

THE INSPIRATION OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

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The Inspiration of the New Testament by Walter R. Browne & J. P. Norris

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WALTER R. BROWNE & J. P. NORRIS

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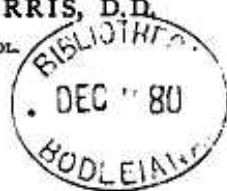
THE INSPIRATION
OF THE
NEW TESTAMENT.

BY

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WITH A PREFACE BY

THE REV. J. P. NORRIS, D.D.,
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PREFACE.

IN the following Essay my friend, Mr. Walter Browne, endeavours to obtain from the Holy Scriptures themselves, a definition, or at any rate a clear notion, of their inspiration.

The method is *inductive*. Passages bearing on the subject are collected and examined; and from these statements or indications, the author seeks to determine the nature and extent of the inspiration which the Bible claims for itself.

To churchmen, who wish dutifully to accept the Church's teaching in such matters, as "a witness and a keeper of Holy Writ," a prior question will suggest itself: Is not the doctrine of inspiration already determined for us, if not by the Canons, yet by the hermeneutic tradition of the Church? And, if so, ought the matter to be treated as an open question? What say the Creeds? What said the General Councils or Fathers of the undivided Church?

Now if we look through the three Creeds we find one clear and explicit statement in what is called the Nicene Creed, touching, though not covering, the sub-

ject of inspiration. "I believe in the Holy Ghost . . . Who spake by the Prophets," or rather, "through the Prophets," (τὸ λαλῆσαι διὰ τῶν προφητῶν). That by "the Prophets" here were meant the prophets of the *New* as well as of the *Old* Testament, may be inferred from the common use of the term by the Fathers of the first three centuries. Thus, we find CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA writing, "the Apostles may most properly be numbered among the Prophets, inasmuch as through them all equally worketh that one and the self-same Spirit." (Strom. v. c. 6). And so ORIGEN: "Both the Prophets of the Old, and the writers of the New Testament, spake by one and the same Spirit, the Holy Spirit by the providence of God, through the Divine Word, enlightening these ministers of truth, the Prophets and the Apostles." (Philocal. c. 1, p. 12). That St. Paul by the word "Prophets" in Eph. i. 20, and ii. 5, means the Christian prophets of his own day is clear, for he says that the mystery of the admission of Gentiles was not *in other ages* made known, but is *now* revealed unto His (Christ's) holy Apostles and Prophets by the "Spirit."

It is highly probable, therefore, that by "the Prophets" in this passage of the Creed, we are to understand the "holy men of God," under both Testaments, who "spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."

We may then very safely say that we are bound to believe, as a part of the Catholic faith, that under both