of Balaam, in his well-known volume), **but had a rebuke for his own  
iniquity** (what sort of a reproof is shewn  
below. If any force can be given to the  
insertion of *own*, it will be found in the  
fact that the reproof came from an animal  
which was part of his own substance: he  
himself furnished the conviction of his  
own iniquity, from the animal on which he  
rode): **a dumb beast of burden** (this expression is apparently used as synonymous  
with an *ass* in Matt. xxi. 5. If so, the  
universal practice of riding on the ass in  
Palestine must be regarded as the reason)  
**speaking in man’s voice hindered** (not in  
matter of fact, for Balaam went on his  
way: but subjectively, was hindering, i. e.  
tried to hinder: “*withstood,*” or as A. V.  
“*forbad*”) **the madness of the prophet** (a  
discrepancy has been discovered between  
this and the Mosaic account, seeing that it  
was the angel, and not the ass, from whom  
the rebuke came, the ass having merely  
deprecated ill-treatment at Balaam’s hands.  
But the Apostle evidently regards not so  
much the words of rebuke uttered, as the  
miraculous fact, as being the hindrance.  
It was enough to have prevented his going  
onward, when the dumb animal on which  
he rode was gifted with speech to shew  
him his madness).

**17, 18.)** *Further  
designation of these false teachers, and  
justification of it.* Compare Jude 12, 13,  
which is here much abridged. **These are  
wells without water** (in Jude, *clouds*without water. The comparison, in both  
Epistles, is simply to that which may be  
expected to yield water, and yields none),  
**and mists driven along by a whirlwind,  
for whom the blackness of darkness is  
reserved** (see on Jude. It is obvious that  
no just charge of inappropriateness can he  
brought against our passage because this  
clause occurs in a different connexion from  
that in Jude. There it is said of wandering stars, here of driven clouds: of each,  
with equal appropriateness: darkness being predicable of clouds, as well as of stars  
extinguished).

**18.]** *Justification of the description.*  
**For, speaking great swelling things of  
vanity** (whose *characteristic* is **vanity**; as  
in the genitive “*body of sin*,” Rom. vi. 6,  
and the like) **they allure** (above, ver. 14) **in  
lusts** (“*in,*” or “*with*,” describes the state  
of the tempters, and the element in which  
their laying of enticing baits is situated) **by  
licentiousnesses** (these are the instrument,  
the bait itself) **of the flesh those who are  
scarcely** (with very little space, or, very  
little time, for such escape) **escaping from  
them who live in error** (i. e., those unhappy persons who are but just escaping  
from the influence of those who live in  
error [the heathen], are then laid hold of  
by these deceivers, enticing them with  
licentiousness), **promising them liberty**(these are the great swelling things which  
they speak; holding out a state of Christian liberty, which proves to be the bondage  
of corruption) **while they themselves are**(all the while) **slaves of corruption** (the  
same words occur together in Rom. viii.  
21, which it is very likely St. Peter had in  
view: compare ch. iii. 15. They promise  
that liberty of the sons of God, being themselves in the bondage of corruption). **corruption** here means, moral decay of sin,