*better tree.* I believe that he *does not  
here regard* what is the fact in nature:  
but makes a supposition perfectly legitimate,—that   
a wilding graft, on being inserted   
into a good tree, thereby becomes  
partaker of its qualities. No allusion can  
be intended to a practice mentioned by  
Columella, of inserting a wilding graft  
into a good tree to increase the vigour and  
growth of the tree: for this would completely   
stultify the illustration—the point  
of which is, a benefit *received* by the wilding   
from the tree, not one *conferred* by  
the wilding on it) **among them** (i.e. among  
the branches: or perhaps **them** may imply  
the *remnants* of the branches broken off),  
**and wast made a partaker of the root** (most  
of our oldest MSS. omit the word “*and,*”  
here found in the revised text) **of the  
fatness** (of that root, on union with which  
all the development of life and its fertility  
depend: which is the source of the fatness.  
With “*and,*” it will mean, of the source  
of life, and also of the development of that  
lite itself in all richness of blessing) **of the  
olive tree;**

**18.**] **boast not against  
the branches** (which were broken off). **But  
if thou boastest against them** (know that  
..., or let this consideration humble thee,  
that... Similarly 1 Cor. xi. 16, “*But if  
any man seemeth to be contentious,...  
we have no such custom*”)**, it is not thou  
that bearest the root, but the root thee.**  
—The ground of humiliation is—“ ‘Thou  
partakest of thy blessings solely by union  
with God’s spiritual church, which church  
has for its root that Father of the faithful,  
  
from whom they are descended. Regard  
them not therefore with scorn.” This is  
expanded further in ver. 20.

**19.**]  
**Thou wilt then** (it being supposed that  
thou boastest, and defendest it) **say, The  
branches** (viz. which were broken off—not  
the whole branches) **were broken off, that  
I** (emphatic) **might be grafted in.**

**20.**] **Well** (the fact, involving even the  
*purpose*, assumed by the previous speaker,  
is conceded. The *prompting cause* of their  
excision, their unbelief, is distinct from  
the *divine purpose* of their excision, the  
admission of the Gentiles, and belongs to  
a different side of the subject);**—because  
of their unbelief** (or perhaps, ‘*through  
unbelief*,’ abstract) **they were broken off,  
but thou by thy faith standest** (in thy  
place in the tree, opposed to *being broken*  
*off.* Tholuek prefers the sense of *standing*   
and *falling* in ch. xiv. 4, and certainly  
the adoption of the word “*fell*” ver. 22,  
seems to shew that the figurative diction  
is not strictly preserved).—**Be not high-minded,   
but fear:**

**21.**] **for if God  
spared not the natural branches** (the  
branches which grew according to natural  
development, and were not engrafted),  
[**take heed**] (there is no word representing  
“*take heed*” in the original. We may  
supply ‘I fear,’ or ‘it is to be feared, or  
simply ‘fear ’) **lest He spare not** THEE also.

**22.**] The caution of the preceeding:  
verse is unfolded into a setting before the  
Gentile of the true state of the matter.—  
**Behold therefore** (i.e. assuming that thou  
enterest into the feeling prompted by the