavent.) A later age provided the justification of this fourfold sense, when the doctrine of the Trinity was adduced (Scripture must have this sense. ‘*Deus est trinus et unus. In essentia unus, in personis trinus. Ideo Scriptura, quæ est de ipso, habet in unitate literæ triformitatem intelligentiæ.*’ Thus, among others, Bonaventura), in order to show that there is *one* literal, and a *three*-fold spiritual sense, of which the anagogical refers to the Father, the allegorical to the Son, and the tropological to the Holy Spirit. Bonaventura even arrived at a sevenfold sense (besides the four already mentioned, also the symbolical, synecdochal, and hyperbolic), to which, according to him, the seven seals in the Apocalypse of St. John alluded. At such a rate of progress, there would of course be no difficulty in arriving at a twelvefold sense, which could be supposed

to be indicated in the twelve apostles. Perchance we may expect this discovery from the future.

### SECT. XIII.

The slavishly fettered school we meet before the Reformation there, where men either were governed in exegesis by ecclesiastical tradition, or clung so closely to exegetical tradition that they no longer judged for themselves, but followed a traditional interpretation without independent examination.

We must consider that exegetical school to be slavishly fettered which is not free from every restraint with regard to that which is written, but, burdened with a foreign yoke, interprets it according to a previously established opinion. The way for such a slavishly fettered exegesis was paved in early times already, by those who appealed from the excesses of the allegorists, specially the heretics, to what might be considered the general doctrine of the Holy Scriptures, the general doctrine of the truth, the *regula veritatis*, by which at first was meant the main substance of the Holy Scriptures, but which in reality gradually became a sort of epitome of the truth laid down in the Bible. A single step further, and men assumed as the test of exegesis, something not to be found in the Scriptures, but that held a place at its side. Such was the case in the west. Ecclesiastical tradition ere long became embodied as it were in the *regula fidei*, the *symbolum apostolicum*, and more extended in what was called

ecclesiastical tradition. Instead of an open discussion on the sense of the Scriptures with those whose exegesis was held to be entirely erroneous, men entrenched themselves more and more behind that which they held to be the hitherto generally acknowledged truth in the church. With this, it was averred, the writings of the New Testament must agree, and according to it men therefore interpreted. If heretics departed from it, they could not be considered to have rightly interpreted the Scriptures. The rule of faith, the *regula fidei*, had thus become the test of the accuracy of interpretation. This was the case especially in the Latin Church. Here Cyprian and Vincentius Lerinensis took the lead, treading in the footsteps of Tertullian, beside whom Irenæus may well be named. Well known is the saying of Vincent. Ler.: ‘Necesse est, propter tantos tam varii erroris anfractus, ut propheticae et apostolicae interpretationis linea secundum ecclesiastici et catholici sensus normam dirigatur.’ Others followed. But while men increasingly denied themselves the liberty of a free exegesis, they adhered more closely to what others had previously contributed to the interpretation of the Scriptures, and at last clung entirely to exegetical tradition, which was now handed down as if the fathers had decided everything satisfactorily in the province of exegesis. Independent study became well-nigh the greatest rarity, while acquiescence in the wisdom of the fathers became customary.

Men set about compiling, and at last satisfied them-

selves entirely with that. They prepared series of extracts from older exegetical works (*catenæ*), and so gave a kind of select readings, not in order to interpret verse by verse, but to let it be interpreted; they gathered from the works of the old interpreters short observations on particular passages, so as thus to repose in the light of earlier times. When these observations were placed in the margin or in the text, they were called *glossæ* (*glossæ extrinsecæ* or *marginales*, *glossæ intrinsecæ* or *interlineares*). So a traditional exegesis obtains authority specially in the Latin Church, from which at last no deviation is made, and in which scarcely any use is made of what Greek interpreters had formerly contributed, least of all of what could have been borrowed from the so-called school of Antioch, only it had suffered too much from the suspicion of not being orthodox. The exegetical tradition thus originated and established, found support and furtherance in the labours of Beda Venerabilis, Alcuin, Rhabanus Maurus, Paschasius Radbertus, Notker Balbulus, Lanfranc, Bruno of Segni, Albertus Magnus, Thomas Aquinas (renowned for his *Catena aurea in IV evangelia* and *Expositio in Epistola D. Pauli*), and in the Greek Church in the *catenæ* of Procopius of Gaza, and later of Œcumenius, Theophylact, Euthymius Zigabenus. Characteristic of this school is the saying of Alcuin: ‘Magis horum omnium (Ambros., August., and others) sensibus utens et verbis, quam meæ quidpiam præsumptioni committens, cautissimo stylo providens, ne quid contrariam S. Patrum sensibus ponerem.’

With regard to the *glossæ*, Walafrius Strabo and Anselm of Laon claim special attention. The work of the former, afterwards known under the title of *Glossa Ordinaria*, dictated to many for a long time, and was quoted by Petrus Lombardus as the ‘auctoritas,’ while the *Glossa interlinearis* of the latter was placed beside it. At length the interpreter had no liberty over against the church; and the lofty panegyric tone became all the more surprising, the less men looked for themselves into the riches and the depths of the sacred writings. Declarations concerning the Scriptures such as the following of Bonaventura served to excite their minds—‘Est ejus inattingibilis altitudo propter auctoritatem inviolabilem, inexhaustibilis plenitudo propter profunditatem inpercrutabilem, infallibilis certitudo propter processum irrefellibilem, inpretiabilis valetudo propter fructum inæstimabilem, incontaminabilis plenitudo propter puritatem inpermixtibilem,’—without ridding them of the habit of letting themselves be initiated into the Scriptures almost entirely by others. At length liberty was lost, and they had to conduct themselves according to the saying of Joh. Gerson: ‘Sensus Scripturæ literalis judicandus est, prout ecclesia, a Spiritu S. inspirata et gubernata, determinavit, et non ad cujuslibet arbitrium vel interpretationem;’ while this in conclusion was added for the encouragement of all friends of true freedom: ‘sensus literalis si et dum expugnatur temporibus nostris in his, quæ sunt jam aperte per ecclesiam determinata ac recepta, non oportet agere curiosis ratio-

cinationibus adversus impugnatores sed statutis punitionibus uti.'

#### SECT. XIV.

The legally free school is met before the Reformation, where men as little indulged in every kind of frivolous ingenuity with regard to the sacred writings, as allowed themselves to be guided by an influence foreign to exegesis, so as consequently to become incapacitated from rendering justice to the Scriptures; but where men, with the sincere resolution to be guided only by the distinctly apparent sense of what is written, endeavoured to let it say that which was originally thought by the writers or speakers.

We must hail that exegetical school as legally free, which held no deeper, no manifold sense, but would acknowledge only *one* sense as that intended by the writer or speaker, and who on that account set the highest value on grammatical interpretation, so as afterwards to elucidate, as much as possible in the spirit of the author, that which is said or written. Great injustice would be done to Origen if he were passed by here without even being mentioned. Although his allegorical interpretation must be considered as a deviation from the right path, yet his merits with regard to the interpretation of the sacred writings may not be overlooked. Ernesti has very rightly called attention to this in his treatise, '*de Origine interpretationis librorum S. grammaticæ auctore*' (*Opusc. Phil.*

*Crit.* p. 288), in which he well remarks: ‘fatendum est, Hermeneuticen librorum S. legitimam Origeni veluti parenti suo plurimum debere, eumque, si suis temporibus magnus et admirabilis visus fuit in allegorica ratione, nobis non minorem in grammatico genere videri debere.’ Quite as unfair would it be not to mention Pelagius, though it may not be forgotten that his peculiar doctrinal views caused him frequently to err in regard to the true sense of the words. But specially conspicuous is here the so-called school of Antioch, as the representative of the endeavour to let the Scriptures speak for themselves, interpret themselves, and elucidate themselves (cf. among others, Ph. Hergenröther, *die Antioch. Schule und ihre Bedeutung auf exeget. Gebiete*, Würzburg 1866). Honourable mention is deserved by men such as Diodorus of Tarsus, Chrysostom (although not averse to allegorizing), Theodore Mopsuest., Theodoret. Nor would it be just not to name Jerome and Christian Druthmar (Grammaticus), and Rupertus, and Nicolaus Lyranus (*Postillæ Perpetuæ*; ‘si Lyra non lyrasset, Lutherus non saltasset’), though we are not unmindful of his having advocated the fourfold sense. But of later times, Laurentius Valla deserves special mention, whose *Annotationes in N. T. ex diversorum utriusque linguæ codicum collatione*, viewed in the light of his own times, present a refreshing contrast to the sickness and narrow-mindedness which had so long been rampant before him. In general, all these have done homage to the principle of neither forcing

anything upon a speaker or writer, of which it is not apparent that he thought, nor of allowing themselves to be fettered by any tradition in a work that demands such an entire and perfect surrender of oneself to that which is written.



## CHAPTER II.

THE THREE DIFFERENT EXEGETICAL SCHOOLS AS  
THEY HAVE EXISTED SINCE THE REFORMATION IN  
THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY.

### SECT. XV.

It cannot be denied that the unrestrainedly arbitrary school, as we saw it existing before the Reformation, has not manifested itself in its former excesses after the Reformation. But just as there were still now and then those who spoke in favour of the allegorical interpretation or a deeper sense, so also have men in other ways indulged in exegetical liberties, which in principle must be condemned as decidedly arbitrary.

Since the Reformation, the unrestrainedly arbitrary tendency has revealed itself under various aspects. The old allegorical interpretation was recommended by some in the Roman Catholic Church. They were for having recourse, with Augustine, to a figurative interpretation, should the literal interpretation not prove subservient to morality, or the 'fidei veritatem.' The mystical sense, which is not to be sought in the words, but in things (*non per verba, sed per res ipsas significatus*), is highly valued (*mysticus sensus est*

nucleus suavissimus, says Santes Pagninus. Sixtus of Siena : ‘non minores utilitates continet mysticum expositionis genus, tam ad fidei integritatem, quam ad morum institutionem longe utilissimum’),—and that not only among Roman Catholics; among Protestants too, allegorizing and penetrating beyond the letter (which, properly understood, is also necessary, but here is equal to not restricting oneself to what is written) finds much favour under various forms. It stood in high honour among the followers of Coccejus in the latter half of the seventeenth and in the commencement of the eighteenth century, and with Camp. Vitringa the elder, and others, who allowed themselves the liberty of indulging in all sorts of profound abstractions, without being entitled to it in the very least. Down to the latest times, this tendency to seek for a deeper sense, and therefore to find it (for what an interpreter seeks for, with a fixed resolution to find, he is sure to find!), has propagated itself among Protestants. A. H. Francke, for instance, held a literal and spiritual sense; J. J. Rambach, a grammatical, logical, and mystical sense; S. J. Baumgarten, an immediate (literal), and, in addition to that, in many places, a mediate sense (mystical). Allegorizing is disapproved of later, but otherwise—H. Olshausen has exerted himself in modern times on behalf of the so-called deeper sense of the Scriptures, the so-called sub-sense, or that which lies deeper (*ὑπὸ νοίᾳ*). He declared himself decidedly against a double sense, against an entirely different sense from that which

the words express. He gave the assurance, that he meant no other than the simple literal sense; but one that lay under that, intimately connected with it—the same sense, but more deeply understood. He gave up the expression first chosen, ‘allegorical interpretation,’ for that of ‘biblical interpretation.’ Still, he must be considered to have advocated a method that tempts us to force a sense upon what is written, which did not lie in the intention of the writer; which temptation, R. Stier, for instance, was not always able to resist, when strenuously protesting against ‘das Verkennen des Tief- und Vollsinnnes’ of the words of the Lord.

Under a different form, the Pietists in earlier times likewise promoted exegetical caprice, by means of their doctrine of the *emphasis* (ἐμφασις, power, force of expression, indicating more than what is really expressed), in which they were preceded by A. H. Francke, and confirmed by J. J. Rambach, who treated of it fully in his *Hermeneutik*. According to this doctrine, the words of Scripture often signify much more than they express, and we are constantly required to suppose a *significantior sensus representatio*. It was affirmed: ‘fundamentum emphasisium sacrarum in eo positum est, quod non solum res, sacris paginis comprehensæ, sed ipsa etiam verba a sapientissimo numine inspirata fuerint, sanctisque scriptoribus suggesta; unde merito vocibus tanta significationis amplitudo tantumque pondus assignatur, quantum per rei substratæ naturam sustinere possunt’ (Rambach). By this method the way was paved for the mystical sense,

by means of which all kinds of mystery were discovered in the persons or things forming the subject of discourse.

But men also indulged in caprice in an entirely different quarter from that where protection was afforded to the allegorical or emphatical or deeper-lying sense. The Socinians (cf. Fock, *der Socinianismus*, p. 372, etc.) subjected the divine revelation to reason, and interpreted the Scriptures according to the *sana ratio*. According to them (F. Socinus, Joh. Crell, Jon. Slichting, Joh. Lud. von Wolzogen, Sam. Przypcovius, and others, cf. *Bibliotheca Fratrum Polonorum*), revelation might indeed contain much that surpassed reason and human powers of comprehension, but nothing that was in conflict with reason and the common sense of man. ('*Multa quidem supra rationem et humanum captum, nihil tamen contra rationem sensumque ipsum communem.*') They laid it down as a rule: '*ne quid statuatur, quod ipsi sanæ rationi repugnet seu contradictionem involvat.*' According to their doctrine, therefore, the interpretation of Holy Scripture might produce nothing that they deemed to be in conflict with the *sana ratio*.

No less arbitrary was the so-called philosophical interpretation (not to be confounded with what was afterwards so called by Stäudlin, 1807) which sprung from the school of Spinoza in the seventeenth century, and is represented by the treatise of L. Meyer, *Philosophia Scripturæ interpres, exercitatio paradoxa, in qua veram philosophiam infallibilem S. literas interpretandi normam esse, apodictice demonstratur, etc.*, 1666.

The author affirmed that the true sense of the sacred writings always must contain a truth, and that therefore every interpretation standing in opposition to a truth of the understanding was to be considered *incorrect*.

A similar judgment must be pronounced on the so-called moral interpretation, recommended afterwards by Kant (*Religion innerhalb der Grenzen der blossen Vernunft*. iii. Nr. 6; *Werke* x. pp. 130-132). According to this method, the sacred writings are to be so interpreted, that the sense accords with the general practical laws of a purely rational religion. This mode of interpreting did not stop to inquire whether the literal sense suffered by it; but also left it undecided, whether the Scriptures themselves would allow of being understood in such a sense.

Arbitrary in a no less degree was the so-called historico-psychological interpretation of Prof. Paulus of Heidelberg (by no means inaptly called a Christian Euhemerus by Strauss, *Leben Jesu* i. 24), and of the naturalists, of a kindred spirit. He explained everything that in the narratives of the evangelists deviates from the *usual course* of nature, *quite naturally*, *i.e.* in such a way as if nothing that at all resembled a miracle occurred in the narrative. It hardly needs reminding, that in carrying this out, much violence was done; that a new dictionary for the meanings of words, and a new grammar, especially for syntax, became necessary. It was especially Strauss (*Leben Jesu*, former edition) who prepared the grave for these

deforming tactics and practice, and who endeavoured to arrive at the same results as the naturalists, only by a very different way—by his so-called mythical interpretation.

Everywhere in this school caprice is prevalent, or the way is paved for it, as a sense not originally intended is forced upon what is written, or at least they, as well as others, are tempted to force such a sense upon it.

#### SECT. XVI.

After the Reformation, too, the slavishly fettered school continues to make its appearance in the Roman Catholic Church; for a time also among Protestants. But while it is merely transitory among the latter, it is made permanent among the former. And while thus Protestant exegesis must end with the acknowledgment of the legally free school in all its rights, that of the Roman Catholics continues to fetter its hands, and will not be able to breathe freely, until Rome shall have become open to the truly liberating influence of the Reformation.

Ecclesiastical and exegetical tradition had gradually obtained greater and greater authority. The saying of Gerson, before quoted, was uttered in the spirit of many of his contemporaries. The Council of Trent confirmed his sentence. It decreed: ‘*ut nemo, suae prudentiæ innixus, in rebus fidei et morum S. Scripturam ad suos sensus contorquens, contra eum sensum, quem tenuit et tenet Sancta mater Ecclesia, cujus est*

judicare de vero sensu et interpretatione Scripturarum Sanctarum, aut etiam contra unanimum consensum patrum—ipsam Scripturam S. interpretari audeat. The church, then, judges by means of the Pope and the council of bishops. The *analogia fidei* and the *Patrum consentiens interpretatio* (which was supposed to exist) were the test of the correctness of an interpretation. Whatever is not in accordance with them, is for that very reason condemned. Does it seem incredible, that even in our age such bondage could be considered bearable, we have but to listen to the language of Prof. Loehnis, for instance, in his *Hermeneutik* (Giessen, 1839): ‘Wie ein Diplomat im Geiste und im Interesse seines Fürsten alles deuten und auffassen muss—so auch der Katholische Interpret in Ansehung der Katholische Kirche. Was die Kirche in den rechtmässigen Concilien, in ihren ächten liturgischen Büchern, in ihren symbolischen Urkunden u. s. w. in Betreff der Auslegung gewisser Stellen der heiligen Schrift bestimmt entschieden hat, das muss auch der Interpret in dieser Art fest halten.’ The assurance is next given, that under the guardianship of the Holy Ghost, the church cannot make any decrees that are at variance with other revelations, since the Holy Ghost cannot contradict himself; that the interpreter can safely proceed upon that; that he must ever take into consideration the expressed opinions of his church, as otherwise he could not be a minister of that church; that he would be opposed to his own church,—and whatever else there be of a similarly re-

pulsive nature. And as if this at length were not sufficient, all access to the original text was seen to be cut off. For the accredited Latin version, the Vulgate, was indicated as the starting-point of all exegesis. (S. Synodus statuit et declarat, ut hæc ipsa vetus et vulgata editio, quæ longo tot sæculorum usu in ipsa Ecclesia probata est, in publicis lectionibus, disputationibus, prædicationibus aut expositionibus pro authentica habeatur, quam nemo quovis prætextu rejicere audeat vel præsumat. *Conc. Trident.*) Thus it was certainly impossible to bring to light what, in the writings of the New Testament, was really to be considered the meaning of the writers and speakers; and no better times are to be looked for in the Roman Catholic Church, before these menial bonds are loosed, and free respiration has become possible by the acknowledgment of the rights and the duty of interpreters.

Among Protestants, indeed, authority was not ascribed, in the interpretation of Holy Scripture, to church fathers and ecclesiastical councils; still, it was a matter of difficulty to many—especially in the seventeenth century—to interpret those writings quite independently of the doctrine of the church. This was placed in the foreground—and is well deserving of credit—that the Scriptures should be explained by themselves. (*Scriptura per Scripturam explicetur.*) It was then specially meant, that obscure passages should be explained by means of the more lucid,—the Scriptures, therefore, according to what is palpably their general contents or main substance (*analogia Scrip-*



turæ S.). The main substance, then, here meant, was to be found in the lucid passages, and consisted of the sum total of the principal articles of faith. According to this sum of the contents of the Scriptures, according to what was the general doctrine of faith (*analogia fidei*, Rom. xii. 6), they had to be interpreted. (Qui sunt interpretes Scripturæ operam dent, ut interpretatio sit analogia fidei, h. e. congruat cum fundamentalibus fidei articulis, sive cum principalibus Christianæ fidei capitibus ex luculentissimis Scripturæ testimoniis collectis. *Hollaz.*) It was necessary to be guided by the *regula fidei* (the ‘articulorum fidei nexus et consensus.’ Ex perspicuis illis Scripturæ locis colligitur regula fidei, quæ est summa quædam cœlestis doctrinæ ex apertissimis scripturæ locis collecta.—Contra hanc fidei regulam nihil quidquam in Scripturæ interpretatione proferendum. Sedulo cavere debemus, ne quidquam contra fidei analogiam proferamus. *Gerhard.*—Caritatis fideique regula moderante. *Conf. Helvet.*) But as men soon came to find the main substance of the doctrine of Scripture conveyed in the symbolical writings of the church, they accordingly found the *regula fidei* in the symbolical books, to which the interpreter was, by reason of the foregoing, confined; and—in that way the doctrine of the church, in the end, determined the results of the exegesis.

The inspiration theory, also, of the older Lutheran and Reformed systems of doctrine, made no small inroads on the liberty of the interpreter. Scripture should interpret itself. But it was considered to be so

entirely inspired by the Holy Ghost, that the supposition of actual variance between two passages was nowhere permissible. Now this last was not the result of exegesis, but held, as result of the doctrinal system, a decided precedence. The sacred penmen were ‘*ab omni errore immunes*,’ and it had now everywhere to be believed that what was written was truth. So that then every interpretation according to which, for instance, one passage of Scripture appeared to be at variance with another, was to be rejected. That one Gospel could have recorded anything, with which the account of another could not be reconciled; that in one of the Epistles of one apostle anything could be taught at variance with the contents of the Epistle of another apostle; that an apostle could have taught something in one Epistle, with which it was impossible to reconcile something else out of another of his Epistles; all that had to be rejected *a priori* by the interpreter. It was indeed conceded, that ἐναντιοφανῆ occurred in the Scriptures, but denied that ἐναντία were to be found in them. It was taught, that the ‘apparent contradictions’ should be removed, and insisted on, that, if the effort did not always succeed, still actual conflict was not to be supposed. It was prescribed to the interpreter, what his result might not be. A lawful and necessarily free research with regard to the sense of what was written, was *entirely* out of the question in this method. Happily Protestantism presents something better also to our view in the province of exegesis.

SECT. XVII.

Especially after the Reformation, the legally free tendency developed itself in all its power, and caused its influence to be felt without wishing to appropriate to itself any liberty that did not belong to it, without fettering itself by a bond, from which it should remain free, if it was to continue to educe from what was written, absolutely nothing but what it really contained. They who belong to this school perceive it more and more clearly, that the purely grammatical, historical, and dogmatical (logical and psychological) interpretation, in its widest sense, is absolutely necessary, and besides, the only one by means of which justice can be done to the entire contents of the writings of the New Testament.

The Reformers carried on what in early times had been commenced especially by the ancient school of Antioch, and had been promoted by the revival of the study of classic literature. Heralds of the legally free tendency were principally Faber Stapulensis and Erasmus, whose labours rendered much assistance to the Reformers in the province of exegesis. These last, and in accordance with them the symbolical books of the Reformed, declared themselves distinctly against the caprice of an allegorical interpretation and of a manifold sense, as also against an acknowledgment of the authority of ecclesiastical or exegetical tradition. The Reformers made it their chief study to interpret the

Scriptures freely by themselves, and, in addition, to acknowledge but one sense as valid. In this school it was said, with Erasmus, ‘nullius auctoritati debet esse addictus qui veritatis agit negotium, neque par est hoc cuiquam hominum tribuere quod neque ipsi sibi postulant et si postularent tanto minus esset tribuendum.’ Here it was taught, with Melancthon, ‘unam ac certam et simplicem sententiam ubique quaerendam esse juxta præcepta grammaticæ, dialecticæ et rhetoricæ.’ In this spirit Calvin and Beza laboured, with whom a place is occupied in the foreground by Hugo Grotius, who afterwards received the just praise of being ‘illustris humanorum et divinorum N. T. scriptorum interpres’ (from Prof. C. Segaar, in his *Oratio de Hugone Grotio, illustri—interprete*. Traj. ad Rhen. 1785). In speaking of this tendency, the oft-times misjudged Coccejus deserves mention, who pointed out to the interpreters of his day the necessity of considering each passage in its connection, and of explaining it out of the entire organism of which it constitutes a part. He defines his meaning in these words, amongst others: ‘filum Scripturæ sequimur, non hinc inde carpentes ejus particulas, sed totos libros ab initio ad finem ordine considerantes neque nostras conjecturas—neque, ut autumo, nostras cupiditates afferentes, ut illis accommodemus verba Scripturæ; sed spiritualia spiritualibus (h. e. tum sermonibus Spiritus ipsius sermones, tum eis quæ docet ea quæ docet) comparantes, atque ita ἀναλογίαν τῆς πίστεως conservantes.’ (*Præf. in Ep. ad Galat.* iv. p. 866.) This hermeneutical rule has

been imputed to him: 'Verba omne id significant quod significare possunt.' It was overlooked that he had said, 'id significant verba, quod possunt significare in integra oratione, sic ut omnino inter se convenient.' He had in view the 'tota compages sermonis,' the interpreting of an author out of his own words, the interpretation of the words from the context.<sup>1</sup> It certainly cannot be denied, that he allowed himself to be guided by his doctrinal views. But in that he is indeed not the first, nor yet the last, among those who may be regarded as belonging to the legally free tendency. Even in the middle of the nineteenth century, those might be named who, as regards exegetical principle and aim, undoubtedly must be numbered among its representatives, who notwithstanding, are striking proofs of the truth, that an interpreter free from all dogmatical prejudice is but rarely to be met with. In this school, however, it has been the ever increasing endeavour to become and to remain independent of everything that may not exercise an influence on the interpretation of the New Testament; and not a few responded to the saying of J. A. Turretin: 'de mente Sacrorum Scriptorum non judicandum est ex hodiernis placitis ac systematibus, sed est animus in ea, quibus scribebant tempora et loca transferendus,

<sup>1</sup> In Holland, Coccejus has been brought into estimation again by Dr. G. van Gorkom, *Spec. de Joanne Coccejo, S. Cod. interprete*, 1856; and by Dr. A. van der Flier, *Spec. de Joh. Coccejo antischolastico*, 1859; in which reference is made to *De Nederlandsche Stemmen*, iv. 149, and to Tholuck, *das Acad. Leben des 17ten Jahrh.*, 2d sect. p. 230.

et quænam in eorum, qui tum vivebant, animo oriri potuerunt ideæ videndum.' But especially since the latter half of the eighteenth century we see this school prospering increasingly, under the influence of J. A. Ernesti and J. S. Semler, though it be true, that they rather indicated the true method by hints, than possessed a perfect acquaintance with, or gave a full description of it. But notwithstanding the truth of this, Ernesti might still be called (by J. van Voorst, *Oratio de J. A. Ernestio*, 1804), 'optimus post H. Grotium dux et magister interpretum N. T.,' and certainly will ever be held in high estimation in this school. After him the grammatical interpretation was permanently established in the foreground, just as the historical interpretation was after Semler, according to which, the writings of the New Testament should be interpreted in the light of the times from which they descend, and particularly, too, of the way of thinking of the writers' or speakers' contemporaries. It is certainly to be regretted that Semler and others made a wrong application, too, of the principle, which in itself was true enough; but that does not affect the truth of the fundamental position. The attention of interpreters being once directed (also by Storr, Keil, and others) to the necessity of a grammatical interpretation, and with a desire to guard against partiality, the endeavour was constantly made to combine whatever was of value in both these methods, and so the grammatico-historical interpretation was permanently installed. The writings of the New Testament were

now accurately interpreted according to the laws of *Philology*, and in the light reflected upon them by *History*. It became more and more the endeavour of many, to penetrate into the spirit of the writers or speakers, to place themselves entirely in their sphere of thought, and interpret them out of that, each one considered independently, and yet, as far as was permissible, out of each other too. Much was afterwards done for the grammatical, specially true philological interpretation, by G. B. Winer (*Grammatik des N. T. Sprachidioms*, 1st ed. 1822, 6th ed. 1855). Others, again, directed the attention of interpreters more than was formerly done to the particular in the general, by an accurate consideration of the peculiarity in the type of doctrine and mode of expression, which is characteristic of the various writers of the New Testament. It was, moreover, more clearly understood, that the interpreter should occupy an independent position with regard to the sacred writings, being as little under the necessity of considering himself responsible for the communications made and the doctrine taught in them, as possessed of the right of in any way disputing or mutilating what he finds related or taught in them. Men have come to understand, that exegesis must be *objective*, that it must interpret and explain that which is written, *i.e.* the object of the exegesis, as accurately as possible; while the interpreter himself must stand in the background as a neutral party, however deeply he must have penetrated into the spirit of what is written. In many respects Protestant Germany has taken the lead

in this path, where commentaries as those of Winer, Fritzsche, Bleek, of Lücke, Tholuck, Rückert, of de Wette, Meyer, and others, equally deserve to be mentioned with gratitude, as various works that endeavoured to explain the type of doctrine of Jesus and the apostles. Protestant Holland has not remained behind, and points with pleasure—to mention only the earlier writers—to the exegetical works of Borger, van Hengel (of great value specially with regard to purely grammatical interpretation), Bouman, and others. Here a large number of more or less extensive writings, treatises, and essays, on portions, passages, and words, has cast much light on particulars of every kind. Here men have proved, and we trust will continue to prove, that they understand that it is just by means of a thorough treatment of such particular portions, passages, and words, that the exegesis of the New Testament is advanced. With Protestant Germany, Protestant Holland may pride itself, that, taken as a whole, it is as little a stranger to the true exegetical method, as it is unacquainted with the true hermeneutical theory. Pleasing signs in this tendency have been manifested also in France. England does not lag behind, but proves that, even as where in North America scientific theological life flourishes, she has a willing ear for the hermeneutical rules held by the Reformers already, but which are not actually applied everywhere where they are declared to be highly valued. It is pleasing, moreover, that men do not confine themselves to the grammatico-historical inter-



pretation, but do more and more justice also to that interpretation which, under the name of logical and psychological, is recommended by some. While men do not seem to be agreed with regard to what is meant by the theological interpretation, the time may be at hand, when, by means of the dogmatical interpretation, the wishes of all parties will be satisfied, and all reasonable demands be fully met. And even if, here and there, without perhaps perceiving its consequences, favour is bestowed on the unrestrainedly arbitrary tendency, or a step is taken that puts us in mind of the slavishly fettered, the commencement of the latter half of the nineteenth century gives us reason to hope that the legally free tendency in the interpretation of the writings of the New Testament has among Protestants obtained a permanent ascendancy. Supported by the unwearied progress of the study of textual criticism, armed with good lexicons and grammars, and lighted on our way by a thoroughly treated archæology, in the widest sense of the term, the time is also seen approaching when Protestant countries will possess an as accurate *translation* of the writings of the New Testament as is possible in their own tongue, elucidated by notes and illustrations on each verse or word, or by continuous commentaries. Such, then, is the grand result of the increasing labours of an exegesis that has once for all bid farewell to caprice, that has thoroughly rid itself of the shackles of unnatural restraint, that has applied itself with heart and soul to the interpretation of the sacred

writings of the New Testament according to the same hermeneutical principles and rules by which every other writing must be interpreted, proving in that way that it holds those Scriptures *sacred* indeed, in which we have to respect the oracles of Christianity.

*Obs. 1.* On the different exegetical tendencies that have obtained in the interpretation of the books of the New Testament, compare, moreover, the works mentioned, sect. 9, obs. 1.

*Obs. 2.* In this review we were not under the necessity of pausing purposely to consider :

*a.* The so-called *historical* interpretation of Semler, in as far as it stood in connection with his accommodation theory, according to which the words of Jesus and the apostles would have to be explained out of the views of their contemporaries in such a way, that they themselves should be considered to have adapted themselves to them, without always giving us the right of concluding from thence to their own convictions. ‘For Christ and the apostles,’ so he expresses himself, ‘having to do with people of their own times, spoke as these were accustomed to speak; and the word was preached to them according to their capacity for receiving it, and not as perfect truth at all times demanded it. Some allowance had to be made for the disciples also, as they could not yet enter into their Master’s spiritual mode of thinking.’ On this standpoint it is therefore no longer the question, *what* thoughts Jesus and the apostles have expressed in

their words, but *whether* they themselves were indeed convinced of the truth of what they taught. This does not belong to the sphere of exegesis, but of biography.

*b.* The so-called *æsthetical* interpretation, advocated, amongst others, by Prof. Pareau (*Hermen. Cod. S.* p. 431 sqq.), in which it is set forth, why the writer said just *that* and not something else, and expressed himself so and not otherwise, in that form, in such a way. Inasmuch as this cannot be said to belong to historical interpretation properly so called, it does not belong to the province of exegesis, but to that of the study of individual character, or to that of an *æsthetical* criticism of what is written.

*c.* The so-called *mythical* interpretation, given in later times by Strauss in particular. According to him and others, a portion of the historical accounts of the evangelists, especially that portion in which miracles occur, is to be considered as being mere myths, notwithstanding that they themselves really intended to relate history. Now it is not the question here, what that which is written pretends to be, or how the writings should be interpreted; but *whether* we have to consider it as credible history, in as far as it recounts facts. This, however, does not belong to the province of exegesis, but to that of historical criticism.

*d.* The so-called *religious* interpretation of J. G. Rätze (*die höchsten Principien der Schrifterklärung*, 1824), according to which the highest law of Scripture interpretation is to be sought in a *Christian rational*

*principle of faith*, viz. in the absolutely divine love, life and work of Christ, which must be called the highest rule for the validity and strictly religious sense of the peculiar teachings, historical narratives, and facts of the New Testament. No doctrine, no narrative of the New Testament, may be acknowledged as Christian, unless their contents be in perfect accordance with the principle of Christian wisdom, holiness, and love. This religious interpretation, therefore, judges of the Christian character of what is communicated in the writings of the New Testament. This, however, does not belong to the sphere of exegesis, but to that of the criticism of biblical, in particular, New Testament theology.

*e.* The so-called *pneumatical* interpretation of J. T. Beck (*Versuch einer pneumatisch-hermeneutischen Entwicklung des 9 Kapitels im Br. an die Römer*, 1833; *Zur theol. Auslegung der Schrift*, at the end of his *Einleitung in das System der Chr. Lehre*, 1838), which sets out from the organic connection of the entire Scriptures. It searches out the features of the Messianic theological character in the individual physiognomy, and brings them to light in the single passages. So it determines its real significance in the internal economy of the divine working of the Spirit. It too, therefore, judges of what is communicated in the Holy Scriptures as Christian truth. Now this does not fall within the range of exegesis, but that of the criticism of biblical, particularly New Testament theology.

f. The so-called panharmonic interpretation of F. H. Germar (*Die panharm. Interpretation der II. Schrift*, 1821), which has its foundation in the endeavour to obtain universal harmony (panharmony—general agreement) as *the characteristic of truth*. It lays down as principle, that the substance of the ideas of the revelation of God in Christ, contained in Scripture, is rightly understood in proportion as it is in the most perfect accordance with the various sayings of Christ mutually, and with everything else that is undoubtedly true and certain, while nothing may be acknowledged as divine revelation that does not agree with that. (Compare, besides, *Beytrag zur allgem. Hermeneutik*, 1828.) The object is, to form a purely Christian type of doctrine. Now this does not fall within the sphere of exegesis, but of systematical theology on a Christian basis.

g. The so-called *theological* interpretation (Klausen, Landerer, and others), which proceeds on the supposition that Scripture is *inspired*; i.e. that by the operation and effectual penetrating energy of the divine Spirit of truth, human individuality was elevated in the apostles to pure knowledge of revealed truth, and to the ability of communicating it; that that operation is expressed in the writings which they have left behind, so that we have in them that truth in unblemished purity and undiminished power. This, then, is placed in the foreground, that the contents of Holy Writ profess to be *eternal and universally valid truth*,—and that the particular must be considered in connection with the general, while the endeavour is made to penetrate

into the life and being of the dogma itself. Inasmuch as something more is here intended than an explanation of particulars out of the known opinions and views of the speakers or writers, it does not belong to the province of exegesis, but to that of Christian dogmatics.

*h.* The *mystical* interpretation, no matter under what form or name it be recommended and defended. In as far as it has no regard to the words, but to some thing or occurrence related in those words, by which God would have to be considered as wishing to reveal or communicate something, it no longer falls within the sphere of exegesis, but that of history, that surely of the estimation of facts, with which not the interpreter but the historical inquirer has to occupy himself.

There was no necessity for making any mention whatever of the *typical* interpretation, as it could only come into consideration in the exegesis of the Old Testament.

## SECOND PART.

### THEORY OF THE EXEGESIS OF THE WRITINGS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

#### SECT. XVIII.

THE Hermeneutics for the writings of the New Testament should, in order to be faithful to its calling, accurately set forth *what* the interpreter of those writings properly has to do, and *how* he ought to perform it. It must accordingly enlighten him with regard to the *task* he has to perform, and the *way* in which he can attain his object.

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#### CHAPTER I.

##### THE TASK WHICH THE INTERPRETER OF THE WRITINGS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT HAS TO PERFORM.

#### SECT. XIX.

THE interpreter of the writings of the New Testament has to consider it as his task, fully, faithfully,

and clearly to develop the sense of what is written, and properly to illustrate it on every side. He must enable others, as far as this is possible, in reading what is written, to think the same that was originally thought by the writer or speaker, and also was really intended to be thought by others. So he renders that which is written intelligible or comprehensible.

*Obs.* 'As far as this is possible.' It might happen, either that we are not acquainted with the original reading, or that the author had written somewhat of which we must now declare, that to the words as they stand there at present, we can really attach no good sense, or that we lack the requisite knowledge of historical particulars, in order properly to illustrate what is said or written. (Compare here Dr. J. H. Holwerda, *de betrekking van het verstand tot het uitleggen van den Bijbel, inz. van de Schriften des N. Testaments*, Gorinch. 1853; *Uitlegk. aantekeningen op eenige plaatsen uit het N. T.* 1853; *Bydragen tot de uitlegging van het N. T.*, Leiden 1855.)

## SECT. XX.

Since, in order to be able to accomplish the task of interpreter properly, one must himself understand that which he has to explain to others, one must first overcome all the difficulties that present themselves in the interpretation of the books of the New Testament,—difficulties, in particular, that arise, on the one hand,



from the *language* in which those books are written, and the *subjects* of which they treat; and on the other, from the *views* and *opinions* that one has himself, in distinction from those that are found in those writings.

*Obs.* And therefore it is required of an interpreter of the New Testament, that he possess a thorough knowledge of the Greek language in general, and of the Greek in which the New Testament is written in particular; an accurate acquaintance with the times whence those writings are descended; and moreover, that he entirely set aside what he himself believes and knows in distinction from the writers or speakers, whose words he has before him. Without this last, confusion and misunderstanding will constantly arise; without the first, he judges just as a blind person does of colours.

#### SECT. XXI.

To be able to treat the writings of the New Testament properly, one must, setting aside as yet their contents, be well acquainted with them, that is, must be properly enlightened with regard to their origin and mutual relation; in other words, one must be initiated into the history of the books of the New Testament, or the so-called particular and general introduction to those books. The interpreter must have acquainted himself with the way in which those books originated

and were united to each other: the first, in order to keep in view that they had their origin in very nearly the same period, and with like-minded writers, but still different persons,—that they were composed on different occasions, in different places, and to satisfy different wants; the second, so as not to forget that they were united to each other, not all at once, but gradually, through the co-operation of various influences, so that we have not before us here *one* book, but a collection of writings, which, together with much conformity, still possess their own peculiarities of language, form, contents, way of putting things, tendency and object, on which peculiarities the interpreter has continually to fix his attention.

*Obs.* 1. It may not be overlooked by any one, that the five historical books of the New Testament must be distinguished from the twenty-one Epistles, and that from these together the Revelation of St. John differs considerably, as partaking more of a prophetic nature. And as regards the historical writings in particular, since they are of different authorship, we may not consider them as if they were various accounts by the same hand (the fourth Gospel is decidedly distinguished from the three synoptical Gospels in more than one respect); and as regards the twenty-one Epistles, it may never be forgotten that they are as little the work of one writer, as written in the same year or for the same readers.

*Obs.* 2. We cannot be sufficiently warned against

the standpoint of those interpreters of the New Testament, who look upon it as similar in every respect to any other book that indeed consists of various parts, but still is the work of one hand. But now the various books of the New Testament are not from the same hand, and have, just as their authors, their own peculiarities. We have no right constantly to suppose that what one author relates was known, though he does not say it, to the others too, as little as we may assume, that the not mentioning of something or other itself involves ignorance of it. So we have no right to suppose, in general, that what one teaches must have been the conviction of the other, though he does not say a word about it. Their silence proves something only when it distinctly appears from elsewhere, that what is related must have been universally known, and what is taught must have been universally acknowledged as truth in the circle to which those writers belonged.

*Obs.* 3. The interpreter of the writings of the New Testament would be blind indeed, were he not struck by the great similarity which exists, *e.g.*, between the three synoptical Gospels, between the Epistles to the Galatians and to the Romans, between those to the Ephesians and Colossians, between the Gospel and Epistles of St. John, and more such like. But he must needs be blind, too, did he not notice any difference whatever between the Epistle of James and that of Paul to the Romans, between the Epistle to the Ephesians and that to the Hebrews, between the synoptical

Gospels and that of St. John; blind, were he not to notice any difference between the type of doctrine of James, of Peter, of John, of Paul. This difference should never be overlooked by the interpreter; and this difference is overlooked by what some have called the theological or biblico-theological interpretation, in as far as it considers and treats the books of the New Testament combined as an organic unity, and constantly interprets one author by another, or ascribes to one what is said by another. What is in the end rightly aimed at and brought prominently forward by the so-called theological interpretation, is for the rest the work of comparative biblical theology. 'In dogmatical representations' (says Klausen, *Herm.* p. 442) 'which seem to be at variance with other certain sayings in the Scriptures, or with the fundamental truth of Christianity in general, it is an axiom for Christian faith, that it must be possible to reduce the contradiction to a difference in the way of apprehending the same truth. To point out this is the task of the theological interpretation, and that by bringing back the particular passages to the dogmatical point of union, which embraces the various ways of representation, and thus makes the apparent contradiction resolve itself into a difference of standpoint and form of development.' With regard to this last, Hermeneutics is satisfied, when it is conceded that the interpreter must acknowledge the difference of standpoint and form of development, there where it is distinctly noticeable; while it further continues to insist that the task of

interpreters be duly kept separate from theirs by whom the results of exegesis have to be rewrought for biblical theology, though both one and the other be performed by the same person. And finally, as regards that axiom, it will have to vindicate itself before the tribunal of pure historical inquiry, and needs not, if it has been justified there, become an axiom for Christian 'faith,' as it then simply is a component part of 'science.' In conclusion, while it is the main object of the so-called theological interpretation to point out how the particulars in the writings of the New Testament, viewed as an organic whole, stand in connection with the whole, and find their satisfactory explanation in that connection, it is, as we shall afterwards see, the dogmatical interpretation that is called to consider and explain the particulars in the various writers in connection with their type of doctrine (their dogma or system, if we wish to call it so).

## SECT. XXII.

In the interpretation of these writings, the interpreter has in no wise and in no case to consider himself responsible for what is said, told, or taught in them. In interpreting the *historical* portions, he must simply examine what the narratives wish to be taken for, not, whether what is there represented as having really occurred, actually took place. This last, indeed, belongs to the province of historical criticism, which ought to be well distinguished from that of exegesis.

He has accomplished his task as interpreter, when he has made it perfectly clear what must, according to the account before him, be considered as having taken place; while he must then previously have examined whether what is written is to be understood as an historical narrative properly so called, or as a parable, for instance. In the so-called *doctrinal* portions of the books of the New Testament, the interpreter is not called to examine whether that which is there taught be truth. He need not appear there as apologist, and ought to consider it unsuitable to communicate his reasons for agreeing to, or differing from, what is there taught. In exegesis no importance whatever attaches to his approval or disapprobation, while everything depends upon the accurate exposition of what is taught. Nor has the interpreter to hold himself responsible for the way in which anything is developed, proved, or refuted in those writings. He has to take the writers and speakers as they present themselves, and objectively to render that which is written. He has accordingly to unfold, without partiality or prejudice, whatever is contained in that which is written, without concerning himself about the impression his interpretation (if it be correct) will make, in case others should have read something totally different in that which is written from that which, it now appears, is actually to be read. The interpreter of the books of the New Testament may not be a flatterer, may not seek to please men, may not make allowance for prejudice, or favour any party. He, in particular, must deeply impress upon

himself the question of the Lord, 'How read ye?' and hold in readiness for every one who is not satisfied with his interpretation—if, namely, it can vindicate itself as true—this one word as final: 'It is written!'

*Obs.* 1. No excuse is ever to be found for any one who, in the interpretation of the New Testament, forces his own views, his conception of the world (*weltanschauung*), his own doctrinal system, on the writer or speaker. Nor can it be carried out for any length of time, as that which is written stedfastly protests against every perversion of its sense, and sooner or later vindicates its rights. The naturalistic interpretation has been exposed for good in all its absurdity. By introducing his own doctrinal views into the text, the interpreter himself is at last exposed. Of what avail is it, for instance, to 'explain away' out of John i. 1-14 the real personal pre-existence of the Logos? Every one who interprets this passage historico-grammatically draws up his shoulders at that 'ideal pre-existence of the Logos' which men have extracted from it after having inserted it. Let the New Testament teach what it teaches; and if men do not agree with it, let them have the courage to say so. If men do not agree with it, it certainly is because they think that they know better. Well, be it so. But let the New Testament have its own views. The task of the interpreter is verily not of such a nature, that when he does his duty, he needs ever make himself anxious while employed upon it. But he must needs become

anxious, if he hold himself responsible for what is written there. This then, however, is a cross that he lays on his own shoulders, and, alas! a source of torture to the writings which he has to interpret.

*Obs.* 2. Exegesis must be and remain objective. This we must ever bear in mind, even where we can with difficulty conceal it from ourselves that we would have adopted another mode of argument, or made a different use of a certain word or saying. This must be specially remembered with an eye to the numerous places in the New Testament where use is made of some passage or other out of the Old Testament. (Comp. J. C. C. Döpke, *Hermeneutik der Neutestamentl. Schriftsteller*, i. Leipzig 1829; Jul. Wiggers, *de interpretat. genere, quo N. F. Scriptores usi sunt*, Rost. 1837.) The interpreter must once for all make this his rule in considering such passages,—to examine :

1. Whether he has to deal with a quotation, properly so called, from the Old Testament, by means of which something has to be proved, or whether only a free use is made of some passage, without its being the question, what was originally meant by those words.
2. Whether the writer or speaker himself translated the original (Hebrew) into Greek, or made use of the LXX.
3. Whether he has translated the original freely or not, or else, quoted the LXX. literally or not.
4. Whether the passage, explained according to the rules of grammatical, historical, and dogmatical interpretation, could be used as it has been; and here no one must be obliged to apply another method of inter-



pretation to the Old Testament than that which is prescribed by Hermeneutics, either in general, or in particular for the New Testament, as the only lawful one.

SECT. XXIII.

Just as it is the prescribed duty of the interpreter, of the books of the New Testament to proceed quite impartially in their interpretation, so as carefully to abstain from every endeavour to harmonize that which is written with ideas and notions of which he himself is possessed, so also is it required of him, that he possess a heart for those writings, for their contents, for the ground-tone, the spirit, the tendency, by which they are characterized. It will do him no harm to rank them above, to value them more highly than, all that has ever appeared within the sphere of religion. He will not be the best interpreter of the New Testament who treats it with extreme coldness, and holds up to view the contents of its treasures without the slightest sympathy for them; but we may expect much for exegesis from him who, furnished with the requisite knowledge, esteems it highly on account of its contents, and treats it with reverence on account of the subjects to which it bears testimony.

*Obs.* He who treats the books of the New Testament with frivolity, brands himself as unfit to do justice to their contents, though for the rest he might

be far superior to others in point of attainments. The writings of the New Testament demand an earnest treatment. Their main ideas are the most earnest conceivable.

#### SECT. XXIV.

It is absolutely necessary that the interpreter should place himself entirely within the sphere of thought, the way of thinking, and the frame of mind of the writers or speakers whose words he has to explain. He requires to have penetrated into their spirit, so as to do justice to their mode of thinking and representing things,—to have placed himself entirely on their standpoint; he must be willing to see as they did, in order to be able to think and feel, to live and speak as they. Then only will he be able to explain their words out of themselves, and so give that psychological interpretation which has so often been insisted on. But as every one will not be equally successful in becoming so entirely one with the various New Testament writers as to be equally suited thoroughly to treat the writings of all (as this also depends upon the natural bent, development, and taste of the interpreter), it will be necessary for every one to consult himself, in order to know what may be undertaken by him in particular with greater or less prospect of success.

*Obs.* 1. Attention has been rightly directed, from various quarters and in different ways, to the duty of

the interpreter to place himself in spiritual contact with the writer whose work he is considering. Now whether this be called philosophical (Stäudlin) or psychological interpretation, or aims at the same thing under a different form, by pointing out that the interpreter of the New Testament should be filled with the Holy Ghost (*vid. ex. gr.* C. Wordsworth, *The Interpretation of the Bible*, London 1861, and others), the thing is virtually the same. The interpreter must have entered entirely into, have become spiritually one with, him; otherwise he is a stranger to him, and understandeth not his speech.

*Obs. 2.* Lücke somewhere (in his *Grundriss der Neutest. Herm.*) justly remarks: ‘Wenn sich doch Allen ins Herz schreiben liesse, was D. Martin Luther aus vollem Herzen zwey Tage vor seinem Tode auf einen Zettel geschrieben: Virgilium in Bucolicis nemo potest intelligere, nisi fuerit quinque annis pastor. Virgilium in Georgicis nemo potest intelligere, nisi fuerit quinque annis agricola. Ciceronem in epistolis (sic præcipio) nemo integre intelligit, nisi viginti annis sit versatus in republica aliqua insigni. Scripturas sanctas sciat se nemo degustasse satis, nisi centum annis cum prophetis, ut Elia et Eliseo, Joanne Baptista, Christo et apostolis, Ecclesias gubernarit.’ If an author is to be interpreted well, he must be reflected in the interpreter.

*Obs. 3.* Sufficient attention is perhaps not always paid to the fact, that every one is not equally suited to the interpretation of all the books of the New Testa-

ment. Though one be well calculated to interpret the Epistle to the Hebrews, he is not so on that account with regard to the Gospel of John; and one might be able to treat the Epistle of James well, who would still on that account not be the fit person for the Revelation of John. The synoptical Gospels and the Epistle, for instance, to the Ephesians or Colossians, not only demand a different preparation, but also suppose other peculiarities in the interpreter. But above all things, sympathize with the writer. Otherwise spare us your mediation as interpreter. If we listen to you as interpreter, then we must listen to the friend of the author whose work is to be given us to understand and enjoy.

#### SECT. XXV.

Resuming everything, we say, that the interpreter of the books of the New Testament has to develop the sense of what is written there, so that nothing originally thought in them by the writer is wanting in the exposition of the sense, or changed in its development. While the interpreter himself has, in doing so, to retire into the background, he must let the author speak entirely for himself, and must do full justice to the author's individuality. Nothing else is of importance but the meaning of what is written by that particular author, and the development of the thoughts expressed in his words. But if much depends on the sense, and if it is the task of the interpreter to develop that sense,

then he must also set out from, and adhere to, the supposition that only *one* sense is laid down and expressed in the words of the author. We may not suppose a deeper, or double, or manifold sense, or whatever that sense be called, which some hermeneuts and interpreters have held besides the one so-called grammatical sense. One sense, no matter whether the author spoke in metaphorical language or not, one sense only is everywhere to be supposed,—one sense, because every one wishing to be understood by others, will have laid down but one sense in his discourse. Only then, when it distinctly appears that the author intended a certain ambiguity, when it is apparent that we are obliged to adopt more than one sense in order to do justice to the author, is it lawful to deviate from the rule, from which the interpreter may otherwise upon no account depart: that everywhere, and at all times, the words have but one meaning, and that but one thought is expressed in the sense of a discourse.

*Obs.* 1. All interpreters, and particularly those of the books of the New Testament, might well remember the saying of Jesus: ‘All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them.’ Who would find it pleasant to think, that after his death more than one meaning would be given to his words? Let us never forget, that we are accustomed, in speaking or writing, to use every word in *one* definite sense, and to express *one* definite thought in each

sentence, when we wish to be understood. We will purposely avoid all ambiguity when we wish others to comprehend our thoughts. If we do not desire this, then we will be ambiguous on purpose, but then unintelligible too. In conversation, just as in reading books, we always proceed upon the supposition that the words have but *one* meaning. Why, then, must the writers of the New Testament, or they who are there introduced as speaking, be condemned to lie under suspicion of an ambiguity that would verily not be to their credit? Let a single sense be supposed in the exposition of the thoughts contained in their words, excepting where it distinctly appears that we must give up that supposition. But this does not appear there, where a certain ambiguity or uncertainty remains to our mind, on account of the peculiar forms or the peculiar idiom of Greek; where thus the (apparent) ambiguity is not to be imputed to the writer or speaker, but to the language which he employs. It is known, for instance, that the genitive can have more than one signification (*e.g.* as genitivus subjectivus or objectivus; apposit., partitivus, etc.); that in different moods and tenses of verbs, the same forms occur. The connection must then determine the intention of the writer or speaker. So *e.g.* with regard to John v. 39, ἐρευνᾶτε (indic. or imperat. ?); xiv. 1, πιστεύετε—πιστεύετε (in like manner); Rom. v. 5, ἡ ἀγάπη τοῦ Θεοῦ (genit. subj. or obj. ?); Rom. viii. 23, τὴν ἀπαρχὴν τοῦ πνεύματος ἔχοντες (genit. appos. or partitivus ?); the expression πίστις Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, Rom. iii. 22, Gal.

ii. 16, etc., Rev. ii. 13, xiv. 12; ἐκάλισεν, John xix. 13 (intransit. or transit.?), and other passages.

*Obs. 2.* In defence of a manifold sense, it is of no avail to appeal to the peculiar character of the sacred writings as the 'word of God,' or of the sacred penmen as 'inspired by the Holy Ghost.' In whatever way we may view the details, it by no means affects the truth of the position, that the authors of the books of the New Testament must be considered to have been subject to the common laws of thought, or rules of speaking and of writing. Though we form the most mechanical notion possible of the inspiration of the sacred penmen,—though we see 'the word of God' in the writings of the New Testament, quite in the same way as, for instance, in Matt. iii. 17*b*, a word of God, in Luke xv. 4, etc., a word of Jesus, and in Rom. i. 1 a word of St. Paul is found; still, we do not on that account obtain a right to the position, that we are not to proceed, with regard to those writings, on the same supposition which is allowed in the interpretation of the words of every one who is considered desirous of being understood and comprehended by men.

*Obs. 3.* It is remarkable, that men constantly again declare themselves in favour of a manifold sense; remarkable, too, that in order to maintain it, they take refuge in arguments that never prove what they should. It has to be proved, that the writers of the New Testament themselves attached more than one meaning to their words—and therefore are an exception to the

general rule. But this is not proved—and ever less asserted. The second sense—so much at least is perceived—is nothing of the author's. A remarkable attempt to rescue the 'double sense of Scripture' has lately been made by H. Schultz (*Theol. Stud. und Krit.* 1866, 1), with a view to the Messianic portions of the Old Testament. Beside the historical sense, which was intended by the authors, and with which exegesis has to deal, they obtained, so he affirms, a second sense in the estimation of believing Israel, which second sense must also be reckoned to the series of God's revelations. This, then, is the secret sense of the Holy Spirit, which also originated historically, but belongs to a period of revelation entirely different from the first. The writer wishes this double sense of Scripture to be admitted only for the Old Testament. It is, however, not clear why then the Christian congregation also may not be considered as privileged with a continuous revelation, by which the writings of the New Testament, too, have obtained, besides that intended by the authors, yet another sense, which also must be received into the series of divine revelations. But as it is acknowledged, that the authors in no case intended such a second sense, and that thus exegesis has nothing to do with it, we can let this matter rest now, leaving it to them who take pleasure in similar theories. The interpreter of the books of the New Testament must adhere to what has been so well said, in the spirit of many, by Keil (*Elem. Herm. N. T.* p. 12): 'Jam, quum quis scriptor, nisi insanus sit, et aut consulto



lectores ludere, aut iis de industria sensum libri sui in ambiguo relinquere velit, verbis suis unum modo sensum subicere soleat, illudque omnium minime in scriptores N. T. cadat, sequitur, singulis horum librorum locis non nisi *unum* sensum esse tribuendum, simulque inter plures explicandi rationes quæ iniri possint, unam tantum rectam et veram esse posse.’

## CHAPTER II.

THE METHOD BY WHICH THE INTERPRETER OF THE  
NEW TESTAMENT CAN ATTAIN HIS OBJECT.

### SECT. XXVI.

THE object which the interpreter of the books of the New Testament must endeavour to attain is : the accomplishment of the task treated of in the foregoing. We have now to point out, in its details, the way that leads to that object ; and that in such a manner as that it may recommend itself as natural, simple, and suitable.

### SECT. XXVII.

No difference of opinion worthy of mention exists with regard to the necessity of *grammatical* or literal interpretation. As a rule, it is conceded that, after some needful preparatory inquiries, we must begin by examining the *words*, separately as well as in connection with each other, in order so to pass on to the explanation of things. It may also be considered as decided, that the interpreter may not stop there,—that

he must devote all attention to the *historical* interpretation, which is to be distinguished from the grammatical. But as no less certain must it be considered, that the interpreter has to proceed further, and to consider that which has been duly illustrated, both grammatically and historically, in connection with the entire way of thinking of the writer or speaker whose words he interprets. We may call this the *dogmatical* interpretation. This accomplished, the interpreter has attained his object.

*Obs.* 1. The meaning given to the word historical, gave rise to an opinion formerly held, that the grammatical might also be called the historical interpretation. Since in later times historical interpretation is defined as the interpretation of what has already been grammatically considered, by means of the light supplied from elsewhere by history, it is evident that historical interpretation must be distinguished from the grammatical. As regards the logical and psychological interpretation advocated by many (*id agit*, says Kuenen in his *Crit. et Herm. Lineam.* p. 67, *ut quomodo cogitata inter se (logice) et cum ipsius auctoris animo (psychologice) cohæreant, aliis tradat*), the former considers the words in their connection and in the context to which they belong, the latter explains them out of the spirit of the writer. But as regards the former, it properly belongs to the grammatical interpretation, as it is not possible to interpret the *words*, if we do not consider them in connection with each other, and with the context of

which they constitute a part. As regards the latter, it belongs partly to historical interpretation, inasmuch as the individual whose words are being interpreted, must be considered, just as the other historical particulars, as constituting a part of the historical material which the interpreter has at his disposal in the historical interpretation. But it still remains—namely, where it is to the purpose—that the writer's entire way of thinking and mode of viewing matters be compared, in order to bring into connection with it that which has been grammatically and historically interpreted, to illustrate it by means of it, and so show that the interpretation given is correct. This might be called the dogmatical (or systematical) interpretation, because in it the aid of the dogma (or system) of the author (so to speak) is called in in the interpretation. Some mean this in part by the so-called logical and psychological interpretation; as also those do who insist on a theological or panharmonic interpretation, in so far, viz., as they wish to have the particular brought into connection with the general, and explained by it.

To prevent misunderstanding, we call to mind in a few words, that a 'dogmatical' interpretation has been spoken of in quite another sense than that intended above. That part of the interpreter's work (cf. Landerer, art. Hermeneutik, in Herzog's *Real Encyclop.* v. 794) was then intended, by which he points out the value of some one or other properly interpreted passage, or the use that may be made of it in Systematical Theology. That, it has been justly observed, is properly speaking

not the task of the interpreter, but of the dogmaticus, as the one by whom the results of the exegesis must be rewrought for Systematical Theology, and who thus must receive into and incorporate with the entire system (Dogmatics) the particular passage properly interpreted by exegesis. It accordingly soon strikes one, that dogmatical interpretation should not be spoken of here, but dogmatical reconstruction.

We pass by at present, that Dogmatical Theology is here confounded with what should be well distinguished from it, Biblical Theology.

And, moreover, as regards the dogmatical interpretation, not words but things are our object. From what has been said on the logical and psychological interpretation, it clearly appears, that they cannot be strictly kept apart from either the grammatical or historical interpretation. That which they have homogeneous with the grammatical or historical interpretations should rather be classed with them, and what remains may then, no doubt, be reckoned to the dogmatical interpretation.

For the rest, the grammatical, historical, and dogmatical interpretations are to be considered as intimately connected with each other. We might here speak of three phases through which interpretation passes, in order to attain to its *ἐσρηξα*.

*Obs.* 2. Not uninteresting is it to call to mind here the distinction which is observed in Juridical Hermeneutics with regard to interpretation. Quite customary is the distinction between authentic and usual (com-

bined ‘interpretatio legalis’) on the one hand, and grammatical and logical (combined ‘doctrinal’) interpretation on the other. Hermeneutics has, properly speaking, to do only with the latter. As regards, then, the grammatical and logical interpretation, ‘illa sensum verborum ex usu loquendi declarat, hæc ex scripto id, quod non est scriptum, per ratiocinationem inducit’ (Eckhard, *Herm. Juris*.—‘Deren erste den Sinn des Gesetzes nach den Worten, die zweite aber die Worte nach dem sinne deutet.’ Von Vangerow, *Lehrb. der Pand.* 7e. Aufl. i. p. 50). Both are intimately connected with each other. In addition to this, we are reminded that the logical interpretation is the same as the historical of theologians. ‘Beachten wir,’ says J. J. Lang (*Beiträge zur Hermeneutik des Röm. Rechts*, 1857, p. 60), ‘ausser dem Sprachgebrauch den innern Zusammenhang des Gesetzes selbst, die Geschichte seiner Entstehung, sein Verhältniss zum Rechte, in welches es eingreift und seinen Zusammenhang mit dem ganzen Rechtssystem, anderweitige Aeusserungen des Gesetzgebers, die Gründe auf welche das Gesetz gebaut ist, Verhandlungen, welche dem Gesetze vorausgingen, die Quellen, welche der Gesetzgeber benützte, und andere Einflüsse, unter denen er stand, so legen wir nicht blos grammatisch aus; ob wir aber dieses Verfahren historische, ob wir es logische Auslegung nennen, erscheint gleichgültig.’ We should say that it is not so entirely indifferent. For the rest, what is here called logical interpretation is not quite the same as the historical interpretation of theologians, but in-

cludes, besides that, a part of the grammatical too, and moreover, the dogmatical interpretation presently to be treated of by us. It is called logical interpretation, chiefly, because it properly is 'eine logische Operation.' V. Savigny (*System des heutigen Röm. Rechts*, i. p. 212 sq.) has, instead of the division into grammatical and logical interpretation, distinguished between a grammatical, logical, historical, and systematical element in the interpretation of law, of which, however, it has been justly said, that the historical and systematical elements are equal to the logical interpretation, while the logical element occupies an intermediate position, and belongs to both. J. J. Lang himself proposes to distinguish six elements in Juridical Hermeneutics, viz., the lexical, syntactical, logical, stylistical, historical, and systematical. We should say, that jurists, just as theologians and all other interpreters, cannot well distinguish interpretation otherwise than as grammatical, historical, and dogmatical (systematical). In whatever way we may judge of those elements of interpretation, it cannot be denied, that the Juridical as well as the so-called Biblical Hermeneutics, is nothing else than general Hermeneutics, applied *there* to laws, *here* to the sacred writings of the Old and New Testaments, and that, if a grammatical, historical, and dogmatical (systematical) interpretation be necessary for the books of the Old and New Testaments just as for all other writings, jurists cannot well have another division in the interpretation of law. Comp. moreover, with regard to the literature of Jurid. Hermeneutics, K. A. von

Vangerow, *loc. cit.* i. p. 46. With respect to that systematical element which v. Savigny wishes to be acknowledged in juridical interpretation, he justly remarks (p. 214): ‘das systematische Element bezieht sich auf den innern Zusammenhang, welcher alle Rechtsinstitute und Rechtsregeln zu einer grossen Einheit verknüpft. Dieser Zusammenhang, so gut als der historische, hat den Gesetzgeber gleichfalls vorgeschwebt, und wir werden also seinen Gedanken nur dann vollständig erkennen, wenn wir uns Klar machen in welchem Verhältniss dieses Gesetz zu dem ganzen Rechtssystem steht, und wie es in das System wirksam Eingreifen soll.’ This is, as regards the main idea, equally applicable to the interpretation of the books of the New Testament, for which reason the dogmatical interpretation also receives a place here.

## PREPARATORY LABOURS.

### SECT. XXVIII.

Before the interpreter can proceed to the grammatical interpretation, he must institute a preliminary examination, without which he would easily be led astray, even at the very commencement of his labours, —yes, in many cases, really be unable to accomplish anything whatever. He must previously examine with regard to the words which he has to interpret: *from whom* they are descended, *to whom* they are addressed,



*by what* they were elicited, *when* and with *what object* they were spoken or written. And with regard to the first : we must acquaint ourselves as much as is requisite, with the person who speaks, with the history of his life, his way of thinking and peculiarity. It is by no means immaterial to the interpretation, to whom the words are to be ascribed. Here especially we must hear who it is that speaks, as words often have just by means of their author a very definite signification.

To whom they are addressed. Sometimes we do not at all understand what a word or saying signifies, if we do not know to whom it was addressed. A speaker or writer addressing himself to certain persons, most likely expressed himself precisely thus and not otherwise, because he spoke to no others than just those for whom his words were intended.

By what they were elicited. This we must endeavour to ascertain, because also by the inducement to speaking or writing, the contents as well as the form may have been determined or supplied.

When and with what object. The circumstances under which, particularly the object with which, something is said, frequently place the words in a peculiar light.

The inquiry on all this must take place beforehand, if we are not completely to grope in darkness in the grammatical interpretation, and be obliged to confess ourselves at a loss with regard to the words.

*Obs.* What has here been mentioned, is generally

reckoned to the historical interpretation. It certainly does belong to the province of history. But it is *the general*, that must come into consideration at the very outset already, in distinction from *the particular*, the aid of which is only called in when we come to the historical interpretation. A few instances may further confirm what is stated above. Very difficult of explanation are the words, 'Have thou nothing to do with that just man' (Matt. xxvii. 19), if we do not know who utters them, and to whom they refer. Even the signification of that *δίψαιος* cannot be determined without additional light. Who can properly explain the words, 'Evermore give us this bread' (John vi. 34), without knowing who utters them, and to whom they are addressed? With regard to the words, 'Give me to drink,' and 'Give me this water' (John iv. 7, 15), as also, 'I am tormented in this flame' (Luke xvi. 24), and, 'Remember me when Thou comest into thy kingdom' (Luke xxiii. 42), just as in the following verse (43), we are in a similar case. If it be said that such instances indeed prove that historical interpretation is indispensable, but not that it is necessary that a preliminary inquiry should precede; our answer is, that without this inquiry, the grammatical interpretation will very often have to be suspended halfway, because we grope in darkness. This is decidedly proved by the adduced instances, and many others might be added.

## GRAMMATICAL INTERPRETATION.

## SECT. XXIX.

After the preliminary inquiry that lights us on our way, we commence our exegetical labours with the *grammatical* interpretation, *i.e.* with the interpretation of the words, so as to pass on to the development of what is contained in the words. Those words are considered in themselves, in their mutual relation, in connection with the context of which they constitute a part. With this we do not as yet enter the province of history, properly so called, where the light of history is laid under contribution. The limits of grammatical interpretation may be considered to be there, where light is supplied from a quarter beyond the mere connection of the discourse.

## SECT. XXX.

In the first place, we have to do with the words as such. With the greatest attention and accuracy we must examine what there actually is to be read, of what words the author really made use, and in what order he arranged them. And here the necessity of a pure text becomes obvious. As long as it is not settled what was originally written, we cannot proceed to the unfolding of the sense originally intended by the

writer. If we can make sure of having the genuine text before us, we can proceed to examine the sense in which each word is used.

*Obs.* 1. We cannot sufficiently urge the necessity of an accurate and repeated reading of the original text to be interpreted. Very easily something escapes the interpreter, either because he has in his mind a translation, but which is not quite accurate, or allows himself to be swayed by a temporarily fashionable interpretation, which should be discarded, or still holds by some traditional interpretation. We should begin with reading well what is actually written. For instance: Matt. xvii. 4, Luke ix. 33: 'It is good for us to be here,' English version (*καλὸν ἔστιν ἡμῶς ὧδε εἶναι* = it is fortunate that, etc., not, it is good *for us* = how happy we feel, etc., of which we read nothing whatever). Luke xv. 8: *δραχμῆ* ('originally bearing the image of Cæsar,' etc. etc., it is said,—and accordingly denarius instead of drachme is read). Luke xv. 10: 'Joy in the presence of the angels of God;' this is sometimes translated, 'before,' etc., but it is in Greek as in the English version (*ἐνώπιον τῶν ἀγγ. τ. Θ.*): thus not = joy which the angels feel, but which they see before them, viz. in God. The words spoken by Jesus at the institution of the Last Supper, 'This is my body,' are not to be considered as if there were written, 'This is my flesh;' and John vi. 51, etc. ('my flesh'), is not to be considered as if Jesus had there spoken of his 'body.' If both John vi. 48 sqq. and the

words of the institution of the Last Supper be read rightly, then indeed several points of difference will be found, but not such an agreement as would give us a right to think of the Lord's Supper in John vi., and of John vi. in the institution of the Supper. Rom. v. 16: *ῥίμα*, not = guilt (as in the Dutch version). Rom. viii. 23: 'not only—but ourselves also;' so that 'we who have the first-fruits of the Spirit' are not reckoned to the *ῥίσις* which is spoken of there. To read accurately, however, is no easy matter. Hence it happens that men can rest satisfied for years with a given interpretation, until some one comes forward and exclaims: 'See! actually something else is written than we have hitherto supposed!' Remember, for instance, John xix. 25, where in modern times men have again learnt to find four instead of three women mentioned (Wieseler).

*Obs. 2.* We must be certain of having the original text before us. As a general rule, we cannot exhume it from the various readings without exegesis. Then we must set out from what, apart from the difference of reading, is already established. It is absolutely necessary that the interpreter of the New Testament should study the criticism of the text of the New Testament; for he may not rest satisfied with what is presented as the genuine or most ancient reading, by this or that critical edition of the New Testament. He must himself be able to use the critical apparatus. Much help is afforded in this by the following works (*inter al.*):

The critical editions of the New Testament, by C. Tischendorf (7th ed. Leipz. 1859; 8th ed. Leipz. 1865, etc.); S. Prideaux Tregelles (London 1857, etc.); H. Alford (4th ed. London 1859, etc.), and others. If we wish to obtain a speedy review of the most important various readings of the text of the New Testament, then, for instance, C. E. Stuart, *Textual Criticism of the New Testament for English Bible Students, etc.*, London 1861, is to be highly recommended.

The critical commentaries of J. J. Griesbach (on Matthew and Mark, 1798, 1811), of J. G. Reiche (on the Pauline and Catholic Epistles, 3 vols., 1853, etc.); the valuable work of Th. Sheldon Green, *A Course of Developed Criticism on Passages of the New Testament materially affected by Various Readings*, London; the critical notes in the best exegetical commentaries of later times,—in particular, too, in the *Exeg. Handbuch* of Meyer; the works on textual criticism by F. H. Scrivener (*A Plain Introduction to the Criticism of the New Testament*, 1861) and others, and the earlier published work of S. P. Tregelles, *An Account of the Printed Text of the Greek New Testament*, 1854; while the Prolegomena of the critical editions of the New Testament by Mill, Wetstein, Griesbach, especially that by Tischendorf, always remain worthy of reading. Nor do we read without profit the *Præfatio* of Professors Kuenen and Cobet to the *Novum Testamentum ad fidem Cod. Vaticanæ*, published by them, Leiden 1860. Since the publication of my treatise on the textual criticism of the books of the New Testament (in the *Werken*

van Teylers Godgeleerd Genootschap, xxxiv. vol.), in 1844, several things have been brought to light in the province of textual criticism of the New Testament, that make it high time that it should appear in a new form, as 'Introduction to the Textual Criticism of the Books of the New Testament.' Great praise is due also to that portion of the *Geschichte der Schriften N. T.* of E. Reuss, which treats of the 'Geschichte der Erhaltung der H. Schriften N. T. (Geschichte des Textes),' sect. 351, etc.

The editions of ancient uncial mss. of the New Testament by Woide, Kipling, Matthæi, Rettig, Tischendorf, Tregelles, Scrivener, and others.

Thorough study of the history of the text of the New Testament is to be strongly recommended to the interpreter, because without it he would find difficulty in tracing the cause of the difference of the ancient witnesses.

*Obs. 3.* The interpreter need by no means be restricted to the division into chapters and verses, to the accentuation and punctuation, of any critical edition whatever, but must himself examine how the text has to be divided, accented, and punctuated. It is known that the usual division (in the *textus receptus*), and the accentuation and punctuation formerly most adhered to, are not irreproachable. It will have to be conceded that it is just exegesis that must bring about improvement here. The interpreter has to decide how we must arrange the division into chapters, for instance, in Matt. iv. 25 and v. 1, xix. 30 and xx. 1; Mark viii. 38

and ix. 1; John vii. 53 and viii. 1; 1 Cor. x. 33 and xi. 1; 2 Cor. vi. 18 and vii. 1; Eph. iv. 32 and v. 1, 2; Rev. xii. 18 and xiii. 1;—into verses: Mark viii. 18, 19; Acts ix. 28, 29; Rom. viii. 33–35; Eph. i. 4, 5; Tit. i. 1–4; Heb. xii. 22, 23; 1 John iii. 9, 10; Rev. xvii. 9, 10;—what we have to lay down with regard to accents and breathings, for instance, in John vii. 34, 36 (ὄπου) εἰμι ἐγώ, or εἶμι ἐγώ; John viii. 58, ἐγώ εἶμι (I am) or ἐγὼ εἶμι (I exist); 1 Cor. iii. 14, μένει or μενεῖ; 1 Cor. xv. 8, τῷ or τῶ ἐκτρώματι; Heb. i. 12, τίνες or τινές; Jas. iii. 6, τροχός (wheel) or τρόχος (course); Matt. iii. 16, ἐπ' αὐτόν or ἐφ' αὐτόν;—and as regards punctuation, for instance, in Mark ix. 23; Rom. ix. 5; 1 Cor. vii. 34, etc. etc.

*Obs.* 4. The interpreter as such has something else to do than the lexicographer. He need not, unless by way of exception, engage in etymological research; for, as a rule, the words are employed in the sense which they have obtained in common usage. Attention must be paid to etymology, only where the writer has formed new words, or made use of newly formed ones. That the lexicographer must be a good interpreter, is self-evident. A dictionary for the New Testament must, in order to be good, be the result of thorough exegesis. As regards dictionaries for the New Testament, where we need them, good service is rendered, not only by the best dictionaries of Greek in general, but also by: C. G. Bretschneider, *Lexicon Manuale Gr.-Lat. in libros N. T.* ed. 2da, 1829; C. A. Wahl, *Clavis N. T. philologica*, ed. 3a, 1843; C. G. Wilke, *Lexicon Gr.-*



*Lat. in libros N. T.* (ed. V. Loch.), 1858, a new edition of which is published by C. L. W. Grimm, 1862, etc.; S. Ch. Schirlitz, *Gr.-Deutsch Wörterbuch zum N. T.* 2e Aufl. 1858; D. Harting, *Gr.-Nederd. Woordenboek op het N. T.*, 1861; E. Robinson, *Greek and English Lexicon of the N. T.*, revised by A. Negrin and J. Duncan, 1857 (published in 1839 already by S. T. Bloomfield); to which may still be added, S. T. Bloomfield, *A Greek and English Lexicon to the New Testament*, 3d ed. 1860. Comp. also, J. A. H. Tittmann, *de Synonymis in Novo Testamento*, libr. ii. 1829-32; R. Ch. Trench, *Synonyms of the New Testament* (new edition), Lond. and Cambr. 1865. Comp. also, Bagster's *Analytical Greek Lexicon*; consisting of an alphabetical arrangement of every occurring inflexion of every word contained in the Greek New Testament Scriptures, with a grammatical analysis of each word and lexicographical illustration of the meanings, etc. London, Sam. Bagster & Sons (more remarkable than just salutary).

*Obs. 5.* Under the influence of philologists such as Gottfr. Hermann ('*de emendanda ratione grammaticæ græcæ*,' 1801), and others, no one in the nineteenth century has done more toward a pure philological treatment of the New Testament than G. B. Winer, whose services in this respect have been surpassed by none before him or among his contemporaries. Of great value is his *Grammatik des N. T. Sprachidioms* (1st ed. 1822, 6th ed. 1855), already mentioned. Mention is here deserved also by: A. Buttmann, *Grammatik des N. T.*

*Sprachgebrauchs* (im Anschlusse an Ph. Buttmann's *Gr. Gramm.*), 1859; S. Ch. Schirlitz, *Grundzüge der N. T. Gräcität, nach den besten Quellen*, 1861; to which we may add, Th. S. Green, *A Treatise on the Grammar of the N. T.*, a new edition, 1862, and K. H. A. Lipsius, *grammatische Untersuchungen über die Biblische Gräcität*, 1863 (edited by R. A. Lipsius, 'Ueber die Lesezeichen'). W. Webster, *The Syntax and Synonyms of the Greek Testament*, Lond. 1864. (The author in the preface declares himself not particularly taken with Winer's *Gramm.*) Nor would we pass by unnoticed: M. Stuart, *Grammar of the N. T.*, Andover 1841, and P. Fairbairn, *Hermeneutical Manual, or Introduction to the Exegetical Study of the Scriptures of the New Testament*, Edin. etc. 1858,—a work that comes into consideration partly here, and partly above, sect. 9. We also call attention to the *Annotatio in D. Car. Aug. Theoph. Keilii elementa Hermen. N. T.* (latine redd. a C. A. G. Emmerling), sects. 21, 22, by Jod. Heringa, Eson, edited by H. E. Vinke, in Heringa's *Opera Exegetica et Hermeneutica*, 1845, pp. 275–314.

*Obs.* 6. A thorough knowledge of the Greek grammar is indispensable to the interpreter of the New Testament. This would not be the case if the writers of the New Testament had not troubled themselves about the rules of grammar, as was formerly sometimes supposed. But Winer rightly says (*Gramm.* p. 36): 'das N. T. ist grammatisch, was die einzelnen Sprachregeln betrifft, ganz griechisch geschrieben.'

SECT. XXXI.

In order to become well acquainted with the meaning which must be attached to each word in each passage of the New Testament, we must be familiar with the idiom of the Greek to which the New Testament belongs,—with the way, therefore, in which they who made use of that Greek were accustomed to employ the words, so as to express particular thoughts by means of them. In every language we must pay attention to the idiom, because by it many words have obtained a meaning which they did not possess originally, and because no writer or speaker, unless by way of exception, withholds or can withhold himself from that idiom. He who would be understood, must adapt himself to it. We do not govern the idiom according to our pleasure, but are governed by it. Hence the knowledge of the idiom always is an indispensable key to a right understanding of a writer.

*Obs.* 1. It is not necessary to make a distinction between the sense (*sensus*) and the signification (*significatio*) of a word, as was formerly thought. Each word has properly but one signification, and occurs in a given place only in one sense. But many words may be placed in a very different connection, in a very different context. According to that, then, the signification, *i.e.* the sense in which they occur, is often modified. When we say of any word, that it has more than one meaning, we do not mean that it can have

more than one meaning in a certain connection, but that it is used in many connections, and has its meaning modified accordingly. And therefore we must consult the connection, if we would determine the sense (= signification) of a word.

*Obs. 2.* It has been justly remarked, that we cannot well think of a peculiar idiom of this or that writer. That which may have been denominated 'peculiar idiom' is the peculiar way and style, the *modus scribendi* and *dicendi*, that which distinguishes one writer from another, the character of language (Sprach-Charakteristik). On it may be compared : Schirlitz, *Grundzüge*, etc., pp. 48-77, and the works mentioned by him.

*Obs. 3.* It is beyond all doubt true, that the interpreter must always inquire, *What is written?* for he is obliged to confine himself to the text. His final word ever is, *That is written*, and to it I adhere. But this may never be meant, as if he were mechanically bound to the letters, and chained to the words ; as if he had not often to consider, that many sayings require to be understood 'cum grano salis,' and be judged of according to the communis sensus (common sense), or also to the usage of common life. Sometimes more and sometimes less is *said* than was really *intended*. For grammar teaches us that, for instance, in Greek, something is sometimes left out or expressed (syntactically) somewhat inaccurately ; it tells us no less of ellipsis and aposiopesis, than of pleonasm, of brachyology (pregnant construction, zeugma), hypallage, etc. (cf. Winer, *Gramm.* pp. 512-559). We arrive at very incorrect

interpretations by forcing the words too much (= unnaturally), instead of considering that, as a rule, a writer or speaker counts on the common sense of readers or hearers. Who would interpret literally Luke i. 64, 'And his mouth was opened immediately, and his tongue;' or Matt. xii. 15, 'Great multitudes followed Him, and He healed them all' (cf. also xix. 2); or 1 John ii. 22, 'Who is a liar, but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ' (ὅστις Ἰησοῦν οὐκ ἔσται ὁ Χρ.), etc. etc.? A sensible interpreter, who is well acquainted with the Greek idiom, understands (or feels) what it is that is here intended. (On the necessity of paying attention in exegesis to the communis sensus also, cf. among others, Mori *Aercoases*, i. p. 185, etc. On the idiom of common life, cf. J. C. G. Ernesti, *Comm. de usu vitæ communis ad interpr. N. T.*, Lips. 1779, which may also be found in H. Muntinghe, *Syll. Opusc. ad doctr. S. pertinentium*, i. 1791.) As interpreter (but also in general as hearer or reader), one must be able to feel that something *cannot* be literally *so* intended. If, for this and other reasons, there be spoken of an exegetical feeling, we have no objection to it, and then willingly refer to the work of Prof. van Hengel, already mentioned, *de betrekking van het gevoel*, etc.

### SECT. XXXII.

In consulting the idiom of the New Testament, attention must be paid separately to :

*a.* What all languages have in common as formed by men, and employed for the expression and communication of their thoughts. There are general laws, to which every one is confined in thinking or speaking, no matter what language he employs. With these general laws, which render comparative philology and grammar possible, the interpreter of the New Testament, too, must be acquainted.

*b.* What is peculiar to the New Testament Greek, in consequence (*aa*) of the change which the Greek language underwent in the age of Alexander the Great and later, (*bb*) of the influence which Hebrew and Aramaic exercised on it, (*cc*) of the use of the LXX.

*c.* The peculiarity of the New Testament idiom there, where decidedly Christian ideas are met with.

*d.* That which is characteristic in the mode of expression of each of the various writers of the New Testament, so that we by no means have a right everywhere to conclude indefinitely from one author to the other.

*Obs.* 1. There is absolutely no reason to assume, that the writers of the New Testament should have arbitrarily departed from those general laws which prevail in all languages, and have followed entirely different rules (*i.e.* properly speaking, no rules of language) in the expression of their thoughts. They who deny this simply assert in that way, that the interpreter may freely indulge in every caprice. Cf. on this, Winer, *Gramm.* pp. iii. iv. 7, 9, and sect. 30 above, obs. 6.

*Obs. 2. aa.* We know that the age of Alexander the Great was very remarkable with regard to the Greek language, viz. that it underwent a great reformation, and that of a twofold character; for we find the formation of a language (prose) for writing, and another for speaking (language of the people for everyday life). In that language for writing, the Attic dialect indeed formed the basis, but the common Greek was also admitted, and several provincialisms crept in (ἡ κοινή or ἐλληνικὴ διάλεκτος). In that conversational language, or language of the people for daily life, the peculiarities of the various dialects, which had hitherto not been intermixed, were commingled, while especially the Macedonian element occupied a prominent place. Now this conversational language is the fundamental element of the Greek in which the LXX. and the apocryphal books of the Old Testament are written, and which was employed by the writers of the New Testament too. That just this conversational language, and not that other (for writing), should form an important constituent part of the New Testament Greek also, is easily explained. The Egyptian and Syrian Jews learnt Greek chiefly by intercourse with those who spoke Greek, and not out of books. The case was different with Philo and Josephus, who must therefore not be placed on a level in all respects with the writers of the New Testament. Cf. here, Winer, *Gramm.* p. 18, etc.; Buttmann, *Gramm.* pp. 1, 2; Lutz, *Herm.* p. 212; Bleek, *Einl. in d. N. T.* p. 56, etc. Honourable mention continues to be merited by H. Planck,

*Commentatio, de vera natura atque indole orationis Græcæ Novi Testamenti* (properly, de senioris Græci sermonis, cujus in litteris sacris vestigia frequentissima deprehenduntur, indole atque ingenio), 1810 (may be found in the *Commentationes Theologicæ* of Rosenmüller, Fuldner, and Maurer, i. pp. 112–170), with which cf. his *Observationes quædam ad historiam verbi Græci N. T.* 1821, in the *Comm. Theol.* of Rosenmüller, Fuldner, and Maurer (i. p. 193–208; cf. also, p. 171, etc.). The Greek of the New Testament is justly called (with Scaliger) the Hellenistic idiom (Winer, *Gramm.* p. 26).

*bb.* It will not be surprising to any one, that the Greek of the New Testament stood under the influence of Hebrew. The majority of the writers of the New Testament may be considered as having been able to read the Old Testament in the original. The Septuagint, which they used, is full of Hebraisms. The Aramaic (Syro-Chaldaic), which they spoke, could also not fail to exercise its influence on their Greek. Cf. Winer, *Gramm.* p. 26, etc. ('Hebräisch-aramäisches Colorit der N. T. Diction').

*cc.* We must be acquainted with the peculiarities in style and expression of the LXX. also, in order to be able to interpret the New Testament well. It ought indeed to be conceded, that the influence of the LXX. on the Greek of the New Testament writers must not be estimated too highly (Winer, *Gramm.* pp. 36, 37); but by no means may it be denied, that the New Testament writers, as regards the way of



expression, did stand under the influence of the LXX., particularly there, where Old Testament views and ideas were present to their mind. In like manner it is of importance that we should be well acquainted with the apocryphal books of the Old Testament, while also we may not be strangers to the Greek of the apocryphal writings of the New Testament, of the apostolic Fathers, and of the other writers who employed the Hellenistic dialect. Aid is afforded us by: J. F. Schleusner, *Novus Thesaurus philologico-criticus s. Lexicon in LXX. et reliq. interpr. Græcos ac scriptores apocr. V. T.*, 1820, etc., 5 vols.; C. A. Wahl, *Clavis Librorum V. T. apocr. philol.*, 1853. Then the Lexica named before, and the Concordances to be mentioned afterwards. *Vide* also sect. 37, obs. 3. Not a little serviceable are the following works of E. W. Grinfield: *Novum Testamentum Græcum, Editio Hellenistica*, Lond. 1844, 2 vols.; and *Scholia Hellenistica in N. T. Philone et Josepho patribus apostolicis aliisque Ecclesiæ antiquæ scriptoribus nec non libris apocryphis maxime depromta*, Lond. 1848, 2 vols.

*Obs. 3.* Many words and expressions in the New Testament are entirely new, or have a new signification, because they must serve to express something new—that which is specifically Christian. Take, for instance, πίστις, δικαιοῦσθαι and δικαιοσύνη, ζωὴ αἰώνιος, εὐαγγέλιον and εὐαγγελίζεσθαι, βάπτισμα, κόσμος, οἱ ἄγιοι, and others. Cf. Winer, *Gramm.* p. 33; Schirlitz, *Grundzüge*, p. 36; also G. von. Zezschwitz, *Profangrécität und Biblischer Sprachgeist. Eine Vorlesung*

*über die bibl. Umbildung hellenischer Begriffe, besonders der psychologischen*, 1859. Valuable is also the *Biblisch-theologisches Wörterbuch der Neutest. Gräcität*, von H. Cremer, Gotha 1866, written with a special regard to the characteristic Christian element in the New Testament idiom.

*Obs.* 4. The peculiarity of the language of the various writers of the New Testament stands in intimate connection with what was peculiar to each one of them in his view and representation of the gospel. ('Sprach-Charakteristik,' the consequence of 'Gedanken-Charakteristik:' Gersdorf.) For that reason a knowledge of the 'type of doctrine' of the different evangelists and apostles is of great importance. Attention has been directed to this before already, in Holland, by W. A. van Hengel, in his treatise, *Over den invloed van de Karakters en denkwijzen der Evangelisten en Apostelen op derzelver Schriften* (*Werken van Teyler's Godgeleerd Genootschap*, xxvii. vol. 1815); later, by E. J. Diest Lorgion, *Diss. de dicentibus scribentibusque speciatim in N. T. occurrentibus suo convenienter ingenio interpretandis*, 1836.

*Obs.* 5. On the contest formerly carried on between the Purists and the Hebraists with regard to the Greek of the New Testament, cf. Winer, *Gramm.* pp. 11-18, and the writers there quoted; further, Schirlitz, *Grundzüge*, pp. 101-126.

## SECT. XXXIII.

When by a knowledge of the idiom we have become acquainted with the meaning which the words can have, we must carefully consult the connection in which they occur, in order to arrive at a definite conclusion. We must first consider the single words in connection with each other; then the expression, if it does not stand by itself, in connection with the discourse of which it constitutes a part. We will, no doubt, often find that the passage we are considering does not stand in connection with what precedes or follows. But if an actual connection does exist between what precedes and what follows and the words that are to be interpreted, then it must be consulted, because the sense of the expression is naturally determined by the connection, and its object is brought to light by that means.

*Obs.* 1. To force from their proper connection any one's words, is generally disapproved of. This 'forcing out of their connection' is always looked upon as an act of violence. The writer or speaker is then wronged. Such injustice has often been committed with regard to words and passages of the New Testament, certainly not with evil intent, but decidedly with detriment to the correctness of the interpretation. Formerly it was much favoured by the separate treatment of the so-called 'passages in proof' of the various doctrines of Systematic Theology. Texts of every kind were quoted

without much attention to the context (*contexta oratio*). Against this, Coccejus, amongst others, protested, while after him too it could be, and had to be, warned against. One continually runs the risk of losing the context out of sight, also, by the use of Scripture in the public preaching of the gospel. That treating a 'text,' not seldom out of the context, for instance as a motto, or so as to be able to retain a theme once chosen, or an ingenious (or sensational) homiletical sketch,—the temptation has proved very strong to some, not to have a too strict exegetical conscience!

*Obs. 2.* It frequently happens that an antithesis occurs in the context, or that the *parallelismus membrorum* determines the sense, or that the whole course of the argument brings out the object of the writer or speaker. Cf. Matt. vii. 21, x. 20; Rom. ii. 13;—Luke xv. 24; John vi. 35;—John vi. 58c, compared with 47b sqq. We may in general well say, that almost every page of the New Testament furnishes instances which demonstrate, that it is of very great service to consult the context. Take just a few more of the numerous passages. Comp. Matt. iii. 11, 'baptize with fire,' with vers. 10 and 12; Luke vii. 47, 'for she loved much,' with what follows, and with vers. 41, 42 (=that much has been forgiven her appears from this, that she bears me much love; *vide* also 1 John iii. 14, ὅτι). Matt. x. 28, in which place, well illustrated by the context, Jesus says in other words: Be not afraid of men, so as to flatter them, and through fear of them become unfaithful to your calling; much rather

be afraid of God, so as to please Him, and therefore do what He wills you should do. This suits the context, in which an encouragement is found to boldness in speaking, and to confidence in God, who will protect them. (Comp. with this, moreover, so as to remove any scruples with regard to this interpretation: Matt. xviii. 34, 35, xxv. 46; John xv. 2*a*, 6; Rom. ii. 6, 8, 9; Jas. iv. 12, cf. ver. 7; 1 Pet. v. 8, 9; Eph. iv. 27.) Matt. xii. 31, where ‘blasphemy against the Holy Ghost,’ according to what goes before, is wilfully to slight the operation of the Holy Ghost, and to ascribe that working to the devil. Matt. xx. 23, ‘to them for whom it is prepared of my Father,’ comp. with vers. 26–28 (viz. to them, who will be the least). John x. 7, ‘I am the door of the sheep,’ where the context shows that the door by which we come to the sheep is intended, cf. vers. 2, 8. Eph. ii. 8, ‘For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God,’ viz. the being saved. (This being saved is, according to ver. 9, not of works = not of yourselves. If it were of works = of yourselves, then it would not be God’s gift.) If we do not attend to the context here, and, moreover, do not know that the words, ‘and that not of yourselves’ (*καὶ τοῦτο*, etc.), cannot refer to the feminine noun *πίστις*, we might easily extract from these words what they never contained.

*Obs. 3.* In speaking here of the connection, we mean the connection in which one word stands to another in the same sentence, or one part of a discourse to another

part of the same discourse. We may, however, go further, and also, for instance, assume a connection in conversations, between the sayings of the various speakers; namely, when it appears that what one says has reference to the words of another, which is the case sometimes, *e.g.* in the conversations carried on between Jesus and his disciples or the Jews. The way in which some one or other expression of Jesus is there understood by his hearers, and whereupon He then again makes use of that expression, sometimes casts much light upon his real meaning. Comp. for instance, Matt. ix. 2, 3, with 5, 6; John v. 17, 18, with ver. 19, etc.; John vi. 51, 52, with ver. 53, etc.; x. 30, 31, with vers. 32-39.

*Obs.* 4. We may lay it down as a rule, that it is not lawful to understand in a different sense or meaning the same word or expression, when it occurs more than once in the course of an argument. For we must, as a rule, suppose that the writer or speaker in such cases thought the same thing, each time he made use of them. This is placed beyond all doubt when, assuming the contrary, it would appear that the writer or speaker had expressed himself very inaccurately, or reasoned very incorrectly; as would be the case, *e.g.*, in Rom. vi. 10, if the apostle had there used the expression, 'died unto sin,' in a different sense from that in ver. 2. But on the other hand, the context itself sometimes points it out, that the same word is not employed in the same sense; as in Matt. viii. 22 (*νεκρούς*); 1 Pet. iv. 5, 6 (the same word), etc.

*Obs. 5.* That in consulting the context, the interpreter need not consider himself confined to the usual division into chapters and verses, we have above called attention to, sect. 30, obs. 3.

## SECT. XXXIV.

It is, however, not sufficient to consult the context, in the strict sense of the word. The writer or speaker, with whom we have to do, may have spoken elsewhere also, on another occasion, on the same thing, the same subject. It is of importance to hear him there. ‘Parallel’ passages cannot afford less light than the so-called context in which anything occurs. Such parallel passages are, however, only those in which the writer or speaker treats of the same thing, the same subject, and not those in which only the same words occur. Here, then, we must also bear in mind, that we must explain the less lucid out of the more clear passages; while, finally, it must be certain that in those ‘parallel’ passages the same thing or subject is spoken of in quite the same spirit, and on the same standpoint.

*Obs. 1.* Passages in which the same words indeed, but not the same subjects occur, can be of no service in illustrating the sense. Nevertheless, it is very useful to have a review of all those passages where, in any writer, the same word occurs. In that way we become acquainted in general with the use he has made of one and the same word. In the examination of parallel

passages, as well as of those where the same word is used, though it be in a different sense, we receive valuable aid from C. H. Bruder, *Concordantiæ omnium vocum N. T. Græci*, 1842, 2d ed. 1853. So also for the LXX. by A. Trommius, *Concordantiæ Græcæ versionis vulgo dictæ LXX. interpretum*, 1718, 2 vols.

*Obs. 2.* In comparing the parallel passages in the New Testament, in illustration of the meaning of a writer or speaker, we naturally must confine ourselves to the writings or words of him with whom we have to do. A passage out of the Epistle of St. James can with difficulty cast any light on the meaning of St. Paul, unless it be previously settled already, that they thought in perfect accordance on the subject under discussion. The case is different when we institute an inquiry into the general idiom of the New Testament. Then we just do require passages from other writers; and upon a comparison of all of them, it appears, too, that the same word is by no means used everywhere in the same sense: for instance, *κύριος* in the Gospels and in the Pauline Epistles; the expression, 'my Father's house,' John ii. 16 and xiv. 2; *τὰ ἔπουράνια*, John iii. 12, Eph. ii. 6, Phil. ii. 10, etc.

*Obs. 3.* More than common discretion must be exercised by the interpreter of the New Testament with regard to the parallel passages in the Gospels, particularly in the synoptical Gospels. With respect to the latter chiefly, they often relate the same thing, sometimes they communicate the same conversation or saying of Jesus, but not in the same words. We have



here, then, different accounts of the same occurrence or thing. But now the interpreter has no right to conclude from one evangelist to another without any limitation, and *e.g.* to explain and supplement the words of the Saviour, as recorded by one narrator, out of the account of another. For, in any difference in the accounts, the question is, *what* Jesus actually said. We must commence there, by making a distinction between what was actually said and what is communicated concerning it; and with this last the interpreter has to deal. For instance, according to Matt. vi. 11, Jesus taught them to pray in the 'Lord's Prayer': Give us 'this day' our daily bread; according to Luke xi. 3: Give us 'day by day,' etc. Now we have no right to say: therefore, this day = day by day. In the same prayer, Matthew has it: 'as we forgive,' etc. (thus, standard); Luke: 'for we also forgive,' etc. (thus: reason for hearing the prayer). Now we may not say that the one is equal to the other. In like manner, also, we may not explain 1 Cor. xiv. and Acts. ii. 4-13 out of each other, and so confound them with each other. In the latter passage there is indeed spoken of other (strange) languages (*ἑτέροις γλῶσσαις*), in the former, on the contrary, not a word is said of 'other' languages, but of tongues (*γλῶσσαις*); and in Acts ii. the context of the narrative compels us quite as much to think of strange languages, as the context in 1 Cor. xiv. decidedly forbids it. Sometimes, however, the comparison of what is related by the different evangelists can reflect some light, when, namely, on

account of an addition or transposition of words, something becomes clear in one, which lacks that elucidation in another. For instance, in Matt. vii. 13, 14, it is evident to every one who pays close attention to the expression ‘Enter ye in,’ that we must not think of the way as being behind the gate, as if there were written: Go ye *out* at the strait gate, etc. No, we must think of this gate or entrance as being at the end of that way; the way is not mentioned first, because the gate, as entrance, is the main subject. To those, now, who do not understand it thus, and therefore place the gate at the commencement of the way, Luke xiii. 24, 25 renders good service, where the gate = the entrance, must be thought of as at the end of the way.

More than once, a comparison of that which is of a similar nature, though it be not of the same writer or speaker, can reflect some light. Thus, for instance, we shall not compare without profit 1 Cor. xii. 13 (‘by one spirit are we all baptized into one body—and have been all made to drink into one spirit’) with Mark x. 38 (drink of the cup, be baptized; something internal and external). So also 1 Cor. xv. 5–8, where *ᾧφθῆ* is used more than once, but first of Jesus as yet visible on earth, and afterwards of Him as the glorified in heaven, is to be compared with Acts vii. 2, 26, 30, where the subjects of *ᾧφθῆ* successively are, God, Moses, and the angel of the Lord (all in the one speech of Stephen); from which it appears, that it was not unusual to employ *ᾧφθῆ*, in one and the same connection, of subjects

very different in their nature : how much more, then, of the same subject in a different condition !

## SECT. XXXV.

In the grammatical interpretation, we set out on the supposition, that all words and expressions must be understood in their proper (strict) sense. But as a rule, it can readily be perceived, whether we must adhere to that supposition in a particular case, or are not rather obliged to explain the words in an improper (tropical) sense. For, the connection in which a word or sentence occurs, the object with which a thing is said, soon makes it appear whether the writer or speaker really expressed himself in a strict sense, or made use of some tropical expression. In order to be able to form an accurate judgment here, and give the necessary explanation, the interpreter requires, amongst other things, to be intimately acquainted with rhetoric. If he be a stranger to it, he will frequently be incapable of analysing and explaining what is figuratively expressed.

*Obs.* 1. Rhetoric, as little as grammar, should be admitted into Hermeneutics. But quite as much as grammar should rhetoric be studied by the hermeneut and interpreter. For if it be the theory of the art of giving a suitable form to the expression of our thoughts in loose style, then one must be acquainted with the theory, so as to be acquainted with the various forms

of speech which are usually employed. Cf. here, C. G. Wilke, *Die Neutestamentliche Rhetorik*, Dresden und Leipzig 1843; and J. Heringa, *Annotatio in Keilii Elementa Herm. N. T.*, in his *Opera Ex. et Herm.*, ed. Vinke, pp. 315-472.

*Obs. 2.* If it be inquired, how it may be ascertained whether something has to be understood in a proper or figurative sense, the answer is: by examining whether the expression, understood in the strict signification, yields a good sense there. If it appears to us, that a word or expression, understood in the strict signification, yields no good sense, does not suit the context, and is contrary to the clearly apparent object of the writer or speaker, then it is beyond all doubt that we must explain it in a figurative sense. Let the experiment be made, *e.g.*, with Matt. vii. 4, 5. Who will affirm that this is meant in a strict sense? Or Matt. vii. 6? Jesus certainly did not there give particular instructions concerning the food his disciples should set before dogs, as little as He wished to give a particular warning against a less appropriate use of pearls, etc. An intelligent interpreter will but seldom be in doubt with regard to the answer to the question, whether he must understand that word or expression in a strict sense or not. To the most important writings on this subject we may also reckon the *commentatio* of M. J. II. Beckhaus, *de dictione tropica N. T. judicanda et interpretanda*, 1819, in the *Comment. theol.* of Rosenmüller, etc., i. pp. 329-355. Let it, moreover, not be forgotten, that the same word may be intended

in one place in a strict sense, in another in a figurative sense. Take *e.g.* 'cup' (Matt. xxvi. 27; Luke xxii. 20; Mark xiv. 36); 'baptism' (Luke iii. 3; Mark x. 38); 'leaven' (Matt. xiii. 33, xvi. 6); 'hunger' (Matt. iv. 2, v. 6); 'Watch' (Matt. xxvi. 40, xxiv. 42); ἐν σαρκί (Gal. ii. 20; Rom. viii. 8), etc.

## SECT. XXXVI.

Among the sayings or expressions which are not to be understood in a strict sense, the parabolical especially are sometimes difficult of explanation. While, in comparisons in general, it depends on the point of agreement (the tertium comparationis) intended by the writer or speaker, in parables the interpreter must then also point out what is, according to the original intention, the point of agreement between the image or picture of the parable and that which is portrayed in it, or figuratively represented by it. While in more than one place in the New Testament an allegory occurs, we meet with parables of Jesus only in the synoptical Gospels, parables in the strict sense of the word; and *they* demand of the interpreter more than ordinary attention and accuracy.

*Obs.* 1. Just as it would not easily occur to any one, for instance, to suppose a metaphor there, where nothing in the context makes him think of a metaphor, so also it should never have occurred to any one to think of an allegory there, where it is by no means evident that,

according to the original intention, an allegory existed. Yet, as is well known, there have been times when many advocated the allegorical interpretation, and explained a passage which contained no allegory, as if they actually had to deal with an allegory. Fortunately the allegorists (unless, indeed, I am greatly mistaken), among Protestants at least, have become extinct.

*Obs. 2.* Generally, one will not easily err in indicating the point of intended agreement in comparisons; especially not, when the speaker or writer himself has given a hint with regard to it. If that hint be wanting, then it has to be inquired what would be most in the spirit and the known way of thinking of the speaker or writer. For instance, Matt. xviii. 3, 'Except ye become as little children,' *i.e.* (not, except ye become so innocent; but) except ye become so simple (ingenuous, artless), etc. Luke v. 31b, 32: Under 'righteous' we are not to understand people who are 'whole,' nor under 'sinners' people who are 'sick' (as if sin = disease); but Jesus says, that as one requires no physician when well, but when sick, so one has no need of Him when belonging to the righteous (and to their number those murmuring folk to whom Jesus spoke reckoned themselves), while one being a sinner does indeed stand in need of Him. Rev. iii. 3, 'as a thief,' cf. xvi. 15; 1 Thess. v. 2; Matt. xxiv. 43 (as unexpectedly as, etc.; cf. what follows: for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of man cometh). Rev. iii. 16, the expression 'neither cold nor hot,' not =

lukewarm, but = unsavoury, is not applicable to cold or hot drinks : cf. ver. 15.

*Obs.* 3. As regards the *parables of Jesus*, it is necessary that we guard with the utmost rigour against every arbitrary treatment of this precious inheritance left us by our Lord. In earlier and later times they have been maltreated in such a manner, that we cannot sufficiently contend against any further caprice. The following rules should be observed in the interpretation of the parables of our Lord :—

1. Begin, after the requisite hermeneutical and exegetical preparation, to which specially belongs the study of metaphorical forms of speech, by reading the parable with the greatest possible care, and repeatedly, lest even the minutest particular should escape your observation.

2. Consider the parable purely historically, entirely in the light of the times in which, of the people among whom, the hearers for whom, of the occasion on which, of the object with which, and especially of Him by whom, it was spoken.

3. Fix your attention on that which is manifestly the main point of the narrative, and interpret, setting out from that main point, the details or features of the narration which appear to be of secondary importance.

4. Give yourself accurate account, not only of what can absolutely not be wanting in the narration in order to make it that particular narration, but also of what serves more for embellishment, and so ought to be reckoned to the mere details.

5. Treat the parable as a common historical narrative, but do not lose sight of the fact that you are not dealing with history, so that you may not supply or add anything, than what was quite naturally supposed by Jesus, and accordingly passed by in silence, and had to be mentally supplied by the hearer of his own accord.

6. Do not forget that each parable can have only one meaning,—that is, at least, if it must be laid down as certain, that Jesus wished to be understood and comprehended by his hearers,—and therefore ascribe to no parable any other than the sole sense intended by Jesus, no secondary, deeper, or allegorical sense.

7. Examine what can be represented by the figure of the parable—what must be the point of agreement and comparison between the figure and that which is represented in it; and place yourself to that effect in the heart of the parable, in its central point, so as to look over and see through it from thence on all sides, in every direction.

8. Make use of the hints given at the beginning and end of the parable, or by an added question or suitable remark, or by the use which Jesus makes of it, or by the explanation which He himself subjoins.

9. Transfer no particulars of the parable separately, as if they were features standing independently by themselves, but only in connection with the whole, so that you interpret the whole parable as one picture, unless Jesus himself appears to have intended another mode of interpretation for it.



10. Explain each parable by itself, and not out of or in connection with another, unless there be manifest indications that one is illustrated by the other, and must be brought into connection with one or more others.

HISTORICAL INTERPRETATION.

SECT. XXXVII.

The philological inquiry, properly so called, having been brought to a close by the grammatical interpretation, the aid of everything that grammar and rhetoric can contribute to the interpretation having been called in, and an important part of the way having thus been accomplished, light must now further be reflected, by means of historical inquiry, on that which still remains to be explained. What is written must, as much as is needful, be placed more particularly in the light of the age from which it is descended, to which it alludes, of which it speaks. We must pay attention to the civil, social, and religious conditions, ideas, and views with which that which is written stands in connection in any way. In so far as it is requisite, geographical, ethnographical, and chronological inquiries must here be instituted; in a word, the so-called biblical history and archæology must be allowed to speak. For it must always be borne in mind, that in the books of the New Testament we have not writings of our own age, nor of the West, but of the commencement of our Christian era, and from the East, which must therefore be

considered in connection with that time and place, of which indeed they bear ample traces.

*Obs.* 1. That which was done more in general in the preliminary inquiry (*vide* sect. 28) partly returns here sometimes, but more nearly defined or modified according to the requirements of the passage under consideration.

*Obs.* 2. There is well-nigh no chapter in the New Testament in which it is not necessary to be acquainted with the manners and customs of the East, in particular of the Jews, so as to be able to give the requisite interpretation, and to be secured against misunderstanding. Generally it is evident that one should know those manners and customs. Sometimes, however, one would not think that the explanation would have to be derived just from that quarter. The better the acquaintance with the East, the more abundant is the light we have. Cf. John i. 18, 'which is in the bosom of the Father,' with xiii. 23; Luke vii. 38 and John xii. 3; Matt. xxvi. 26, and parallel passages, where it is related that Jesus broke bread at the institution of the Last Supper, a very natural thing, as those reclining at the table used no knives, and therefore the bread had to be broken in order to be distributed. 'The breaking of bread' is accordingly something often mentioned in the Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles: Matt. xiv. 19, xv. 36; Acts xx. 11, xxvii. 35. Very easily, therefore, that expression could also signify the same as 'to eat,' 'to keep a feast:' Acts ii. 46, xx. 7; 1 Cor. x. 16. But he

who does not think of this, or does not know it, readily finds in that 'breaking of bread' a symbol, and that of the breaking of Jesus' body, which, however, was not broken; *vide* John xix. 33, 36. (1 Cor. xi. 24, the word 'broken,' in the words of the institution of the Lord's Supper, does not belong to the original text.) In like manner, Rom. vi. 3, 4 cannot be explained, unless we know how baptism was administered; and 1 Cor. xv. 29 is so difficult to explain, because we are ignorant of the custom there alluded to.

*Obs. 3.* Aids to the historical interpretation of the New Testament are: *1stly*, The books of the Old Testament (and later Jewish writers), as well as the books of the New Testament in general, which must be considered as most important sources for historical and archæological study; no less, too, contemporary writers, who make us acquainted with the age in which the writings of the New Testament were composed. Here we call attention, besides, to the most important commentaries on the Old Testament (*vide* Hagenbach, *Encyclop.* p. 184, etc.), particularly to J. Lightfoot, *Horæ Hebr. in Matt., 1 ad Corinth.* (*Opera omnia*, ii. 1686); C. Schoettgenii, *Horæ Hebr. et Talmud. in univ. N. T.* 1733; J. G. Meuschen, *Nov. Testam. ex Talmude et antiq. Hebr. illustr.* 1736; J. J. Wetstein, *N. Test. Græc. cum lectt. varr.—nec non commentario pleniore ex scriptoribus rett. Hebr. Græc. et Lat. historiam et vim verborum illustrante*, 1751–52. For the apocryphal writings of the Old Testament, the *Kurzgef. Exeg. Handb. zu den Apokr. des A. T.* of

O. F. Fritzsche and C. L. W. Grimm, etc. 2dly, The works on the so-called biblical archæology of De Wette (third part, 1842), H. Ewald (*Die Alterthümer des Volkes Israel*, 2d ed. 1854), Keil (1858),—(comp. also J. H. Pareau, *Antiq. Hebr. breviter descriptæ*, ed. 3, 1840; K. C. W. F. Bähr, *Symbolik des Mos. Cultus*, 1837), etc. 3dly, G. B. Winer, *Biblisches Realwörterb.* 2 vols. 3d ed. 1847; the *Bijbelsch Woordenboek voor het Christelyk gezin*, ed. by W. Moll, P. J. Veth, and F. J. Domela Nieuwenhuis, 3 vols. 1852, etc.; J. J. Herzog, *Real-Encyclopædie für Prot. Theol. und Kirche*, 1854, etc.; J. Kitto, *A Cyclopædia of Biblical Literature*, Edin. 1849, 2 vols.; W. Smith, *A Dictionary of the Bible, comprising its Antiquities, etc.*, 2 vols. 1860; A. Rich, *Dictionnaire des Antiquités Romaines et Grecques (Trad. de l'Anglais sous la Dir. de M. Cheruel*, Paris 1859); T. A. Bost, *Dictionnaire de la Bible ou Concordance raisonnée des Saintes Ecritures*, 2e ed. rev. et. augm., Paris 1865; T. Ayre, *The Treasury of Bible Knowledge, being a Dictionary of the Books, Persons, Places, Events, and other Matters of which mention is made in Holy Scripture, with engravings and maps*, London 1866. Vide, moreover, the literature as enumerated by Hagenbach, *Encycl.* pp. 141-144.

### SECT. XXXVIII.

In historical interpretation, the person whose words we interpret comes into special consideration. He

must, in as far as he is known from elsewhere, reflect light on his own words. Out of the history of his life, out of his condition of life, out of his view of life, from his standpoint, out of his way of thinking, out of his frame of mind, we must elucidate his saying or his discourse, that so he may in reality become the interpreter of his own words. This is a decidedly historical inquiry, from which we may never exempt the books of the New Testament.

*Obs.* 1. This mode of interpretation has also, at least partly, been called the psychological, and in a certain sense it may be called so. But still it is properly of a purely historical character, and therefore ought to be ranged under historical interpretation. If we would retain the name of psychological interpretation, we might then speak with equal propriety of geographical, chronological, and, in general, of archæological interpretation,—a thing to which we surely would not conclude. What has further been brought by some under the head ‘psychological interpretation,’—viz. an employing of the passage considered in order to learn to comprehend the writer or speaker himself, to learn to understand him as a whole,—no longer belongs, as we have before already remarked, to the province of exegesis. For the rest, that the psychological interpretation is with difficulty to be separated from the historical, is also conceded by those who treat of it separately (*i.e.* then combined with the logical) in Hermeneutics.

*Obs. 2.* The explanation of any saying or discourse out of the person of the writer or speaker himself, is absolutely necessary, to enable us to decide in how far a thing has to be considered as said by him in expression of his own opinion on any subject, and not merely for a particular case with a view to particular individuals (*κατ' ἀνθρώπων*). For it sometimes happens that we say something by reason of an inducement given, while we place ourselves on another's standpoint, or speak more particularly according to some one's capacity and requirements. Such sayings can then only be explained, when we are well acquainted with the person who speaks, and therefore know how he really thought with regard to the subject under consideration, and how he was accustomed to express himself on it. Cf. for instance, Matt. xix. 21, where the saying 'Sell what thou hast' is the answer of Jesus to the question of the rich young man,—but suited to his wants; Rom. ii. 5–11, where Paul speaks on the standpoint of the law and of divine justice; Gal. iii. 16, where the apostle argues from the singular 'to thy seed,' in distinction from the plural 'to seeds,' as of many (which cannot be used, because 'seed' here is a collective noun). But in this same Epistle, iii. 29, he by no means makes that distinction there, where above all he ought to have done so (if it existed according to his conviction), and writes, 'Then are ye Abraham's seed,' while he should have written, with iii. 16 before him, 'then are ye Abraham's *seeds*.' As it is, he knew right well that 'seed' is not used in the plural for 'posterity,'

and accordingly uses it himself in the singular in Rom. ix. 7, 8, too, and there expressly explains Gen. xxi. 12, 'In Isaac shall thy seed be called,' not of Christ, but of the 'children of the promise.' Cf. also Rom. iv. 18 and xi. 1.

*Obs.* 3. In explaining writings out of the person from whom they derive their origin, we must note the time of life in which he wrote so and expressed himself in such a manner. We surely will have no right to explain that which was said by some one in his youth out of what he became in old age. So it would indeed be most strange, if we set about explaining the first Epistle of Paul to the Thessalonians out of the much later Epistle to the Philippians. But as little right have we to explain that which was written later, and under quite different circumstances, out of that which was said much earlier, as if nothing could have been modified since that time. So, for instance, we may not explain Phil. i. 21*b* or 2 Tim. iv. 6 out of 1 Thess. iv. 15-17.

#### SECT. XXXIX.

Just as it is not lawful to force a word out of its connection, or to explain a sentence or period apart from the connection of the whole to which it belongs, so also we are not at liberty to force a writing taken as a whole out of its historical connection, and to consider it apart from its connection with the age whence it has come down. The books of the New Testament belong

to a definite period, and are written by men who would have written quite differently had they belonged to an entirely different age, and had an entirely different object in writing. Their historical surroundings, the historical frame in which they are set, may not be overlooked. It is by means of historical interpretation that one first learns really to comprehend the writings of the New Testament considered as a whole, and is enabled also to distinguish between what merely belongs to the temporary form in which they represent things, and that which must really be considered as their opinion, their conviction, their doctrine. Just as the light must fall well on a painting if it is to be properly judged of, so also, by means of pure historical treatment, the light must fall well on a writing, and therefore on those of the New Testament too, if misunderstanding of every kind is not to take place.

*Obs.* 1. Il faut juger les écrits d'après leur date. This applies to the books of the New Testament too. Were we to read the Epistles of Paul as if he were a born Christian of the nineteenth century, and as if they were written to us from Arnheim or Stockholm, we would do him great injustice, and deprive ourselves of the enjoyment and profit that would accrue to us from a right understanding of this great apostle. An epistle of St. Paul requires to be read as if one were reading in Asia, or Greece, or Italy, and that in the first century of our era,—in a word, as an epistle of St. Paul, not written to us, but to Christians of the first century,



at Corinth, Rome, or for whomsoever the epistle was destined. Let us therefore place ourselves in the circumstances, the atmosphere, of both writer and readers. In like manner, too, in the Gospels, which abound so in scenes of every kind out of life in the East, in Palestine.

*Obs. 2.* It is of great importance that we distinguish between that which is temporary or local in the teaching of Jesus and the apostles, and that which is permanent in it or valid for all ages. For some expressions or sayings are not to be considered as intended for every one, and are contained in a form that would have been different again, if they had been uttered at another time, in another circle, or had been intended for other hearers. We cannot but suppose that Jesus, as well as the writers of the books of the New Testament (we need not say, accommodated themselves, but) expressed themselves according to the usage or custom, and in the forms of their times, so as to be understood by them for whom their words were in the first instance intended. For that reason we must know these forms too, so as to be able to interpret their words, and, moreover, to develop out of the temporary form the thought that is valid for all ages.

*Obs. 3.* The more indispensable to a correct explanation of the writings of the New Testament historical interpretation is to be considered, so much the greater calamity is the want of historical knowledge in the interpreter of those writings, of the times from which they have come down. For then they do not escape the

danger of finding teachings and aims of every kind imputed to them, of which the writers never thought; while the interpreter who is a stranger to the times from which those writings come down, bears a striking resemblance to a person who is to take us through a geological museum in order to explain the objects collected there, but who is backward in his geological knowledge some thousand years.

### THE DOGMATICAL INTERPRETATION.

#### SECT. XL.

Everything having been grammatically and historically well explained, the interpreter has in some instances not yet accomplished his task. He must develop, and that, too, in connection with the entire 'Lehrbegriff' or system of doctrine (in as far as it can be spoken of) of the writers or speakers, the subject itself treated of, the thought itself which is expressed in the words, the doctrine we find propounded. The interpreter must consider the passage or discourse which he is treating, in connection with the dogma (so to speak) of him whose words he has before him, so as to point out how they fit into the whole of the thoughts, convictions, the doctrines and preaching of the speaker or writer. And thus it may at the same time appear whether or not we have introduced into the words that have been considered, anything heterogeneous, and have forced upon them anything foreign. This (dogmatical)

interpretation having been given, we have arrived at the end of the exegetical inquiry.

*Obs.* 1. While some would have it to be the task of logical interpretation, to explain what is written or spoken out of the entire series of thoughts of which it constitutes a part, and to point out the place it occupies there, the organic connection in which it stands with it, it can scarcely be denied, that in as far as in that, the immediate context, or the connection with what immediately precedes or follows, comes into consideration, the province of grammatical interpretation is entered. In as far as the aid is called in of the known way of thinking and views of the speaker or writer, we are really within the sphere of historical interpretation. That which remains may appropriately be called dogmatical interpretation. They who treat of the logical interpretation separately, will readily concede that they can with difficulty be considered quite separately, and that they prefer to combine it with the psychological.

*Obs.* 2. While the advocates of the theological interpretation would have the particular passages and sayings to be considered in connection with the organism of the whole book of the New Testament, they are right in so far as they demand that the particular passages and sayings should not be isolated from the whole to which they belong. The part must be considered in connection with the whole. This only is not so correct, that they name the *whole*

New Testament instead of the *writer* or *speaker*, who alone can be taken into account here. For the interpreter needs not, in order to explain a Pauline epistle well, point out how that which is there taught agrees with the doctrinal views, *e.g.*, of Peter or John. That finds its proper place in Comparative Biblical (New Testament) Theology.

### SECT. XLI.

It may be said of the dogmatical interpretation, that it only in reality, properly speaking, concludes what the grammatical and historical interpretation commenced and proceeded to do. Words, expressions, sayings, precepts of every kind in the writings of the New Testament, cannot otherwise be satisfactorily explained, than in connection with the entire dogmatical view of the writer or speaker, otherwise than in the light of his entire way of thinking and viewing things. So only is one really enabled to interpret according to the ‘*analogia doctrinæ*’ of him whose words he has before him. This interpretation being well given, the original intention of that which is written has been rendered clearly evident, and the proof of its correctness has been given in the clearness of the explanation.

*Obs.* 1. The great importance of the dogmatical interpretation appears, whenever we have to deal with words, sayings, declarations, etc., which cannot be

understood quite correctly unless one is initiated into the entire views and way of thinking of the speaker or writer. Without the dogmatical interpretation no sufficient light is cast on words such as, for instance, ἀναστάσις, ἀποκάλυψις and φανέρωσις, δικαιοσύνη, ζωὴ αἰώνιος, θάνατος, καταλλαγή, κόσμος, μετανοεῖν (and ἐπιστρέφειν), νόμος, πίστις (and πιστεύειν), πνεῦμα, σάρξ, σωτηρία, and many others;—on passages such as Rom. iii. 20, etc., iv. 25, v. 12, etc., vi. 10, vii. 14, etc. (comp. vi. 14 sq. and viii. 2 sq. with Gal. v. 17 sq.);—in general, on that which relates to the doctrine of sin, salvation, sanctification,—to the doctrine of the death of Jesus on the cross and His resurrection, of faith in Him, of justification by faith, etc. There certainly are many places where there need be no thought of dogmatical interpretation. But whatever belongs to the didactical element cannot dispense with that interpretation. Thus we stand in need of it in explaining the difference between 1 Cor. xv. 3 (comp. Rom. iv. 25 and Gal. i. 4), where Jesus is said to have ‘died for our sins,’ and Rom. vi. 10, where He is said to have ‘died unto sin’ (the two different points of view from which St. Paul considers the death of the Saviour). So also in the interpretation of 1 Pet. iii. 18, ‘Christ hath . . . suffered for sins,’ and iv. 1, ‘Christ hath suffered for the flesh’ (σάρκι). So, too, a thorough knowledge of the Pauline type of doctrine is requisite in order to explain 1 Cor. xii. 3 well, in which place it may not be forgotten, that, according to St. Paul, the Holy Ghost is not received *before*, but by faith in Christ (Gal. iii.

2, 5, 14; Eph. i. 13, in harmony with John vii. 38, 39; Acts ii. 38, v. 32). So also in the explanation of Rom. vi. 10 (Christ died unto sin), on which expression we receive light from Gal. iv. 4 and 1 Cor. xv. 56*b*. So also when we hear St. Paul speaking (Rom. vi. 3-6; Gal. iii. 27) on baptism, and think that from what he there says, we may conclude that he ascribes a magical power, a magical influence to baptism, as if, having been baptized, one were *eo ipso* one with Christ and renewed by the Holy Ghost. An accurate knowledge of the Pauline 'Lehrbegriff' shows that Paul preached faith in Jesus (Col. ii. 11, 12, 'through the faith'), and nothing but faith, as the way or means of becoming one with Christ, and of receiving the gift of the Holy Ghost. Did the apostle ascribe such a power to baptism as that we might really by it be united to Christ and receive the Holy Ghost, he would indeed have attached more value to the administration of baptism than he does according to 1 Cor. i. 14-17. (Tit. iii. 5, 'washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost,' the genitives (regeneration and renewing) are genitivi appositionis, just as there occur in Eph. vi. 14-17*a* and elsewhere not a few; in other words, regeneration and renewing by the Holy Ghost are compared with a washing (bath)).

*Obs.* 2. The dogmatical interpretation supposes thorough knowledge of Biblical (New Testament) theology in general, and of the 'Lehrbegriff' or doctrine of the speaker or writer in particular. This knowledge, naturally, is not to be obtained otherwise

than by means of thorough study of the books of the New Testament, in addition to which, one must be constantly occupied as interpreter. A correct dogmatical interpretation is therefore to be expected only from him, who has also bestowed his best energies on the interpretation of the New Testament.

### SECT. XLII.

By means of the grammatical, historical, and dogmatical interpretations, which should always be combined as much as is needful, we will as a rule be able to arrive at the true explanation of what is written, unless the text handed down does not, or only insufficiently acquaints us with the original thought of the writer. Let no one now, however, imagine that by the mere knowledge of hermeneutical precepts he is baptized an interpreter of the books of the New Testament, able and experienced in every respect. However indispensable that knowledge may be without which the New Testament would remain a sealed book, practice is required,—practice in the interpretation and explanation of writings of every kind, particularly of ancient times; and above all, constant study of Greek authors as well as in particular of the Old Testament also, but most of all, naturally, of the writings of the New Testament itself. *They* must be constantly read anew with the utmost accuracy, constantly, as much as possible, as if we read them for the first time, and while placing ourselves entirely on the standpoint of

the first readers, whom the speaker or writer must be considered to have had in view. Only after we have thoroughly acquainted ourselves with the author and his book, should we consult that which others have contributed by way of explanation and interpretation. A feeling of the want of assistance may cause us to betake ourselves to commentaries, but not before we ourselves have done that which lay in our power.

*Obs. 1.* That especially the study of the books of the Old Testament, besides that of Greek literature, renders eminent service to the interpretation of the writings of the New Testament, is quite as comprehensible as it is beyond all doubt. Neglect the Old Testament, and you are in total darkness with regard to many a point in the exegesis of the New Testament. Take, *e.g.*, the expressions βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν, ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ, ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου, ἡ γέννα, ἡ κάμινος τοῦ πυρός, ἡλασμός and ἡλαστήριον, and so much that relates to the sacrifices, the temple, and the hopes of a Messiah entertained by the Jews in the days of Jesus, etc. etc. In the representations of those who appear as speakers in the Gospels, in the teaching of Jesus, in the Epistles and Apocalypse, the Old Testament must constantly be our ἐξηγητής.

*Obs. 2.* Well-nigh innumerable is the multitude of commentaries, of earlier and later times, on the books of the New Testament; as also of treatises, essays, etc., on larger or smaller portions of these books. The latter are for the greater part mentioned in many commen-



taries; and as regards the literature of commentaries, cf. G. B. Winer, *Handbuch der theolog. Literatur (hauptsächlich der protestantischen)*, 1838, i. 234–279, 1s *Ergänzungsheft* (1842), p. 38, etc.; Hagenbach, *Encyclop.* (1864), pp. 184–191; J. E. Volbeding, *Index Dissert. Programm. et Libellorum, quibus singuli Historiæ N. T., etc., loci illustrantur*, Lips. 1849; *Corpus Dissert. Theol. s. Catal. comment.—ad exegeticam—ac reliquas disciplinas Theol. spectantium, quæ in uberrima collect. Weigeliana Lips. prostant.* (Præfatus est O. Fiebig), 1847. The majority of the commentaries, etc., are found enumerated in the *Kurzgef. Exeg. Handb.* of De Wette, in the *Theol. homil. Bibelwerk* of J. P. Lange, etc.

And now, as regards the use of the interpretations given by others, we should not neglect comparing the best commentaries, etc., in order to profit by whatever good others may have contributed. But let us not begin with that. Let us, as a rule, first try our own powers quite naturally, simply, and unconstrainedly. (Quemadmodum vina, quæ sub primam calcationem molliter defluunt, sunt suaviora, quam quæ a torculari exprimuntur, quoniam hæc ex acino et cute uvæ aliquid sapiant, similiter salubres admodum et suaves sunt doctrinæ, quæ ex scripturis leniter expressis emanant, etc. *Baco Verul.*) Let us see how far we can get without help from others. Let us remain as long as possible under the fresh and unadulterated influence of the writings of the New Testament, and let them speak for themselves, not allowing the words at the very

outset to be intercepted by another, so that we see them as through a coloured glass. Having ourselves done what we could, let us then consult others, in order impartially to test with a discerning judgment, and gratefully to use, that which they have contributed. Something quite different, however, is the reading of well-written exegetical essays or commentaries, so as to see how able interpreters, masters in the art, set to work in the interpretation of the New Testament. This last is strongly to be recommended, being similar to the study of the masterpieces of art by the youthful artist.

#### THE TRANSLATION.

##### SECT. XLIII.

After the exegetical inquiry has been terminated, and everything possible has been done in explanation and interpretation of the Greek text, we may proceed to the translation. In this work, often of great difficulty, we must exercise much circumspection. Most, if not all, languages have too much that is peculiar, easily to allow of a literal translation. As regards the translation out of Greek into one of our western languages,—for instance, French, German, Dutch, English,—it soon becomes clear that a literal translation can but seldom be thought of. But then it is not absolutely necessary either, in order to answer the purpose. The main point is, that the *same* thing be said in the trans-

lation as in the original, as regards thoughts and things. In that, however, the translator must adhere as much as possible to the original form. In the syntax he must follow the rules of the language into which he translates. He must likewise respect the idiom of that language. He is therefore bound on the one hand by the original, on the other by the language into which he has to translate it. In order to succeed well in this, he should be thoroughly acquainted with both languages, and perfectly understand that which he has to translate out of the original. For this reason, one should not proceed to the translation before he has accomplished the work of interpretation. If hardly anything remains to be explained, if the sense is so clear that scarcely any elucidation is required, then let the translation immediately follow.

*Obs.* 1. Translation in general, as well as of the books of the New Testament in particular, is verily not a work to be undertaken by every one. One may have great merit as interpreter of the books of the New Testament, and yet not be particularly suited to the translation of those books. One must also have a good knowledge of his mother-tongue, and, in general, must understand the genius of the language. It is not enough to refrain from the use of all foreign words, and to prove oneself to be a purist. One must have entered into the spirit of the language; he must not only be a grammarian, but also a philologist. We may here call to mind the saying of Vinet (*Homil.* p. 121) :

Pour ne pas errer sur le sens que nous appelons extérieur, il faut avoir une idée précise de la langue des auteurs, je veux dire de la valeur des signes et des formes de cette langue, comparés aux formes et aux signes correspondants de notre propre langue. En d'autres termes, il faut savoir à quel taux il faut prendre les mots principaux, qui reviennent le plus souvent et entrent dans les passages les plus importants.

*Obs. 2.* It is known that no writings have been translated as often, and into so many languages, as the books of the New Testament. Most important with regard to this, is what we find in Reuss, *Die Geschichte der H. Schr. N. Testaments*, 1864, 4es Buch, *Geschichte der Uebersetzungen*, sect. 421, etc.; on the translations of later date, sect. 468-500. A review of most of the later translations of the Holy Scriptures, or of a portion thereof, on behalf also of the extension of Christianity among not-Christian nations, is to be found in the *Report of the British and Foreign Bible Society*, annually published in London. The *Statenoverzetting* of the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament into Dutch has considerable merit, and not less in many respects, the translation into Dutch of 'All the Books of the New Testament' (with notes), by Dr. G. Vissering, 2d ed. 1860.

*Obs. 3.* In many places we may proceed to the translation, though the original cannot yet be satisfactorily explained. Let, then, the obscurity of the original be transferred to the translation. Why should

we not be able to translate 1 Cor. xv. 29 or Gal. iii. 20, though it be not clear what is really meant there? But one must have fully satisfied himself with regard to accentuation and punctuation, etc. How otherwise would he translate Rom. ix. 5? Painful is the position of the translator in places such as 1 Cor. xv. 1, 2; and well-nigh desperate there, where one is obliged to say: This is grammatically unintelligible! To whom does not Rev. xii. 7 here occur?

#### SECT. XLIV.

The translation of the books of the New Testament ought, just as that of every writing, to be *faithful* and *clear*: faithful, so that it expresses no less, no more, and nothing else, than the original; clear, so that it does not sin against the syntax, nor against the meaning of the words, nor against the idiom. Very justly has it been remarked, that it may not be a daguerreotype of the original text, but its lifelike portrait. The translator has to demand of himself, what Erasmus rightly demanded of a paraphrase: so to express differently what is said in the original, that still you do not say something else (*sic aliter dicere, ut non dicas alia*). Not to paraphrase, not to explain, but so to reproduce the original in the other language that it may entirely reflect it, such is the task of the translator.

*Obs.* 1. This subject has been more largely treated

of by me in an essay, under the title of 'Thoughts on a New Dutch Translation of the New Testament,' in the *Jaarboeken voor Wetenschappelyke Theol.* x. 1852, p. 743, etc. Comp. also D. Harting on the explanatory insertions in the Statenvertaling of the Bible, *Jaarb. voor Wet. Theol.* v. 1847, p. 607, etc. Vide also: W. A. van Hengel, *Proeve van grondslagen, etc.*, 1852, and *Het wenschelyke eener nieuwe Nederd. vertaling van den Bijbel in het algemeen en van het N. T. in het bijzonder*, 1855; J. da Costa, *Bedenkingen tegen het Synodale plan eener nieuwe Nederd. Bijbelvert. van het N. T.* 1855.

*Obs. 2.* Vinet rightly reminds (*l. l.* p. 121): Ce n'est pas au traducteur à expliquer ou à commenter. Il doit rendre les expressions de l'original, et en conserver, sans s'embarrasser des conséquences, les duretés, les obscurités, le caractère paradoxal; il ne doit pas reculer devant des métaphores qui sembleront étranges parce qu'elles sont étrangères.

#### SECT. XLV.

Then only could we possess a translation of the books of the New Testament entirely above all want of improvement, when nothing more remained to be done for the explanation and interpretation of those writings, at least in so far as the explanation and interpretation exercise an influence on the translation. As long, however, as that is not the case, liberty must still be given for a revision of every translation, more

especially as in the establishment of the genuine Greek text, notwithstanding the successful progress of this labour, the final, decisive, and satisfactory word has not yet been spoken. If we had a translation of the books of the New Testament which rendered the original quite correctly, we might set out from that translation in interpretation. But now that we are not so far advanced, it continues the duty of every interpreter constantly to revert to the original Greek, and also never to decide in any exegetical question without having very carefully consulted it.

*Obs. 1.* It is now generally conceded that the Dutch 'Statenvertaling' of the Old and New Testament does not satisfy all the requirements of our times, however excellent it may have been for its own. (Cf. on the history of the Statenvertaling, J. Heringa, *Bijzonderheden betreffende de vervaardiging van de gewone Nederd. Bijbelvert.* in Kist en Roijaards *Archief voor Kerkelijke Gesch.* v. 64, etc.) Vide van Hengel, *Het wenschelijke*, etc.; Harting, *over de verklarende tusschenwoegsels*, etc.; Vissering, *Welke zijn de gebreken der dusgenaamde Statenvert. van de Schriften des N. T.* in *Jaarb. v. Wet. Theol.* x. p. 258, etc., 411, etc.

*Obs. 2.* In the so-called popular scripture-interpretation,—i.e. interpretation of the sacred writings on behalf of those who cannot read them in Greek,—one certainly cannot lay the Greek down as foundation for *them*, but must undoubtedly do so for himself in his preparation. Every one who stands up before the

people as an interpreter, ought *always* to do it. He who cannot do it, is fit only to a certain extent to be heard as an independent interpreter of the sacred writings of the New Testament. He must often be content only to refer to what others have said. Of course, it is an exception in those places and subjects, on which the knowledge of Greek exercises no decisive influence. But in order to be able always to know this, one must surely be a particularly well-informed member of the congregation. If he is such, then he may, after the ever indispensable preparation, and with the ever indispensable acquirements, sometimes engage, not without profit, and not without a blessing to the less developed, in the difficult work of the (partial) interpretation of the New Testament. Let each here conscientiously consult his own powers.

#### SECT. XLVI.

As regards the form in which the sum of the exegetical inquiry must be communicated, it ought to be calculated according to the requirements of those for whom the interpretation is given, and according to the object with which one comes forward as interpreter. We may here think of oral or written interpretation, that for the learned, or for the less developed, or for a mixed public; of that in which the sole object is, to understand the writer, or also to make use of that which has been explained for practical purposes. One may be content with a translation and paraphrase, with



short observations added, or may also wish to give a continuous commentary, in which words and things receive a thorough treatment and full consideration (as is generally the case in a good *commentarius perpetuus*). Separate essays and treatises continue to be of great importance, either on words and expressions, or on particular sentences and divisions, especially when, in as far as it is still required, exegetical difficulties are fully considered in them. For scarcely ever can these be treated of so fully in a commentary, as to do proper justice to every particular question.

*Obs.* Cf. here, Lutz, *Bibl. Herm.* sect. 11; Landerer, *Art. Hermeneutik*, in Herzog's *Real-Encyclop.* pp. 796, 797.

#### SECT. XLVII.

The results of the exegesis of the New Testament are rewrought, either for the history of the origin of Christianity (life of Jesus, of the apostles, etc.), or for New Testament theology ('*Lehrbegriff*' of Jesus, Paul, Peter, etc.). The credibility of the historical portions is examined into by Historical Criticism. To examine into the truth of the doctrinal portion is the task of Critical Dogmatics. The defence of that which we have found to be credible, and have acknowledged as truth, continues to be entrusted to Christian Apologetics. We have access to none of these sciences or labours otherwise than by means of exegesis. With

a view to it, the absolute necessity will ever have to be acknowledged of Hermeneutics resting upon and building further on a purely critical foundation.

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