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Ein Prediger muss nicht allein *weden*, also dass er die Schafe unterweise, wie sie rechte Christen sollen sein, sondern auch daneben den Wölfen *wehren*, dass sie die Schafe nicht angreifen und mit falscher Lehre verfuerehen und Irrtum einfuehren.

Luther

Es ist kein Ding, das die Leute mehr bei der Kirche behaelt denn die gute Predigt. — *Apologie, Art. 24*

If the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle? — *1 Cor. 14:8*

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Verbal Inspiration — a Stumbling-Block to the Jews and Foolishness to the Greeks

(Continued)

IV

The moderns have many more objections against Verbal Inspiration. To three of these they attach special importance. They denounce Verbal Inspiration as “a *mechanical* theory of inspiration”; they abhor it as “resulting in an *atomistic* conception of the Scriptures”; they abominate it as establishing “the *legalistic* authority of the letter.”—The old evil Foe means deadly woe. The appeasers have up till now been telling us that nothing is lost if the Church gives up half of the Bible, seeing that they are willing to let her retain the important half, the Gospel message; if only the saving truths be inspired, all is well. And now they are insisting that not even this portion of Scripture is inspired, verbally inspired. They would have us believe that the words in which the saving truth is clothed are purely human — human words which are not absolutely reliable, human words which do not carry divine authority.

Verbal Inspiration is a detestable thing in the eyes of the moderns. They express their detestation of it in the horrified exclamation: “Mechanical Inspiration!” and stigmatize us as “mechanical inspirationists.” Some of them call it a heathen conception. G. P. Mains: “Many have believed in its verbal inspiration as literal as though God dictated every word, using the human writer only as an automaton. This view, however, is distinctively neither Hebrew nor Christian. From immemorial times it has been shared by the heathen seers concerning the utterances of their oracles.” (*Divine Inspiration*, p. 71.) R. Seeberg: “We must also be careful not to regard the situation as if the theory of verbal inspiration were ‘really’ Christian. . . . That kind of inspiration in

which the prophet in ecstatic fervor forgets himself and the world and becomes only the pen or tongue of a deity, was far from unknown in the ancient world, and was then introduced into Jewish and Christian thought by the theories of Plato and Philo." (*Revelation and Inspiration*, p. 31 f.) Dr. H. C. Alleman supports Seeberg's protest against the heathen doctrine of Verbal Inspiration: "The doctrine of verbal inspiration . . . is foreign to the genius of our Confessions. It is, in fact, a carry-over from the old heathen conception of inspiration: a man who was possessed by a god lost self-control and became but a mouthpiece of the deity." (*The Luth. Church Quart.*, Oct., 1940, p. 352.) M. Dods, whom Alleman calls in as a corroborating witness, describes "the mechanical or dictation theory as the theory of complete possession, in which the divine factor is at its maximum, the human at its minimum. What is human is suppressed; the indwelling God uses the human organs irrespective of the human will. The man is the mere mouthpiece of the God. This view has always been popular outside of Christianity." (*The Bible: Its Origin and Nature*, p. 107.) S. P. Cadman voices his protest in these words: "It is conceivable that God possessed the power to reduce the authors of this sacred literature to the level of mere automata acting under hypnosis. . . . God inspired selected personalities to transmit His will to their fellows, but in so doing He did not obliterate their individuality nor thereby make them speak like puppets in a Punch-and-Judy show." (*Answers to Everyday Questions*, p. 253.) Dr. J. A. Singmaster puts it this way: "Various theories of inspiration have been advocated. The most popular and fallacious of these is the dictation theory, which holds that the writer is merely an instrument which the Spirit used as a player does the organ or that he is merely the stenographer of God. . . . The apostles were not unconscious media for the Spirit." (*Handbook of Chr. Theol.*, p. 67.) The moderns are up in arms against the idea of putting the prophets and the apostles on a level with the pythoness of Delphi.

As a rule, the moderns use more moderate language. They will not use the terms "heathen doctrine," "mantic divination," "hypnosis," but use the milder term "mechanical" to express the same idea: the holy writers must not be made automata.²⁵³ Dr. R. V. Foster inveighs against "the mechanical theory," "which holds that the sacred writers were as mere machines, or amanuenses;

253) Cremer: "The dogmaticians taught a doctrine of inspiration which was an absolute *novum*. True, it lacked only the concept of ecstasy to be a renewal of the mantic doctrine of inspiration as taught by Philo and the old apologetes, which had been universally rejected by the Church in its opposition to Montanism. But the very absence of this concept only made the situation worse, for it reduced the mantic inspiration to a mechanical one." (*Pieper, Chr. Dog. I, p. 279.*)

mere passive recipients and recorders of what was dictated by the Holy Spirit." Dr. T. O. Summers takes Musaeus, Baier, and Quenstedt to task for teaching "that the Holy Spirit acted on men in a passive state; that those who were under the power of the inspiring Spirit were acted upon as mere machines, mechanically answering the force which moved them." Dr. M. S. Terry takes "the leading churches of the Reformation, which accepted the Calvinistic creed" to task for teaching that "the normal powers of the holy writers were suspended or neutralized in the process of their writing"; that they were "impassive machines, controlled by another person."²⁵⁴ Dr. A. H. Strong: "The dictation theory holds that inspiration consisted in such a possession of the minds and bodies of the Scripture writers by the Holy Spirit that they became passive instruments or amanuenses — pens, not penmen, of God. . . . Representatives of this view are Quenstedt, Hooker, Gaussen. . . . We cannot suppose that this highest work of man under the influence of the Spirit was purely mechanical." (*Systematic Theology*, p. 102.) Dr. G. Drach: "One theory of divine inspiration is that of mechanical verbal dictation. According to this theory the human writers under the influence of the Holy Spirit were in a passive state of receptivity, similar to that of a stenographer who takes dictation. . . . Zwingli's spirit led his followers to incline toward the dictation of words as well as to the inspiration of the contents of the Sacred Scriptures, and this theory found its way into some of the Reformed confessions, and also influenced some of the Lutheran theologians of the seventeenth century." (*The Luth. Church Quart.*, 1936, p. 244 f.) Dr. A. J. Traver: "There can be nothing mechanical about it. God did not dictate to the writers of the Bible as to a stenographer." (*The Lutheran*, Jan. 23, 1936.) Dr. J. A. W. Haas: "In the problem of inspiration the facts of course refute any mechanical theory of verbal inspiration in minute detail." (*The Lutheran*, Jan. 23, 1936.)

The moderns denounce Verbal Inspiration as a dangerous and horrible thing. Dr. A. T. Kantonen, in the article "The Canned Goods of Past Theology," published in *The Lutheran*, Dec. 12 ff.,

254) See *Theological Quarterly*, 1913, p. 2 ff.; 1914, p. 79. The article containing these references is entitled: "'Mechanical Inspiration' the Stumbling-Block of Modern Theology." Our selection of a similar title for the present writing is a pure co-incidence. — Are the terms "mechanical inspiration" and "verbal inspiration" synonymous? Not with us. But the moderns use them so. See footnote 1. When the moderns denounce "mechanical" inspiration, they mean verbal, plenary inspiration. Ladd: "Theories of verbal or mechanical operation." Sanday: "Mechanical and verbal inspiration of the Bible." Evangelischer Oberkirchenrat in Stuttgart: "Die evangelische Kirche betrachtet die Bibel als Wort Gottes; nicht im Sinne einer *mechanischen Verbalinspiration*, sondern als das in Menschenwort gekleidete Zeugnis Gottes von seinem Wesen und Walten." (See *CONC. THEOL. MTHLY.*, VII, p. 719.)

1935: "Lutheran exegesis will be seriously handicapped unless it abandons once and for all the unpsychological and mechanical theories of inspiration and unhistorical views of verbal inerrancy which the application of scientific and historical methods to the study of the Bible has rendered obsolete." Dr. E. E. Flack: "Is not the inspiration of Scripture too high and holy a reality to be defined in terms of stenography? Does one exalt the Word of God by dehumanizing it?" (*The Luth. Church Quart.*, 1935, p. 417.)

The moderns are demanding that this foolish, wicked theory be abandoned once and for all. A. Deissmann is glad to note that "this dogma of verbal inspiration of every letter of the New Testament, which rightly can be called mechanical inspiration, is now abandoned in all scientific theology." (*The New Testament in the Light of Modern Research*, p. 234.) And they want the Lutheran Church, together with the entire Christian Church, to abandon it because it is not Biblical. H. E. Jacobs wrote in the introduction to *Biblical Criticism*, by J. A. W. Haas: "If the verbal theory of inspiration means that every word and letter is inspired, so that the writer was purely passive and performed a merely mechanical office, as 'the pen of the Holy Ghost,' this, we hold, is an assumption for which we have no warrant." (See F. Bente, *Was steht der Vereinigung im Wege?* p. 50.) W. Sanday: "The mechanical and verbal inspiration of the Bible may be questioned, but its real and vital inspiration will shine out as it has never done." (*The Oracles of God*, p. 46.) Christ did not teach it, says G. T. Ladd: "The germinal doctrine of Sacred Scripture given us in these words [of Christ] is as far as possible from the rabbinical view of His own day. Nor does it afford a root for a growth into any theories of verbal or mechanical inspiration or of the infallibility of the Old Testament. . . ." (*The Doctrine of Sacred Scripture*, I, p. 38.) And the Lutheran Church should not teach it any longer, says E. E. Fisher: "It is more consistent with Lutheranism to believe that the writers of the Holy Scriptures were truly human in the way in which they accomplished their tasks than to believe that they were automatons who served as 'secretaries' to take down the dictation of the Holy Spirit. For one thing, what we know of the way in which the writings have come to assume their present form precludes any conception of dictation. But more important is Lutheranism's conviction that the human personality may be made the vehicle of the divine without the loss or destruction of human freedom." (*The Luth. Church Quart.*, 1937, p. 196.) If the Lutherans want to get together, they must get rid of Verbal Inspiration, says *Folkebladet*, Nov. 23, 1938: "Students of Scripture are more and more getting away from the theory of verbal inspiration, a theory which has brought more confusion among

Christians than perhaps anything else. It is an impossibility to imagine that the prophets and apostles could have intended that their words should be considered as a dictation by the Holy Spirit and that they as almost unconscious automatons were the Holy Spirit's pencils. When a subjective theory is elevated to the status of an objective primary truth, then hubbub [*virvar*] surely will ensue in the Church. And that has most certainly been the case." — This, then, is the grievance of the moderns against Verbal Inspiration: it degrades the writers to the level of machines! 255) They resent the idea that the apostles had to submit to be made into dead writing machines. They ask the "mechanical inspirationists": How dare you make the prophets undergo the horrible experience of Verbal Inspiration? Summoned by the cry of Cadman: Let us not reduce the authors of our sacred literature to the level of mere automata acting under hypnosis! they are determined to drive the foul spook out of the Church. 256)

255) Fundamentals, III, p. 13: "The inspiration includes not only all the books of the Bible in general but in detail, the form as well as the substance, the word as well as the thought. This is sometimes called the *verbal* theory of inspiration and is vehemently spoken against in some quarters. It is too mechanical, it degrades the writers to the level of machines, it has a tendency to make skeptics, and all that."

256) Queerly enough, the charge that the later dogmatians, such as Quenstedt, and those who accept their phraseology are "mechanical inspirationists" is made by some who themselves believe that every word of Scripture is divinely inspired and absolutely true. For the sake of a complete record we submit the following references. W. Lee declares that "it seems impossible to reconcile this phase of the purely organic, or as it has of late years been termed, *mechanical*, theory of Inspiration with the highest aim of religion" and quotes these words of Quenstedt (*Theol. Didactico-Polemica*, cap. IV, sect. II) as proving him a "mechanical inspirationist": "All and each of the things which are contained in the Sacred Scriptures . . . were not only committed to letters by divine, infallible assistance and direction but are to be regarded as received by the special suggestion, inspiration, and dictation of the Holy Spirit. For all things which were to be written were suggested by the Holy Spirit to the sacred writers in the very act of writing and were dictated to their intellect as if unto a pen (*quasi in calamus*), so that they might be written in these and no other circumstances, in this and no other mode or order." Lee adds: "For the present, I shall merely observe that, while I can by no means accept this system as correct or as consistent with the facts to be explained, it will be my object in the present discourses to establish in the broadest extent all that its supporters desire to maintain; namely, the infallible certainty, the indisputable authority, the perfect and entire truthfulness, of all parts and every part of Holy Scripture." (*The Inspiration of Holy Scripture*, pp. 33, 37.) B. Manly quotes this same statement of Quenstedt as proving that Quenstedt held "the theory of mechanical inspiration, or, as it has been termed, the dictation theory." Manly himself says: "Who said these words [Gal. 3:8]? God, personally. The manner of the quotation can only be explained on the principle that the Scripture is so identified, in all that it says, with God Himself, that what Scripture says, God says; and so a personal utterance of God and a saying of Scripture are simply equivalent." (*The*

What is all this about? In the first place, the moderns are fighting against a straw man. And as they unfold this particular grievance of theirs against Verbal Inspiration, we notice, in the second place, that they are waging war against Scripture.

The lusty strokes which the moderns deliver against "verbal, mechanical inspiration" hit a straw man. The advocates of Verbal Inspiration have not taught and do not teach that the holy writers, uttering the words of the Holy Spirit, were thereby deprived of their intelligence and consciousness. The moderns cannot produce a single statement by the dogmaticians of the early Church or of the seventeenth century to the effect that the Holy Ghost could not speak through the prophets without turning them into dead machines or putting them into a state of coma or forcing them to act as vacuous stenographers. All that we can find in these statements about Verbal Inspiration is to the effect that the holy writers wrote what was given them to write consciously and rationally, that they fully used the powers of their mind and their special gifts, that their hearts were filled with horror of the sins which their words denounced and with joy and wonderment at the grace of God which their pens described. Quenstedt is held up by the moderns as the *exemplum horribile* of the mechanical-inspiration aberration. Have they read Quenstedt through? Have they read pages 82 ff. of the offensive chapter in his *Theol. Didac.-Pol.*? There he repudiates the idea "as though the holy writers had written without, and contrary to, their will, without consciousness and unwillingly." No; "they wrote uncoerced, willingly, and knowingly; *sponte enim, volentes scientesque scripserunt*. . . . The holy writers were said to be *φερόμενοι, acti, moti, agitati a Spiritu Sancto*, by no means as though they were out of their mind . . . or as though they did not understand what they were to

Bible Doctrine of Inspiration, pp. 44 f., 130.) Quenstedt could not have used stronger language. One more example. We read in *The Luth. Church Quart.*, 1940, p. 353: "It is only fair to Dr. M. Reu to say . . . that he disclaims the doctrine of mechanical verbal inspiration. In his brochure *In the Interest of Lutheran Unity*, in the chapter 'What is Scripture?' he says: 'The mode (of inspiration) was a mystery and will remain a mystery for this life. It is always a mystery how the Spirit of God works on human personality.' (P. 65.) 'There is a theory of Verbal Inspiration which degrades the authors of the Biblical books to dead writing machines.' (P. 68.) But with that limitation he proceeds to claim that the Scriptures themselves demand verbal inspiration." The entire passage reads: ". . . dead writing machines, who without inner participation wrote down word for word what was dictated to them by the Spirit. We meet this doctrine in the Lutheran Church occasionally already during the sixteenth century, more frequently in the seventeenth century, although it can hardly be called the earmark of the presentation of all orthodox dogmaticians; later it is limited to popular writers, and today it is found only in some fundamentalist camps."

write.”²⁵⁷) Were the old Church Fathers “mechanical inspirationists”? “Epiphanius urges against Montanus ‘that whatsoever the prophets have said, they spake with understanding’; he refers to their ‘settled mind,’ their ‘self-possession,’ and their ‘not being carried away as if in ecstasy.’ So also Cyril of Jerusalem, alluding to this question, says of the true Spirit: ‘His coming is gentle; most light is His burden; beams of light and knowledge gleam forth before His coming.’” (W. Lee, *op.cit.*, p. 85.) And which one of the present-day verbal-inspirationists makes of the prophets and apostles vacuous stenographers or even senseless machines? Not A. L. Graebner: “The Bible was written by divine inspiration, inasmuch as the inspired penmen performed their work as the *personal organs* of God,” etc. (*Outlines of Doctrinal Theology*, p. 4.) Not F. Pieper: “The inspired authors were not dead or mechanical, but living instruments, endowed with intelligence and will, and employing a definite style, and using a peculiar mode of expression (*modus dicendi*).” (*What Is Christianity?* p. 242.) “God did not first kill or dehumanize Isaiah, David, and all the holy prophets in order either to speak or write His Word *through* (διὰ) them; but He carefully kept them alive and preserved them in their genuine human way of expressing themselves, in order that they might speak and write so as to be understood by men.” (*Chr. Dog.*, I, p. 277.) Not R. C. H. Lenski: “‘God-inspired’ means ‘breathed by God,’ the very word ‘breathed’ referring to His *Pneuma*. Is that mechanical? Peter says: ‘. . . borne along by the Holy *Pneuma*,’ like a vessel on its true course by the gentle wind. This is neither a theory nor something dead and mechanical. God made the mind and heart of man, and His Spirit knows how to guide them. He does not move them about like blocks, but fills them with light, guides them with light, guides them in word and thought.” (On 2 Tim. 3:16.) Not H. M’Intosh: Mechanical inspiration “was never taught in its usual sense by any intelligent upholder of the Bible claim. But while we disown this, we hold that the words of Scripture are *not merely* the words of man, but also the words of God — the Spirit’s inspired words, as well as the writer’s *spontaneous* words.” (*Is Christ Infallible and the Bible True?* p. 658.)²⁵⁸)

257) Presenting a detailed examination of Quenstedt’s position, the article in the *Theol. Quart.* (“‘Mechanical Inspiration’ the Stumbling-Block . . .”) states: “There is not a single place to which his modern critics can point that would prove that Quenstedt regarded the inspired penmen of God as ‘impassive instruments,’ ‘machines,’ ‘dehumanized or superhuman humans.’ This is a turn which Quenstedt’s critics have given to Quenstedt’s thought. This thought Quenstedt himself declines.”

258) A few more statements might prove welcome. They will convince the honest opponent that the upholders of Verbal Inspiration do not teach a mechanical inspiration. A. Hoenecke: “The passages just mentioned (1 Tim. 5:23 and 2 Tim. 4:13) prove that the apostles were not

We have not read every book and article and remark that was written by a verbal-inspirationist. But as far as we have read, we have not found a single statement to the effect that divine inspiration put the holy writers into a state of coma. Neither did Dr. W. T. Riviere ever find such a statement. He writes: "Fundamentalists and Bible-believers are accused of holding what may be called a Typewriter Theory. . . . I do not recall ever hearing

dead machines under inspiration, that the Holy Ghost did not, in the process of inspiration, ignore the personal and brotherly relationship of the holy writers but operated with it in the inspirational act." (*Ev.-Luth. Dog.*, I, p. 350.) G. Stoeckhardt: "Das Diktieren des Heiligen Geistes war kein mechanisches Vorsprechen, dem ein mechanisches Nachschreiben zur Seite gegangen waere. The holy men of God were not sleeping or dreaming as they spoke and wrote, moved by the Holy Ghost. The powers of their soul, their will, and intellect were active. It was a real speaking and writing. And that is an intellectual activity of rational beings. . . . The Holy Ghost put this entire apparatus, this human research, meditation, study, and composing into action, applied it to His purpose, made it the medium of His activity, His speaking. The prophets and apostles themselves, these living persons with their will and thoughts, their searching and composing, were pens, *calami*, of the Holy Ghost. . . . While they were searching, meditating, writing, the Holy Ghost supplied His heavenly wisdom, His eternal, divine thought, and also the right words; He gave them the words *gleichsam unter der Hand*. That is what the fathers described with the phrase *suggestio rerum et verborum*. . . . Thus the Holy Ghost in no way did violence to the will and thought of His human organs. He swayed and actuated their will and their thinking, but *θεοκρατῶς*; *suaviter, leniter*, as the fathers expressed it, *gleichsam unvermerkt, wie unter der Hand*. He poured His divine wisdom, spiritual thought, spiritual words into their mind and heart. The mind of the holy authors moved freely, according to its natural bent; freely it expressed itself in the sacred writings. At the same time it was altogether swayed and controlled by the Holy Ghost. What the mind, the mouth, the pen, of the prophets and apostles produced was not their own, not human wisdom and human words, but from beginning to end it was of the Holy Ghost. From the first conception of the thought to its finished expression it was all the product of the Spirit of God." (*Lehre und Wehre*, 1886, p. 282 f.) *The Lutheran Teacher*, Feb. 13, 1938 (Norwegian Lutheran Church): "One of the tenets of our Church is belief in the verbal inspiration of the Bible. . . . Now, if God really did not guide these men in the choice of words but left this matter to the discretion of the writers, we could never feel free from the suspicion that these fallible human beings might have erred in the selection of their phraseology. Yet, on the other hand, God did not dictate to a dictaphone, which is a machine for reproduction void of all personality. The holy writers were not mere machines. . . . They knew what they were writing, though it might be true that they did not at all times realize to the full the deep significance of all they said. . . . They found expression for their personality in their own individual habits of style. . . ." Let us hear a few representatives of the Reformed Churches. J. Bloore: "In those who wrote the Bible, the emotions of the soul, the energies of the spirit, and even the infirmities of the body are made use of under the control of the divine Spirit, always, of course, in a manner according to the purpose in view. The individuality, peculiarity, and distinctive qualities of these writers find expression in their work, so that the Book is one of ever-living interest from the human side, while from the divine it proves itself in every part to be 'the word of God, living, active, and sharper . . .' (Heb. 4:12, 13). . . . This is not mere dictation — far from it, for all the powers of the mind and heart

this theory advocated, but something of the sort is often attributed to conservatives. It makes a nice target for ridicule." (*Bibliotheca Sacra*, July, 1936, p. 298.) And even if the moderns could dig up such a statement, that would not justify them in characterizing the old doctrine of verbal inspiration as "the mechanical theory of inspiration," in charging Luther and Quenstedt, Pieper and Warfield, with making the holy writers vacuous stenographers. "It ought to be unnecessary," says B. B. Warfield, "to protest again against the habit of representing the advocates of Verbal Inspiration as teaching that the mode of inspiration was by dictation." (*Revelation and Inspiration*, p. 173.) Warfield utters his protest in connection with his statement: "The Church has always recognized that the Spirit's superintendence extends to the choice of the words by the human authors (verbal inspiration). It ought to be unnecessary. . . ." We protest against the insinuation that Quenstedt and Luther, Warfield and Pieper, ever intimated that the Holy Spirit dictated to Moses and Paul as to vacuous stenographers.

We protest against it in the name of reason. Reasonable men refrain from "fighting against windmills." — We are back on our old subject. It seems that in every phase of their attack on Verbal Inspiration the moderns are doomed to display a lack of acumen. — There is no sense in taking the old dogmaticians to task for something they never said. There is no profit in setting

of the instrument are engaged and wrought upon so that a divine impress is left upon the whole man." (*Alternative Views of the Bible*, pp. 148, 150.) *Bibliotheca Sacra*, Jan., 1941, p. 72: "It is of interest to compare Peter's declarations here (1 Pet. 1:10, 12) with his claim in the second epistle (2 Pet. 1:20, 21) that men spake from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit. Here the passivity of the prophets seems to be emphasized, and yet in the first epistle we are introduced to the most intense kind of mental activity. There is no conflict, provided we understand that the reflection of the prophets followed the revelation of the Spirit to them and did not enter into the prophetic message. . . . Hence the prophets, though passive in the sense that they did not contribute the message apart from the Spirit's moving, yet were so far from being mechanical instruments that they had all their powers of thought aroused and taxed by the disclosures granted to them." L. Boettner: "Instead of reducing the writers to the level of machines or typewriters, we have insisted that, while they wrote or spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit, they nevertheless remained thinking, willing, self-conscious beings whose peculiar styles and mannerisms are clearly traceable in their writings. . . . Hence we see that the Christian doctrine of inspiration is not the mechanical lifeless process which unfriendly critics have often represented it to be. Rather it calls the whole personality of the prophet into action, giving full play to his own literary style and mannerisms, taking into consideration the preparation given the prophet in order that he might deliver a particular kind of message, and allowing for the use of other documents or sources of information as they were needed. If these facts were kept more clearly in mind, the doctrine of inspiration would not be so summarily set aside nor so unreasonably attacked by otherwise cautious and reverent scholars." (*The Insp. of the H. Scr.*, pp. 37, 44.)

up a straw man and then knocking him down.²⁵⁹⁾ Philippi is right in calling these tactics “senseless ridicule” and Boettner in calling it an “unreasonable attack.” The attack springs from ignorance. “When modern theologians declare that our orthodox dogmaticians had the conception of a purely mechanical inspiration, this must be condemned as outright fiction or else lack of acquaintance with the old dogmaticians.” Thus Pieper (*What Is Christianity?* p. 242.) It is one of the “groups of confusions and misconceptions, misrepresentations, and caricature which . . . have confused the issues.” Thus M’Intosh (*op. cit.*, pp. 8, 312). It is a sorry spectacle. M. S. Terry attacks the dogmaticians for teaching that the holy writers spoke “with the mantic frenzy of sibyls and soothsayers,” and that, when Jeremiah dictated to Baruch, “his normal intellectual activity was temporarily arrested or neutralized by divine power.” (See *Theol. Quart.*, 1913, p. 2.) Terry is fighting a bogey. S. Bulgakoff enters the fray: “I assume that no one can any longer, in our time, advocate the theory of a mechanical inspiration of sacred books. This theory either regards the writers as passive instruments in God’s hands or interprets the process of writing as dictation from the Holy Spirit.” And he asseverates: “Inspiration is not a question of *deus ex machina*. It is not an act of God which coerces man and to which he is subjected apart from his own will.” (In *Revelation*, by Baillie and Martin, p. 153.) Bulgakoff is wrestling with a specter which he himself created. There is no point in A. H. Strong’s quoting Locke: “When God made the prophet, he did not unmake the man.” (*Op. cit.*, p. 103.) Professor Ladd is wasting his energy when he declares: “Nor is man made most fit for this office when rendered passive like a pen to write, or a tablet on which to write, the dictated message from God.” (*What Is Scripture?* p. 430.) What do you think, in the light of what the dogmaticians really taught and actually did not teach, of W. Elert’s strong language: “Wenn manche Dogmatiker . . .

259) J. G. Machen: “This doctrine of ‘plenary inspiration’ has been made the subject of persistent misrepresentation. Its opponents speak of it as though it involved a mechanical theory of the activity of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit, it is said, is represented in this doctrine as dictating the Bible to writers who were really little more than stenographers. But of course all such caricatures are without basis in fact, and it is rather surprising that intelligent men should be so blinded by prejudice about this matter as not even to examine for themselves the perfectly accessible treatises in which the doctrine of plenary inspiration is set forth. It is usually considered good practice to examine a thing for one’s self before echoing the vulgar ridicule of it. But in connection with the Bible such scholarly restraints are somehow regarded as out of place. It is so much easier to content one’s self with a few opprobrious adjectives, such as ‘mechanical,’ or the like. Why engage in serious criticism when the people prefer ridicule? Why attack a real opponent when it is easier to knock down a man of straw?” (*Christianity and Liberalism*, p. 73.)

folgerten, dass der schreibende Mensch auch an der Bildung des Wortlautes keinen eigenen Anteil mehr habe, so grenzt das an Gotteslästerung" (*Der Christliche Glaube*, p. 209.)? It is nothing less than bathos when Dr. Flack exclaims: "Is not the inspiration of Scripture too high and holy a reality to be defined in terms of stenography? Does one exalt the Word of God by dehumanizing it?"

Again, it seems such a waste of paper when the moderns pen statements like these: "This is one of the chief reasons why the doctrine of verbal inspiration has been discarded as incapable of proof and *incompatible with the evident fact*. If the divine mind dictated to the writers the substance and form of the writings, there could not be the individuality that characterizes these documents. There is a striking unity of purpose disclosed in them; but their style, vocabulary, and point of view are as various as their names." (H. L. Willett, *The Bible Through the Centuries*, p. 284.) The facts disprove a mechanical inspiration! Dr. E. H. Delk: "That the oracular and dictation theory of writing has disappeared . . . goes almost without saying. The note of individualism is so strong in the synoptic writers that no theory of verbal inspiration is longer tenable." (*Luth. Quart.*, 1912, p. 568.) F. Buechsel: "Selbstverstaendlich kam die alte Inspirationslehre in Widerspruch zu den einfachsten Tatsachen in den Schriften der Bibel. Die individuellen Eigentuemlichkeiten, die diese Schriften stilistisch zeigten," etc. (*Die Offenbarung Gottes*, p. 113.) Similar statements have been set down above. *But the verbal-inspirationists, the so-called "mechanical-inspirationists," have been making the same statements.* Find examples above. We, too, have discovered these facts and cheerfully accept them. Why should the moderns waste paper by repeating what the dogmaticians have long ago set down? Every statement of theirs dealing with the difference of style and the individuality of the writers can be matched with one by Pieper and Hoenecke and Warfield. The moderns are beating the air. They are proving to us what none of us denies. Have done with this nonsense.

The moderns will reply to this that we are inconsistent; that, if we concede the difference in style, etc., and with them reject mechanical inspiration, we shall have to reject verbal inspiration, too. And here lies the root of the trouble. The moderns will admit that Quenstedt and Warfield and Pieper never said, in so many words, that the holy writers became dead machines and vacuous stenographers. But they insist that anyone who declares that every word written by the apostles was given them by the Holy Ghost to write necessarily teaches a mechanical inspiration: verbal inspiration *cannot but be* mechanical inspiration. This

objection reveals the ignorance on the part of the moderns of an essential feature of inspiration: its miraculous nature. We have treated of this matter in the sixth article of this series, under Assertion No. 9. We say with Luther: "Die Heilige Schrift ist nicht auf Erden gewachsen." (VII:2095.) Every miracle presents a mystery, and we are ready to admit that we cannot solve the mystery how the holy writers wrote exactly what the Holy Spirit gave them to write and still wrote with perfect freedom. We are not presumptuous enough to deny either one of these revealed truths because we are unable to solve the psychological difficulty that confronts us here. Will you say that it was impossible for God to make Paul His mouthpiece without destroying the personality and freedom of the apostle? "It is in vain," says Charles Hodge, "to profess to hold the common doctrine of Theism and yet assert that God cannot control rational creatures without turning them into machines." (*Syst. Theology*, I, p. 169.) Do not quote to us the laws of psychology — "the *unpsychological* and mechanical theories of inspiration and unhistorical view of verbal inerrancy" (Professor Kantonen). The handbooks of psychology certainly do not contain a section explaining the mystery of Verbal Inspiration. But God is not bound by our psychological wisdom.²⁶⁰ And it is not for us to form judgments on this matter on the basis of our very limited knowledge of psychology; the less so, as we do not know from personal experience what inspiration is. "We who have never ourselves experienced this act of the Spirit cannot penetrate the mystery of it; we doubt whether the holy writers themselves did." (Lenski, on 2 Tim. 3:16.) At any rate,

260) F. Bettex: "But just here we are amused at those weak-minded critics who, with hackneyed phrases, talk so glibly about 'mechanical instruments' and 'mere verbal dictation.' Does, then, a self-revelation of the Almighty and a making known of His counsels, a gracious act which exalts the human agent to be a co-worker with Jehovah, annihilate personal freedom? Or does it not rather enlarge that freedom and lift it up to a higher and more joyous activity? Am I, then, a 'mechanical instrument' when with deep devotion and with enthusiasm I repeat after Christ, word for word, the prayer which He taught His disciples? . . ." (*The Fundamentals*, IV, p. 77.) H. M'Intosh: "Psychological difficulties. . . . A similar presumptuous and inane objection is that such a control or influence over men's minds as would secure the truth and divine authority of the Bible is inconsistent with the mental freedom of man — as if God the Holy Ghost could not so act on the human mind as to ensure this without violating its free action — and must be confined within the narrow grooves of the oracular dictates of such audacious but unveracious speculation." (*Op. cit.*, p. 623.) Der Deutsche Ev.-Luth. Schulverein: "Wir halten fest an dem Wunder der Inspiration, und das ist, was die modernen positiven Theologen 'mechanisch' schelten. . . . Wir lehnen jede Erklärung des Vorgangs der Inspiration ab. . . . Gegen das Zeugnis Jesu und seiner Apostel ist uns die Gelehrsamkeit der gelehrtesten Professoren und Doktoren lauter Wind." (See *Lehre und Wehre*, 1909, p. 234.)

they gave us no explanation of it. And here are men who are not afraid to declare *ex cathedra*: Verbal Inspiration must be mechanical inspiration! — If their reasoning is correct, then pity the blessed in heaven, who are incapable of thinking any but God's thoughts and cannot but speak in God's own words; they have lost their personal freedom! We thank God that He knows how to work in men in ways that are beyond the laws of common psychology. We thank Him that He converted us by His gracious power. We contributed nothing of our own towards our conversion. We were *pure passivi*. And yet we were not coerced. In the moment that faith was created in us we gave joyous consent. We were converted willingly — God made us willing.²⁶¹ We do not find it impossible to accept the teaching of Scripture that God spoke through the prophets and apostles, made them His mouth-pieces, without making them insensible machines.

The moderns keep harping on the term "dictation." Did not the dogmatists state that the Holy Spirit "dictated" the contents and words of Holy Scripture to the holy writers? And is not "dictation" a mechanical affair? We have promised (footnote 172) to shed some light on this plaguing term and now tell the moderns that they are misquoting the fathers. Oh, yes, the fathers employed the word "dictation" and called the holy writers "amanuenses." B. Mentzer actually wrote: *Tanta est S. Scripturae auctoritas, quanta est DICTANTIS Spiritus Sancti, cuius illi fuerunt AMANUENSES.*" But are the moderns not acquainted with the common law of all language that where metaphors are employed the point of comparison must be scrupulously observed lest the writer be made to utter nonsense? No man dreams of saying that when Jesus called Herod a fox He had the idea that Herod was a four-footed animal. Herod was a fox *in a certain respect*. It is the cheapest kind of ridicule to make the fathers who compared the holy writers to stenographers *in a certain respect* say that the holy writers were vacuous stenographers. Use common sense! When the fathers call the apostles amanuenses, they give expression to the truth that they spoke and wrote not by their own right, in their own wisdom, but by the authority of God. The words of John 3:16 are so truly the very words of the Holy Ghost as

²⁶¹ Quoting some more from Stoeckhardt (*Lehre und Wehre*, 1886, p. 283): "Verbal Inspiration presents an incomprehensible mystery, which the human mind cannot elucidate. . . . We may perhaps find an analogy in the miracle of conversion. The conversion of the sinner is *in solidum* the work of the Holy Spirit; not the least part of it is effected by man's own powers. Still conversion is not effected by way of coercion; it does not change man mechanically; but it is a mysterious, inscrutable working of God on the will, the mind of man, which so influences his will and mind that he now wills, and gladly wills, what is God's will and thinks that which is godly."

though He had dictated them into the pen of St. John, as though we heard the Holy Ghost proclaim them today from heaven in His own majestic voice. The fathers never intended to convey the thought that the holy writers were lifeless machines. Again and again they disavow such ideas. G. P. Mains got the right idea when he used the phrase "as though God dictated every word," but falsified the idea of the fathers when he added: "using the human writer only as an automaton." The moderns are quoting the dogmaticians correctly as far as the bare word "dictation" is concerned, but are misquoting as far as the context is concerned. In the words of Dr. Pieper: "God used the holy writers as His *organs*, or *tools*, in order to transmit His Word, fixed in writing, to men. In order to express this relation between the Holy Ghost and the human writers, the Church Fathers as well as the old Lutheran dogmaticians call the holy writers *amanuenses*, *notarii*, *manus*, *calami*, secretaries, notaries, hands, pens, of the Holy Spirit. It is a well-known fact that these expressions are very generally derided by modern theologians. But Philippi justly calls this 'senseless ridicule.' The expressions are altogether Scriptural if only the *point of comparison* (*tertium comparationis*) is not lost sight of, namely, the *mere instrumentality*. The expressions state neither more nor less than the fact that the holy writers did not write their own word but τὰ λόγια τοῦ θεοῦ, the Word of God, and that, as we have seen, is the authoritative judgment of Christ and of His apostles. These expressions therefore should not be made the butt of ridicule; people ought to realize that they are in conformity with Scripture." (*Op. cit.*, I, p. 276.) The moderns are fighting a straw man.²⁶²⁾

262) Dr. Stoeckhardt: "Ganz sachgemaess haben daher die alten Lehrer der Kirche diese Taetigkeit des Heiligen Geistes ein Diktieren und Propheten und Apostel Haende, Handlanger, Notare, Griffel (*manus*, *amanuenses*, *notarii*, *actuarii*, *calami*) des Geistes Gottes genannt. Es ist Unverstand und boeser Wille, wenn man deshalb den Alten vorwirft, dass sie eine ganz aeusserliche, mechanische Vorstellung von der Inspiration gehabt haetten. Das *tertium comparationis* liegt auf der Hand. Man wollte mit jenen Vergleichen nur recht stark hervorheben, dass Propheten und Apostel hier dem Geist Gottes nur als Organe gedient haben, um seine Gedanken den Menschen kundzutun, dass sie in keiner Weise Mithelfer waren, dass sie alles, was sie geschrieben, auch alle Worte und Ausdruecke empfangen, nichts aus sich selbst herausgenommen haben. . . . Ihr ganzes Herz war bei dem, was sie schrieben. Hieronymus schon bezeugt: 'Neque vero prophetae in ecstasi locuti sunt, ut nescirent quod loquerentur.' Die Propheten haben, wie er weiter ausfuehrt, ihres Amtes nicht gewartet 'instar brutorum animalium.' Der Geist hat ihnen nicht nur das aeusserere Hoeren ('quod in auribus resonat'), sondern auch das feinere geistliche Gehoer ('secretiorem auditum') gegeben, kraft dessen sie nicht nur die Rinde, sondern auch das Mark zu erfassen vermochten." (*Lehre und Wehre*, 1892, p. 327 f.) — We cannot permit men to charge those who use the term "dictation" with being "mechanical-inspirationists." Dr. R. Watts upheld Verbal Inspiration in

The terms "dictation," "amanuensis," "mouthpiece," are not bad, said Pieper. They express the Scripture truth that God spoke by, *through*, διὰ τοῦ προφήτου, Matt. 1:22; διὰ στόματος Δαβὶδ, *by the mouth* of David, Acts 1:16. The moderns should not blacklist the term "mouthpiece," seeing that the Lord said: "My words which I have put in thy mouth," Is. 59:21. David liked the term: "The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and His Word was in my tongue," 2 Sam. 23:2. Luther liked it: "Ein Prophet wird genannt . . . , dem der Heilige Geist das Wort in den Mund legt." (III:785.) "Darum sind diese Worte Davids auch des Heiligen Geistes, die er durch seine Zunge redet." (III:1891.) "Pen" is not a bad word. Ps. 42:1: "My tongue is the pen of a ready writer."²⁶³ Then read Rev. 2:1 ff. and Lenski's comment: "Jesus dictates the letters; John takes the dictation. . . . Despite those who taboo the word, the Lord here *dictated* those seven letters to John." St. John did not protest against serving as an amanuensis in a somewhat literal sense. And all the apostles and prophets were glad to serve as amanuenses in the higher sense in which the fathers use the term.

These terms are very good terms. They express the all-important truth that the holy writers were not the real authors of the Sacred Writings, but that these Sacred Writings are throughout the very Word of God. Blessed is he who will say with Luther: "The Holy Scriptures are written *by* the Holy Ghost" (IX:1770); "Diese Worte David's sind des Heiligen Geistes Worte." And this truth, that what was spoken διὰ τοῦ προφήτου, through the prophet, was spoken ὑπὸ κυρίου, *by* the Lord (Matt. 1:22), is strongly and strikingly expressed in the good old terms "dictation," "mouthpiece." And so we say: "The Christian minister of the right sort, who simply repeats what he hears Scripture saying, will instruct his congregation on the question: Given by inspiration of God — what does that mean? about as follows: That does not mean that

his book *The Rule of Faith and the Doctrine of Inspiration*. Dr. Pieper praised this book highly, but was constrained to say: "Dr. Watts takes exception to the use of the term 'dictation.' To be sure, you can force the metaphor and make it express preposterous notions. But the old *Lutheran* theologians, for example, who used this term, did not conceive of inspiration as given 'by an external audible utterance.'" (*Lehre und Wehre*, 1886, p. 233.) So, when Hoenecke, for instance, writes: "We can compare the writers with various instruments. Harp and flute have different tones; yet he who can play both instruments can perfectly produce through both the same melody. The holy writers are animated, living harps and flutes," etc. (*op. cit.* I, p. 346), do not rush to the conclusion that that is "mechanical inspiration" — something which Hoenecke repudiates. See his statement quoted above.

263) Prof. J. P. Meyer: "Wer darf unseren Dogmatikern den Vorwurf machen, dass sie eine mechanische Auffassung der Inspiration verrieten, weil sie in Anlehnung an den Ausdruck des 45. Psalms die heiligen Schreiber als 'Griffel' des Heiligen Geistes bezeichnen, die ein 'Diktat' des Heiligen Geistes niederschrieben?" (*Theol. Quartalschrift*, 1931, p. 189.) See also P. E. Kretzmann, *The Foundations Must Stand*, p. 24.

God dictated the Bible to men after the fashion of the teacher who dictates something to little boys and girls or that God called out these words and the holy writers wrote them out thoughtlessly. But it does mean that God really inspired all the words of Scripture, infused them into the minds of the holy writers, gave them into their heart and pen, spoke and pronounced to them inwardly what they should write and did write. Just look at the text! It is written: 'All Scripture given by inspiration of God.' Any child can understand these words and we must understand them to mean what they say." (Dr. Stoeckhardt, quoted in *Freikirche*, Oct. 22, 1939; *Lutheraner*, 1941, p. 325.)

The moderns are with us when we reject mechanical inspiration. They are glad to hear that we disavow it. They may be glad to learn that they were mistaken in ascribing such a teaching to the fathers. Is, then, the issue settled? It should be. Theologians should not keep on quarreling after the misunderstanding has been cleared up. But we notice that the moderns are not yet satisfied. They will not let the matter rest with our disavowal of mechanical inspiration. They heartily subscribe to the first part of Dr. Stoeckhardt's statement. But the second part of it raises their ire. We are as far apart as ever. The fact is that the point at issue is not so much the question of mechanical inspiration but rather the question of the truth of Scripture. Their real grievance is that the old dogmatists taught the verbal inspiration and absolute inerrancy of Scripture. Our grievance against them is not their fight against the straw man — we could easily forgive and forget that — but their fight against Scripture. That is a serious charge. We submit the proof for it under three heads.

1) The fight against the "mechanical theory of inspiration" is a fight against the truthfulness of Scripture in that it denies one of the chief teachings of Scripture, the doctrine of Verbal Inspiration. You will remember that the moderns identify verbal inspiration and mechanical inspiration. Recall Deissmann's statement: "This dogma of verbal inspiration of every letter of the New Testament, which rightly can be called mechanical inspiration."²⁶⁴⁾

264) Sanday: "Mechanical and verbal inspiration of the Bible." Alleman: "The doctrine of verbal inspiration . . . the old heathen conception . . . a man became but a mouthpiece of the deity." Add this, by Dr. J. A. W. Haas: "There has been a misinterpretation of the following words in 1 Cor. 2:13: 'Words which the Holy Ghost teacheth.' The term 'words' is taken to mean every single word down to the minutest 'and.' . . . It was unfortunate that our early dogmatists developed a *mechanical, verbalistic* theory of inspiration of the Word. . . . Our early theologians were really Calvinistic in their verbalistic conception. . . . It is a mere fiction to uphold the infallibility in every statement and not merely in the essentials of faith." (*The Luth. Church Quart.*, 1937, p. 280 f.)

Recall the claim of the moderns that verbal inspiration *cannot but be mechanical*. But Scripture teaches Verbal Inspiration, and we raise the charge against the moderns that they are in direct opposition to Scripture when they stigmatize the teaching of the old dogmatists as un-Lutheran and unchristian, as mechanical, they are ridiculing the Word of God. Let Dr. Reu elaborate this. "During the last years a hot pursuit was started against this theory [the mechanical theory] in some quarters of our Church. . . . Alas, not seldom this pursuit *aims at Verbal Inspiration* in every form, and thus the combat becomes a fight against the testimony of Scripture concerning itself. We do not want to emphasize the fact that without Verbal Inspiration we lack every guarantee that the divine content is expressed in Scripture correctly and without abbreviations; we rather stress the fact that Scripture itself demands it. It is demanded by the form of the quotations 'The Holy Spirit speaks,' 'God says'; furthermore, it follows from the fact that Jesus as well as Paul draw important conclusions from the wording of Old Testament passages, a few times even from a single word, as *elohim* in Ps. 82:6 or *σπέρμα* in the story of Abraham; and in particular does it follow from 1 Cor. 2:12, 13: 'Of these we also speak — not in words which man's wisdom teaches us, but in those which the Spirit teaches — interpreting spiritual (things) by spiritual (words).' . . . Even the formation of the word was taught by the Spirit." (*In the Interest of Luth. Unity*, p. 68 f.) Scripture clearly teaches Verbal Inspiration, and the moderns, denouncing that as mechanical, are in the open, fighting not a straw man but Scripture.²⁶⁵⁾

265) There are those among the moderns who admit that Scripture teaches Verbal Inspiration but insist that Scripture is wrong on this point. Warfield writes: "Among untrammelled students of the Bible it is practically a matter of common consent that the writers of the New Testament looked upon what they called 'Scripture' as divinely safeguarded in even its verbal expression and as divinely trustworthy in all its parts, in all its elements, and in all its affirmations of whatever kind. . . . It is also the judgment of all those who can bring themselves to refuse a doctrine which they yet perceive to be a Biblical doctrine. . . . Let us pause long enough to allow Hermann Schultz, surely a fair example of the 'advanced' school, to tell us what is the conclusion in this matter of the strictest and coldest exegetical science. 'The Book of the Law,' he tells us, 'seemed already to the later poets of the Old Testament the "Word of God." For the men of the New Testament, the Holy Scriptures of their people are already God's Word in which God Himself speaks.' This view, which looked upon the Scriptural books as verbally inspired, he adds, was the ruling one in the time of Christ, was shared by all the New Testament men, and by Christ Himself." (*Op. cit.*, p. 61 f.) "Thus, for instance — to confine our examples to a few of those who are not able personally to accept the doctrine of the New Testament writers — Archdeacon Farrar is able to admit that Paul 'shared, doubtless, in the views of the later Jewish schools on the nature of inspiration. These views . . . made the words of Scripture coextensive and identical with

2) The moderns repudiate "mechanical" inspiration, by which they mean verbal inspiration, because of the alleged errors in the Bible. Convinced that the Bible teems with imperfections, mistakes, ethical aberrations, they refuse to teach that the Holy Ghost is the real Author of the whole Bible and offer the substitutes "dynamical inspiration," "concept inspiration," and the like, which leave room for these "errors." Professor Kantonen would have us "abandon the unpsychological and mechanical theories of inspiration and unhistorical views of verbal inerrancy." He believes that "the Bible has the same limitations that bound any historical process. . . . Or, as one of the Biblical writers themselves, Paul, said: 'We have this treasure in earthen vessels.' . . . The scientific opinions which the Biblical writers shared with their contemporaries. . . . The Bible is a magnificent cathedral, . . . well preserved, although today we may perhaps detect here and there a crack in the walls or a loose brick." (*The Message of the Church, etc.*, p. 103 f.) The thesis is that, since Scripture contains mistakes, it cannot have been mechanically (verbally) inspired. M. Dods: "If we should find on examination that much of what is human — discrepancies or inaccuracies — enters into the Bible, we must expand our theory to include this" and therefore reject "that which has been known as the mechanical or dictation theory" (*op. cit.*, p. 106 f.). W. Sanday: "The writers and teachers of the early church doubtless held a high view of it (Inspiration), but it was not by any means a mechanical view. They would not have hesitated to admit what we might call slips of the pen. Take, for instance, Matt. 27:9, where a saying which really belongs to Zechariah is attributed to Jeremiah." (*Op. cit.*, p. 18.) Dr. G. Drach: "The theory of a mechanical verbal inspiration simply falls to pieces. . . . This theory holds that

the words of God.' . . . The writer of an odd and sufficiently free Scotch book published a few years ago (James Stuart) formulates his conclusion in the words: "There is no doubt that the author of Hebrews, in common with the other New Testament writers, regards the whole Old Testament as having been dictated by the Holy Ghost, or, as we should say, plenary and, as it were, mechanically inspired." (*Op. cit.*, p. 175 f.) This is what actually happens: commenting on Jer. 1:9 ("I have put My words in thy mouth") C. H. Dodd declares: "That this is direct imaginative experience does not admit of question. We may readily suppose that the words and the touch on the lips were actual hallucinations." (*The Authority of the Bible*, p. 79.) Most moderns will not go that far. They prefer to say with *Folkebladet*: "It is an impossibility that the prophets and apostles could have intended that their words should be considered as a dictation by the Holy Spirit" (dictation = verbal inspiration). These men say that Jeremiah and Paul did not mean "verbal" inspiration. But that does not alter the fact that they refuse to accept a clear teaching of Scripture. They will not, indeed, charge the holy writers with having hallucinations. But they will have to charge them with using misleading language. They will have to say that, when Paul declared that all the words of Scripture are inspired, he did not mean what he said.

the prophets and apostles were inspired . . . in all that they wrote. . . . So we must settle on a theory of inspiration which while it avoids mechanical verbal inspiration . . . does not overexalt the apostles as infallible mouthpieces all the time. . . . We repudiate the absolute infallibility of the apostles and others who wrote the Sacred Scriptures." (*The Luth. Church Quart.*, 1936, pp. 247 to 251.)²⁶⁶

266) A few more statements to show that what is back of the fight against "mechanical" inspiration is the conviction that the Bible is an imperfect book. Dr. A. J. Traver: "By its very nature, inspiration is spiritual. There can be nothing mechanical about it. God did not dictate to the writers of the Bible as to a stenographer. . . . Inspiration includes only the knowledge essential for knowing God and His plan for man. . . . Inspiration of the kind necessary for the knowledge of God is not necessary for scientific knowledge." (*The Lutheran*, Jan. 23, 1936.) Since in Dr. Traver's opinion the Bible made several false scientific statements, he naturally refuses to say that these were direct statements of the Holy Spirit. And so the moderns operate with the dynamical theory of inspiration, which nicely takes care of the errors. "Die Schrift verdankt ihre Entstehung zwei Faktoren, einerseits der freien goettlichen Selbstbetaetigung. . . . andererseits der freien menschlichen Selbstbetaetigung gegenueber der goettlichen Offenbarung. . . . Die goettliche Selbstbetaetigung bestimmt die menschlichen Organe zur Selbsttaetigkeit und verklaert sie zu freien Organen des goettlichen Geistes. Auf Grund solchen Zusammenwirkens des goettlichen und menschlichen Geistes nennen wir die Heilige Schrift das gottmenschliche Wort. . . . Wir bemerken nur noch (4), dass eine *Irrtumsfaehigkeit* der Schrift in bezug auf solche Dinge zuzugeben ist, was entweder gar nicht in das Gebiet der Heilsgeschichte faellt oder als ganz unwesentlich die Substanz der Heilsgeschichte in keiner Weise beruehrt." (*Zoecklers Handbuch der Theol. Wiss.*, I, p. 747 f.) Similarly Luthardt-Jelkes *Kompendium der Dogmatik*, p. 111, quotes Quenstedt's statements "*Nulla falsitas, nullus vel minimus error, sive in rebus, sive in verbis*" and comments: "Dass diese Saetze viel zu weit greifen, liegt auf der Hand. . . . Dieser Fehler besteht darin, dass das Verhaeltnis des Heiligen Geistes zur Schrift nicht durch die *eigene geistige Aktivitaet* der biblischen Schriftsteller, sondern nur aeusserlich durch die Hand der Schreibenden vermittelt gedacht ist." The mistakes are there — you must charge them to the self-activity of the holy writers — and so you will have to abandon Verbal Inspiration. Quoting a number of similar statements, one, for instance, by William Adams Brown, who protests against "making the Bible the result of immediate divine dictation," the *Theol. Quart.*, 1914, p. 77, states: "The plenary, or verbal, inspiration is denounced as 'mechanical inspiration' for this additional reason that such an inspiration would make the inspired penmen inerrant." The moderns have the idea that, if the dogmaticians had only known about these errors in the Bible, they would not have taught verbal (mechanical) inspiration. Dr. J. A. W. Haas puts it this way: "It was unfortunate that our early dogmaticians developed a mechanical verbalistic theory of inspiration of the Word. . . . Out of the minute verbalistic conception grows the problem of the infallibility of the Word. Extreme verbalism demands . . . an original perfect text for all the books of the Bible. . . . The whole idea of a completely infallible Word in every historical and geographical detail is due to the position which John Gerhard took in his *Confessio Catholica*." (*The Luth. Church Quart.*, 1937, p. 280 f.) Dr. Joseph Stump: "The seventeenth-century dogmaticians of the Church, impelled by a laudable desire to maintain the supreme authority of the Bible, formulated a very

Every blow which the moderns aim at the “mechanical, verbalistic inspiration,” repudiating it because of the alleged errors in the Bible, hits Holy Scripture. They are fighting a straw man inasmuch as Verbal Inspiration is not mechanical; but inasmuch as they identify the two concepts, they are really engaged in a warfare against Scripture. The reason they give for their inability to accept Verbal Inspiration is a terrible indictment of the Word of God. They are saying that the Bible is not true in every respect. Study the following pronouncement by the editor of *The Christian Century*, March 30, 1938, and ask yourselves whether he is serving the cause of the Bible. “The writers of the Bible were men like ourselves — like E. St. Jones and Kagawa, if you wish. . . . I cannot imagine what added authority the Bible would have if it were conceived as having been dictated by God to a stenographer. Its value would be no more precious. Its meaning would be no more clear. Its truth would be no more authoritative. Indeed, I fear it would subtract from its authority if God had so dictated it, for *I would be at a loss to account for the obvious errors in it.*” I should not care to have a friend who, when men calumniate me, takes it for granted that I am guilty and then tries to find excuses for me. When enemies of the Bible posed the question: “*Hat nicht das Neue Testament neben der reinen Lehre Jesu manches stoerende Beiwerk?*” the Evangelische Oberkirchenrat in Stuttgart hemmed and hawed and finally said: “*Die Evangelische Kirche betrachtet die Bibel als Gottes Wort; nicht im Sinne einer mechanischen Verbalinspiration, sondern als das in Menschenwort gekleidete Zeugnis Gottes von seinem Wesen und Walten.*” Yes, it contains “some incongruous trappings,” but that does not hurt the chief contents of it, etc. — The Bible deserves better apologists, better friends. God protect the Bible against its friends who declare: “Christian faith affirms the presence of both the divine element and the human factor in inspiration. We have the heavenly treasure in earthen vessels. ‘God used men — not machines.’ . . . ‘Discrepancies do exist. Matt. 27:9 quotes Zechariah, but credits Jeremiah with the words. There seems to be a disagreement in the Synoptists on the number of times the cock crew, etc.’ (Dr. C. J. Sodergren.) . . . The human element may also be recognized as we observe the fact that sometimes the strong feeling of the writer blinds him to qualities of purity and mercy. . . . In these passages (Ps. 69:24; 58:6, 10; 109:8, 9, 10;

definite theory of inspiration. The sacred writers were regarded as mere amanuenses who wrote down what God dictated. Consequently in their view no human element entered into the writing of the sacred books. God alone is the author of Holy Scriptures. . . . Hence it followed that the Holy Scriptures in the original text are to be regarded as completely free from errors of any kind.” (*The Christian Faith*, p. 315.)

137:9) the human, or shall I say inhuman, element is sadly evident." (Hjalmar W. Johnson, in the *Journal of the Am. Luth. Conf.*, May, 1939, pp. 18—21.)

3) The moderns do something worse to the Bible. They not only cut away great parts of it—the alleged errors and indecencies—but they emasculate all of it. In their fight against the "mechanical-verbalistic" inspiration they are fighting against the reliability and divinity of every word of the Bible. That is a serious charge. But their own words prove it. They have been telling us right along that inspiration does not extend to the letter, the words of the Bible. Dr. H. E. Jacobs assured us that, "if the verbal theory of inspiration means that every word and letter is inspired," he will have none of it. A. Deissmann told us that he is glad that "this dogma of verbal inspiration of every letter of the New Testament, which rightly can be called mechanical inspiration . . . is now abandoned." "What is the extent of inspiration?" asks G. L. Raymond; "does it apply to the style and the words or only to the substance and the sense?" He answers: "The inspired element is underneath the phraseology rather than in it. . . . We have no reason to expect to find evidence of inspiration in the specific details of the expression, except so far as, indirectly, they may indicate the general trend of that which is expressed." (*The Psychology of Inspiration*, pp. 154, 187, 307.) Do we hear correctly? Are the moderns saying that the words of the Bible are not inspired words? The editor of *The Lutheran* (June 21, 1928) is saying: "For every essential issue there is divine truth at hand; that its verbal expression is of human origin can be frankly recognized." H. Wheeler Robinson: "The confident appeal to the Scriptures as affording an infallible direction of faith and conduct is made impossible if that is sought in the *letter*" (italics by author) "of the Word of God to men. . . . The fuller recognition of the principle of mediation . . . throws us back on the inner content of the revelation instead of its literary expression and record." (*The Chr. Experience of the Holy Spirit*, p. 175.) H. F. Baughman: "Its authority is not to be identified with the form of language which announces the truth of God but must be found in the light of experience through which the Word of God came to the soul of a man." (*The Luth. Church Quart.*, 1935, p. 260.) J. A. W. Haas: "Men were never saved by a Bible that was mechanically perfect in its verballity." (*What Is Revelation?* p. 16.) Not perfect in its verbal expression? Did not the Holy Spirit choose the words? Or was that left to fallible men? The Holy Spirit did not choose the words, say the moderns. G. T. Ladd: "Inspiration is not 'verbal' in the technical sense of the term; that is, it does not consist in, or involve, the selection and dictation, by

the Holy Ghost Himself, of all the words employed by the writers." (*What Is the Bible?* p. 436.) G. Drach: "Zwingli's spirit led his followers to incline toward the dictation of words as well as to the inspiration of the contents of the Sacred Scriptures, and this theory . . . also influenced some of the Lutheran theologians of the seventeenth century. . . . Gerhard went from the inspiration of the impulse to write to the inspiration of the contents and then to the inspiration of the choice and use of words." (*The Luth. Church Quart.*, 1936, pp. 245, 247.) And so, of course, since fallible men made the choice of words, "we do not know," says Luther A. Weigle, "whether the words of the Bible given us are true or accurate." (See *Conc. Theol. Mthly.*, XIII, p. 151.) — As we read Gen. 1:1 or John 3:16, the moderns warn us not to be too sure that we are dealing with God's Word. God's Word may be contained in these words, which transmit to us the ideas of the writers, but that must be established in some other way. What Moses and John wrote may be true or it may be false. There can be no absolute reliance on any verse of Scripture. — The moderns are fighting Scripture in that they deny one doctrine of Scripture, as we saw under 1). But that means, as we now see, that they are fighting all of Scripture.

The moderns do not want to have inspired *words*. Is further proof required? Then examine the substitutes they ask us to accept in place of the old doctrine which they have thrown to the moles and bats. There is the concept-not-words theory. Dr. Drach has defined it for us as "the inspiration of the contents, not the dictation of words." J. De Witt: "It simply means that truth as inspired by God is of such quality and nature that invariable verbal accuracy is not needed. It may be expressed with great freedom and in various forms without impairing its substantial value. It is the thought that is inspired." (*What Is Inspiration?* p. 41.) *Suggestio rerum* — yes; *suggestio verborum*? Never! ²⁶⁷⁾

Then there is the dynamic theory, the popular theory of the day. Nine out of ten opponents of Verbal Inspiration cry out: Not mechanical, but dynamical! Professor Ladd will tell us what it is. "Inspiration may be said to be 'dynamical,' as distinguished

267) See footnote 255. — Warfield: "This may be called the rationalistic view. . . . It affirms that . . . the Bible is inspired only in its *thoughts* or *concepts*, not in its words. . . . This legacy from the rationalism of an evil time still makes its appearance in the pages of many theological writers . . . ; but it has failed to supplant in either the creeds of the Church or in the hearts of the people the church doctrine of the plenary inspiration of the Bible, *i. e.*, the doctrine that the Bible is inspired not in part, but fully, in all its elements alike, — things discoverable by reason as well as mysteries, matters of history and science as well as of faith and practice, *words as well as thoughts.*" (*Op. cit.*, p. 59.)

from what is mechanical. Its general conception is that of a divine influence coming like breath or wind into the soul of man and producing a transformation there. . . . The influence is dynamical — a divine force dwelling and working in the human soul. It therefore involves the highest activity of all the normal powers. . . . Inspiration is not 'verbal.'” (*Op. cit.*, p. 434.) C. E. Lindberg: “The orthodox dynamic theory . . . sets forth the divine activity but also places proper emphasis on the human side. . . . The holy writers were not merely mechanical instruments, such as pens or amanuenses, there was an *auto-activity* analogous to the new life that succeeds the new birth, when the regenerated soul cooperates with the Holy Ghost.” (*Christian Dogmatics*, p. 389.) In German they say: “Die Inspiration ist Entfaltung der menschlichen Selbsttätigkeit.” (F. Buechsel, *op. cit.*, p. 113.) Just how this “dynamic inspiration” worked when the holy writer penned a sentence, just how the divine dynamics and the human dynamics balanced each other, they will not tell us.²⁶⁸ But one thing they tell us plainly: the dynamic theory does away with the inspiration of the words. A. H. Strong: “The dictation theory, the true view, holds . . . that the Scriptures contain a human as well as a divine element, so that, while they constitute a body of infallible truth, this truth is shaped in human molds. . . . Inspiration did not always, or even generally, involve a direct communication to the Scripture writers of the words they wrote. . . . They were left to the action of their own minds in

268) *Fundamentals*, VII, p. 21: “Fifth, ‘dynamic inspiration.’ But the efforts of those who hold to this view to explain what they mean by the term are exceedingly vague and misty.” M’Intosh: “. . . what has been contemptuously called the mechanical, as distinguished from the dynamical, theory of Inspiration — though what mechanical or dynamical can precisely mean in such matters the users of these misleading phrases have never yet attempted to make plain.” (*Op. cit.*, p. 463.) Nor does M. Dods (who does not believe in Verbal Inspiration) think much of the dynamic theory: “This theory has been found to introduce confusion into the subject.” (*Op. cit.*, p. 120.) Professor Ladd sees the difficulty of pointing out just where, say in John 3:16, the divine force gave way to the human force or in which word human fallibility was overcome by the divine infallibility. After describing the “dynamical,” he is forced to add (on p. 437): “In all inspiration, the exact place where the divine meets the human and is limited by it, as well as the precise mode of the operation of the Spirit, remains concealed and mysterious.” He employs the analogy of “the ordinary Christian experience” — no Christian “can draw a line in the working of his thoughts and emotions and say: ‘This is of God, and this other is my own.’” The confusion grows when Lindberg, for instance, finds it necessary to oppose the views of “the old dogmatists who held to the mechanical theory of inspiration,” insists on operating with the dynamic theory and the auto-activity of the holy writers, and finally arrives at the position of the old dogmatists, declaring with them that “the holy writers imparted the divine truth as to thought *and expression*,” “that every word in the original text is inspired” (*op. cit.*, pp. 395, 401).

the expression of these truths." (*Op. cit.*, p. 102 f.) Archdeacon Farrar's definition is quoted as classical in R. Tuck, *A Handb. of Bibl. Diff.*, p. V: "The *dynamic*, or power, theory. It holds that Holy Scripture was not 'dictated by,' but 'committed to writing under the guidance of,' the Holy Spirit. While recognizing the divine energy, it does not annihilate human co-operation. The truths are inspired by the Holy Spirit, the words and phrases are the result of the writer's own individuality; the material is of God, the form is of man."²⁶⁹) It seems that, on this point, the dynamic-theory men teach the same as the concept-theory men. Well, that is no affair of ours. All that we are interested in is to show that

269) A word, in passing, on the monstrosity of the concept: thoughts without words. They have been telling us that verbal inspiration is "unpsychological." Well, we are unable to grasp the psychology underlying the theories which they offer as substitutes for verbal inspiration. They say that God inspired the thoughts but not the words. Did you ever discover yourself thinking a definite thought without clothing that thought in definite words? In *speaking* and *writing*, thoughts are expressed in words, and the *mind* cannot but follow the same process. Stoeckhardt grappled with the problem posed by the "concept theory," gave it up, and declared: "In jeder vernuenftigen Rede haengen Gedanke und Ausdruck so eng zusammen, wie Leib und Seele." (*Lehre und Wehre*, 1886, p. 256.) Nor could A. A. Hodge grasp the idea: "The line can never rationally be drawn between the thoughts and words of Scripture"; nor Canon Westcott: "The slightest consideration will show that words are as essential to intellectual processes as they are to mutual intercourse. . . . Thoughts are wedded to words as necessarily as soul to body. Without it the mysteries unveiled before the eyes of the seer would be confused shadows; with it, they are made clear lessons for human life." (See *Fundamentals*, VII, p. 23.) The Expositor's *Greek Testament* refuses to subscribe to the laws of this new psychology. On 1 Cor. 2:13: "In an honest mind thought and language are one, and whatever determines the former must mold the latter." Lindberg: "If we believe that the thoughts were inspired, we must also believe, logically, that the words were inspired as well. Some persons, who do not have clear conception concerning inspiration and boast that they are liberal, say: We believe in the inspiration of the idea, but not of the words. Even the best modern psychology holds that there cannot be an idea without form or words. Man thinks in words." (*Op. cit.*, p. 396.) Lenski: "Erase the words, and the thought disappears. . . . The thought cannot be separated from the words which are its vehicles." (On 2 Tim. 3:16.) And: "This distinction between content and words is an illusion. Of what is Holy Scripture composed? Merely of words! Page after page of words, and then some more words. And what are these words? They are the vehicles of thought. Without words, there is no thought or content. Take out the words, and what do you have left? Nothing! That is the fatal feature for all who do not want to admit Verbal Inspiration and still would like to believe in an inspiration of content. The bird flies out of their hand, and they retain only a few feathers. If only one could take a knife and go into the Bible, and cut out the words entirely, and then after all the words have been removed, hold it up and say, 'Behold this is the bare thought.' But after such an operation is completed, what is left? The empty pages of the Bible! Beautiful content and thought!" (Quoted in *The Pastor's Monthly*, 1935, p. 261.) — Another point: If the inspiration of words would have to be mechanical, the same objection would hold as to the inspiration, a real inspiration, of thoughts.

the moderns have a horror of the *suggestio verborum*. They leave us in no doubt that they will not have the words of Holy Scripture proceed out of the mouth of the Lord. — Note that the purpose of these theories is not merely to take care of the alleged errors in the Bible. See 2). They cover also those parts and passages which are accepted as true. The words of John 3:16, too, are not inspired.

The words are not inspired; they are not God's own words, but the writers' own words — if you still doubt that the moderns say that, ask them for further elucidation of their dynamic theory. They will tell you to consult Zoekler's *Handbuch*. "Two factors produced Holy Scripture. One is the free self-activity of God. The other is the free human self-activity over against the divine revelation. . . . The human organs are *free* organs of the divine Spirit. . . . Holy Scripture is thus a divine-human word." "Nach der modernen wissenschaftlich vermittelten Umbildung des Inspirationsbegriffs ist nicht sowohl ein unbedingt *goettlicher* als vielmehr ein *gottmenschlicher* Ursprung und Charakter der Schrift zu lehren." Dr. Stump continues the elucidation: "In the view of the seventeenth-century dogmatists no human element entered into the writing of the sacred books. God alone is the Author of the Holy Scriptures." That is wrong, for "there is a human as well as a divine factor to be taken into account in considering the writing of the Holy Scriptures." (*Loc. cit.*) "The Bible," said Professor Volck, "is the product of two factors, a divine and a human factor"; "the Bible was composed by men"; "the holy writers," said Th. Harnack, "exercised absolute self-activity (*selbststaendigste Aktivitaet*)"; acting independently, they expressed their own thoughts in their own words, and Thomasius insisted that "the sacred writings were not dictated by the Holy Ghost, but were — produced by the self-activity of their authors." (See *Lehre und Wehre*, 1886, p. 168; *Proceedings, Syn. Conf.*, 1886, pp. 31, 36.) "The human side' of Scripture, as the moderns use the term, means that the holy writers were *causae efficientes*, not only the writers but indeed the authors of Holy Scripture." (Dr. Walther. See *Proc., Iowa Dist.*, 1891, p. 54.) Why, they even use the phrase "*eigene produktive Geistestaetigkeit*." They do not want to have the Holy Spirit to be the sole Author of Scripture. Only in a restricted sense will they call Him the *real* Author. They refuse to call the words of Scripture "the very words of God." And we say that he who makes out of these divine words human words is fighting Scripture, is striking at its very heart.²⁷⁰⁾

270) Was not Moses the *author* of the Pentateuch and St. John the *author* of the Fourth Gospel? — Do we have to go over the same old ground again? Certainly the holy writers were not dead machines. They wrote as rational, intelligent writers write. They searched for the

Bound to let us know that in their opinion the Bible is the product of a joint authorship, a divine-human book, the moderns even use the very expressive term "synergism" in this connection. For instance: Dr. M. S. Terry, who does not believe in the inerrancy of the Bible, characterized the "mechanical inspiration" as monergistic and declared: "The synergistic theology is the opposite of this and the only tenable alternative." (See *Theol. Quart.*, 1913, p. 4; 1914, p. 79.) As in synergism conversion results from the collaboration of God and man, so Scripture has been produced by two factors, God contributing the ideas, man the words. It would be well if all the moderns, all those who speak of the "two factors"

right word, and they chose the fitting word. But when the moderns use this same phraseology in order to say that the words of Scripture are not the very words of the Holy Ghost, seeing that they are the writers' own words, they are not speaking our language, the language of Scripture. The holy writers were not "the originators but the receivers and announcers" of their message, and the Holy Ghost supplied not only the substance but also the form (the words) of the message. Did the holy writers cooperate? Yes, as instruments; no, if that means that they produced anything of their own. Two factors? Yes, one the instrument of the other; no, if it means independent factors. May Moses and St. John be called authors? Stoeckhardt does not hesitate to call them "the holy authors." (See above.) But when the moderns call them co-authors of the Bible, meaning that God is the Author of the thought and the apostles the originators of the words, they are not speaking the language of Scripture and of the Church. The Church does not state on the title page of her Book: "The Bible, the Word of God and of the holy writers." What would Paul have put on the title page? See 1 Thess. 2:13. — Stoeckhardt: "Die Weissagung der Schrift (2 Petr. 1:21), die Heilige Schrift, ist kein Produkt der Menschen, des menschlichen Willens. Jene 'selbstaendige Aktivitaet' der heiligen Schriftsteller wird ausdruecklich verneint. Die Position lautet: Die heiligen Menschen Gottes haben geredet, getrieben von dem Heiligen Geist. Freilich jene heiligen Maenner, die Propheten, waren es, die da redeten; aber da sie die Weissagung niederschrieben, wurden sie vom Heiligen Geist getrieben, bewegt, getragen (φερόμενοι). Sie standen ganz und gar im Dienst, waren Werkzeuge des Heiligen Geistes. Der Heilige Geist war es, der hier in der Weissagung seine Gedanken, seine Weisheit kundgab und die Propheten und ihr Reden, Schreiben als *medium* gebrauchte, das, was er wollte, den Menschen zu wissen zu tun. Der Heilige Geist, kein anderer ausser oder neben ihm, ist der Autor der Schrift, der Weissagung. Die Schrift ist Produkt des Heiligen Geistes, und zwar ausschliesslich Produkt des Geistes, kein 'von Menschen verfasstes Gotteswerk'." (*Lehre und Wehre*, 1886, p. 214.) Warfield: "The Church has held from the beginning that the Bible is the Word of God in such a sense that its words, though written by men and bearing indelibly impressed upon them marks of their human origin, were written, nevertheless, under such an influence of the Holy Ghost as to be also the words of God, the adequate expression of His mind and will." "Here [Acts 1:16] the Holy Spirit is adduced, of course, as the real Author of what is said, but David's mouth is expressly designated as the instrument (it is the instrumental preposition that is used) by means of which the Holy Spirit speaks the Scripture in question." "The things which they spoke under this operation of the Spirit (2 Petr. 1:19-21) were therefore His things, not theirs. Though spoken through the instrumentality of men, it is, by virtue of the fact that these men spoke 'as borne by the Holy Spirit,' an immediately divine word." (*Op. cit.*, pp. 83, 97, 173.)

and the "free self-activity," would, without more ado, call their teaching the "synergistic theory of inspiration." It is what they mean. They do not want to call Scripture exclusively the product of God. Scripture makes that claim.²⁷¹⁾ Scripture wants us to receive all its words as words chosen by God and therefore expressing the thought so perfectly and infallibly as only God can express it. But the moderns will not have it so.

To sum up, the moderns abominate and loathe Verbal Inspiration. The ridicule which they heap on "mechanical inspiration" is intended to discredit Verbal Inspiration and turn men against it.²⁷²⁾ And discrediting Verbal Inspiration, they are discrediting Scripture. They are destroying the Christian's faith in the absolute reliability of the words of Holy Scripture.

That is a frightful situation. Uncertainty, doubt, and fear are sweeping through the land. The stop-and-go theory of inspiration is bad enough. According to it only half of the Bible is inspired. And now the moderns apply to the rest their half-and-half theory, and all is lost. The passages dealing with the saving truth are, they tell us, half divine and half human; the words in which the divine thought is expressed are the words of men. But the only way in which we can receive the divine truth is through words—and can the Christian base the hope of salvation on the words of fallible men? Dr. Haas told us that the Bible is not mechanically perfect in its verballity. Dr. Weigle

271) Dr. Pieper: "Where Scripture speaks of the *causa efficiens* of Scripture only one factor is recognized, the divine factor. Scripture does not say: 'All Scripture is given partly by inspiration of God, and partly it is produced by men,' but only: 'πᾶσα γραφὴ θεόπνευστος.' The holy men that took part in this matter are characterized as *instruments through whom God spoke*. What resulted was not a writing which is half man's word and half God's, but Scripture, which is nothing but God's word (cf. Matt. 1:22; 2:15, etc.; Heb. 10:15) and cannot be broken (John 10:35)." (*Lehre und Wehre*, 1892, p. 197.)

272) Pieper: "To discredit Verbal Inspiration among the public, the assertion is rather generally made that the dogmaticians had entirely 'mechanical conceptions' of the inspiration of Scripture." (*Op. cit.* I, p. 365.) M'Intosh: "They have sought to heap ridicule upon the true and Scriptural position by associating with it foolish fancies excluded by it"; "they have found it a much easier thing first to misrepresent and then to caricature the position of the real defenders of the claim of Scripture than honestly to face their proof." (*Op. cit.*, pp. 8, 268, 312.) Machen: "If we say: 'Yes, we do believe in Verbal Inspiration,' then they hold up their hands in horror. 'How dreadful, how mechanical!' they say. 'If God really provided in supernatural fashion that the words should be thus and so, then the writers of the Biblical books are degraded to the position of mere stenographers, indeed, even lower than that . . . of mere machines. . . .' Such is the hole into which we are thought to be put. . . . How can we possibly escape? Well, I think we can escape very easily indeed. Yes, I believe in the verbal inspiration of the Bible; but I do insist that you and I shall get a right notion of what the word 'verbal' means." (*The Christian Faith in the Modern World*, p. 46 f.)

told us: "We do not know whether the words of the Bible given us are true or accurate." Dr. Seeberg told us, in addition: "There can be no doubt that the Biblical authors could certainly draw conclusions intrinsically false from inspired truths." (*Op. cit.*, p. 102.) When you must make fallible men your authority, there is an end to Christian assurance. Beware of this "Dictated-but-not-read theory." That is what W. T. Riviere calls this concept theory. "A busy man dictates a letter to his stenographer and tells her to transcribe and mail it without waiting for his final inspection and signature. Since there is large opportunity for mistakes to occur, this procedure is rarely followed with important letters. The addressee, warned by the notation 'dictated but not read,' does not hold his correspondent responsible for all details of expression or even of matter." (*Bibliotheca Sacra*, 1936, p. 299.) The moderns are offering us a Bible the words of which are not underwritten and guaranteed by the divine Author, for He is responsible only for the thought; the expression of the thought is the work of man. The moderns actually say that. If they said that the form as well as the thought were given by the Holy Ghost, that would be verbal, mechanical inspiration! So we get a Bible whose *statements* of the saving truth are of human origin, and that is the end of all and any Christian assurance. Let us repeat that: "We emphasize the fact that without Verbal Inspiration we lack every guarantee that the divine content is expressed in Scripture correctly and without abbreviations." (Dr. Reu.) We repeat: "If God really did not guide these men in the choice of words but left this matter to the discretion of the writers, we could never feel free from the suspicion that these fallible human beings might have erred in the selection of their phraseology." (*The Lutheran Teacher*.) And remember, the moderns have introduced this *monstrum incertitudinis* into the holy of holies. Their half-and-half theory is applied to John 3:16 as well as to 1 Tim. 5:23. What results? "If the words godhead, election, redemption, imputation, regeneration, propitiation, sacrifice, atonement, faith, repentance, justification, sanctification, adoption, resurrection, heaven, hell, etc., were not inspired and infallible, then everything essential to Christian faith and life may be only old wives' fables. Without certainty and divine authority in the words of Scripture, it is patently impossible to believe in the things, or even to know the will of God, for our salvation." (M'Intosh, *op. cit.*, p. 614.) "Ist wie Jacobs und Stump sagen, die Schrift wirklich unfehlbar (infallible, inerrant) in allen ihren theologischen Ausfuehrungen, so muessen auch alle Worte, die sich in diesen Ausfuehrungen finden, vom Heiligen Geiste (der allein unfehlbar das Richtige treffen kann) gesetzt sein. Finden sich in denselben Worte, die Menschen gesetzt

haben ohne dass der Heilige Geist dabei die Wahl geleitet hat, so kann von absoluter Unfehlbarkeit auch in den theologischen Ausfuehrungen nicht mehr die Rede sein. Auch die *loci classici* sind nicht mehr unfehlbar gewisse Wahrheiten, wenn die Wahl der Worte, aus welchen sie bestehen, fehlbaren Menschen ueberlassen war." (F. Bente, in *Lehre und Wehre*, 1904, p. 87.) We repeat: If the moderns are right, if the concept theory and the dynamic theory are the thing, the Christian is condemned to a life of uncertainty, doubt, and fear.

It is a frightful situation. The moderns tell the Christians that they must carefully sift the words of the fallible holy writers in order to find the truth of the divine thought hidden therein, and then tell them that there is no known process by which that can be accomplished. D. F. Forrester tells them: "All of them [the holy writers] struggled with evident limitations of temperament, environment, and vocation. In their case it is necessary not only to find out what they said, but also *what they were trying to say*, what the eternal Word of God was saying in them to all men everywhere. The wheat must be sifted from the chaff, the 'Word' taken from the worn-out wrappings. And then that 'Word' shall be made plain. All must be fitted to our modern thought. . . . What is warped and ill-balanced must be corrected; what was neglected must be added; what was soiled by the heat and dust of controversy must be polished until it is bright and clear again." (*The Living Church*, Feb. 11, 1933.) There is pure gold among all this dross—find it! But when we ask them for the Lydian stone which will infallibly show the gold, they tell us: There is no such thing. Dr. E. Lewis tells us: "What is of the *form* of revelation and what is of the *substance*? It may be that an infallibly exact criterion has not been given us." (*A Philosophy of the Christian Religion*, p. 140.) Dr. L. Weigle just told us: "We do not know whether the words of the Bible given us are true or accurate, but there is a spirit in them that manifests an acceptable teaching." The disturbed Christian asks Bishop D. Wilson to guide him in his search for the saving, divine truth and gets the answer: "Where nature ended and Inspiration began, it is not for man to say." (See W. Lee, *op. cit.*, p. 34.) The terrified Christian wants assurance as to whether every single word of John 3:16 is infallibly true—it is a matter of life and death to him—and Prof. R. F. Grau advises him: "The boundaries between the divine and the human elements cannot be definitely fixed in a mechanical way. No one knows how much is divine, how much human." (See Pieper, *op. cit.*, I, p. 275.) We know the answer: every word is God's word. We need no Lydian stone where the Bible is concerned. It is all pure gold. All is well where Verbal Inspiration

rules. But he is in a bad state whose spiritual advisers either tell him that there is no sure way of finding the priceless treasure of God's Word in this divine-human book or sell him divining rods — the Christian self-consciousness or "the spirit in the words" or "what is fitted to our modern thought" — which invariably lead him astray. "Of a truth," said Dr. Walther in the *Lutherstunde*, "it is not a small matter when a poor man is lying on his deathbed and seeks comfort in a passage of Scripture and the devil assaults him with the question: Yea, how do you know that God said that? May not the writer have misunderstood the Holy Spirit?" (*Lehre und Wehre*, 1911, p. 155.)

Walther once more: "Dr. Luther writes in his *Large Confession* with reference to Zwingli's *alloeosis*: 'Beware, beware, I say, of the *alloeosis*! For it is the devil's mask.' . . . We must apply this to the so-called 'Gottmenschlichkeit der Schrift' (the divine-human nature of Scripture) as the term is used by modern-conservative theology: Beware, beware, I say, of this 'divine-human' Scripture! It is a devil's mask; for at last it manufactures such a Bible after which I certainly would not care to be a Bible Christian, namely, that the Bible should henceforth be no more than any other good book, a book which I would have to read with constant sharp discrimination in order not to be led into error. For if I believe this, that the Bible contains also errors, it is to me no longer a touchstone but itself stands in need of one. In a word, it is unspeakable what the devil seeks by this 'divine-human' Scripture. . . . Erbarme sich Gott seiner armen Christenheit in dieser letzten, betruetzten und gefaehrlichen Zeit!" (*Lehre und Wehre*, 1886, p. 76.) The old evil Foe means deadly woe.

"Without a doubt," says Edwin Lewis, "our fathers came very close to Bibliolatry; they could make no distinction between the Word of God and the words of men by which that Word was given." (*The Faith We Declare*, p. 49.) We say: Blessed be our fathers, blessed be St. Paul, who taught us that every word of Scripture is the very word of God!

TH. ENGELDER

(To be continued)

