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when our "lives were forfeit," pleads with his followers for forbearance. Still God's "philanthropy" breathes an inspiration and prescribes a model. By the memory of his spontaneous grace which made us what we are, let us reach after that crown of saintliness, the meekness that beareth all things and forgiveth all things for Christ's dear sake!

J. OSWALD DYKES.

THE REFORMERS AS EXPOSITORS.

II. LUTHER.

THAT the services of Luther to the cause of Biblical Interpretation were immense, and indeed unique, is acknowledged by nearly every one who has touched on the History of Exegesis. Unhappily, there is no good book on Luther as an Expositor; yet he did more than any one to give force and currency to the principles which had originated with his ablest predecessors, from Nicolas of Lyra down to Laurentius Valla, and which had found in Erasmus their most powerful exponent. Luther gave to Germany an open Bible written in a style which has moulded and permeated the whole German language. His Commentary on the Galatians¹ is his only complete and continuous contribution to the Exegesis of the New Testament, yet it was that single work which led to the conversions of John Bunyan and John Wesley, whose religious influence has been as powerful as that of any teachers in the last three centuries. Luther's German Bible may be regarded as being in many places a most valuable commentary, and in his Prefaces, his Sermons, his doctrinal works, his polemical treatises, and his Table-talk, he enunciated rules to which the com-

¹ 1519. Re-edited in 1524 and 1535.

plete revolution of exegetic methods which has taken place in modern times has been principally due.

The famous old saying, "*Si Lyra non lyrasset Lutherus non saltasset et mundus delirasset*," or as it sometimes runs, "*Nemo Doctorum in Bibliam saltasset*," only possesses a partial truth. Luther no doubt learned much from Nicolas of Lyra, but he was led to his final conclusions during the course of that divine education which constitutes the real history of his life. His most effectual lessons were learnt from the Holy Spirit of God amid the agonies and struggles of intellectual and spiritual conflict.

His advance was gradual.—

i. As an Augustinian monk at Erfurd, till the age of twenty-six (A.D. 1508) he knew no Greek and no Hebrew, and had never seen—by which we must understand, I suppose, that he had never *read*—a complete Bible.¹ At this period he found a Vulgate in the library of his monastery, and for the first time realized that it contained something more than the Church Lectionaries. He read it with diligent assiduity, much to the surprise of the excellent Staupitz; and the mere fact of his doing so led to his being suspected of heterodoxy.² Yet at first he was entirely in the bonds of ecclesiastical tradition. He did not refer to the original tongues, and contented himself with the *Glossa Ordinaria*, having been hitherto taught to dislike the Postills of Nicolas of Lyra. It was, however, during this epoch that his whole soul and life were influenced by the words which St. Paul quotes from Habakkuk, "The just shall live by faith."

¹ This he expressly asserts in his Table-talk. It is, however, a curious and unexplained circumstance; for, as Dr. Beard has recently pointed out in his Hibbert Lectures, the University of Erfurd in the fifteenth century had given considerable attention to Biblical studies.

² The edict of Charles V. for the Netherlands shews that the common reading of the Bible was regarded by the Romish Church as a crime worthy of death by burning.

ii. For nearly ten years more, till the year 1517, he remained in this stage; and though he gave expository Lectures on the Bible at Wittenberg, he still contented himself with the Vulgate, and wrote in servile dependence upon the Fathers.

iii. In the four following years (1518–1521), when he was already at the ripe age of thirty-seven, he made the great advance which was continued through the remainder of his life. He began to study Hebrew and Greek, and attaching less and less importance to the views of the Fathers, drew largely on his own spiritual experiences. The striking anecdote of the delight which he felt when first he discovered that the *pœnitentia* of the Vulgate corresponded to “*repentance*” and not to “*penance*”¹ is an illustration of the tendency of words often repeated “to ossify the organs of the intelligence,” and, as Bacon says, to react upon the understanding like a Tartar’s bow. Nothing could have more surely revealed to Luther the inestimable advantage of seeking in the original languages the real meaning of the sacred writers. The commentaries of this period of his life are not polemical, but popular and practical. His one object was to give *life* to the words of Scripture, and to bring them home to the hearts and consciences of men. His *Operationes in Psalmos*, which has been called “the first scientifically exegetic book of the Reformation,” belongs to this period.

iv. In his fourth and last stage he gained a clear grasp over the principles which continued to predominate for three centuries in the Exegesis of the Reformation. These principles I will, with all brevity, endeavour to explain.

1. First among them is the *supreme and final Authority of Scripture, apart from all merely ecclesiastical authority*. This position Luther asserted as a *Haupt-fundament*. He never paused to demonstrate it; he refused even to discuss

¹ *Briefe*, ed. De Wette, vol. i. p. 116.

it; and for a sufficient reason. As far as words went it was theoretically accepted by his opponents. Luther and the Romanists alike said, "Scripture is the ultimate witness and authority"; but there was this essential difference between them:—the Romanists combined Scripture with its interpretation as accepted by the mediæval Church; Luther entirely rejected the supremacy of that system of interpretation, and regarded it as being in many instances demonstrably erroneous. Nay, he went farther, for in later years he openly and frequently derided both the principles on which Papal Exegesis was founded and the results to which it led. It was in his controversy with Eck at Leipzig in 1519, that he was first led to the distinct rejection of the authority of Councils, which he said had demonstrably erred and had contradicted each other. In the days of Arius, he argued, the majority of the bishops had been Arians. "When Papists quote the Scriptures," he scornfully observed, "it is in this style: '*Ye are the salt of the earth,*' i.e. '*Ye are priests.*' '*Praise God in his saints,*' i.e. '*The Pope has the power to confer canonization.*'" "We should trust a layman who has Scripture with him," he said, "more than Pope or Council without it." "The Church is the creature of the Gospel, incomparably inferior to the Gospel." "The censure of the Church will not separate me from the Church, if truth joins me to the Church." "The Church cannot create articles of faith, she can only recognize and confess them, as a slave does the seal of his lord."¹ "The Pythagorism, '*Iipse dixit,*' is not to be tolerated in the Church."² "Let each of us see that we so read, write, teach, learn, that after having studied our Bibles, we do not heap up to ourselves Fathers, Councils, Doctors, Decretals, and the slough of human

¹ See Fabricius, *Loci Communes Martini Lutheri*, i. 120. Köstlin, *Luther's Theologie*, i. 275ff.

² *Id.*, i. 60.

traditions and opinions.”¹ Thus Luther refused to allow the Pope—as he, in his rough way, expressed it—“to sit on all the eggs.”

2. Luther not only asserted the authority of Scripture but of *Scripture only* [sufficiētia Scripturæ]. He anticipated the formula of Chillingworth that “the Bible, and the Bible only, is the religion of Protestants.”² He declined to be refuted by any patristic comments. “I ask for Scripture,” he said, “and Eck offers the Fathers. I ask for the sun; he shews me his lanterns. I ask ‘where is your Scripture proof?’; and he adduces Ambrose and Cyril!” The Romish Church, like the Jewish, regards tradition as the sole authoritative interpreter of Scripture; and Luther set aside this claim.

In his Comment on the Psalms (1521)³ he lays down two rules by which to judge of the Fathers. One is that they have often erred; from which he draws the unanswerable inference that their bare *opinions* can have no value apart from such proofs as they can offer. The other, no less unanswerable, is that the Fathers not only never claim, but expressly *repudiate*, all title to be regarded as infallible authorities. “The Papists wrong the dear Fathers,” he said, “in attributing to them an authority which they disclaimed. They honour not the Fathers, but their own tyranny. They want to sit on the eggs, and be our idol.”⁴

Respecting individual Fathers he expresses himself with

¹ *Id.*, i. 69. Luther formally rejected the rule of Vincentius Lerinensis, that, “*Interpretationis linea secundum ecclesiastici et catholici sensus normam dirigatur*” (*Commonitor.* Ep. 2), which was reaffirmed by the Council of Trent. See Köstlin, *Luther's Theologie*, i. 272–278.

² “*Non aliunde quam ex ipsâ sacrâ Scripturâ certa et infallibilis potest haberi interpretatio.*” Quenstädt, i. 137.

³ On Ps. xxxvii.

⁴ The Council of Trent (Sess. iv.) forbade any one to interpret “*Contra eum sensum quem tenuit et tenet sancta mater Ecclesia aut etiam contra unanimum consensum Patrum.*” There is however, exegetically speaking, no such thing as an *unanimitis consensus Patrum*.

the most independent freedom. For Augustine he had the deepest respect, but from Origen he was repelled by his allegories (*die denn nicht eines Dreck's werth sind*), and from Jerome by his ecclesiasticism. He considered that he had wasted time over Cyprian and Gregory, and thought that Melancthon was worth a score of Cyprians and Firmilians. "*Salvis reverentiis Patrum,*" he said in his Dispute at Leipzig, "*praefero ego auctoritatem Scripturae.*"

Of the Schoolmen he speaks (as we have seen in previous papers) still more contemptuously. He complains that those scholars who have "filled their bellies with the husks of swine (*i.e.* of philosophers)" have given rise to the proverb, "*Scriptura habet cereum nasum.*"¹

3. *He rejected Allegory as a source of dogma* even more decisively than his predecessors, and insisted still more strongly on *the supreme importance of the literal sense*. Here are some of his own statements:—

"The literal sense of Scripture alone is the whole essence of faith and of Christian theology."

"I have observed this, that all heresies and errors have originated, not from the simple words of Scripture as is so universally asserted, but from *neglecting* the simple words of Scripture, and from the affectation of subjective (*proprio cerebro*) tropes and inferences."

"An interpreter must, as much as possible, avoid allegory that he may not wander in idle dreams." "Allegories must be used as mere pictures and ornaments."² "Each passage has one clear, definite, and true sense of its own. All others are but doubtful and uncertain opinions." "Allegories are empty speculations, and as it were the scum of Holy Scripture." "Allegory is useless for proof." "Allegory is a sort of beautiful harlot who proves herself

¹ *Fabricius*, l. c. 67.

² Just as St. Paul introduces the allegory of Sarah and Hagar *after* preaching Justification by Faith, "So kannst Du heimliche Deutung mit einführen neben dem öffentlichen Text, den schmücken und als schöne Spangen darzu heften."

to be specially seductive to idle men.”¹ “To allegorise is,” he says, “*mit der Schrift gauckeln.*” Allegorising may degenerate into a mere monkey-game (*Affenspiel*). Allegories are, in his own energetic words, “*ungeschikte, unge reimte, erdichtete, altvettelische, lose Zoten.*”

Like almost all writers of this age his practice is inferior to his theory, but the only reason why he did not reject the allegorical method altogether was the occasional though rare use of it by St. Paul. Luther did however decisively reject the *fourfold sense*. “In the Schools of Theologians,” he says, “it is a well-known rule that Scripture is to be understood in four ways—literal, allegoric, moral, anagogic. . . . But if we wish to handle Scripture aright, our one effort will be to attain “*Unum, simplicem, germanum, et certum sensum literalem.*”²

He was led to these conclusions by seeing that there was no glimmer of any genuine exegetical principle in the mediæval commentaries, and that allegory had been abused into a subtle method for transferring to the Church the authority which belonged exclusively to the Scriptures. Such a method destroyed all certainty of interpretation, and left room for the most extravagant perversions. It undermined the inherent value of the sacred records to such an extent as to lead to the foolish remark of even Erasmus, that without allegorising one might as well read Livy as the Book of Judges.³ Unhappily, however, Luther opened a postern-door for the re-intrusion of artificial dogmatic combinations when he said that “Grammar must not rule facts, but yield to facts.”⁴ It is strange that so many centuries

¹ These remarks are chiefly taken from Luther's *Commentary on Genesis. Fabric.*, l. c., vol. i. pp. 72 ff.

² On Genesis xv. The “*quadruplex intelligentia*” (words, context, purpose, doctrine, of Flacius, *Clavis S.S.*, p. 68) is far more sensible.

³ *Enchirid. Mil. Christiani.*

⁴ On Genesis xvi. and see Preface to the Canticles. It is especially in his Comments on Job, Psalms, Revelation, and Solomon's Song that Luther is least faithful to his own principles.

of exegetes have failed to master the simple principle that their one duty was to ascertain, apart from all fancies or prepossessions, what was really said and really meant by the sacred writers at the time when they wrote.

4. The rejection of allegoric fancies and traditional methods led to the famous dogma of *the Perspicuity of Scripture*.¹ In his views upon this subject he sometimes almost anticipated the modern thesis that "the Bible is to be interpreted like any other book." He even wishes that there were no such things as commentaries, which Melancthon also said ought to be avoided like a pestilence.

"The Holy Ghost," says Luther, "is the all-simplest writer that is in heaven or earth; therefore his words can have no more than one simplest sense, which we call the scriptural or literal meaning."²

"The Word of God," says Melancthon, with strange tautology, "is not obscure and doubtful, because it is a law perspicuous and clear." He was confronted with the answer that there was not a verse in Scripture which could not be interpreted in different ways, but he contents himself with calling it a specimen of "mere petulance and diabolical sophistry." He does, however, add the limitation that "*in the chief matters which pertain to the Law and the Gospel*" (*perspicuitas finalis*) "the Scripture is open and without obscurity," and attributes contests and disputes to the malice and pravity of those who corrupt Scripture.

5. With such views Luther, as a natural consequence, held *the right of private judgment*.

This view lies at the base of all Protestantism; we might

¹ *Werke*, xviii. 14, 16. Of course he did not mean to assert that Scripture does not contain difficulties. He is fond of quoting St. Gregory's phrase "*Fluvius est in quo agnus peditat et elephas natat.*" The "perspicuity" of Scripture was supposed to be conditioned by right use of means, which included the aid of the Holy Ghost; and a distinction was drawn between "outward" and "inward" clearness.

² Answer to Emser (*Werke*, xviii., ed. Walch, 1602).

even say that it lies at the base of all independent and thoughtful religion. Man has no right to abrogate the reason with which he has been endowed by God; and the Christian has no right to abrogate the exercise of that spiritual faculty—the result of that unction from the Holy One, which is promised not only to priests, but to all faithful Christians alike—by which he is enabled to know all necessary truth. No doubt the Reformers were instantly liable to be perplexed by the fact that the exercise of the individual judgment led men into the extremest diversities. In the sacramentarian controversy Zwingli, in the political controversies the Anabaptists, in many other bitter and deadly controversies, Calvin, and Campanus, and Emsler, and Serretus, and Socinus appealed equally to Scripture and claimed the right to interpret it in their own way. The difficulty was a terrible one because tolerance was as yet unknown. The doctrine of toleration unhappily owes more even to the Socini than to the Great Reformer. Melancthon proposed to get over the difficulty by talking of a “*consensus of pious men*,” which was only restoring in another form the futile notion of the infallibility of councils.¹ Calvin, with his usual boldness, denied the right of private judgment altogether; he said that the best remedy for disputed dogmas was “*verorum episcoporum synodus*.”² Luther stoutly held fast to it. He preferred the hurricane of controversies to the pestilence of universal error and the stagnancy of enforced uniformity. He asks Henry VIII. “who could be certain in his own conscience that the Pope interpreted Scripture rightly?”³ What then was the worth of the nominal unity—the torpor of meaningless and unreasoning acquiescence—which reigned in Roman

¹ “*Interpretatio est donum piorum*.” Melancthon, *Loci Communes*, p. 369. On the other hand even in 1520 Luther wrote to the Pope “*Leges interpretandi verbum Dei non patior*.”

² Calvin, *Instt.*, iv. c. 9, § 13.

³ See Köstlin, *Luther's Theologie*, vol. ii. p. 63.

Catholicism? Whatever evils might seem to spring from the exercise of private judgment, Luther continued to maintain that since Scripture is common to all, it is the duty of each separate Christian to ground his faith upon it, and to test his faith by it. "To ascertain and judge about doctrine pertains to all and to every Christian, and in such a way that let him be anathema who injures their right by a single hair."¹

6. There were, however, certain definite rules which he laid down respecting the right interpretation of Scripture. In his Preface to Isaiah (1528), and in other parts of his writings, he says that three things are necessary to its comprehension.

i. *Grammar*. He admits that his own knowledge in this matter is imperfect, but quite justly claims that at least he knew as much as St. Augustine and other great recognized teachers. The importance of demanding a knowledge of grammar is shewn by the complaint of Bellarmine that "the better a grammarian a man was the worse theologian was he considered to be."²

ii. *History*, i.e. the times, circumstances, and conditions under which the words of Scripture were written (*Distingue tempora et concordabis Scripturas*).

iii. "The proportion of faith." Elsewhere he insists on the further essentials of—

iv. Faith and spiritual illumination.

v. Observance of the context.

vi. The reference of all Scripture to Christ.

The last four points require a word of elucidation.

7. "*The Proportion of Faith*" is a phrase which recurs again and again in all the post-Reformation discussions

¹ *Werke*, vol. xxxviii. p. 339. (Erl. Ausg.). He grounded this right on Matt. vii. 15; John x. 4, 5; 1 John iv. 1; 1 Thess. v. 21; 1 Cor. ii. 15 (regarding every Christian as "spiritual"); 1 Cor. iii. 22 (i.e. you have the right of judging, de omnium dictis et factis).

² Bellarm., *De Rom. Pontif.*, iv. 12.

about Scriptural exposition. As is the case with so large a number of current dogmatic shibboleths, the phrase is used in a sense wholly apart from its original meaning. When St. Paul said if we have the gift of "prophecy," *i.e.* of religious teaching, each man should exercise it *κατὰ τὴν ἀναλογίαν τῆς πίστεως*, he meant "according to the proportion of *our* faith" as the Revised Version rightly renders it, *i.e.* in accordance with the smaller or larger measure of faith which each man has himself received. This phrase was however understood to mean that all Scripture must be interpreted with reference to all other Scripture, which was practically a reappearance of the old Romish rule that nothing was to be explained in any other sense than that of the current Church dogmas. So far as the rule meant that no words or expressions were to be completely isolated, or exaggerated into meanings contrary to the general teaching with which they are connected, this misapplied phrase is susceptible of a true meaning; but it unhappily paved the way to the distortion and sophistry of that later Protestant Scholasticism which viewed every word of Scripture in the light of the standards and confessions of doctrine. Such a method makes of the Old Testament a sort of obscure forest in which "Dogma and Allegory hunt in couples to catch what they can." It was the abuse of this rule about the "Analogy of Faith" which caused the shipwreck of Protestant exegesis in the next generation.

8. Nothing can be wiser than Luther's remark on the *observance of the context*. "To cull diverse passages from diverse places without any reference to sequence of thought and comparison is," he says, "no happy mode of understanding and interpreting the Holy Scriptures. Nay more, it is the most current cause for going wrong." In the following sentence he is thinking more of the so-called "proportion of faith." "The theologian," he says, "unless

he wishes to err, must place all Scripture before his eyes, and compare contraries, and like the two cherubim which confronted each other, he must find unanimity in the midst of the mercy-seat; otherwise the countenance of each cherub will divert the eye which follows it far from the mercy-seat, that is from the true understanding of Christ."

9. Luther's main principle in studying the Old Testament was to find Christ everywhere. "*Tolle Christum e Scripturis quid amplius in illis invenies?*" "The end of the Law," says Flacius, "is Christ; He alone is the pearl we must find."¹

Here are some of his maxims :

"If our opponents urge Scripture against Christ, we urge Christ against Scripture."

"Scripture must be referred to Christ or cannot be held as true Scripture." "Keep the commandments" should be interpreted to mean "Keep them in Christ, or in the faith of Christ." "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God," *i.e.* in Christ and his faith. "Do this and thou shalt live," *i.e.* do it in Me, or thou wilt not do it, or wilt do the reverse. "Redeem thy sins by alms,"² *i.e.* in the faith of Christ, "otherwise thy alms will be a sin."³

Here again there is a truth which is indistinctly stated and may lead to great confusion. Homiletically it is perfectly correct; but exegetically this reading of Christian dogmatics between the lines of Jewish writings may only become (as it did become) another phase of unreality and scholasticism. It may be morally permissible, but it can only be historically false and misleading, to give to Genesis the meaning of the Apocalypse, and to the Canticles that of the first Epistle of St. John. It caused the radical defect of Luther's exegesis—its perpetual tendency to dogma

¹ Flacius, *Clavis S.S.*, p. 7.

² "Redime peccata tua eleemosynis," Dan. iv. 26. A.V. "Break off thy sins by righteousness."

³ "Wir erleuchten die alte heilige Schrift durch das Evangelium." *Werke*, iv. 1728.

and controversy in treating of passages where the dogma is only subjective and arbitrary, and the polemic has no fair excuse. A commentary on the Old Testament is not a reasonable place for incessant attacks on monkery, or arguments in favour of Justification by Faith. When Luther reads the Trinity and the Incarnation in passages written a thousand years before the Christian era, and—in a spirit worthy of Rabbi Akhiva himself—infers the Divinity of the Messiah, and even the *communicatio idiomatum* from the particle \aleph in Gen. iv. 1, we see that his conceptions of the due treatment of the Old Testament differ seriously from ours. Luther finds traces of the Trinity in Gen. i. 26, iii. 21, xi. 7–9; Num. vi. 22; 2 Sam. xxiii. 2, etc.; and Immortality in Gen. ii. 7. Like Augustine he will admit any interpretation “*modo pia sit.*” He deliberately adopts the principles which a thousand years earlier had, with deeper insight and more candid wisdom, been deliberately rejected by Theodore of Mopsuestia and the School of Antioch. He here fails to follow the rule of Hilary, which he praises: “Optimus interpres hic est qui sensum e Scriptura potius retulerit quam attulerit, nec cogat hoc in doctu contentum videre, quod ante intelligentiam docere præsumserit.”¹ It must then be admitted that Luther in his comment upon Genesis adds little or nothing to Nicolas de Lyra except the dogmatic treatment of patriarchal history.²

10. We may remark that the bold attitude of Luther towards certain parts of Scripture—such as the Epistles of St. Jude and St. James, the Epistle to the Hebrews, and the Revelation of St. John—and generally speaking that *manly independence*³ which has led to the stigma that

¹ *Fabricius*, l. c. i. 72.

² Siegfried, über Raschi's Einfluss auf Lira und Luther. *Merx, Archiv.*, vol. i. p. 432. To the last Luther disliked Lyra's use of Jewish interpreters.

³ See his Prefaces to the Epistles of James and Jude, and 1 Peter. In the former he says, “Was Christum nicht lehret das ist noch nicht apostolisch wenn es gleich St. Petrus oder St. Paulus lehrete.” The very interesting passages are

he is the founder of modern rationalism,¹ arose from his conviction of the truth of this exegetic principle. It led with perfect honesty, to the very results which are most distasteful to those who have most warmly adopted it. He held it a matter of no importance whether Moses had written the Pentateuch or not. He has little to say of Esther. He says that Ezra "*estherissat et mordochissat.*" If Scripture be of little or no value except so far as it bears on one special doctrine, Luther's free expression of indifference towards certain parts of Scripture which did not honestly admit of such application became a logical necessity. When controversialists urged the Epistle of St. James against the doctrine of Justification by Faith, he told them that it was their way "to quote some single text and then set *their horns against all Scripture.*" His views were more or less shared by the Magdeburg Centuriators, Melancthon, and even Caietan. He failed indeed to realize the complexity, the fragmentariness, the multiforimity of Scripture as a whole, but we must set it down as one of his highest merits, that on *his* estimate of what the Canon ought to be, "he sought for the Canon in the Canon," and was not carried away by the "subjective idolism" and slavish superstition which treats all parts of Scripture as though they were of equal importance and were in every word and letter written by the finger of God. He shewed his courage and insight and his superiority to the popular ideas of his day by giving to the phrase "the

collected in Reuss, *Heilige Schriften, N. T.*, vol. iv. p. 65. Luther's prefaces are collected by Walch in the fourteenth volume. Luther recognised the subjectivity of his views, and did not wish to force them on others. See *Tischreden* (Erl. Ausg. vol. lxii. p. 128, vol. lxiii. p. 35).

¹ The first to make this charge was Krause, *Opusc.*, p. 199. Keim, *Jesus of Nazara*, vol. i. p. 142 (E. T.), calls Luther "the most radical critic of the free Church of the Reformation." Luther puts James, Jude, Hebrews, and Revelation at the end of his Bible, and does not even number them. He says of the Revelation, "Mein Geist kann sich in das Buch nicht schicken, und ist mir die Ursach genug dass ich sein nicht hoch achte das Christus drinnen weder gelehrt noch erkannt wird."

Word of God" a deeper and wider meaning than that which, in a manner wholly unscriptural, *identifies it* with Scripture.¹

11. Nothing can be more true than Luther's demand for *faith* as a means for the *saving* knowledge of Scripture. Without spiritual insight it is certain that no man can rightly apprehend some of its deepest lessons. Luther felt that he had himself been taught by struggle and tribulation. "The happy and fortunate," he says, "read the Scriptures as though they were some songs of Ovid."² Yet here, too, there is room for abuse. The decision of what an author says and means appertains throughout by far the largest part of the sacred writings to grammar, intelligence, candour, historical knowledge, literary tact and training, far more than to piety. Without these the holiest readers have erred in matters of interpretation. The maxim, "*Grammaticam decet Theologiae cedere,*" may lead to casuistry and perversion, and the remark, "*Nullus homo unum iota in Scripturis videt nisi qui Spiritum Dei habet,*" applies only to the need of spiritual discernment for a *saving apprehension* of Divine truths. Neither holiness nor orthodoxy can decide upon questions of translation, and it is nothing less than spiritual arrogance and usurpation which has led priests and sects to claim, on the supposed possession of "an inward light," an infallible authority to decide on such questions as the meaning of sentences and the canonicity of books.

12. Of these great principles, then, some are invaluable; others, as we have seen, are liable to grave abuse unless their limitations are more carefully stated than has been

¹ According to Diestel, *Gesch. d. Alt. Test.*, 283, this *identification* of the Bible with the Word of God is due to G. Major *De origine Verbi Dei*: 1550. See Heppe, *Alt-protest. Dogmatik*, i. 251.

² In Gen. xxi. To the "gift of prophecy," and "our own study," he adds "temptations inward and outward," as tending to explain the sense of St. Paul and of all the Scriptures.

done by Luther. But apart from these, he occasionally states other valuable rules—such as the importance of observing antitheses, the frequency of anticipation and recapitulation, the notice of the figure *ὑστερον πρότερον*¹—and his writings abound in those vivid illustrations and powerful flashes of insight which are often more useful than pages of dull dissertation. If we sum up his merits and deficiencies as an Expositor, we may say that (1) he failed to grasp, or rather to apply, the essential principle of the Progressiveness of Revelation; (2) that this imperfect recognition of historic development gave great haziness to his view of the relation between the Old and New Testaments;² and (3) that he sometimes turns from the straight path of interpretation to pick up the gilded apples of dogma. On the other hand his view of the supreme dignity of Scripture; his rejection of false traditional methods; his manly independence and originality; his bringing the struggles of daily life to bear on difficulties which arise from the inscrutableness of the human heart; his insistence on a full use of extraneous aids; his constant reference to the original languages; his realization of the literal sense; the boldness with which he judges Scripture itself by its own loftiest and richest elements—constitute an epoch in the advance which was for a time retarded as the breath of new life became more faint, but which is being carried to its best results by living scholars, and which, if we only trust to the guidance of God's Holy Spirit, and are not afraid of new truths, is yet destined to bring forth "fruits which are fruits of nepenthe, flowers which are flowers of amaranth."

F. W. FARRAR.

¹ In Gen. xxx. he borrows the rule from Aug., *De doctr. Christiana*, ii., who took it from Tichonius.

² To this perplexity about the Old Testament, and not to the want of courage or to the low moral standard with which he has been so basely charged, was due his fatal concession in the case of the bigamous marriage of Philip of Hesse.