

hand, and (2) it may be viewed as the credible record of a supernatural revelation of which they were the recipients. In order that the full force of this argument may be felt we must bear in mind the contrast between the treatment accorded to the Old Testament Scriptures by Christ and the writers of the New Testament, and that which flows naturally from any of the modified theories of inspiration. All these theories deny the infallible truth and divine authority of the Holy Scriptures, and they are introduced expressly to account for the presence of an undefined and undefinable amount of error in the sacred page. It is evident that no man who had embraced any of these theories could legitimately treat the Scriptures as an infallible standard of faith and life. He might appeal to them as investing with a high degree of probability the sentiments which they sanctioned. He might quote them with much confidence for their leading facts, and perhaps also for their more prominent doctrines; but that he should ever build upon the mere form of their phraseology, or draw inferences from what is implied as well as what is expressed, would be impossible. (1.) Now it is to be observed that in all the quotations made by Christ and the writers of the New Testament from the Old there is no reserve made for error, no attempt made to distinguish divine truth from human mistakes. The Old Testament Scriptures are quoted by our Lord and His Apostles just as they are quoted to-day by those who believe in their plenary inspiration. "It is written" was deemed by our Lord a sufficient answer to the temptations of Satan, the cavils of Scribes and Pharisees, and the doubts of His own Disciples. It never occurred to him that a thing might be written in Scripture, and after all be a mere blunder. His mind is never haunted with the terrible uncertainty resulting from such a notion. He ever deals with the Old Testament in the spirit of His own maxim, "The Scriptures cannot be broken." The same style of quotation characterizes the writings of the Apostles and Evangelists. They never question the infallible truth or divine authority of the ancient Scriptures. On the contrary, they take for granted that "the Scriptures must be fulfilled; and they constantly appeal to them as a decisive standard of truth and duty. If, therefore, the writers of the New Testament are regarded either as fair exponents of the mind of Christ or as the credible historians of a true revelation from God, their testimony to the inspiration of the Old Testament is conclusive. Had the quotations and references made by our Lord been few the thought might have found entrance that in some unaccountable manner the historian had forgotten the words of his Master, but when we discover that the quotations made by Christ Himself may be counted by scores, and that they are recorded not by one but by four evangelists, then every principle of historical evidence must be overthrown if our Lord did not sanction the plenary inspiration of the Old Testament. And when we add to this that in all the quotations made from the Old Testament Scriptures in the New—quotations numbered not by scores but by hundreds—the writers uniformly appeal to them as to an infallible standard, what can be thought of the modesty of a writer who ventures to declare "that the prevailing popular view of the authority, the inspiration, and the infallibility of the Bible has been superstitiously attached to it?" It is a superstition which we share with Christ and His Apostles. This argument gathers additional force from the consideration that Christ and His apostles addressed a people who already believed in the plenary inspiration of the Old Testament, and who must have understood them as endorsing that dogma. That such was the belief of the Jews in the time of Christ is put beyond dispute by the language of the writers of the Apocrypha, and by the express testimony of Philo and Josephus.—*Vide* Lee on Insp. p. 63-68. We may, indeed, be reminded that the Jews also attached a superstitious reverence and authority to traditions. But did our Lord use language fitted to foster the delusion? On the contrary, we find these traditions denounced in the severest terms, while the law in its purity was vindicated from the false glosses wherewith it had been overlaid. But did our Lord ever charge the Jews with superstitious reverence for the Holy Scriptures? Did he ever denounce them for their Bibliolatry? Nay, verily, the very gravamen of his charge against them was that they had made void the Word through their traditions: Mark vii. 15; Matt. xv. 6. (2.) The express statements of Christ, and of the writers of the New Testament, prove the plenary inspiration of the

Old Testament Scriptures. "Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets; I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law till all be fulfilled:" Matt. v. 17, 18. No one surely can imagine that our Lord in using such language did not imply His belief in the plenary inspiration of the Old Testament. He expressly calls the Scriptures which the Jews had made void through their traditions, "The Word of God." We find Him grounding an argument upon a single word, and that used in an uncommon sense, because "the Scriptures cannot be broken." "If He called them gods to whom the Word of God came, and the Scriptures cannot be broken." John x. 35. He recognizes the usual threefold division of the books of the Old Testament, and attributes the same unerring truth to their contents, "These are the words which I spake unto you while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the Psalms concerning Me:" Luke xxiv. 44. In the New Testament the ancient Scriptures are on several occasions referred to as "the oracles of God," terms which indicate that "they are in word, as well as in sense, divine communications." In 2 Tim. iii. 16, 17, the Apostle Paul, whose remarkable conversion and general character stamp him certainly as a credible witness of a supernatural revelation, declares expressly that "all Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness," etc. Alford and Ellicott propose in a somewhat hesitating manner to translate the words "every divinely inspired Scripture is also profitable," but even this harsh rendering does not affect the argument, for the reference must still be to the Holy Scriptures spoken of in the previous verse, which Timothy had known from childhood. According to the ordinary translation Paul asserts categorically the inspiration of all Scriptures, and according to the other he mentions it as a thing which is to be taken for granted and proceeded upon. According to either view Paul must be held as sanctioning the idea that Divine inspiration is a common property of the Old Testament Scriptures. We are aware that an attempt has been made to evade the force of this testimony by translating the words "every writing divinely inspired is also profitable," etc. But not only does this represent the Apostle as introducing a statement entirely irrelevant to the matter in hand, but also as using the word Scripture in a sense of which there is no example in the New Testament. For of the fifty times in which the word occurs, either in the singular or the plural, in the New Testament, it is used in all save two, unless we except this text, as a kind of proper name for the Old Testament. The two exceptions are significant. The one is where Peter applies the word to St. Paul's Epistle, along with the other Scriptures, 2 Peter iii. 16. The other is an instance of a similar kind, where Paul quotes two passages, one from the Old Testament and the other from the New, under the common title of Scripture. That the word *graphe* was used as a kind of proper noun in the New Testament, like our word Scripture, admits of no question. It was employed usually to denote the sacred writings of the Old Testament, although at the date of this epistle the *usus loquendi* had become so far modified as to admit of the application of the word to the canonical writings of the New Testament. The testimony of 2 Peter i. 20, 21, is in some respects more decisive: "Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man, but holy men spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." What language could more clearly assert the plenary inspiration of the Old Testament? After reading these explicit testimonies from Christ and the writers of the New Testament, which might have been greatly multiplied, it seems a phenomenon which demands explanation that an Oxford professor could deliberately write that "for any of the higher or supernatural views of inspiration there is no foundation in the Gospels or Epistles."

Christ and the writers of the New Testament found arguments upon the very words of the Old Testament in a manner which demonstrated their belief in its inspiration. The answer which our Lord returned to the cavils of the Sadducees in reference to the resurrection of the dead is a striking example in point. He refutes their objection by an appeal to the fact that long after the death of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, God had, in His words to Moses, represented himself

as the God of these patriarchs, and our Lord reasons that as God is not the God of the dead but of the living, they must be still alive. The whole force of this argument is based on the precise collocation of words employed in Ex. iii. 6: "I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." Now suppose a Sadducee had replied, as one of his modern successors doubtless would, that Moses was left to his own powers to record, as best he could, facts with which he was personally cognizant, and that by a slip of memory he had no doubt substituted the idea of the present for the past, and that the words really used by Jehovah probably were, "I was the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob," what would have become of the argument "God is not the God of the dead but of the living?" And if the Scriptures are not so inspired as to be characterized by infallible truth and divine authority, what possible answer could be returned to such a rejoinder? On the same occasion our Lord silenced the Pharisees by an argument founded on the use of the personal pronoun "my" in one of the Psalms—an argument depending entirely on the unerring accuracy with which the Psalm is worded.—Matt. xxii. 41. We have seen also that he reasons from an uncommon sense attached, in one of the Psalms to the word "gods," because "the Scriptures cannot be broken:" John x. 35. And the Apostle Paul is so fully convinced of the plenary inspiration of the ancient canon that he bases an argument in Gal. iii. 16, on the distinction between the singular and the plural in an Old Testament promise. The manner in which Old Testament predictions are verified by Christ and His apostles, as fulfilled, opens up a very interesting line of evidence, on which we cannot enter.

The inspiration of the New Testament is sustained by evidence not less satisfactory. Those who admit the plenary inspiration of the Old Testament are not likely to question the infallible truth and divine authority of the New. The tendency in certain quarters is rather in the opposite direction. The presumptive argument in favour of the inspiration of the New Testament is certainly stronger than that which prepares us to welcome the inspiration of the Old. For not only is there the general presumption that God, having given to men a supernatural revelation, will ensure them the full benefit of the gift by enshrining it in a correct record, but there is another springing from the character of the later revelation. If any revelation is deemed worthy of an inspired record, surely it must be that, so full and perfect, which has been introduced in these last days by God's Son from Heaven. But passing to the evidence, we discover, as we examine the New Testament, (1), that the writers claim co-ordinate authority with those of the Old Testament. Not only does the same calm tone of authority pervade their writings, but we find the Apostle Peter combining in the same sentence the words of the prophets and the commandments of the apostles as equally entitled to the thoughtful submission of Christians—"That ye may be mindful of the words that were spoken before of the holy prophets, and of the commandments of us the apostles of the Lord and Saviour:" 2 Pet. iii. 2. In the same chapter Peter ranks the epistles of Paul with the other Scriptures, as possessed of the same essential character and authority. "Even as our beloved brother Paul also, according to the wisdom given unto him, hath written unto you; as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other Scriptures, to their own destruction:" 2 Pet. iii. 15, 16. What language could more clearly claim co-ordinate authority for Paul's epistles and the Old Testament? It is indeed highly probable that as Peter regarded Paul's epistles as Scripture he included in "the other Scriptures" all the canonical books of the New Testament written at the date of this epistle, or nearly the whole of the New Testament. In 1 Tim. v. 18, Paul ranks as Scripture two passages, the one from the Old Testament and the other found only in the Gospels—Matt. x. 10, and Luke x. 7.

(Concluded next week.)

LORD CAIRNS, who has been for some time Lord High-Chancellor of England, is the second son of an Irish gentleman, and by his talents and steady application and integrity, he has risen to his high position. Last week he was gazetted Earl Cairns and Viscount of Garmoyle.