words and construction, to deny that the  
Apostle has adopted the tradition current  
among the Jews, that the *rock followed  
the Israelites* in their journeyings, and  
gave forth water all the way. Thus Rabbi  
Solomon, on Num. xx. 2: “ *Throughout  
all the forty years it was to them a  
well:*” and Schéttgen cites from the  
Bammidbar Rabba, “How came that  
well, which is mentioned Num. xxi. 16?  
Answer. It was like a stone, or a swarm  
of bees, and it rolled on, and accompanied  
them in their journeys. When they encamped, and the tabernacle was set up, the  
rock came and rested in the entrance of the  
tent. Then came the Princes and stood by  
it, saying ‘Spring up, O well, &c.,’ and it  
sprung up.” He also gives other testimonies.  
—The only ways of escaping this inference  
are (1) by setting aside the natural sense  
altogether, as Chrysostom does, understanding the saying, not of water at all, but of the  
spiritual rock, i. e. Christ, who went with  
them and wrought wonders; or (2) by taking  
the rock as equivalent to the *water from the  
rock:* so Calvin, who says, “ How could  
the rock, which stood fixed in its place, have  
accompanied the Israelites? As if it were  
not plain that by the word *‘rock’* is denoted the flow of water, which never deserted  
the people.” But against both of these  
we have the plain assertion, representing  
matter of physical fact, they drank from the  
**Spiritual (or, miraculous) rock which followed  
them:** and I cannot consent to depart  
from what appears to me the only admissible  
sense of these words. How extensively the  
traditionary reliques of unrecorded Jewish  
history were adopted by the apostolic men  
under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit  
the apology of Stephen may bear witness.

**But** (distinction between what  
*they* saw in the rock and what we see in  
it: they drank from it and knew not its  
dignity: *but*) **the rock was Christ**.—In  
these words there appear to be three *allusions:*  
(1) *to the ideas of the Jews themselves:* so the Targum on Isa. xvi. 1:  
“They shall bring gifts to the Messiah of  
the Israelites, who shall be strong, inasmuch  
as in the desert he was the Rock,  
the Church of Zion:” so also in Wisd. x.  
15 ff., the wisdom of God (see note on  
John i. 1) is said to have been present in  
Moses, to have led them through the wilderness, &c. That the MESSIAH, the ANGEL  
OF THE COVENANT, was present with the  
church of the Fathers, and that his upholding power was manifested in miraculous  
interferences for their welfare, was a truth  
acknowledged no less by the Jew than by  
the Christian. (2) *To the frequent use  
of this appellation*, A ROCK, for the God of  
Israel. See,among other places, Deut. xxxii.  
4, 15, 18, 30, 31,37; 1 Sam. ii. 2; 2 Sam.  
xxii. 2 and passim xxiii. 8, &c.; Psalms  
passim, and especially lxxviii. 20, compared  
with v.35; see also Rom. ix. 33; 1 Pet.  
ii. 8. Hence it became more natural to  
apply the term *directly to Christ*, as the  
ever present God of Israel. (3) *To the  
sacramental import of the water* which  
flowed from the rock, which is the point  
here immediately in the Apostle’s mind.  
As well in sacramental import as in upholding physical agency, *that rock was  
Christ.* The miraculous (spiritual) food  
was (sacramentally) the flesh of Christ:  
the miraculous (spiritual) drink was the  
blood of Christ: so that the Jews’ miraculous  
supplies of food and drink were  
*sacramentally significant of the Body and  
Blood of Christ*, in kind analogous to the  
two great parts of the Christian Supper of  
the Lord. In the contents prefixed to the  
chapters in the A. V., we read as the import of these verses, “ *The Sacraments of  
the Jews are types of ours*,’ which though  
perhaps correctly meant, is liable to be  
erroneously understood ; inasmuch as no  
sacramental ordinance can be *a type of  
another,* but all alike, though in different  
degrees of approximation, and by different  
representations, *types of Him*, who is the  
fountain of all grace. The difference between their case and ours is *generally*,  
that they were unconscious of the sacramental  
import, whereas we are conscious  
of it: “*they knew not that I healed them*,”  
Hos. xi. 3: and *in this particular case,*  
that Christ has come to us “not by water  
only, but by water and blood,” 1 John v. 6:  
HIS DEATH having invested our sacramental ordinance with another and more  
deeply significant character. To enter more  
minutely into the import of the words,  
“*the rock was Christ*, would be waste of  
time and laboUr. ‘The above reasons abundantly  
justify the assertion, without either  
pressing the verb **was** beyond its ordinary