

It is, too, the one power creative of righteousness. It seeks the good of the race by seeking the good of all its individuals; blesses the mass through the units that compose it. The rewards of the kingdom are the virtues of the kingdom, the holiness that is happiness, the graces that adorn the saints of God. And it does its glorious work without ceasing, making earth more like heaven, man more like God. While it lives He reigns, and while He reigns man need fear no victory of evil, either over himself or his kind; may rest assured that the Divine Father who guides the world, will guide it, through its shadow as through its sunshine, to the calm and glory of an eternal day.

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ON THE EPISTLES OF ST. PETER.

THE SECOND EPISTLE. (*Concluded.*)

To resume. The quotations in the second Chapter, which wear the appearance of being a Greek rendering of some Hebrew original, are full of words which not even St. Jude, though drawing from the same source, has employed. Such are *καταπέτω* (Chap. ii. 4), rendered to *cast down into hell*, but which is derived from one of the Greek equivalents for the Hebrew word *Sheol*, and is, literally, *to commit to Tartarus*. In the same verse we have the word *σειρά*, which is translated *chain*, a word used by no one else in the New Testament, and the figurative employment of it here, in the expression "chains of darkness," is just, in the manner of St. Peter's word-painting. *Πλαστός*, too, in the preceding verse, which is rendered *feigned*, is likewise confined in

its New Testament use to this Second Epistle, and indicates that readiness to bend themselves to any circumstances, that *plastic* nature, which must ever be the characteristic of words which are meant only to deceive. Here is another touch of St. Peter's style, whose graphic mind would readily picture words of this unstable nature, as clay under the hand of the potter, which can be moulded now to one shape and now to another, according as it suits the purpose of the workman. And in the same passage *ἐμπορεύομαι*, "to make merchandise of," is a word that is only found once again, in the Epistle of St. James (Chap. iv. 13), and there in the ordinary sense of "buying and selling," and not as here with the implied additional sense of knavery and dishonesty. In the same verse (Chap. ii. 3) *ἀργέω* is likewise unique and somewhat graphic. "Whose judgment lingereth not" is the English rendering; but *ἀργέω* means *to be idle*, which seems to convey some stronger sense. Their judgment is doing its work even though they may not see it, though it may be somewhat tardy in its effect, yet it is quite sure, it has always been in steady accumulation, and will fall with the greater force in the end.

Not content with any of the ordinary words for *burning*, which are plentiful enough, the writer, when speaking of Sodom and Gomorrah employs again (Chap. ii. 6) a picturesque and unique word. *Τεφρώω* is *to turn into ashes*, and paints most vividly in a single word the condition to which the valley of the Cities of the Plain was reduced by their overthrow. So of *μῶμοι*, *blemishes*, and *ἐντροφάω*, *to sport themselves*, in Chap. ii. 13, both which words are

found only here. The former primarily signifies *blame*, and by the Greek classical writers is sometimes personified as Momus, the very genius of fault-finding. The writer of our Epistle uses it for those grounds on which one may find fault with anything, and this our translators gave very well by *blemishes*; but a glance at the history of the word is sufficient to shew that it is one which no tame describer would have employed, but is graphic in a high degree. The other word ἐντροφάω is weakly rendered by *sporting themselves*. The noun with which it is connected is rendered *riot*, a few words earlier in this same verse, and *living in riot* is the sort of translation which we ought to have here, that the notion of unrestrained self-indulgence, which the writer depicted and the context demands, might be fully brought out. In the next verse (Chap. ii. 14), ἀκατάπαυστος, used of “eyes which never cease from sin,” is unique, though closely resembling, as we have seen, 1 Pet. iv. 1,—“He that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin.”

Once more, in Chap. ii. 16, we find three words which occur in this Second Epistle only—the words for *rebuke*, ἐλεγξις; *iniquity*, παρανομία; and *madness*, παραφρονία; while we seem to have in the last verse (22) of the Chapter a curious independence of translation which deserves a longer notice, as well on this account as for the words of which it consists. We know from the New Testament that the Septuagint Version of the Old Testament scriptures was in constant use in the days of the apostles, and that both our Lord and his apostles quote from it sometimes exactly, sometimes with

slight variations. But in the verse under our consideration, the writer has varied from this rule. He seems to be quoting Prov. xxvi. 11, but he gives Greek words entirely different from those of the LXX. If the suggestion which we have already made, that throughout the whole of this second Chapter the writer is translating from some Aramaic original, be adopted, we can understand how, in thought, he would turn more readily to the Hebrew original than to the Version, and how he would thus be likely to give us an independent rendering of the Hebrew. There may also be another reason why he modified his translation. With a Jew's love for parallelism he has added another proverb to balance the one which he seems to quote. The verse in Proverbs runs thus, "As a dog returneth to his vomit, so a fool returneth to his folly." Now the whole passage in 2 Pet. ii. 20-22 is speaking of the fool returning to his folly. The writer, therefore, needed only the former half of the verse for his illustration, which he takes, but gives it in a translation entirely his own, and not quoted from the LXX., and then adds, as a parallel, "And the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire." But whether we admit the first clause of the verse to be an independent translation which the writer made from the original Hebrew, or consider that both expressions were common proverbs, we have yet the singular feature in the verse that *ἐξέραμα*, vomit; *κύλισμα*, wallowing; and *βόρβορος*, mire, are words found in no other portion of the New Testament.

In the third Chapter of the Epistle we no longer find what we have called the influence of translation upon the writer's language, but come to his own independent utterances. And here we trace the same kind of peculiar and pictorial expressions which we have so often noticed in the words of St. Peter. First we have *ροιζυδὸν* (Chap. iii. 10), a word found only here in the Sacred Volume, and rendered, *with a great noise*, in describing the final conflagration of the heavens. But in the original word is contained a clear intimation of the character of the noise, which the English version loses altogether. It is the hurtling sound of weapons whizzing through the sky, or the rushing tumult of a mighty torrent. Then, in the same verse, *καυσώω*, represented by *with fervent heat*, fails of the picturesque character of its unique original. The verb is not the usual one employed to signify *consuming by fire*; indeed the writer employs two others, of more common use in that sense, in the immediate context. This word is connected with the noun *καύσων*, the *burning heat* of James i. 11, and when joined, as here, with *λυθήσονται*, expresses that dissolution which shall take place in the universal frame when the fire of the last day shall blaze down upon it, and, as it were, melt it and cause it to fall asunder. And this dissolution is expressed afterwards (Chap. iii. 13) by another verb, *τήκομαι*, which, literally, signifies *to melt away*, the very effect of such burning heat as is implied in the verb *καυσώω* and its noun *καύσων*. Going on for a verse or two we come to the verb *στρεβλῶσιν*

(Chap. iii. 16), used of those who *wrest* the Scriptures. But the original word points to an act of the greatest violence, an act of wilful torturing. Its root is a word which is used for the rack on which criminals in ancient times were stretched, to force from them a confession which could be procured in no other way; and which, when procured, though it answered for a time the purposes of those who sought it, was more frequently false than true. Carry this notion with us to the interpretation of the verb *wrest*, and how much more meaning does it infuse into the passage! These men will make the Scriptures speak their language, whether the plainest sense thereof be so or not; and therefore they are represented in the picturesque phrase of our writer as putting the very words on the rack to wring out of them a meaning which cannot by fair means be obtained.

Long as we have dwelt on the pictorial language of the Epistle, we have not yet exhausted either the pictorial words or the unique expressions of the writer. We have said nothing of such words as *μωπαίων* (Chap. i. 9), "that cannot see afar off," where the idea contained in the root of the verb implies the *wilful blocking up* of the apertures of sight. We have not dwelt on the pictorial and Petrine character of the use of *σκήνωμα* (Chap. i. 13, 14), "a tabernacle," as a name for the body, of which the soul is but the temporary tenant; nor on *δυσνόητα* (Chap. iii. 16), "hard to be understood," of the Pauline writings; nor on *νοστάζειν* (Chap. ii. 3), in which is conveyed the notion of that

sleepy nodding of a person overwrought and weary, yet feeling bound to go on, which is missed from our English rendering, "slumbereth not;" nor on the forcible and unique *κατακλυσθείς*, which is tamely rendered (Chap. iii. 6) by "overflowed;" for the word contains the same root as that other which is always used for the greatest of overflows (*κατακλυσμός*), the universal deluge.¹ Yet enough, I think, has been said to shew that the writer of this Epistle had precisely the same tendencies in his language, and the same peculiarities in his choice of words, as was possessed so eminently by St. Peter, and these tendencies and peculiarities of no ordinary character, but such as make St. Peter's utterances remarkable among the writings of the New Testament.

But to continue. We noticed in the First Epistle that the Apostle was fond of a duplication of terms and delighted in a wealth of epithets. In the Second Epistle we are met by precisely the same partiality. Take, as examples, "*the exceeding great and precious*

¹ To complete our list of peculiar words we have to add,—

<i>ἄθεσμος</i> (Chap. ii. 7 ; iii. 17),	<i>μεγαλοπρεπής</i> (Chap. i. 17),
<i>ἄλωσις</i> (Chap. ii. 12),	<i>μίασμα</i> (Chap. ii. 20),
<i>βλέμμα</i> (Chap. ii. 18),	<i>μισμός</i> (Chap. ii. 10),
<i>βραδύτης</i> (Chap. iii. 9),	<i>ὀμίχλη</i> (Chap. ii. 17),
<i>ἐκάστοτε</i> (Chap. i. 15),	<i>παρεισάγειν</i> (Chap. ii. 1),
<i>ἐκπαλαι</i> (Chap. ii. 3 ; iii. 5),	<i>ταχινός</i> (Chap. i. 14 ; ii. 1),
<i>ἐπόπτης</i> (Chap. i. 16),	<i>ψευδοδιάσκαλος</i> (Chap. ii. 1).

Many of these, which occur in Chap. ii., we believe to be due to the fact that St. Peter was translating, perhaps from memory, from some Aramaic record, from which he, as well as St. Jude, drew those illustrations which are so much alike in the two Epistles, and yet have so many differences. But some of the words quoted just now, as *βραδύτης*, *ἐπόπτης*, and others, partake strongly of those Petrine characteristics which have been so largely illustrated in the text.

promises" (Chap. i. 4); "Ye shall be *neither barren nor unfruitful*" (Chap. i. 8); "he is *blind, and cannot see afar off*" (Chap. i. 9); "till the *day dawn* and the *day star arise* in your hearts" (Chap. i. 19); "whose *judgment lingereth not*, and their *damnation slumbereth not*" (Chap. ii. 3); "*presumptuous* are they and *self-willed*" (Chap. ii. 10); "*spots* are they and *blemishes*" (Chap. ii. 13); "*kept in store, reserved* unto fire" (Chap. iii. 7); "*without spot* and *blemishless*" (Chap. iii. 14); "*unlearned* and *unstable*" (Chap. iii. 16). Here is a very trifling peculiarity of style, but one which was sure to betray itself in the man who possessed it, though it is of so insignificant an order that no imitator would be likely to hit upon it. The very slightness of its nature, while it is in perfect accord with St. Peter's manner of speech and writing, tells more strongly than a more noticeable mark in favour of the apostolic origin of the Letter in which it so characteristically occurs.

But it is when we come to remark the traces of that peculiar turn of mind which led St. Peter to be ever looking back on his past life, and giving hints of such retrospection in his words, that we especially find evidence of his authorship in the later Letter. Such a backward view of another's life is impossible to an imitator. He may study carefully and copy very closely the objective external marks of the author whom he has taken for his model; but to enter into another man's mind, to look back with the vision of another over a life of which he has had no experience, to grasp within his mental glance scenes different from those which have been made

the subjects of allusion in the known writings of him whom he is aiming to copy, and to let the effect of such a review be traceable only by subtle evidences in his words,—this is work beyond the imitator. To achieve this he must assume the other's personality, with all its past experiences. He must become his very self.

We have already pointed out an instance in the Epistle where the mind of the writer seems certainly to have been dwelling on the outpouring of the Holy Ghost at Pentecost, and where his thoughts have made themselves apparent in the words which he has written. We have noticed, too, Dean Alford's remarks on such retrospective allusions in the language of Chap. i. 13, 15, where *σκήνωμα* and *ἔξοδος* are found, two words which occur in a marked manner in the Transfiguration narrative, and which an allusion to that scene brought to the writer's thoughts and into the immediate context in the Epistle. But the whole of this latter passage is full of allusions to that scene of Peter's reconciliation described by St. John (Chap. xxi. 15-19). There Peter is told by Jesus that, when old age shall have come upon him, he will have to depart from this world, and not by a natural death. "When thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not. This spake he," St. John adds, "signifying by what death he should glorify God." To this intimation the memory of the writer of our Epistle is carried back, and he reminds his readers that Christ had already forewarned him of his end,

and tells them that he is now ready to obey his Lord's command (John xxi.22), "Follow thou me," even when such following should be to a death of the same dreadful kind which his Master endured. And as if his mind were full of this following in the very *manner* of Christ's death, he uses of his own departure the precise word *ἔξοδος*, which had been employed in the Transfiguration story concerning Christ's "*decease*" (Luke ix. 31), "which he should accomplish at Jerusalem." As if he would intimate by his choice of words, "I know that as my Lord died, in such wise shall I also die."

It may also be remarked here, as an evidence that the notice of the Transfiguration given in this Epistle is not the work of an imitator, that the words which are quoted as spoken by the heavenly voice are not the same with the language of any of the Gospel narratives. We may be quite certain that a writer who was merely a pretender would have been very careful that here at least he should be in accord with the earlier historic narrative. But the writer of this Epistle was undisturbed by any idea that his testimony would be impugned, and so he has given in substance what is reported by the Evangelists, but has left verbal identity altogether out of his consideration.

It is a small matter, but one which bespeaks the fisherman who in early days had plied his trade on the Galilean lake, that *δεδεάζω*, *to catch with a bait*, is his favourite word for the snares by which men are allured into evil. Thus (Chap. ii. 14) he speaks of "*beguiling* [literally, laying a bait for] unstable

souls," and (Chap. ii. 18) "they *allure* [set a bait] through the lusts of the flesh." And the word is used nowhere else but by St. James (Chap. i. 14), "Every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust and *enticed*."

We can see how the memory of the writer goes back to the exhortations of Jesus when He is speaking of the "false teachers" who shall be among his flock, "who shall privily bring in damnable heresies, . . . and many shall follow their pernicious ways, by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of." That solemn address, uttered just before the Lord's decease, was vividly present to the writer's mind, and its character, so appropriate to his own circumstances, stamped itself upon his words. "Many false prophets," the Lord had foretold (Matt. xxiv. 11), "shall rise and shall deceive many, and because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold." Peter had once beheld this waxing cold of love, and the way of truth evil spoken of, when, in his Master's life, many had turned back (John vi. 66) and walked no more with Him, because his words did not harmonize with other teachings to which they had given more earnest heed. And now there are like signs of the times: now men deny the Lord that bought them, and almost in Christ's words does the writer warn his hearers of their peril. In the same way does he go back in mind to the words of Jesus when he says (Chap. ii. 20) of those who have once escaped the pollutions of the world, but are again entangled therein, "the latter end is worse with them than the

beginning." Jesus, after uttering almost the very words, had said (Matt. xii. 45), "Even so shall it be also unto this wicked generation," and the memory of the disciple brings back the words of which his own eyes were in some sort beholding the fulfilment.

Once more does that last sermon of Jesus (Matt. xxiv. xxv.), spoken when He had gone out and departed from the Temple, never more to return thither, seem to be ruling the writer's thoughts, as in the third Chapter of the Epistle he tells how, "in the last days, there shall come scoffers walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of his coming?" And the Master's solemn tones in the same discourse when He says, "Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of heaven shall be shaken, and then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven," find their echo in the exhortation (Chap. iii. 10) of the apostle, which also looks back to his own Pentecostal sermon, "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, when the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up."

But there is one allusion to a scene in the past life of the apostle St. Peter which is very marked, and most appropriately finds place in this Second Epistle. The writer is not, as in his first Letter, giving practical precepts for the regulation of the Christian life, but warnings against dangers which will beset the flock from errors in teaching and

consequent loss of faith. This duty had been especially laid upon Peter, and in most memorable words. After a solemn rebuke (Luke xxii. 33), wherein the wiles of Satan against Peter himself had been foretold, the Lord had said unto him, "When thou art converted, strengthen [στήριζον] thy brethren." Now had the time arrived when such strengthening was required, when the Christian body would need prayers as earnest as the Lord's for his apostle that their "faith might not fail." And the occasion brings the word which Christ had used into the language of this Epistle. The writer speaks as one who knew that this work had been appointed to him, and that he had laboured to fulfil his charge. "I will not be negligent," he says (Chap. i. 12), "to put you always in remembrance of these things, though ye know them and be *established* [ἐστηρικμένους] in the present truth." Again, those who wrest the Scriptures to force them to bear such a meaning as they desire are (Chap. iii. 16) "the unlearned and *unstable*" (ἀστήρικτοι), while the condition to which the apostle by his teaching has led his followers he speaks of again (Chap. iii. 17) in an expression which recalls the earnest injunction of Jesus, "Beware, lest ye . . . fall from your own *steadfastness*" (στηρικμόν). Our English Version, by its variations of expression, conceals from the reader the frequent repetition in the Original of this same notion; but, when observed, it is a repetition which partakes largely of the retrospective character of much of St. Peter's diction, and is exactly like what we have seen more than once in the larger compass of the First Epistle.

Let us now look back on all these resemblances which we have been noticing. There is much in the words of the Second Epistle which resembles the First, more even than those who assign the two Letters to different authors have pointed out. Such similarity might naturally be expected if St. Peter were the author of the Epistle, but it might have been achieved by another than he. Yet the writer has not only exhibited points of resemblance to the First Epistle, but also to the Gospel of St. Mark, and to those portions of the Acts of the Apostles which cannot but at first have proceeded out of the mouth of St. Peter. That St. Peter's language throughout all the compositions which had their origin from him would have a marked likeness is not difficult to understand, but it is hard to believe that a writer whose object was mere imitation would have ventured in an Epistle to copy the phraseology of the historical books. If he made one Letter bear a close resemblance to the other, his purpose would have seemed abundantly answered. But let us grant that there existed a writer so clever at the date when it is suggested that this Second Epistle was composed, and that he had in his possession and had studied, with a view to his forgery, the diction of St. Peter in every part of the New Testament where traces of that diction are to be found. Yet we have to go farther than this. We have to believe that the supposed imitator had a deep insight into St. Peter's modes of thought, and so managed to give to his Epistle the same eminently practical character which marks all the other utterances of that apostle.

We have to believe that this writer had observed how frequently St. Peter appeals to what was learnt, or to be learnt, by sight, and regarded that faculty as the most efficient mode of influencing men's actions, and that he framed his Letter to be of a like character. We have further to believe that he made allowance for the supposed advanced age of the apostle, as represented in the Second Epistle, and made him appeal not only to sight, but to the old man's faculty, the recollection of bygone times. We have to believe that this fancied forger noticed St. Peter's use of unique and rare words, and had adopted that usage; yet, while studing his Letter with words of that character, he does not repeat those which had been employed in the First Epistle, though to adopt a fair share of these would have seemed to most men the likeliest way of establishing the claim of his Letter to be a work of St. Peter. We have, moreover, to believe that in the choice of his rare words the imitator was able to do as St. Peter had done, and to choose those which were in general of a most picturesque character, and many of which form in themselves complete word-pictures. We must believe, too, that he could put himself in the position of St. Peter and imitate that apostle in his habit of retrospection, and in so doing make not a retrospect suitable to the circumstances under which he himself had lived, but exactly such a one as St. Peter would have made; that the allusions in these backward glances shall all be made in St. Peter's character, as though the writer thought *his* thoughts, remembered with *his* memory, and saw

with *his* eyes; that events like the Transfiguration, Christ's discourse on leaving the Temple at Jerusalem, and that solemn interview in which the repentant apostle was assured of his Lord's forgiveness, shall all be made to leave a natural impress on the language of the Epistle, though without much direct mention of the events, and in some cases no mention whatever. If St. Peter wrote the Second Epistle, all these peculiarities are natural, and are just those which we have observed in the First Epistle; while to ask us to believe that the composition in which all these resemblances to St. Peter's natural style are found is but the work of a cunning inventor, is to make a far greater demand on our faith than is required to surmount such objections as have been raised against the genuineness of the Epistle.

For deeming it most probable, as we do, that both St. Jude and St. Peter drew the examples which they have given for illustration from some common Aramaic original, we do not feel that the similarity which exists between these two Letters should interfere with the acceptance of our Epistle as the genuine production of the apostle whose name it bears. That it should have been doubted of for some time may be very well understood, if it were first circulated, as was likely, among a portion of the Diaspora, and by them kept as a peculiar and precious treasure of their own. But that it should at length have been accepted and admitted into the Canon proves that those who lived much nearer to the time of its composition than we do, and who, no doubt, had before them evidence of

which we have no trace, were so satisfied of the genuineness of the Letter that their misgivings were swept away.

It ought not, moreover, to surprise us that there is a difference of tone discernible in the language of the two Epistles. The object of the First, written evidently in times when no erroneous teaching gave the overseers of the Church cause for alarm, is to encourage, to exhort, and to advise in matters of piety and duty; and in it the enemy against whom most warning is given is their cruel adversary the Devil. While the Second, put forth in dangerous days, when heresy was rearing its head, speaks all of false teachers, who were ready to lead men astray by their lessons and by scoffing questions to break down the strength of faith. When the objects of the Epistles are so distinct, and the condition of the hearers so different, can we wonder that the teaching deemed needful by the apostle should assume a different shade? To the first auditory Christ's second coming might justly be spoken of as an *ἀποκάλυψις*, a *revelation*. They are styled by the apostle (1 Pet. i. 5), "those who are being kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation." To disciples of whom he could thus speak, the appearing of the Lord Jesus would be the heralding of their own entry into the blessed enjoyment of "praise, honour, and glory" through Him. They might, therefore, be expected to welcome all that spake of the coming of the Lord, and to be ready to cry with the writer of the *Ἀποκάλυψις* (Rev. xxii. 20), "Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

But when false teachers are abroad, and the apostle feels that "many will follow their pernicious ways," it is a time for the same coming of the Lord to be set before men in its more warning aspect. To those who fall away it will be a *παρουσία*, a coming, a presence (2 Pet. i. 16), but one to which they have not looked forward, nor expected it as a day of enlightenment. To them it will really be the great and terrible "day of the Lord" (Chap. iii. 10), and the "day of judgment" (Chap. iii. 7). Would it not have been strange if Epistles written under such changed circumstances had not borne traces of that change in the character of their arguments and exhortations? And is it not likewise easy to be understood why in the second Letter Jesus is so often styled "the Saviour"? It was against his honour and power that "the damnable heresies" should be introduced, and should make men "deny the Lord that *bought* them." This purchase of mankind by his death constituted him *σωτήρ*, a Saviour, and when there is a danger of the efficacy of that death being questioned, and so of the salvation purchased thereby being imperilled, the circumstances call for that great emphasis which the writer gives to Christ's work of redemption by the name which he delights to apply to the Lord.

Again, our Lord's sufferings are much dwelt on in the First Epistle,—hardly at all in the Second. But is there not a cause? What use is made of Christ's example in this frequent mention? It is to urge Christians to exhibit under their sufferings a patience

like unto his. "As Christ suffered for us, . . . ye should follow his steps" (1 Pet. ii. 21); "It is better that ye suffer for well-doing than for evil-doing, for Christ also hath once suffered, . . . the Just for the unjust" (Chap. iii. 17, 18); "As Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves with the same mind" (Chap. iv. 1.). This is the tone of the First Epistle. But in days when apostasy is threatening, exhortations of such a kind would be out of place. It would be speaking to deaf ears to urge on an audience who were in peril of a temptation to deny Christ altogether that they should imitate the life of a Master whose lessons even they may soon be instigated to cast entirely to the winds. In this point too, it is the different circumstances of the time which make different language necessary.

And is the writer of the Second Epistle very anxious, as is said, to make men believe, by his repeated mention of the fact, that he is really the apostle St. Peter, and thus to gain more authority for his composition? He dwells on his personal experience it is true, and perhaps writes himself *Συμεών* (using the Hebrew form rather than the Hellenistic Simon), Symeon, in the first verse of his Epistle, that by his first word he may testify that it is a Hebrew who is speaking to his brethren; just as there is so much in the whole of this Epistle which exhibits that Jewish leaning once so faultily indulged in by St. Peter, and which in its innocent attachment to his own race was likely to grow stronger with increasing age. But observe why in each case the writer puts forward his personal evidence. It is

where that alone would entitle him to speak more strongly than other people. "We have not followed," he says, "cunningly devised fables, . . . but were eye-witnesses of Christ's majesty" (2 Pet. i. 16). Yet here is no striving to exalt the authority of his words, for a moment afterwards he calls prophecy a *more sure* word than his own testimony. Is there here anything of the self-asserting tone of one who pretends to be what he is not? And in like manner, when he speaks (Chap. iii. 2) of those words of which his hearers should be mindful, he places first those "spoken by the holy prophets," and after that adds, "and the commandment of us, the apostles of the Lord."

And with regard to another objection. If we place the date of this Second Epistle only at a distance of thirty years after our Lord's death, ought we to feel any surprise that the places associated with his presence on earth have begun to be regarded as sacred by his followers? And, above all, that the mount on which the three apostles had at the Transfiguration a prevision of the glory of heaven, "where Moses and Elias appeared in glory" (Luke ix. 31), should have grown to be by that time reverently spoken of as "the holy mount"?

Let us next look at the words (Chap. iii. 14-16) in which this writer speaks of St. Paul's Epistles. "Wherefore, beloved" he says, "seeing that ye look for *these things* [*τὰυτα*], give diligence that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot and blameless. And account that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also,

according to the wisdom given unto him, wrote unto you, [ὑμῶν], as also in all his Epistles, speaking in them of these things [τούτων], wherein are some things hard to be understood, which the ignorant and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures [τὰς λοιπὰς γραφὰς], unto their own destruction." Here there can hardly be a question that the τούτων (Chap. v. 16), *these things*, refers back to the ταῦτα, *these things*, of verse 14. It is not at all necessary, therefore, to understand the writer as saying that St. Paul speaks in all his Epistles of "the longsuffering of our Lord as salvation." That apostle (Rom. ii. 4) says, "the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance," and it is probable that to those words is the allusion in our Epistle. But *these things* may be extended to all the matter of verses 12 and 13, in which are mentioned the coming of the day of God, the dissolution of the heavens, and the destruction of the world by fire, as well as the expectation of new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness shall dwell. And of these, or some of these subjects, no Epistle of St. Paul can be said to be silent. And when the writer speaks of the Epistles of St. Paul as "written to you," he is evidently including all the Christian Jews, who were his own special care, among the general body of the universal Church. St. Paul's Epistles to the Galatians, the Ephesians, the Colossians, and Philemon, we can have no doubt were circulated among the very Churches to which St. Peter addresses himself in his First Epistle. And nearly all the Epistles of St. Paul were written before the date which must be given to the Second Epistle of St.

Peter, and during his residence in Rome we may justly assume that most of these, if not all, had become known to St. Peter. But it is urged that the application of the term *γραφαί* to the Epistles of St. Paul betrays a late date; that in the New Testament times this word was only used of the scriptures of the Old Testament. In the first place, this statement is not correct. For in James iv. 5 we read, "Do ye think that the scripture [*ἡ γραφή*], saith in vain, The spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth to envy?" of a passage which is nowhere to be found in the Old Testament. And as Bretschneider¹ has pointed out, the Jews of this age spake of other works than the Old Testament as *γραφαί*, as he instances in the case of the Book of Enoch. But if it were not so, can we have a doubt that the writings of the New Testament were certain very speedily to be spoken of, by Christian writers at least, in the very same terms which were used of the records of the older covenant? When we find St. Paul writing, as he does even as early as 1 Thess. ii. 13, of his own Epistles or preaching as "the *word of God* which ye heard of us;" and again (2 Thess. ii. 15) "Hold fast the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word or our epistle;" we can hardly be surprised that the books which by the thirtieth year after our Lord's death had become current, and some of them no doubt gathered into one collection, should be looked upon with the same reverence and spoken of by the same name which was given to the other and earlier *Word of God*.

¹ Lex. in Nov. Test. s. v. *γραφή*.

Such are the most forcible of the objections which have been urged against the genuineness of our Epistle. If these be overcome, all else are of very minor character. And when we see that, although written under such widely different circumstances, there is in the two Letters so much accord in thought as is shewn when we compare 1 Pet. ii. 16 ("As free, and not using your liberty for a cloke of maliciousness, but as the servants of Christ") with 2 Pet. ii. 19 ("While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption"), passages which breathe the same sentiment though differently expressed; when we trace the similarity of thought in the one Letter, which speaks (1 Pet. ii. 8) of "those which stumble at the word, being disobedient, where unto also they were appointed" (*ἐρέθησαν*), and in the other, which tells (2 Pet. ii. 6) of the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah which God *appointed*¹ (*τεθεικώς*) "an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly;" when we see that both use the same language about the near approach of the end of the world, both speaking of the times immediately approaching as "the last time" (1 Pet. i. 5) or "the last days" (2 Pet. iii. 3); and while one declares "the end of all things is at hand" (1 Pet. iv. 7), the other, in equally solemn tones, while urging his hearers to be "looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of the Lord," testifies (2 Pet. iii. 10) that this "day of the Lord shall so come as a thief in the night;" when both Letters speak in like terms of the value of prophecy, the writer of the Second Epistle calling it *more sure*

¹ Authorized Version, "made."

than the testimony of himself and his fellow apostles ; while St. Peter (Chap. i. 10) speaks of the spirit within the prophets of old as " the spirit of Christ " himself ; and when both, in most remarkable language, testify that prophecy did not carry its own interpretation with it ; that, as is said (2 Pet. i. 20), " it is not of any private interpretation," which, as we have shewn above, signifies that the prophet was not the expounder of his own prophecies, and in 1 Pet. i. 12, " Unto whom [the prophets] it was revealed that not unto themselves, but unto us, did they minister the things which are now reported unto you ; " and when to these similarities of thought on most important subjects we add the closeness of resemblance in language and style which it has been the chief aim of this paper to illustrate, there seems to be a large preponderance of evidence in favour of the genuineness of the Second Epistle. If both Epistles be the work of St. Peter, the resemblances are natural, the differences not unnatural, while the hypothesis of a second-century imitator is beset with difficulties which seem beyond all power of solution.

J. RAWSON LUMBY.

THE POTTER AND THE CLAY.

JER. XVIII. 1-10 ; ROM. IX. 19-24.

ST. PAUL'S words in dealing with this parable, " Hath not the potter power over the clay ? " have often, I imagine, been read and pondered over with the sense of an intolerable burden. They have seemed to shut out hope and energy and courage. We have found it hard to reconcile them with our sense of human freedom and responsibility. Instead of the glad tidings which tell us that all