

self wholly with us and our sins. Laden with our guilt He descended into the valley of the shadow of death; and if his union with God is stronger than the power of death, it is because his righteousness is stronger than our sins.

Thus in Christ the ideal of life eternal in God, of a life superior to all destructive forces, is made a reality. It does not, indeed, become so under the very form in which our Psalmist conceives of it. We no longer feel entitled to argue from our acceptance with God to victory over physical disease and deliverance from physical death; but that is not because our hope is less high, but because in the light of the New Testament mere physical death is seen as a thing wholly disconnected with the spiritual death of alienation from God, which, under physical form, is the real evil over which the singer of our psalm feels himself victorious. It is our New Testament hope that death itself does not for a moment interrupt full and joyous life-fellowship with God. For the Christian, Sheol, the place of forgetfulness, exists no more, and the hope of them that live and of them that die alike is that we shall ever be with the Lord.

W. ROBERTSON SMITH.

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*ON THE EPISTLES OF ST. PETER.*

THE SECOND EPISTLE.

AN inquiry such as we have hitherto been endeavouring to make into the characteristics of St. Peter's style must, when it comes to deal with the Second Epistle, be mainly directed against the objections of those who have concluded that this

second Letter was put forth in the name of the apostle of the Circumcision by some clever imitator of St. Peter's manner of writing, but was really composed at a much later date than that to which it would lay claim if it were the genuine work of the apostle whose name it bears. But though the observations which will be made will apply most directly to the question of imitation, it is not intended to leave out of sight other objections which have been urged against the genuineness of this composition. The later acceptance of the Epistle into the Canon, and its enumeration among the Eusebian *ἀντιλεγόμενα*, will be borne in mind, as well as other features of discrepancy, which some have pointed out in the contents of the two Epistles: such as, the different way in which our Lord's second coming is spoken of in the two letters; the more prominent notice assigned to the sufferings of Christ in the First Epistle as compared with the Second; the seemingly anxious assertion on the part of the writer of the Second Epistle that he was really the apostle St. Peter, a tone indicative of one who was assuming a character not his own; the name of "holy" applied (Chap. i. 18) to the mountain of the Transfiguration, which form of expression is deemed a sign of a later date than the apostolic age; also the mention of St. Paul's Epistles and the other scriptures made in Chap. iii. 15, 16, which some have considered to afford evidence that this Letter was written at a much later period than its language claims for it, and at a time when the Epistles of St. Paul and other parts of the New Testament volume had been collected, and were in extensive circulation. But while ex-

pecting to have somewhat to say to each of these classes of objection, it seems most probable that if one kind of opposition can be satisfactorily disposed of first, a portion of the other questions which have arisen about the genuineness of the Epistle may be found to have been answered, as it were, by anticipation.

We shall have to dwell very fully on the similarity of the language of this Epistle to all else which is Petrine in the New Testament, for our design is to shew that such likeness is far closer than any imitator would either have dared or have been able to make it. And we will begin our comparison with the two Epistles.

Some of the points of resemblance between them which have been considered to betray the hand of an imitator, are the following: The salutation, "Grace unto you, and peace be multiplied," is found in 2 Pet. i. 2, as well as in 1 Pet. i. 2. The writer of the Second Epistle uses the noun *ἀναστροφή*, *conversation*, and its cognate verb exactly as they are employed in the earlier letter. Thus, 2 Pet. ii. 7, "Just Lot is vexed with the filthy *conversation* of the wicked;" and in verse 18 of the same Chapter men are spoken of who "live in error," but where a more consistent rendering would be "whose *conversation* is in error;" and in 2 Pet. iii. 11 we read of "holy *conversation* and godliness." In the First Epistle this word is common; thus (Chap. i. 15), "Be ye holy in all manner of *conversation*," and (verse 17), "pass the time of your sojourning here in fear," where, to bring out the resemblance which the original passages bear to each other, we should render, "for the time of your

sojourn here let your *conversation* be in fear;" and in the following verse (18) the writer speaks of "vain *conversation*." In the second Chapter (verse 12) we come upon, "Having your *conversation* honest among the Gentiles;" and in the third (verses 1, 2, and 16) we read of the "*conversation* of the wives," "chaste *conversation*," and of a "good *conversation* in Christ." In like manner ἀπόθεσις is found in 2 Pet. i. 14, of the *putting off* of the earthly tabernacle; and in 1 Pet. iii. 21 (and nowhere else in the whole of the New Testament), of "the *putting away* of the filth of the flesh." The writer of one Epistle resembles the writer of the other in employing ἀρετή, *virtue*, or *excellence*, in speaking of God. For in 1 Pet. ii. 9 we have, "That ye should shew forth the *praises* [*excellencies*] of him who hath called you;" and in 2 Pet. i. 3, "that hath called us through [not *to*, the preposition is διὰ] his glory and *virtue*." The writers of these Epistles alone employ this word in such a way in the New Testament. Again, the "without blemish and without spot" of 1 Pet. i. 19 appears in "spots are they, and blemishes" (2 Pet. ii. 13), and "without spot and blameless" (2 Pet. iii. 14). Ἐπόπτης, an *eye-witness*, used in 2 Pet. i. 16, may be paralleled by ἐποπτεύειν, a verb which St. Peter, fond of ocular demonstration as we have seen him to be and believing in its influence, employs twice in the First Epistle. He says (Chap. ii. 12), "Evildoers may by your good works which they shall *behold* [be eye-witnesses of] glorify God;" and once more (Chap. iii. 2), "while they *behold* your chaste conversation." Both writers employ ἴδιος in the sense of the Latin "suus," that is, merely as a possessive

adjective. Thus (1 Pet. iii. 1), "*your own* husbands," and, four verses lower down, "*their own* husbands;" so in 2 Pet. i. 20, where the writer is speaking of prophecy as not being *ιδίας επιλύσεως*, and in which place the most coherent sense is obtained by rendering "No prophecy arises [the verb is *γίγνεται*] out of the prophet's *own* interpretation,"—that is, it is not a foretelling of what is to come by a man who knows what he means when he utters it,—“for the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man.” Another instance of this pronominal use of *ιδιος* is in 2 Pet. ii. 16: “But he was rebuked for *his* iniquity;” and in verse 22 of the same Chapter, “his *own* vomit,” where it ought to be noticed that though the writer is perhaps quoting from the Proverbs (Chap. xxvi. 11), he does not take the form of expression for the pronoun (*ἐαυτοῦ*) which is used in the version of the LXX., a version which was well known, and which he might have been expected to quote, but employs his favourite *ιδιος*, and makes, as it seems, a rendering of his own, of which we shall have to speak in another place. Thus also is the word *ιδιος* used in 2 Pet. iii. 16, “their *own* destruction.” After the same manner *κομιζεσθαι* is found in both Epistles of the *receiving* of rewards or punishments: as in 1 Pet. i. 9, “*Receiving* the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls;” and in 1 Pet. v. 4, “ye shall *receive* a crown of glory that fadeth not away;” which examples have their counterpart in 2 Pet. ii. 13, “and shall *receive* the reward of unrighteousness.” In both Letters the same expression is found, of “walking in, or after, the lusts of the flesh.” (Cf. 1 Pet. iv. 3 with 2 Pet. ii. 10 and iii.

3.) *Καλεῖν* is used in both of the Divine invitation to mankind, as in 1 Pet. i. 15, "He which hath *called* you is holy," so in 1 Pet. ii. 9 and 21; iii. 9; v. 10 and 2 Pet. i. 3; and the expression (1 Pet. iv. 1), "He that hath suffered in the flesh *hath ceased from sin*," is nearly reproduced in 2 Pet. ii. 14,—"*eyes full of adultery and that cannot cease from sin.*"

On some of the instances here adduced too much stress ought not to be laid, as, although it is true that they constitute points of resemblance between these two Epistles, yet the like usages may be found in other parts of the New Testament. But there are several other points of similarity in the language of these two Letters which ought to be enumerated before the list can be considered to approach completeness. And as the object of the present paper is to insist on a far greater resemblance between this Second Epistle and the other utterances and writings of St. Peter than has been shewn in the passages above cited, an attempt must be made, even at the risk of proving tedious in the recital, to give some of the chief additions which should be made to the examples already set down. And we will take them in the order in which they occur in the Second Epistle. In 2 Pet. i. 4 we have the word *τίμιος* used of "*precious promises.*" Except in St. Peter's language this word is used in the New Testament nearly always of material solid things, as of *stones, fruit, wood, &c.*; only St. Paul, in Acts xx. 24, employing it when speaking of the value of his life. Now in 1 Pet. i. 19 it is used of the "*precious blood*;" and the way had been paved for this transference of the adjective from its common application by the expression in verse 7

of the same Chapter, "the trial of your faith being much more *precious* than of gold that perisheth." Again, the way in which *κοινωνός* is used in both Epistles should be mentioned. In the Authorized Version of 2 Pet. i. 4 we read, "that by these ye might be made *partakers* of the divine nature." But this rendering does not bring out in any measure the force of the verb *γένησθε*. A far better version would be "that thereby ye *may become* partakers." So the sense of the passage will be, "God has given unto us all things that pertain to life and godliness, . . . whence we have his exceeding great and precious promises that by these ye may become *partakers* of the divine nature." Here the participation is spoken of as a result to be attained in the future. Just so in 1 Pet. v. 1 is *κοινωνός* employed to describe the apostle himself as "*a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed.*" Such use of the word as expressing a realization in the present of what is not yet attained to, but to be striven for, is found in no other writer of the New Testament. Nor ought that appeal to the knowledge of those to whom the writer speaks in 2 Pet. i. 12 to be passed over without observing how closely it resembles a passage in the earlier Letter, and may almost certainly be taken as an allusion thereto. The previous verses are an exhortation, "Give diligence to make your calling and election sure, . . . for thus an entrance shall be ministered unto you . . . into the kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Wherefore," adds the writer, "I will not be negligent to put you in remembrance of these things, though [*εἰδότας*] ye know them. We have only to read over 1 Pet. i. 18

to be almost certain that we have the words to which the later-written passage is an allusion. Here we have the same thought of a diligent and careful walk in holiness, with an exactly parallel appeal to the knowledge of his hearers on the subject of their redemption: "Pass the time of your sojourning here in fear, knowing [*εἰδότες*] that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things as silver and gold, . . . but with the precious blood of Christ."

Nor, in a comparison like the present, should we omit to notice that use of *ἐνεχθεις* in 2 Pet. i. 18. "This voice which *came* from heaven" is the Authorized Version, but the verb implies much more than this, and instead of "which came" we might well read "which was brought." Now, we have already seen how much the early Chapters of the Acts of the Apostles represent the language of St. Peter rather than any other member of the apostolic band, and there, in the account of the Pentecostal enlightenment (Acts ii. 2), we have the same verb, only in another tense (*φερόμενος*), employed in the description of the "sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind;" and it is worthy of note also, that that manifestation is called *φωνή*, a *voice*, the word which the writer of this Second Epistle employs in the verse which we are now considering. Our English version of Acts ii. 6 entirely obscures the connection which we desire to point out, for it renders, "Now, when this was noised abroad," words which would be more accurately translated, "Now, when this *voice* was heard," a reference to the sound of "the rushing mighty wind" which had been mentioned in the previous verse. If we had nothing



further, the resemblance in language which is here observable might warrant us in inferring a connection between St. Peter and the Second Epistle which bears his name; but when we see that in the First Epistle (Chap. i. 13) that apostle uses the very word *φερόμενος* of the grace "that shall *be brought* for Christians at the revelation of Jesus Christ," we feel that we have in these words, thus employed, a link which connects the Second Epistle with the First and with the narrative in the Acts far more firmly than would be done by any more immediately apparent similarity of expression. For, notice how closely the whole sentence (1 Pet. i. 12, 13) is connected with the mention of the descent of the Holy Ghost, and it will be seen that we have here another instance of what is so common with this apostle, where one thought in his mind has influenced his mode of expression in the sentence which immediately follows it. "Not unto themselves," he says, "did they minister the things which are now reported unto you by them which have preached the gospel unto you with the *Holy Ghost sent down from heaven*. . . . Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be *brought unto you* [*φερομένην*] at the revelation of Jesus Christ."

Again, the writers of both Epistles used *ἀσέλγεια* in the plural (a very rare use of the word) of those evil practices which were always so closely connected with errors of doctrine in the early Church. In 2 Pet. ii. 2 it is a "*lasciviousness* whereby the way of truth is evil spoken of." In 1 Pet. iv. 3 a like *lasciviousness* is defined as a working of "the will

or desire of the Gentiles." Once more, in two so brief Epistles, it is worth notice that both writers employ the somewhat uncommon word *διάνοια* for *mind*—in 2 Pet. iii. 1, "I stir up your pure *minds* by way of remembrance," and in 1 Pet. i. 13, "Gird up the loins of your *mind*." So, too, both writers use the passive participles *τηρούμενος* and *τετηρημένος* in exactly the same manner concerning the rewards *in store* for the righteous and of the wicked who are kept *in store* for the day of punishment. Thus, in 1 Pet. i. 4, an inheritance . . . *reserved* in heaven; and in 2 Pet. ii. 4, "The angels that sinned are *reserved* unto fire against the day of judgment."

These instances, and there are some others which might still be added to the list, demonstrate a very large amount of resemblance in the expressions and, also, what is of more importance, in the mode of thought of the person or persons by whom these Epistles were written. But it is necessary next to call attention to the list of resemblances that can be traced between the language of this Epistle and that of the Second Gospel and of those parts of the Acts which are either St. Peter's very words, or which must, in the first instance, have been derived from him.

And, first, in St. Mark's Gospel alone, with the exception of this Second Epistle, is the verb *δωρέομαι* employed in the New Testament. In Chap. xv. 45 St. Mark uses it of Pilate, who gave (*έδωρήσατο*) Christ's body to Joseph of Arimathea; and in 2 Pet. i. 3 we read, "his divine power hath given unto us [*δεδωρημένης*] all things that pertain to life and godliness." The word *βασανίζω* is found in the same

tropical meaning both in this Epistle and in the Second Gospel. The word implies, in its original sense, *to test by a touchstone, or by the use of torture*. But it is afterwards transferred to any torment, and so these writers both use it. Thus 2 Pet. ii. 7, 8, "Just Lot *vexed* his righteous soul from day to day" with the unlawful deeds of the people of Sodom. And in St. Mark (Chap. vi. 48) the same word is used of the disciples whom Christ, from his lonely station on the mountain-top, saw "*toiling* in rowing" on the Sea of Galilee. So, again, both these writers employ in the same way *τρέμειν*, a word uncommon in the New Testament. With the Evangelist (Chap. v. 33) the woman with the issue of blood came fearing and *trembling*; with the Apostle (2 Pet. ii. 10), "They *tremble* not to speak evil of dignities." When a word like this is found but once more in the whole of the New Testament, it is worth noting for our purpose that it occurs in writings which we desire to assign to the same source. And the same remark applies to the word *λαίλαψ*. In 2 Pet. ii. 17 we have it in the expression, "Clouds that are carried with a *tempest*;" and in St. Mark (Chap. iv. 37), "There arose a great *storm* of wind." But though storms and tempests are not of rare mention in the New Testament scriptures we have *λαίλαψ* only once more, and that is in St. Luke (Chap. viii. 23), of the same occurrence as is related by St. Mark; and most likely the authors of both the Gospels, as neither of them were eye-witnesses of the event, drew their narratives from the same source, and that source St. Peter. The late Dean Alford, in his Prolegomena to this Epistle, has pointed out a trace of allusion to the Gospel

narratives of the Transfiguration (of which the history was, as we have before shewn, most probably drawn from the narration of St. Peter), which he shews to contain a note of the genuineness of this second Letter. In 2 Pet. i. 17, 18, we have a reference to the presence of the writer at the Transfiguration of our Lord. It is a remarkable coincidence that close to that reference, and in the verses leading on to it, two words should occur both of which are connected with the narrative of the Transfiguration in the Gospels. In verse 13 we read, "As long as I am in this *tabernacle*," let us remember that it was St. Peter who, at the Transfiguration, said, "Let us make three *tabernacles*." In verse 15 we have the expression, "after my *departure*" (*ἐξοδον*); at the Transfiguration, Moses and Elias talked with Jesus (Luke ix. 31) of "his decease [also *ἐξοδον*], which he should accomplish at Jerusalem." In the light of all that has been already said of the retrospective character of St. Peter's mind, and the influence which such retrospection exercised upon his speech, we look upon such an example as the one just detailed as a very strong indication that the writer was the same person who shewed such power in the First Epistle of intimating by his language the scenes on which his memory was exercised, and who could and did recall so minutely the events of our Lord's life in which himself had been concerned.

But if the resemblances between the language of this Epistle and the Gospel of St. Mark be noteworthy, still more striking are those instances where the Epistle uses words such as are recorded of St. Peter in the Acts. In the very first verse we find

an interesting example. In speaking of those who "have *obtained* the like precious faith with us," the writer makes use of the verb *λαγχάνω*, a word which occurs in the same sense in St. Peter's speech in Acts i. 17, where of Judas it is said, "He had *obtained* part of this ministry." But in this sense the word is found nowhere else in the New Testament. Again, the way in which this writer employs *ἐνσέβεια*, in the sense of *holiness*, viewed rather objectively as a potentiality in exercise than subjectively as a part of a character, is just what St. Peter does in his speech to the Jewish rulers, after the cure of the lame man at the Temple Gate. "Why look ye on us," says he (Acts iii. 12), "as though by our own power or *holiness* we had made this man to walk?" And in the Epistle (Chap. i. 7) we find this *ἐνσέβεια*, represented in the Authorized Version by *godliness*, enumerated as one of those qualities which will make the possessor neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of Jesus Christ.

Once more: that use of *λαλεῖν* for the message of God to man, which has been already noticed as a feature of the Epistle, is also seen in the speeches of St. Peter. Thus (Acts iii. 21): "Which God hath spoken [*ἐλάλησεν*] by the mouth of all his holy prophets." And again in the twenty-fourth verse: "All the prophets, as many as have spoken [*ἐλάλησαν*], have also foretold of these days." It is worthy of notice also that the word *ἐπάγειν*, which the writer of the Epistle has used (Chap. ii. 5) to express the "*bringing in the flood upon* the ungodly," is the same which is used in those proceedings before the Sanhedrim when St. Peter and his companions were

brought again in custody after their miraculous deliverance (Acts v. 28). There the spokesman of the Jewish council is made to say, "Ye intend to *bring this man's blood upon us*;" and no doubt this was the expression which St. Peter used when he narrated the circumstances of the hearing, and from his lips *ἐπάγειν* came into St. Luke's narrative. Again, the use of *ἄνομος* concerning things and not persons is confined to St. Peter in the Acts and to the writer of this Epistle. The latter speaks (Chap. ii. 8) of the "*unlawful* deeds" by which Lot was vexed, and the former (Acts ii. 23) calls the hands by which Christ was slain *unlawful* (Authorized Version, *wicked*). In all other instances the adjective is employed of lawless *persons*. Once more, in the Epistle (Chap. ii. 9) we find *ἐυσεβῆς* is employed by the writer to describe *godly* persons: "The Lord knoweth how to deliver the *godly* out of temptations." Now, this same word is employed (Acts x. 2, 7) in the character of Cornelius, and also of the soldier whom he sent to summon Peter to come to Cæsarea. This description must have come from the lips of that apostle, and the word is used nowhere else in the New Testament. For in Acts xx. 12, where some MSS. have this adjective, the best read *εὐλαβῆς*, which is adopted both by Lachmann and Tischendorf. In the same verse (Chap. ii. 8) of the Epistle we have *κολαζομένους* employed, "to reserve the unjust *to be punished*," and a part of the same verb is, in Acts iv. 21 (a Petrine narrative), "finding nothing how they might *punish* them." "The *reward* of iniquity," used by St. Peter (Acts i. 18) of Judas, occurs in 2

Pet. ii. 13, and 15, in the latter case concerning Balaam, though the Authorized Version has obscured the evidence of the identity of the original by translating the latter "wages of unrighteousness," and has rendered the same words in verse 13, "the reward of unrighteousness." The unusual verb φθέγγομαι is found twice in the Epistle: first (Chap. ii. 16), of Balaam's "ass *speaking* with man's voice;" and, again (Chap. ii. 18), of those who "*speaking* great swelling words of vanity." Neither Evangelist nor Apostle uses the word elsewhere, except in Acts iv. 18, where it occurs in the injunction given to Peter and his comrades that they should not "*speaking* at all, nor teach in the name of Jesus." And this whole narrative, as we have already remarked, is full of indications that its author was St. Peter, the principal actor in the events recorded. And, once more, we ought to dwell on the occurrence in both books (the Acts and 2 Peter) of the expression, *ἡμέρα κυρίου*, for that phrase is found only in 1 Thess. v. 24 and in the two passages about to be quoted. But the whole language of St. Peter's quotation from Joel (Acts ii. 20), "The sun shall be turned into darkness and the moon into blood, before that great and notable *day of the Lord* come," is so manifestly in the mind of the writer of our Epistle (Chap. iii. 10), that we may look upon the words of this third Chapter as a solemn close of the apostle's ministration, made emphatic by what is a forcible repetition of the teaching of his first sermon. "*The day of the Lord* will come as a thief in the night, in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat ;

the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up." How closely, too, the thoughts of the writer of the Epistle are in accord with the thoughts of St. Peter in the Acts we may see from the consideration of such passages as 2 Pet. i. 21. There, speaking of prophecy, the writer declares "it came not in old time by the will of men." Put this sentence side by side with that part of St. Peter's speech (Acts ii. 23) in which he describes the whole events of Christ's death as the result of God's decree, and it is seen how the two passages are the counterparts to each other. "Him," says the Apostle in this Pentecostal sermon, "being delivered by the determinate counsel and *foreknowledge* of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." Both prophecy and the events which fulfil it are of God's will, and above man's control. And we may take occasion, from the word *πρόγνωσις*, *foreknowledge* (which only is found here and in 1 Pet. i. 2, "according to the *foreknowledge* of God the Father"), to observe that a like verbal similarity to that which we have striven to point out between the Second Epistle and the Acts and St. Mark's Gospel exists between those writings and the First Epistle of St. Peter. Where, then, two Letters have this feature so conspicuous, it affords, without anything else, a strong presumption that the writer of the one was the writer of the other. And these imitations, not of the First Epistle only, but of St. Mark and the Acts; imitations, not only of words, but of manner, make it hard to conceive that the Second Epistle is supposititious. The writer, if he were not St. Peter, putting out of sight for a moment the great dis-



honesty that would then be contained in the assertions made in the Letter, a dishonesty quite inconsistent with the solemn tone and purpose of this Epistle, must have been the most accomplished of forgers. He must have been not content with imitating one Letter in the other, but must have seen how much stronger his case would be if he introduced peculiarities from St. Peter's language such as are found in the Second Gospel and the Acts, and must have inserted such phrases accordingly. And all this must have been done under a false name, in a letter saying, "We have not followed cunningly devised fables," in a letter containing warnings against deceivers and exhorting the readers to "all holy conversation and godliness" in prospect of the judgment, that they might at that day be found "without spot or blemish." Such cleverness of imitation is difficult to believe in, and that one who would attempt it should do so in such solemn terms is still more incredible.

But we have not yet seen the whole of this writer's powers. For if he be an imitator, he is one who has exactly hit the striking peculiarities of St. Peter's modes of thought and expression. We have seen in all the acknowledged words of that apostle that his only end for knowledge was that it might be put into practice. Precisely of this character is the language of the writer of the Second Epistle. After that marshalling, in the opening of the Epistle, of the Christian graces in the order in which they seem most fitly to succeed each other, he concludes his exhortation to a diligent cultivation thereof, thus: (Chap. i. 8) "For if these things be in you, and abound,

they make you that ye shall *neither be barren nor unfruitful* in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ;" and immediately he follows this admonition with the assurance (verse 10), "For if ye *do* these things, ye shall never fall." And this peculiar turn of mind is perceived very strongly when we consider the examples which the writer brings forward in the second Chapter of the Epistle. He is warning those to whom he addresses himself of the evils of "false teachers, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies;" and he selects as instances to illustrate his lesson, first, "the angels that sinned." In their case it *was* the false promptings of the father of lies that led his fellows into the rebellion which ended in their expulsion from heaven. But with the precise train of thought which we should have expected from St. Peter, who felt that teaching, be it bad or good, must shew itself in action, the writer chooses all his further illustrations, which are three, from those offenders of whose evil *deeds* rather than evil *lessons* we should soonest be led to think. They are "the world of the ungodly," destroyed by the flood, when all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth; the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah condemned with an overthrow as an example unto "those that after should *live* ungodly;" and "Balaam, the son of Bosor, who loved the wages of *unrighteousness*." We have only to follow the exhortation a few verses farther (Chap. ii. 20) when we find the effect of knowledge directly described in its influence on the life. It is by the "knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ" that men "escape the pollutions of the world." And to the same end is the

solemn lesson of the approaching judgment applied by the writer (Chap. iii. 11), "Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness?" So, too, with the expectation of a new heaven and a new earth (Chap. iii. 14), the end is to be a more careful walk while living here, "Seeing that ye look for such things, be *diligent*, that ye may be found of him in peace, *without spot and blameless*." And the sad result of "being led away with the error of the wicked" is declared (Chap. iii. 17) in the same spirit to be a "fall from your own steadfastness." In every Chapter, therefore, of this very brief Epistle the writer exhibits to us exactly what we know St. Peter would have been likely to say under similar circumstances. His exhortations and warnings all tend towards a practical end in our lives, and his examples to illustrate the evil effects of unsound doctrine are such as shew not so much the faultiness of lessons as those wicked *practices* which are the certain fruits of wicked teachings.

We have noticed, further, how much the keen-sighted St. Peter makes use of and reference to the eyes as the great vehicles of instruction. This peculiarity we also find in the writer of the Second Epistle. With him (Chap. i. 9) the man who lacketh those signs of Christian advancement which the writer is there enumerating, such as faith, virtue, knowledge, and the like, "*is blind, and cannot see afar off*." And as in the First Epistle so here, one ground of the writer's claim to be heard is (Chap. i. 16), "we were *eye-witnesses* of his majesty." And when he needs a simile whereto to liken the word of

prophecy, it is to a "*light that shineth in a dark place*" that he compares it, and the full appreciation of the meaning of prophecy shall arrive "*when the day shall dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts.*" So, too, with the overthrow of the Cities of the Plain it is (Chap. ii. 6) that they may be an *ensample* (*ὑπόδειγμα*)—a thing at which men may look and point, and by such visible demonstration of God's wrath be warned against evil-doings and the evil teachings which lead to them. It is (Chap. ii. 8) "*in seeing and hearing the unlawful deeds of his neighbours that just Lot vexed his righteous soul from day to day.*" And as the eye may be the organ through which good is learnt, so, when perverted, it may be made the instrument of evil; and this our writer feels and expresses when he speaks (Chap. ii. 14) of "*eyes full of adultery and that cannot cease from sin.*" And, lastly, it is to a manifestation of Christ's coming, which *they can see*, from its evidence in the dissolving heavens and melting elements, that he points (Chap. iii. 10-12) his readers by way of exhortation that they may be prepared; and it is for similar ocular demonstration that he makes the scoffers ask (Chap. iii. 4), when they exclaim, "*Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation.*" It is worthy of notice also, in connection with this feature of the writer's style, how apt he is to choose words as descriptive of evil or good which indicate an appeal to sight as the judge. Thus it is "*without spot*" that he exhorts (Chap. iii. 14) his hearers to strive to be found in the day of the Lord, and in Chap. i. 9 the

sinner is spoken of as "*purged* from his old sins." He describes (Chap. ii. 10) the wicked as "walking in the lust of *uncleanness*," and (Chap. ii. 13) as "*spots and blemishes*" in the Christian body. That from which they are to escape by the knowledge of Christ is "the *pollutions* of the world," and if they turn again to their evil ways, they are described by that terrible similitude "the sow that was washed" going once more "to her wallowing in the mire."

But in this Second Epistle there is another faculty to which appeal is frequently made by the writer, and which finds place most fitly in this Epistle which claims to be written by one who knew he must shortly put off the tabernacle of the flesh; and this faculty is Memory. Long before the time when Kephalos explained to Socrates (Plato, *Repub.* 1, 2) that only the young could take part in the active scenes of life, and that he, and men advanced in age like him, must be content with indulging the memory of bygone times and actions, memory was the resource of advancing years, and has made Horace's old man (*Ars Poetica*, 173) to be "*laudator temporis acti se puero*." Now it is extremely remarkable how strongly this comes out in the Epistle with which we are at present engaged. To St. Peter, with whom seeing meant doing, loss of sight would, of course, be the image most suggestive for expressing a state of spiritual deadness; and we have seen that the writer of the Second Epistle employs that simile, saying (Chap. i. 9) that such a one "is blind, and cannot see afar off;" but he goes on to add, what we venture to think marks very forcibly the later life and advanced

years of the writer, that that other faculty on which the aged dwell more than on sight, is failing also, and the man "hath forgotten<sup>1</sup> that he was purged from his old sins." As memory, therefore (which always survives the apprehensive qualities), played a large part with the writer in his advancing years, so he naturally dwells on it in addressing his disciples. "He will not be negligent (Chap. i. 12) to put them always in *remembrance* of these things, though they know them." "Yea, he thinks it meet" (Chap. i. 13) "to stir them up by putting them in *remembrance*," "that they may be able" (Chap. i. 15) "after his decease to have these things always in *remembrance*." And when he is about to bring his Letter to a close, after having quoted the sad examples by which he desired his hearers to be influenced and warned, he again becomes emphatic in the same strain. "This second epistle," he writes (Chap. iii. 1), "I now write, in which I stir up your pure minds by way of *remembrance*, that ye may be *mindful* of the words which were spoken by the prophets," and by us. This frequent appeal to memory suits so admirably the circumstances of old age, under which the author professes himself to be writing, and is so exactly what we should expect from St. Peter, whose failing powers of vision would drive him, as Chaucer puts it, to see

"With eyen of the mynde,  
With which men seën after they ben blynde"  
(*"Man of Law's Tale,"* 454),

that though it might not be of great weight were

<sup>1</sup>The expression is unique, *λιθην λαβών*, and might be rendered, "has willingly suffered an oblivion."

it standing alone, it becomes a coincidence of considerable evidential value when combined with all else that can be said in favour of the genuineness of this Letter.

To proceed. The writer of this Second Epistle, if he be not St. Peter, must have noticed that that apostle was greatly given to employ in his language words which occurred rarely and in many cases never in the other writings of the New Testament. And not only must he have noticed this singularity, but he has imitated it in a very remarkable manner. To do the first of these things, to observe a peculiarity, is possible for many persons; but the faculty of close imitation herein is given to but very few; and especially such an imitation as this is found on examination to be. For its character is most unexpected. If we set ourselves to imagine what would be the course of action which an imitator, who desired to produce an Epistle that should pass for the work of St. Peter, would pursue, we should fancy it something like this. He would be certain to introduce largely into his composition those unusual words which he knew St. Peter had already employed. The unique words of the first letter would no longer be allowed to be unique, but would be reproduced in the new Epistle. The writer might have introduced other rare words of his own, but he would certainly have had the larger proportion of them of such a kind as to point to the writer of the First Epistle as the writer of the Second. Such words alone would seem to a forger likely to establish a belief in his identity with St. Peter. For how could he or his readers tell what unusual

words the apostle himself might have introduced into a second letter? St. Peter, with his peculiar turn of mind, could and would have chosen language like in character, though unlike in words, to that which he had employed on a former occasion; but the imitator must import largely from what was acknowledged as the work of the apostle if he would make his forgery pass current as an apostolic Epistle. Now, in reality, we have in the Second Epistle such a composition as we can understand, if it be St. Peter's own work. The Letter abounds, as did the first, with *ἄπαξ λεγόμενα*, and also with words of rare occurrence, but hardly any of the rare words are the same as those found in the Epistle which is admitted to be the production of the apostle. We submit that this is very unlike the work which an imitator would have put forward. Such a man might very well have chosen a set of peculiar words, and have made a point of introducing them into his letter. But he would assuredly have thought, "How will this help my claim to apostolic authorship? I must, at least, have a considerable sprinkling of St. Peter's peculiar expressions in my letter if I wish my work to impress the world with the idea that it came from the pen of that apostle." This we venture to suggest is what an imitator would have thought, and his action would have been in accordance therewith. But it is what the writer of the Second Epistle of St. Peter has not done, though his work is studded, like that writer's first Letter, with unique words and expressions of rare occurrence.

Nor will a more particular examination of these



words of rare occurrence be without its teaching. We shall by this means see that they are, for the most part, of that expressive, and often picturesque, character which prevailed among the unique and rare words of the earlier Letter. We have not far to go for an example. In Chap. i. 1 we find the phrase, "that have obtained the like precious faith with us." Perhaps this is all that a readable translation could effect, but it comes far short of giving the idea conveyed by the unique original *ισότιμος*. That word, which is represented in the English by *like precious*, implies "valued, or purchased, at the same price." There is a danger, as we read over our English version, of disjoining *like* from *precious*, and understanding it merely in the sense of *the same*, whereas to attain to the meaning of the author we must combine most closely *like-precious* into one word, and then the reader is reminded, as the writer intended he should be, of the price which has been paid to redeem *all men alike*, and that, as St. Paul has it (1 Cor. vi. 20), we are not our own, but are bought with a price, and that same price paid for each one among us; and that as the Lord, who purchased us all unto Himself, is one, so the faith of us all should be one likewise. The expression "precious *promises*" (Chap. i. 4, and again Chap. iii. 13) brings in a form of the word for *promises* unknown in the New Testament except in this Epistle. A good instance of the vivid and pictorial character which the writer has communicated to the language of this Epistle is seen if we turn to Chap. i. 19. There we read, "We have also a more sure word of prophecy;

whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a *light* that shineth in a *dark* place, until the day *dawn*, and the *day star* arise in your hearts." But when we turn to the Original we notice that the word for *light* is *λύχνος*, and that means, not merely a *light* but a *lamp*. And there is no small difference in the ideas conveyed by the two words. A light may shine into a dark place; but if it only come in through an aperture from without, we cannot divert its rays to any part which we desire to see, and there may be large portions of the space into which little or none of its illumination can pervade. But with a lamp it is different. You can carry it with you; you can use it at every step; you can bring its light to bear on any point you please; you can hold it forward before you, and see by its aid every part to which you are approaching. And this is the use which the writer considers his readers should make of the word of prophecy, and that, if rightly employed, its guidance would be found more sure even than that message from heaven which they who were eye-witnesses of the Transfiguration had made known.<sup>1</sup> It would prove a light unto their feet and a lantern to their path. For it is as wanderers in a dark and dismal road that he pictures himself and his fellow-pilgrims. And there is much more contained in *ἀνχμηρὸς* than is brought forth by our English

<sup>1</sup> St. Peter is of course speaking in this passage only of his own personal testimony in comparison with the word of prophecy. And the institution of such a comparison supplies us with an undesigned evidence of the comparatively early date of our Epistle. Had there been any considerable collection of Christian books already formed, the author would have placed them much more on a level with the writings of the prophets. But as there was no such collection, the prophetic writings are still to him "the more sure word."

word *dark*. Its primary sense is one of *drought* and *parched land*. With this meaning are at once connected the ideas of *dust*, *squalor*, and *misery*, and through these gradations there is imported into the word its later signification of *gloom* and *darkness*. By the use of his unique word the writer has set before us a picture of the world as the Christian must regard it,—nay, as all must feel it to be, if they value it for itself alone. It is a barren cheerless desert, through which we have a journey to make, but the intricacies and difficulties of which continually perplex us, and which is sure to be full of miseries and discomforts except where it is enlightened with brightness from above. But there is a day of glorious splendour to come, and how it will differ from what has been, the writer depicts for us by the verb which he next makes use of. That day is not merely to *dawn*: *διανυάζειν* (a word again peculiar to this Epistle) implies a thorough illumination, a shining through and through. No longer any dark corners, into which we are forced to carry the lamp of prophecy that we may obtain thereby some degree of guidance, but a perfect blaze of brilliant light, whereby the *φωσφόρος* (a word unique again), the Light-bearer, shall shed illumination into the dark places of our hearts, where the light is so sorely needed. Read with the expansions which such fuller translation gives, the verse we are considering conveys some such sense as this: “You do wisely to take heed above all things to the word of prophecy; like a lantern it will give you light at each step through the gloom and misery and defilement of the world, and relieve of their difficulty many of the hard problems which your life’s journey

will force upon you. In this wise should it be used till the clearer daylight, which is coming, pour its floods of brightness upon you, and the Bringer of day shine forth in your hearts." There is much in this passage which partakes of that picturesqueness of speech which we have seen to prevail in all the utterances of St. Peter. Both the gloom and the brightness, through the words by which they are described, have certain pictorial characteristics superadded to them such as seem to be inseparable from St. Peter's descriptions. Word-painting was natural to the apostle, and it appears to have been no less so to the writer of this Epistle. Wherever there is an opportunity for indulging such a tendency of speech, there it is sure to present itself. In the next verse (Chap. i. 20) he says: "No prophecy of scripture is of any private *interpretation*." But he does not employ the ordinary New Testament term for *interpretation*, which elsewhere is *ἐρμηνεύω*, and its various derivatives and compounds. No, he chooses a word of his own, and writes *ἐπίλυσις*, that is, an *untying*. The pictorial character of the word is seen at once. There are hard knots in the utterances which God puts into the mouths of his prophets, which they themselves had not the power of untying. This is exactly as we should have expected St. Peter to speak, and exactly as St. Mark does speak in Chap. iv. 34, where he employs the verb *ἐπιλύω*, to which *ἐπίλυσις* belongs: "When they were alone he expounded [literally, untied] all things to his disciples," a sense in which no other writer in the New Testament has employed this word.

[Here we must pause for a month.—ED.]