

would Paul or Peter say? Under the guidance of the same spirit? They would say—*just what they have written*. If God were to send a special messenger from Heaven, what could he add to a law that is *perfect and converts the soul*? Nothing. But are not the Scriptures hard to be understood? No. Peter says in Paul's epistles there are *some* things hard to be understood. But this difficulty never was the cause of error in any; for the unlearned and the unstable, who wrest these hard sayings, wrest "the other Scriptures also to their own destruction." There are, it must be admitted, mysteries in the Scripture. The Scripture however is not a mystery, but the *revelation* of a mystery. The word mystery is much misunderstood, and, of course, misapplied. It does not necessarily suppose any thing difficult of apprehension. A mystery may be abstruse, but it may be something level to the weakest understanding. It means what we never could have discovered, and to be known must have been revealed to us. That Saul was a native of Tarsus is a mystery to us, because we never could have known it, if it had not been communicated. Divine mysteries are such as God has revealed, and God only could reveal. His design was that we should know them, and I will not easily believe that when God condescends to become author, he only of all authors is the one that needs an authorized interpreter. The great obstacle to right interpretation of Scripture is found, not in its obscurity, but in our reluctance to receive it. We don't like the reproach of infidelity, and we don't like the doctrines of the Bible, and we adopt the accommodating course of finding or inventing an interpretation that is agreeable to our views,—*"The natural man knoweth not the things of the Spirit of God."* The Papacy dislikes the Scriptures, and as it would not do to disown them, they spread over them a parchment on which they have engrossed their own doctrines, and which they call the interpretation of the Church, and by the same magic in-