**in order that**. The words “all this was  
done,” and the uniform usage of the N.T.,  
forbid any other. Nor, if rightly viewed,  
does the passage require any other. Whatever may have been the partial fulfilment  
of the prophecy in the time of Ahaz, its  
reference to a different time, and a higher  
deliverance, is undeniable: and then, whatever causes contributed to bring about all  
this, might be all summed up in the fulfilment of the divine purpose, of which that  
prophecy was the declaration. The accomplishment of a promise formally made  
is often alleged as the cause of an action  
extending wider than the promise, and  
purposed long before its utterance. And  
of course these remarks apply to every  
passage where the phrase is used. Such a  
construction can have but one meaning.  
If such meaning involve us in difficulty  
regarding the prophecy itself, far better  
leave such difficulty, in so doubtful a matter  
as the interpretation of prophecy, unsolved,  
than create one in so simple a matter as  
the rendering of a phrase whose meaning  
no indifferent person could doubt. The  
immediate and literal fulfilment of the prophecy seems to be related in Isa. viii. 1–4.  
Yet there the child was *not* called Emmanuel: but in ver. 8 that name is used  
as applying to one of far greater dignity.  
Again, Isa. ix. 6 seems to be a reference to  
this prophecy, as also Micah v. 3.

**23. the virgin**] the words are from the  
Septuagint. Such is the rendering of the  
LXX. The Hebrew word is the more  
general term, “*the young woman*,” and is  
so translated by Aquila.

**they shall call**]  
This indefinite plural is surely not without  
meaning here. **Men shall call**—i.e. it  
shall be a name by which He shall be called  
—one of his appellations. The change of  
person seems to shew, both that the prophecy had a literal fulfilment at the time,  
and that it is here quoted in a form suited  
to its greater and final fulfilment. The  
Hebrew has, ‘*thou shalt call*’ (fem.).

**Emmanuel**] i.e. **God (is) with us**.  
In Isaiah, prophetic primarily of deliverance from the then impending war; but  
also of final and glorious deliverance  
by the manifestation of God in the flesh.

**25.**] With regard to the much-controverted sense of this verse we may observe,  
(1) That the primâ facie impression on  
the reader certainly is, that **knew her  
not** was confined to the period of time  
here mentioned. (2) That there is nothing in Scripture tending to remove this  
impression, either (a) by narration,—and  
the very use of the term, “*brethren of  
the Lord*” (on which see note at ch.  
xiii. 55), without qualification, shews that  
the idea was not repulsive: or (b) by implication,—for every where in the N. T.  
marriage is spoken of in high and honourable terms; and the words of the angel  
to Joseph rather imply, than discountenance, such a supposition. (3) On the  
other hand, the words of this verse do not  
*require* it: the idiom being justified on the  
contrary hypothesis. See my Greek Test.  
On the whole it seems to me, that *no one  
would ever have thought of interpreting  
the verse any otherwise than in its primâ  
facie meaning, except to force it into  
accordance with a preconceived notion  
of the perpetual virginity of Mary*. It  
is characteristic, and historically instructive, that the great impugner of the view  
given above should be Jerome, the impugner of marriage itself: and that his  
opponents in its interpretation should  
have been branded as heretics by after  
ages. See a brief notice of the controversy in Milman, Hist. of Latin Christianity, i.72 ff.

**he called**] i.e. Joseph ;  
see ver. 21.

**CHAP. II. 1–12.**] VISIT AND ADORATION OF MAGI FROM THE EAST.

**1. Bethlehem of Judea**] There was another Bethlehem in the tribe of Zebulun,