

communicate. We know that we have not a complete record of all that Jesus did, and said, for the simple reason, that, if so, the New Testament would have been so bulky as to have interfered with its usefulness. It was meant for all,—for the common people, as well as for those who have leisure for literary pursuits; and therefore it must, of necessity, contain only an abridged account of Christ's sayings, and doings—a selection of all that was most important;—enough to comfort, and elevate, and stimulate us, and guide us in the way of salvation, but nothing to gratify an idle curiosity. This is inspiration.

#### THE SPIRIT THE REVEALER OF FUTURE EVENTS.

There is another species of inspiration, which implies a divine operation upon the mind, of a higher sort. I mean the revelation of future events. The gift of prophecy our Saviour promised, that the Spirit would confer upon the apostles. "He will show you things to come," said he. This gift of prophecy was conferred, in abundant measure, on Peter, John and Paul, and in the striking, and unmistakeable fulfillment of their prophecies, we have a most convincing proof of the reality of our most holy religion. But the gift of prophecy was not confined to the apostles. It had been predicted by Joel, that, in the last days, God would pour out of his Spirit upon all flesh, and that their sons, and their daughters should prophecy. And so we find that, in apostolic times, not only did Agabus deliver remarkable predictions, of the fulfilment of which we have an account in the New Testament, but the daughters of Philip the Evangelist also did prophecy.

When the prophets were inspired to predict future events, they must have been entirely passive, in the hands of the Spirit. They could utter only what he communicated, and probably employed the very words which he suggested. This, indeed, the prophets themselves declared. Thus when Agabus took Paul's girdle, and bound his own hands and feet with it, he said,—“Thus saith the Holy Ghost, so shall the Jews, at Jerusalem, bind the man that owneth this girdle, and shall deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles.”

So entirely passive do the prophets

appear to have been, when future events were disclosed to them, that sometimes they did not understand fully the import of the things, which they were made the instruments of communicating to the Church, and had to study their own predictions. Thus Peter says—“Of which salvation the prophets have enquired; and searched diligently, who prophesied of the things that should come unto you, searching what, or what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow.

#### THE SPIRIT ENLIGHTENED THE MIND, AND EXALTED THE FACULTIES OF THE APOSTLES. AND THIS HE DOES TO SOME EXTENT, IN THE CASE OF ALL BELIEVERS.

But there is another species of inspiration, of which the apostles were the subjects, closely allied to the refreshing of the memory, and guiding into all the truth, of which we have already spoken, but still slightly different from it. I mean the illumination of the mind, and exaltation of the faculties, in virtue of which they were enabled clearly to understand truths, which were dark, and incomprehensible to them before, and to see them, in their relation to other truths, and comprehend fully the glorious scheme of redemption. Thus, after the out-pouring of the Holy Spirit, on the day of Pentecost, the apostles fully understood, and appreciated truths, which had appeared mysterious, and revolting to them before, and obtained an insight into the way of salvation, to which they had been strangers before.—This is probably what the apostle John means by the “unction of the Holy One,” bestowed, to some extent, on all genuine believers, but in a double measure, upon the apostles. “But ye have an unction from the Holy One,” says he, “and ye know all things.” And again with reference to the same subject, he says—“We know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true; and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ.”

Except in the matter of predicting future events, the Spirit revealed to the apostles