Articles by William Kelly

William Kelly

Public domain. As published on plymouthbrethren.org.

Also online at https://plymouthbrethren.org/author/332

KEE Ministry Library · Faithful Men
kee-ministry-library.netlify.app

A Critique

A Critique of: “Lights in the World,” and “The Gravity of the Moment.” by F.E.R.

After a careful reading of these, I am compelled to say, that to any one of spiritual discernment they prove a mind abandoned to its own ideas and unsubject to God’s revelation of the truth. They have been sent for a judgment; as I never seek such reading.

“Lights in the world” in Scripture mean heavenly luminaries, in no way comparable to a candle or lamp, which is the figure for prophetic light in 2 Peter 1:19. In Phil. 2 the children of God shine as Christ, and bear no such earthly analogy. Nor is “word of life” confounded with light anywhere as in this poor fancy, though it seems a new thing to speak of life, after giving it up as unintelligible previously. Here it is analysed into “two or three” elements meeting in one person which is mere stuff. Life is itself as Scripture clearly shows; but this system is sound and clear as to nothing, only launching out into fancies foreign to God’s word.

After a good deal of irrelevant talk about the wick, i.e. “Myself,” he comes in pp. 6-9 to “the first great fact in God’s work in the soul.” Yet characteristically he avows “I cannot tell you what new birth is.” Why then did he speak or write? He tries to get rid of the stigma of such ignorance by saying that his auditors were equally ignorant. But, though this may be true of both, a birth is a manifest fact whether naturally or spiritually. Ignorance of the new or spiritual birth is simply because they deny God’s impartation of life to the believer. This writer entirely left out the Spirit’s use of the word to the

soul dead in trespasses and sins by revealing Christ as life to it. He talks of its not being “the communication of anything”! but by the Spirit’s power without the word or anything else. This is all fundamentally false and fanatical. The effect he says is “collapse,” and “a cry” both clearly the effect of a new life, which he denies to be communicated in defiance of the plainest scripture.

The next thing is the “light” (p. 13). What foolishness! The True Light lighteneth every man, converted or not (John 1:9). Life alone profits by it; but this victim of his own imagination puts it after the new birth! He understands nothing according to God. Further he shows his utter darkness by making the second thing, the enlightening, to be “properly the work of the evangelist”!! For he excludes the evangelist and human agency in general from the first work. One verse of scripture exposes and demolishes this wicked nonsense; “For in Christ Jesus I begot you through the gospel”, (1 Cor. 4:15).

As the oil figures admittedly the Holy Spirit’s anointing, we may leave this.

But a great deal is made in the latter part of Christ’s “glorifying God on the earth,” in distinction from His being lifted up so as not to die there. Here however the truth is quite missed. For it is in addressing the Father that our Lord said “I glorified thee on the earth. I finished the work, which thou hast given me to do” (John 17:4). On the other hand in John 13:31, 32 He said, “Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in him. If God be glorified in him, God also will glorify him in himself and will glorify him immediately.” The glorifying of God was as to sin on the cross, the

glorifying His Father was all His life through on the earth. Here all is muddle with egregious pretension to accuracy. So it is also to say, I could only tell you that "the light is the love of God." How much better to have been silent than to let out such unconscious confusion oracularly!

On the "Gravity of the moment" a few words suffice. "The Son of God," who is the rock on which the church is built, is revealed in Rev. 2:18 as the unchanging object of faith, when Christendom was given up to idolatry and persecution, combined with the pride of prophesying or the claim of infallibility in the church; but not in the earthly place of Ps. 2. Again, it is false to confound the promise "I will give him (the overcomer) the morning star" at (the translation of the saints) with that star arising in the heart now as in 2 Peter 1:19, which ought to characterise the Christian's present hope. The promise includes the two parts of the Lord's future presence: His kingdom judicially as the Sun of righteousness; and the special heavenly hope that He will give us the Morning-star before that day dawns.

I have only to add the inveterate error as to righteousness (p. 15), a shameless misuse of Rom. 5:21. For he makes it "obligation to righteousness" and "the practical setting aside of sin"; instead of believing it to be Christ made to us righteousness, and the obedience of the One (just before spoken of) to constitute the many righteous. This too is fundamental error destructive of the gospel of God. What is the worth of many true things with such falsehood? "No lie is of the truth."

W.K.

Christian Science: A Delusion of the Day

(3rd. ed., Race, 1913. [B.T. N3: p.303.])

Many of our readers may not know of this new society, sprung up on American soil, already too fruitful in monstrosities, though not without votaries in Europe generally as well as in Great Britain and its Colonies. Unlike Mormonism, which appealed to superstitious feeling in the humblest class, the later delusion finds its prey among educated folk of easier means, whose ears are inclined to the bombastic phrases of philosophic scepticism, without conscience and without faith. As founded by a woman, Mrs. Dr. Mary Baker Eddy, we need not wonder that women predominate among its million-and-a-half with a sprinkling of men from all grades. For it is a day when the true God is daringly blasphemed; and “Christian Science” is not its least guilty form. “Metaphysical” (not faith-) healing is one of its marked characteristics; had it aspired to no more, one might have left it to perish as a craze among kindred vanities. For is there in Bedlam any mania more certain than the notion, as well as the reasons given for it, that “man is never sick, for mind is never sick, and matter cannot be”? “Sickness is a delusion.” “There is no such thing as suffering in the universe of a good God.” “Tumours, ulcers, tubercles, inflammation, pain, deformed back [a singular limitation among so many deformities], are all dream-shadows, dark images of mortal [!] thought that will flee away before the light.”… “haemorrhage and decomposition are beliefs, images of mortal thoughts superinduced upon the body.”

To state such wild vapourings sufficiently exposes them to any persons of sound judgment. The unsound may be left to the logic of facts as the best disproof. Nor should such verbiage have called for a notice in these pages, but that the vagary claims to be a religion! as well as a science, and not a new religion but the oldest Christian religion!! yea its clear and intelligible apprehension, according to the rules laid down by the Master Himself!!! Such a pretension, along with its suicidal basis of “NO PERSONAL GOD,” calls for the sternest denunciation. Mind without a personal subsistence is the shallowest of delusions. The self-existent God has affections and will, no less than purity, wisdom, and power according to His own infinitude. He is love and light in the beautiful yet true figures of scripture. But to deny implicitly His creation of angels and men, as well as of the heavens and the earth, is to fly in the face of His holy writ. To say that there is no other mind but the One, and no other will but His, is to contradict the Bible from Genesis to Revelation, nay the surest and saddest facts before us every day.

Through one man, says the great apostle, sin entered into the world, and death through sin. When man fell, “dying thou shalt die” began; and Adam was only a father after he sinned. The race is a fallen one. Physical maladies are the symptoms and evidence of the mortality that is the portion of every child of Adam. Nor did he deny the sufferings of this present time, though he counts them not worthy to be compared with the coming glory to be revealed toward us. For we know, says he, that the whole creation groans together and travails in pain together until now.

If this craze were consistent, it would deny death as well as sickness and pain. But its inconsistency is palpable and extreme. For if there be no reality in sickness, there can be no room for “healing”; which last they make one of the chief pillars of their system! Nor could there be reality in the miraculous powers which Christ both displayed and conferred on His servants at the first as a sign to unbelievers. How can “Christian Science” come like an angel of light to sick, suffering, and diseased humanity, if “sickness is a delusion,” and “there is no such thing as suffering in the universe of a good God”? Is it not plain that “Christian Science” is the real delusion, not sickness or suffering? Christ healed them as real diseases; He will completely clear them away when His world-kingdom comes.

The truth is that this pretentious folly is only a revival of heathen Pantheism. In it Christ has not even the place allowed to Him in the Koran of the false Prophet of Mecca. For He in it is owned to be the Judge, if not the Saviour. But Mrs. Eddy leads her followers to deny a Personal God which the Moslems acknowledge, and consequently the everlasting judgment which remains for the unbelieving. An impersonal God must be indifferent, a mere abstraction incapable of either love or judgment. The True God is He that sent His Son into the world to save sinners, but only such as believe. All others who hear add to their other sins the crowning one of rejecting the Lord and Saviour, and of disbelieving God. Scripture is clear and decisive that He who is to judge the wicked is the same Jesus who once suffered for sins, Just for unjust. What an awful aggravation of their unbelief, when the risen and glorified Saviour sits to judge those who denied the true

God as well as His Son! To say that “sin” is an illusion is to sink morally lower than an unbelieving Jew. The very heathen were not so false or audacious, though they had no adequate idea of what sin is in God’s sight. “Christian Science” in denying its reality robs Christ of His moral glory as well as His grace, as the Taker away of the sin of the world.

Yet if there be no personal God, if He be but the mind of which we are part, it is a necessary consequence to deny Satan, sin, and judgment, incarnation and redemption; and the profession of believing Christ or the Spirit or the scriptures in any real sense: all must be unreal, and in time thrown aside as inconsistent with their own system. It is an antichrist, and neither “Christian” nor “Science.”

Think again how such a system destroys all the highest relations, and duties of the Christian. It were absurd to worship a principle: one can only worship a living personal God. Our communion is with the Father and with His Son by the Holy Spirit. With an impersonal Being this cannot be, as indeed it is folly to talk of mind, will, or love in that case: “His” we cannot say, save improperly.

A living and personal God we are called to serve, and Him only, as the Word when become flesh did perfectly; and He is the truth. Further every form of Pantheism undermines responsibility which must be to a person. Adherence to a principle is quite a different thing. Pantheism or “Christian Science” is incompatible with relationship to God, and hence overthrows the foundation of morality; as it still more evidently shuts out grace, redemption, the new creation, and the new

relations God forms in all who receive Christ the Lord by faith.

Drummond’s “Natural Law in the Spiritual World"

The object of this paper is not to introduce a book which is understood to have already a circulation of at least 30,000 copies in a comparatively brief space, but to point out its character, as accounting for popularity so marked. It is written with force and clearness, with liveliness and geniality, rising to eloquence when the occasion calls for it; and there is a fair presentation of fundamental truth, such as new birth and the atonement, with wholesome and clever exposure of the one-sidedness of revivalism (indeed, one may say of the evangelical system), as well as of sacramentalism.

Yet it is not, in my judgment, the good points of the book but the bad, and, from a christian stand, its unworthy and dangerously corrupting peculiarities, which have made it so palatable, at a moment when men crave the exciting food which it supplies, conceiving that they stand well abreast of the science of the age.

Mr. D. is a Christian. But his enthusiasm evidently goes in the direction of natural science; and so blinding is its influence that he seems completely under the spell of the fashionable evolutionist reveries of the day. His ardent effort throughout is to conciliate his argument and illustration as much as possible with the principles and even language of Mr. Herbert Spencer, the acknowledged chief of British Agnosticism! The assumption of modern infidelity, in a small knot of bold materialists who have got the public ear, is so overbearing, that those who value their good opinion, or dread their contempt and that of their followers, fail to

see that this vaunted theory, if logically carried out, is incompatible with Scripture, denies creation in any genuine and full sense, and threatens to end, like Pyrrhonism of old, in the destruction even of science itself. For evolution is supposed in time to efface those fixed laws by which objects animate and inanimate are governed, the ascertainment of which constitutes science. At best evolution attempts to account hypothetically for the origin of things; natural science is based on observed and permanent facts since creation.

But let us hear our author's own narrative (pp. 6-7) of what he fondly regards as his discovery, and what we cannot but mourn over as a delusion, by which no believer ought to have been taken in.

"It has been my privilege for some years to address regularly two very audiences on two very different themes. On weekdays I have lectured to a class of students on the Natural Sciences, and on Sundays to an audience consisting for the most part of working men on subjects of a moral and religious character. I cannot say that this collocation ever appeared as a difficulty to myself, but to certain of my friends it was more than a problem. It was solved to me, however, at first, by what then seemed the necessities of the case I must keep the two departments entirely by themselves. They lay at opposite poles of thought; and for a time I succeeded in keeping the Science and the Religion shut off from one another in two separate compartments of my mind. But gradually the wall of partition showed symptoms of giving way. The two fountains of knowledge also slowly began to overflow and finally the waters met and mingled. The great change was in the compartment which held the Religion (!). It was not that the well there

was dried; still less that the fermenting waters were washed away by the flood of Science. The actual contents remained the same. But the crystals of former doctrine were dissolved (!); and as they precipitated themselves once more into definite forms, I observed that the Crystalline system was changed. New channels also for outward expression opened, and some of the old closed up; and I found the truth running out to my audience on the Sundays by the weekday outlets. In other words the, subject-matter Religion had taken on the method of expression of Science, and I discovered myself enunciating Spiritual Law in the exact terms of Biology and Physics.

“Now this was not exactly a scientific colouring given to Religion, the mere freshening of the theological air with natural facts and illustrations. It was an entire re-casting of truth (!). And when I came seriously to consider what it involved, I saw, or seemed to see, that it meant essentially the introduction of Natural Law into the Spiritual World. It was not, I repeat, the new and detailed analogies of Phenomena rose into view — although material for Parable lies unnoticed and unused on the field of recent science in inexhaustible profusion. But Law has a still grander function to discharge towards Religion than Parable (!). There is a deeper analogy between the two kingdoms than the analogy of their Phenomena — a unity which the poet’s vision, more quick than the theologian’s (!), has already dimly seen.”

Of this vision Mr. D. assumes to be the Seer; and by his own acknowledgement, when his mind had for some time being paying weekday homage to Science, Sunday homage to Religion, he found the wall that parted them

giving way, but “the great change was in the compartment which held” not the Science, shifting and at best but growing as it is, but — “the Religion!” How came a child of God and a minister of His revealed truth to write such a sentence without shame? For what is Religion but the answer in heart and mind and walk to “Jesus Christ the same yesterday and to day and for ever”? Of course it is admitted that “the actual contents remained the same.” “But,” he affirms, “the crystals of former doctrine were dissolved.” God be thanked! it is not so with any servant of Christ loyal to his Master or the truth.

In early days a similar effort was made by the enemy, and not by forms of Science so beneath and remote from the grace and truth that came by Jesus Christ as Biology and Physics. Men then bearing the Lord’s name sought to enunciate Spiritual Law in the exact terms “of ancient metaphysics.” But the apostle resented the insult to God’s word and Spirit, which alone and perfectly. make Christ known, as leaving the saint a prey “through philosophy and vain deceit,” as he calls the falsely so named knowledge or speculation. On the other hand he insisted on holding fast the form or pattern of sound words, which [words] Timothy as others had heard from him, in faith and love which are in Christ Jesus. Hence the duty of keeping the good deposit that was entrusted to us through the Holy Spirit that dwells in us: for as the pretension to the Spirit without the word breeds fanaticism, so is rationalism the result of using the word without the Spirit working in us to Christ’s glory. Natural Science is the idol of Mr. D. Nor is it that he means to exclude Christ, any more than Aaron when he made the golden calf to please the people. But the fact is

the deep dishonour of this book to divine revelation. Alas! the worship of the weekdays did dissolve that of Sunday. “The Crystalline system was changed.” “It was an entire re-casting of the truth!” Truly we find ourselves in the difficult times of the last days, when one who yet owns Christ and the written word can dare so to think and write and print to the grief and shame of every thoughtful christian. And what pleasure (not without ridicule) to Messrs. Huxley and Tyndall and their companions, when they see the professing crowd carried away from the truth in their direction by this novel wind of doctrine! None can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one and love the other; or he will hold to the one and despise the other. Scripture repudiates Science not only as a co-ordinate but even as a subordinate authority in spiritual things. The process of ruin may seem slow, but is sure. To faith divine truth must be paramount; for the word of the Lord abides for ever. They cannot mingle their waters save to the loss of the well undefiled.

Science in its own “compartment” is or may be all well; but the truth (and “religion” must be this or a fable) refuses the banns which Mr. D. would proclaim between it and Science. One may not any more than the author respect “the theologian’s” insight into God’s mind in Scripture. For the effort to make the truth “scientific,” common to the theologian in an intellectual way and to Mr. D. in the lower depth of naturalism, is ruinous to the spiritual intelligence of revelation: which is little and powerless indeed, if it carry not divine authority over the conscience, as it reveals Christ in grace and truth to the heart. But think of a Christian gravely bowing to “the poet’s vision,” even though its comparative dimness

be recognised in honour of the great eureka What pandering to sentiment, not to say to self!

“The effect of the introduction [not of Christ, as Revealer of God and Mediator between God and man, into a lost world, but] “of Law among the scattered Phenomena of Nature has simply been to transform knowledge into eternal truth! The same crystallising touch is needed in Religion (!). Can it be said that the Phenomena of the Scriptural World are other than scattered (!!)?” p. 9. Yes, Mr. D.: God has from the beginning perfectly done in and by Christ, for what you call “the Spiritual World,” that which you vainly pretend to do by your book; and He has given the full and unchanging record in His Book. He and He alone has revealed the truth. He that pretends to furnish “eternal truth” at this time of day he that denies that God has united the once scattered “Phenomena of the Spiritual World in His Christ, made known in Scripture by the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven, is no true prophet. It is not “Reign of Law” we need: for we have already grace reigning through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.

In sober sadness the author has lost himself in this dream of identical Law. The nebula, from which the evolutionists deduce the universe, in the teeth of the calm majesty of Genesis 1, never fails to envelop the minds of all who confound that mythical hypothesis with true science; but of all these evolutionists (for they have their widely differing sects), none logically as well as spiritually less consistent than such as still profess faith in Christ and Scripture.

That this is no exaggeration of Mr. D.'s thought will be apparent yet more from what he says in p. 10 "My Spiritual World before was a chaos of fact; my Theology, a Pythagorean system trying to make the best of Phenomena apart from the idea of Law." It never seems to occur to the devotee of Science any more than to the theologian of the old schools, that not "the idea of Law," but the truth of Christ in Scripture, is by the Spirit's teaching the one centre of order in what is otherwise uncertain as well as chaotic. But He is this, and infinitely more, in the spiritual realm, to the exclusion of the vain key which Mr. D. commends.

"I make no charge against Theology in general, I speak of my own" [as if he had not been trained like other young men in the ordinary curriculum]. "And I say that I saw it to be in many essential respects centuries behind every department of science I knew." Christian reader, is not this perplexing language from a professed believer? the speech of Egypt, not of Canaan? If by "Theology" he means the revealed faith of a christian, as it surely ought to be, what means its being centuries behind any department of Science? Is not Scripture a revelation completely out and divinely perfect? Science how different!

Then how absurd and worse to add, "It was the one region still unpossessed by Law"! Our measure of appropriating the truth is our measure of knowing and applying Christ. That region is wholly possessed by, and instinct with — not Law, but — Christ. It is "the great exception," and distrusted by such men of science only and by all others as do not by the Spirit look to Christ and have life in Him. And what will Mr. D.'s book do for such adversaries? It may harden those who make Law

their god; it will corrupt every christian who admires and yields to its distinctive system; it is a positive wrong to Christ and Scripture; and the more sorrowful, as the author is, I doubt not, at bottom, a believer.

Even his apology in p. 11 is most objectionable and false "We have Truth in nature as it came from God." How different the voice of revelation in Rom. 1:19, 20! There is a real testimony to God's everlasting power and divinity (Theotes, but not Theotes which is only known in and by Christ, Col. 2:9). One learns justly that God must be; but Who and what He is can be known only through His Son, by and in whom it is eternal life to the believer. He is objectively the truth, as the Holy Spirit is the power by whom alone applying God's word He is made known.

But "Truth in nature" even "as it came from God," which Science ignores (being occupied only with nature fallen as it is), we have not; nor has such language any just sense. For Truth even in its least application means a thing or person made known as it is. Hence Nature could not possibly make known truth, unless a poet's vision be preferred to Scripture. Nor is God Himself ever called truth there, but Christ in one way and the Spirit in another, as revealing God and making known man and all else in the spiritual realm. No! "Truth in Nature" is only another part of the delusion, which Mr. D. shares with remarkably bad company, who begin with claiming "the same reverence" for Nature as for "all other Revelation," and are in danger of ending with the abandonment of Scripture, the only revelation of God for a sinner or a saint.

There are many excellent and true remarks up and down the volume; but less than what is here said would be unfaithfulness in him who writes this notice, whether or not he may examine it beyond the Preface in which its aim is explained.1 It is only incidental statements which are at all wholesome. The prime object is here shown to be false and evil. Hence the book is calculated to expose the unwary to that vast and complicated network of error in our day, which prepares the way for the apostacy or “falling away” which is at hand. Even the author would confess that, if his main design is fallacious, the book as a whole must be worse than worthless, as grace can employ anything.

1 Another is now examining the book with more detail in the “Bible Treasury” for May, etc., of this year. (1885)

John Nelson Darby as I knew him

A friend of Mr. Darby's, who was for many years on intimate terms with him, has kindly forwarded the following interesting account of a most interesting career.

As you wish for some personal reminiscences of the late J.N.D., I go back to my first intercourse with him in the summer of 1845 at Plymouth. For though I had been for years in communion before this, it had not been my lot to see him for whom above all others I had conceived, because of his love and testimony to Christ, profound respect and warm affection. I was then living in the Channel Islands, in one of which I began to break bread with three sisters in Christ, before ever looking a "brother" in the face. It was in J. B. Rowe's shop, Whimple Street, that we met; and very cordial and frank was his greeting. Painful disclosures had already been made of an effort to undermine from within, and to set up, under His name Who had taught us liberty of ministry and the unity of the Spirit, a state of things contrary to His word.

Mr. Darby was then bringing out in numbers the perhaps most valuable critique he ever wrote, in exposure of Mr. B. W. Newton's Thoughts on the Apocalypse; wherein the main object was to oppose, slyly but with set purpose, every truth which was distinctive of the movement, and all-important in our convictions of God's truth and glory in Christ. Nor was the revolutionary effort confined to the retrograde party in Plymouth. Mr. Chas. Hargrove, an Irish ex-rector, Mr. J. Parnell (was he yet Lord Congleton?), with others, had

committed themselves on various grounds to the reaction. Mr. Darby had replied to them all, with an earnest trenchant ability which earned the dislike and resentment of such as love compromise, rather than truth. Though grieved to the heart at schism, which must if unjudged lead to what the apostle calls “heresy” or sect, it was clear to me which cared for Christ, and which did not rise above self or their friends.

To established and non-established, it was just what many leaders of Christendom were desiring; for like the chief priests of old, they doubted whereunto this would grow. As no mean one among them wrote, they began to breathe freely when the Newtonian rent came. But a little matter of a private kind will interest you and your readers, as it gave me (some twenty years or so his junior), a practical lesson. When dining with Mr. Darby, he by the way said, “I should like to tell you how I live. Today I have more than usual on your account. But it is my habit to have a small hot joint on Saturday, cold on Lord’s day, cold on Monday, on Tuesday, on Wednesday, and on Thursday. On Friday I am not sorry to have a bit of chop or steak; then the round begins again.” I too, like Mr. Darby, had been ascetic as a young Christian, and had been reduced, by general indifference to outward life, so low that the physician prescribed as essential what had been discarded in self-denial. How uncommon to find a mind endowed with the rarest power of generalisation, able to come down like the apostle, and impress on a young disciple, eating, drinking, or whatever is done, to do all unto God’s glory! At that time Mr. Darby had not a whit of asceticism, but liberty and his heart bent on pleasing the Lord as to necessary food. To me, however small it might seem to

some, it was a hint of daily value, and through me to others; for many a saint, when “cleansed from leprosy”, forgets or neglects, in Levitical phrase, to shave off all his hair, and to wash his clothes, though he may duly bathe. So natural is it, as one of that class said, to retain and give to the Lord his “gentlemanship” — a gift abhorrent in His eyes; for it is worldly to the core.

Mr. Harris, Mr. Newton, Mr. H. Soltau, and many more I of course saw, and found full of kindness, even then when party spirit was doing its deadly work. For in brighter days did not Edward Irving call it a “swamp of love”, when his own mind was carried away by pretensions to miraculous power, and to a ritual beyond the Ritualists?

But such is the power of spirituality and devotedness, that Mr. Darby was the only one there to whom I felt free to tell confidentially the sad tale of an ex-clergyman’s sin, and to join with me in prayer respecting it. As the evil had come to my knowledge unsought and far away, it devolved on me in faith and love to seek him out, and lay what none perhaps suspected upon his soul before God. As he had already withdrawn from communion, one could leave all else with Him. No doubt he is long departed, and as no one is alive to guess the one meant, I venture thus to speak.

It was at a much earlier date (1831, I think) that F. W. Newman invited Mr. Darby to Oxford: a season memorable in a public way for his refutation of Dr. E. Burton’s denial of the doctrines of grace, beyond doubt held by the Reformers, and asserted not only by Bucer, P. Martyr, and Bishop Jewell, but in Articles IX — XVIII of the Church of England. With a smile he said to me, “That

is the only pamphlet by which I ever made money." The same visit of his acted more privately (not on Mr. W. E. Gladstone, who saw and heard him then) but on G. V. Wigram, Sir L. C. L. Brenton, B. W. Newton, and W. Jarrett, as well as others too halting in faith to make a decided stand and endure the consequences. It was characteristic of those young men that, when once at a conversazione someone remarked, "May the Lord give me a living in a beautiful country," (and he had more than his desire in a Scotch Bishopric), Mr. Wigram immediately exclaimed, "May He give me to follow and serve Him at all cost!" He too had his heart's desire. Sir Chas. Brenton hardly quite appreciated J.N.D., if one may judge by his rather severe saying, "I never knew a man in whom the two Adams were so strong." Sir Charles was rather legal, and suffered from it; so much so that J.N.D. called a few, not long before the former died, for special prayer on his behalf, and not in vain.

It was, if I err not, before 1830 that, filled with the sense of the Christian's union with Christ, J.N.D. visited London, and laid it before one regarded as among the most mature of the Evangelical clergy. But his own indifference to worldly appearances seemed to render that precious but little understood truth a dead letter to this divine, who confounded it with the new birth, as ill-taught saints commonly do. His tone was pompous and self-complacent. He evidently regarded his visitor as a poor curate airing as a wonder what all knew. But the well-appointed carriage from Westminster, with coachman and footman, came to take Mr. Darby to his father's house, and happened to catch the clergyman's eye, when his manner changed to servility. This disgusted my friend, who could make allowance for

ignorance, but was pained by a worldly spirit in a Christian, especially in a Christian minister. He well enough knew that the clergyman was of humble extraction; but this was nothing in his eyes if there had been spiritual feeling. Nor did the clergyman grow in grace any more than truth, when he became a bishop, and a metropolitan one. There was a worm at the root of his theology; for he betrayed unsoundness as to divine inspiration, both before his elevation to the episcopal throne, and after it. Such men cannot be expected to have ears to hear.

I was unable to attend the Conference at Liverpool in the forties, but was present at that which was held in London in 1845. Only on the afternoon of the third day did J.N.D. rise to speak, and this, after a well-known friend had alluded to his silence in singular terms. Mr. Darby explained that he had not spoken because so many brothers had a great deal to say. It was a most impressive discourse; for after many, and not leaders only, had spoken with considerable power and unction, he gave a terse summary, which set their main points in the best position, and then brought in a flood of fresh light from Scripture on the whole theme. During the same Conference a noble personage, who resented Darby's exposure of a foolish and injurious tract by himself, gave way to vehement spleen. But J.N.D. answered not a word. Another, who was no less unreasonably offended, came into the hall while Mr. R. M. Beverley was telling us what had helped him to what he regarded as the chief truth he had long wanted. The old brother (very deaf) entered, and went as near the speaker as he could, and heard him read a page of his own book, affirming the very doctrine of the Spirit's

presence and working, which he himself was abandoning, and for which Mr. Darby had censured him. This incident made no small impression on me of a living God's ways.

Considerate and kind as J.N.D. was to F. W. Newman, before Newman's active mind rebelled against "the doctrine of Christ", he had no real sympathy with the character either of him or of his brother the Cardinal. Men, and not God, governed them both, though in a different way. The younger of the two had been much the most distinguished throughout his academic career. The elder became a master of style in English writing, but a mere slave of tradition. Mr. Darby cared supremely for Christ and the truth to the glory of God the Father. Both brothers began as Evangelicals; but they diverged, as time went on, and were quite estranged, till the one became a Papist, and the other an infidel; then they "renewed happy intercourse." Anything like this was sorrow and shame to Mr. Darby, who could not respect, even as a man, him who wrote and justified No. 90 of the Oxford Tracts; for from beginning to end it is a barefaced and jesuitical plea, to construe in a Romanist sense the Protestant Thirty-nine Articles. More shocking still that Pusey and Keble etc., should endorse its deceit. Also what could J.N.D. feel but grief and indignation at the blasphemer, who at length could compare J. Fletcher's as a life more perfect than that of Jesus the Son of God? It is my judgment, that if Professor H. Rogers, in his Eclipse of Faith, crushed Phases of Faith on its own ground, much more did Mr. Darby, on a Christian basis, in his Irrationalism of Infidelity; just as he also laid bare the dishonesty of J. H. Newman's

Apologia pro sua Vita. Even their logic was anything but immaculate.

Mr. Darby was deliberate and prayerful in weighing a Scripture; but he wrote rapidly, as thoughts arose in his spirit, and often with scarcely a word changed. He delighted in a concatenated sentence, sometimes with parenthesis within parenthesis, to express the truth fully, and with guards against misconception. An early riser and indefatigable worker, he yet had not time to express his mind as briefly and clearly as he could wish. “You write to be read and understood,” he once said playfully to me; “I only think on paper.” This made his writings, to the uninitiated, anything but pleasant reading, and to a hasty glance almost unintelligible; so that many, even among highly educated believers, turned away, because of their inability to penetrate sentences so involved. No one could be more indifferent to literary fame; he judged it beneath Christ and therefore the Christian. He was but a miner, as he said; he left it to others to melt the ore, and circulate the coin, which many did in unsuspected quarters, sometimes men who had no good to say of him, if one may not think to conceal the source of what they borrowed. To himself Christ was the centre of all, and the continual object before him, even in controversy; nor is anything more striking, even in his hottest polemics, than his assertion of positive truth to edification. He was never content to expose an adversary, where not only his unfaltering logic, but instant and powerful grasp of the moral side, and above all of the bearing of Christ on the question, made him the most redoubtable of doctors. Yet the same man ever delighted in preaching the glad tidings to the poor, and only paid too much honour to those whom he

considered evangelists more distinctively than himself. Indeed I remember one, who could scarcely be said to be more so than he was, happening (to his own discomposure) to preach in his presence at one of the Conferences in the past (Portsmouth); and for months after, this dear simple-minded servant of the Lord, kept telling brethren in private, and not there only, “Ah, I wish that I could appeal to the people as So-and-so does!”

That he exercised large and deep influence could not but be; but he sought it not, and was plainspoken to his nearest friends. To one whom he valued as a devoted man, he said, “Come, -, not so much of the gentleman.” Another, dear to him from an early day and an admirable pastor, a good teacher and preacher, had got married to a worldly-minded lady (his second wife), though an Evangelical of the Evangelicals. This brother (an ex-clergyman) grieved him by running down the simple few gathered to the Lord’s name in the village where he lived. The complainant was no longer the labourer he had once been among the poor, but was as a half-squire and half-parson drawing back to a long abandoned social intercourse with country folk. “Ah! -,” said Mr. Darby, “it is not the brethren but the wife.” That this was true made it the less palatable; and the wife did not fail to make it a rupture never healed. Nor was it only such cases that gave him pain. A lady I knew, when he paid a visit to Guernsey, invited a company to meet him in private, but exclusively of those who were in a good position. Had it been an Anglican Christian, or one with Denominations, he would have made allowance and expected nothing else; but he was vexed that one in fellowship should be so far from the word and will of the

Lord as to fail in giving an opportunity to lowly saints, rich in faith, who would have enjoyed it exceedingly. When asked to give thanks, he begged me to do so, meaning it as a quiet sign that he was displeased.

It was my privilege, being actively engaged, to hear him very seldom, and this at great meetings in which he ordinarily took a large part; but I remember once hearing him preach (on Romans 5:20, 21) to a small company of the very poor; and to a more powerful and earnest discourse I never listened, though in the plainest terms, exactly suited to his audience. The singing was execrable; and he did his best to lead them, for his voice was sweet, and his ear good; but the barbarous noise of others prevailed, with which he bore in a patience truly edifying, going on with his message quite unmoved.

Yet was he anything but self-confident. Being asked once to preach in the open air, he begged the younger man to take it; for said he, “I shrink from that line of work, being afraid of sticking in the midst, from not knowing what to say.” He ungrudgingly delighted in the bold preacher with a heart full of the love of souls. He overlooked many faults, where he credited anyone with devotedness (sometimes at their own valuation). An intense admirer of his used to say that in this respect and others too, “he was the most gullible man in England.” This of course was extreme exaggeration; nevertheless it occurred often enough to embarrass his fellow-labourers. I remember once in Bath remonstrating with him, because of his apparently unbroken confidence in a brother who was behaving very ill to his own mother and sister, whom he drove out of the meeting as a veritable “Diotrephes,” to gratify his

mad and unbelieving father. Mr. Darby soliloquised as we walked along, “Strange thing, that my pets should turn out scamps.” I fear that so it evidently was with this person; for not long after he furnished the most defamatory scandal ever written, printed and circulated, against his blindly generous benefactor.

The upshot of this case is instructive. The railer, who of course vanished, not only from fellowship but to another land, had great kindness shown him by a Christian man there, an Irish gentleman. Having occasion afterwards to visit Ireland, he enquired if any of his friends knew of one, Mr. Darby. Oh, yes to be sure! Everyone knows of Mr. Darby. “Well,” said he, “I received — and his large family for a long time; during which he was habitually abusing Darby. But I found him out to be worthless; so I came to the conclusion that the object of his abuse must be a very good man.” It smacks rather Hibernian; but it was a sound instinct, and true in fact.

The same readiness to believe the best, even of untoward souls, showed itself not seldom when persons drew on his purse, or, what was of more moment, sought fellowship through his mediation. Not a few even now will recollect an excessively turbulent man, who espoused the cause of one who had to be put out of fellowship; and being himself no less guilty, he fell under the like sentence. This man never appeared till Mr. Darby returned to London from his long journeyings, but repaired to him forthwith on his arrival. Then followed the renewed appeal: “How is it that — is still outside?” Thereon a dead silence ensued, easily understood; for everyone would have gratified Mr. Darby, had it been possible. At last a brother (now deceased), noted for his downrightness, said, “Mr. Darby, we know -; but you do

not.” Yet were some weak enough to call him a Pope who would have his way, and bore no contradiction.

A similar case, only more disreputable, of one ex-communicated for outrageous profanity, etc., occurred much later. Mr. Darby’s heart somehow was touched, because he came to the meetings, and indeed forced himself to the front, and tried, while unrestored, to appropriate the Lord’s Supper. Yet our beloved friend looked leniently on what was very painful to most. He was as far as possible from the ogre which so many fancied, but inflexible against those who assailed Christ. So he himself used to say, “I ought never to touch matters of discipline; for I believe the first person, brother or sister, that tells me about things. It is quite out of my line.” So much was this felt, that I used to pray the Lord that only a true account might first reach his ear. But every considerate Christian must be aware that the faithful were as slow to spread evil tidings to gain a point, as the light and party-spirited were quick to plead for those they favour, and especially with one so influential as J.N.D. Also, when one of his position and character took up a cause in this one-sided way, as might and did happen, all can conceive how difficult it was for others to convince, or for himself to revise. Do any blame me for giving these amiable drawbacks? I humbly think that even in a brief sketch it is hardly truthful to omit what has been here touched with a loving hand, and what he himself would have frankly owned. It is not for me to say one word of what is best left in the grave of Christ, where my own failures lie buried.

No man more disliked cant, pretension, and every form of unreality. Thos. Carlyle loudly and bitterly talked his

detestation of “shams,” J.N.D. quietly lived it in doing the truth. He often took the liberty of an older Christian to speak frankly, among others to a brother whose love, as he thought, might bear it. But sometimes the wound however faithful only closed to break out another day. “What were you about, -, hiding among your family connections, and not once seeing the brethren around?” On the other hand reliable testimony is not wanting of his ready love in so lowly a way as to carry him where few would follow, especially where known. In early days, among the few at Plymouth a barber brother fell sick; and as no one else thought of his need, J.N.D. is said to have gone in his absence and served as well as he could in the little shop.

Thoughtful for others he was indifferent as to comforts for himself, though he did not mind buying costly books, if he believed them of value for his work. Then he was habitually a hard worker, from early morn devoted to his own reading the word and prayer; but even when most busily engaged, he as the rule reserved the afternoons for visiting the poor and the sick, his evenings for public prayer, fellowship, or ministry. Indeed whole days were frequently devoted to Scripture readings wherever he moved, at home or abroad. But his clothes were plain, and he wore them to shabbiness, though punctiliously clean in his person, which dressy people are not always. In Limerick once, kind friends took advantage of his sleep to replace the old with new, which he put on without a word, as the story went.

In middle life he trudged frequently on foot through a large part of France and Switzerland, sometimes refreshing himself on the way with acorns, at other times thankful to have an egg for his dinner, because, as

he said, no unpleasant visitors for certain could get in there! In his own house, or lodging, all was simplicity and self-denial; yet if invited to dine or sup, he freely and thankfully partook of what was set before him. Still he had a vigilant eye for the Lord, particularly with younger fellow-labourers; and I remember that when with me on first setting up house, he deliberately looked at a table-spoon or fork before him. Happily I passed muster; and nothing was said: they were only plated! So he lived himself. Even in such things he hated for Christians the pride of life, and justly felt that one little licence opens the way for many greater.

His largeness of heart, for one of strong convictions and of practical consistency, showed itself in many ways. After he left the Anglican Establishment he preached occasionally at the call of godly clergymen who urged it; but he only appeared for the discourse and was not present at the previous service. So in France afterwards he preached for pious ministers of the Reformed Church; nor did he refuse the black gown as an academic dress; but when they brought the bands, “Oh! no,” said he: “I put on no more.” Again, he did not spare but warmly rebuked the zealots among half-fledged brothers, who were so ignorantly bitter as to apply what the apostle said of heathen tables to those of the various Denominations. It was only fundamental error which roused his deepest grief and indignation. Then, as one of these (a heterodox teacher) said to me, J.N.D. writes with a pen in one hand and a thunderbolt in the other.

As a more public instance, take his letter from Barbados to Archdeacon Stopford, when cast down by Mr. Gladstone’s disestablishment and spoliation of the Irish Protestant church, to assure him of his sympathy. “If the

Protestants trust God, this will remain their position. Let them, because of the word of God, and in honouring it and what is called Protestantism, as owning it cordially, coalesce with the Presbyterians, as you have noticed they did in the best times under Bramhall… Only be yourselves, and trust God. Have done with the State, reject it, making no terms for a little money and much subjection; if you do, you are lost." But none the less, when the pious and learned Dr. O'Brien, Bishop of Ossory, who had married his niece, wrote a defence of Baptismal Regeneration, which he had long rejected, Mr. Darby wrote a vigorous reply, and proved that the argument on the formularies as well as Scripture was simply and grossly a begging of the question.

Even in his own circle his forbearance towards prejudice was as great as his decision in momentous things. He often worked with another, when he did not shrink from preaching in the open air so much as later. Once his companion was a man of singular eloquence, but slow to learn fuller truth and addicted to form. So the naval ex-commander read a petition from the Common Prayer selection, and the ex-clergyman made the gospel appeal. Perhaps one such experiment sufficed. Incongruities happened in those days. At a later date he became more chary of preaching in so-called churches or "temples" (as they call them abroad), when superstition crept in and rationalism. The recent indifferentism that prevails also curtailed in practice the readiness with which outside Christians were received, though the principle abode as ever; but its application could not but be abridged, when some wished to break bread who were insensible to notorious and grievous error taught where they usually attended.

It will interest many to hear that his paper on the Progress of Democratic Power, and its effect on the Moral state of England, immensely struck the late Sir T. D. Acland, who was Mr. Gladstone's intimate friend from Oxford days till death. In acknowledging the gift of Miscellaneous I., which contains the sketch, he wrote to me that it was (though written many years before) the most wonderful forecast and just appraisal he ever read of what is come and coming.

This then is my conviction, that a saint more true to Christ's name and word I never knew or heard of. He used to say that three classes, from their antecedents, are apt to make bad brothers; clergymen, lawyers, and officers. He himself was a brilliant exception, though a lawyer first and a clergyman afterward.

A great man naturally, and as diligent a student as if he were not highly original, he was a really good man, which is much better. So, for good reason, I believed before I saw him; so taking all in all I found him, in peace and in war; and so, in the face of passing circumstances, I am assured he was to the end. Do I go too far if I add, may we be his imitators, even as he also was of Christ?

W. K.

The Higher Criticism

“The Higher Criticism” [Second Edition]: Three Papers by S. R. Driver, D.D., Canon of Christ Church, and Regius Prof. of Hebrew Oxford; and A. F. Kirkpatrick, D.D., Master of Selwyn College, and Lady Margaret’s Prof. of Divinity (sometime Reg. Prof. of Hebrew), Cambridge. London Hodder & Stoughton, 27 Paternoster Row. 1905.

Dr. Kirkpatrick opens the first of these papers with words which sound well:- “The aim of the Christian student is truth; and the aim of the Christian teacher is to bring that truth to bear upon human character and life. The Old Testament forms an integral part of the Bible. It was placed in the hands of the Christian Church by its Founder and His Apostles as the record of God’s revelation of Himself to His chosen people and the manifold preparation for His own coming; as the source from which instruction in conduct was to be derived, and as the means by which the spiritual life was to be fed. We cannot therefore treat it as any other book: it is sacred ground: reverence is demanded of us as we approach it. But it is no true reverence which would exempt it from the fullest examination by all legitimate methods of criticism” (p. 3). Textual criticism as applied to Scripture has for its aim to set out the very words of the original, and the rejection of every intrusion, omission, or change through the copyist whether unintentional or designed. Such was the recognised task of the orthodox critic from the first; and the MSS., the Versions, and ancient citations furnished the materials which the critic employed to give, in his judgment, the

most exact approach to the deposit of faith: a difficult and delicate work, which demanded spiritual discernment at least as much as patient research and multifarious learning. Such is the criticism alone considered “legitimate” till of late.

But this is not “The Higher Criticism,” which as a system is of comparatively recent date, and under cover of literary problems has raised fundamental doubts incompatible with divine inspiration in any real and honest sense. Individuals or parties may have indulged from early days in similar incredulity and on a small scale; but neology did not then spread, being reprobated by men of simpler faith, even if not very intelligent. Nor would Dr. K. dispute this, as one may gather from his page 5: “Now, what is the position of students and teachers of the Bible today? They are face to face with a treatment of the Bible, especially the Old Testament, which half, nay, a quarter of a century ago, would have seemed utterly irreverent, subversive of the foundations of the faith; and which still seems to many (it is not to be wondered at) irreverent and mischievous.”

In a note to page 14 (his last), he acknowledges, not the energy of the Holy Spirit acting on pious and prayerful souls distressed by the revived superstition and infidelity of our day, but “the influence of contemporary methods of study and modes of thought; and, in particular, how modern methods of examining literary and historical documents and the doctrine of development compel us to revise many of our traditional ideas in regard to the Old Testament.” Yes, there you have the impulse which has carried away in its sceptical current the crowd of literary speculators. It is not God’s grace, but the spirit of the age, applying the fashionable

craze of development without faith or even fear of God in owning His word, but boasting of present-day methods of criticism, where we have no authentic history save what He has given by His servants the prophets, whose limbs they would rend into the galvanised factors of their unbridled imagination. Did not the Lord of glory, the “before Abram came into being I am,” know all the truth about the Bible? Did not the inspiring Holy Spirit? If both declare and sanction the common faith of God’s elect against the revolutionary scheme, where and what are the new critics?

The real position of the party represented by these two distinguished leaders in Cambridge and Oxford is, on their own showing, presumptuous to the last degree. It is a conspiracy against the confession of all the Christian martyrs and saints who have lived and suffered for righteousness and the Lord’s name for some 1800 years. It is rebellion against the plain yet profound and divinely inspired revelation, which the church of God received admittedly from its Founder, the Truth itself, and through Apostles, assured by Himself of the Holy Spirit’s power to guide them into all the truth. During many centuries were prophets of old raised up by God in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, children of no faith, but perseveringly addicted to idolatry. They warned Israel from the beginning of their national history; even the greatest of them before they entered on the promised land predicted their ruin for a while, His hiding His face from them because of their abominations, and also His moving them to jealousy with a no-people, and provoking them to jealousy with a foolish people (Deut. 32). And we Christians have the greatest of apostles interpreting these words in Rom.

10:19, as that which Moses said of the rejection of Israel and the present call of the Gentiles; yet looking onward in Rom. 11 both to the Gentiles cut off because of their unbelief, and to the restoration of Israel in sovereign mercy, by an everlasting covenant never again to rebel nor be defiled, when Jehovah's sanctuary shall be in their midst for evermore.

It is too evident that these sponsors for the revolt against the Bible, as the Lord and His apostles undoubtedly taught, and the faithful in their measure have accepted with all confidence in Him and them (the foundation on which the church is built), have in no way profited either by the prophecy of Israel's ruin or by the brightness of their glorious recovery, when Christendom falls under the unsparing judgment of its unbelief in yet richer privilege. But there is another warning still closer and more serious. The same Lord and His apostles solemnly assure us, that the Christian testimony would be corrupted as certainly as the Jewish one had been; that the evil was active even in the apostolic days, and that so far from being extirpated, it would surely work up to a head of entire revolt from God, the apostasy and the man of sin, the full and foul contrast of the righteous Man who never did but the will of God.

In presence of the many words of God pointing to this awful consummation before the present age ends, it were wise for the leaders and the followers of the new movement to weigh the Lord's question, "When the Son of man cometh, shall He find faith on the earth?" (Luke 18:8.) He goes far beyond the Roman sack of Jerusalem and dispersion of the Jews, and the city trodden down by nations still later till times of nations are fulfilled, which is clearly not yet come. He tells us of signs of sun, moon,

and stars, and upon the earth distress of nations in perplexity, the roar of the sea and rolling waves, men ready to die through fear and expectation of what is coming on the inhabited earth, for the powers of the heavens shall be shaken; and then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. If the moral end for man was his iniquity in crucifying the Messiah, God's Son, He will come as the glorious Son of man to judge mankind and establish the world-kingdom of God which neither the gospel nor the church could do. He alone is competent and worthy (Rev. 11:15); but how overwhelming the judgments whereby the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness!

We know how little the new school cares for traditional views; and there in principle I cannot blame them. But few tradition-mongers are so ignorant of prophecy as they. It is well then before they fall into the same destructive criticism as to the New Testament, that they should lay to heart that the Lord's approaching judgment of Christendom as well as of the world generally is the uniform testimony of the apostles and prophets. It is a day of Christ's manifest triumph for faith, but of ruin for unbelief in teacher or taught.

"The night is far spent and the day is at hand" (Rom. 13:12). "Waiting for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Cor. 1:7). "For indeed we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened; not that we would be unclothed but clothed, that the mortal might be swallowed up of life" (2 Cor. 5:4). "For we through the Spirit by faith wait [not for righteousness, being already justified, but] for the hope of righteousness," i.e. glory with Christ (Gal. 5:5). For God's purpose is to head or "sum up all things in the Christ, the things in the

heavens and the things upon the earth; — in Him in whom we also obtained inheritance," we being not the heritage, but heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ (Eph. 1:9-11). "For our citizenship is in [the] heavens, whence also we await the Lord Jesus Christ as Saviour who shall transform" etc. (Phil. 3:20, 21). "When the Christ, our life, is manifested, then shall ye also be manifested with Him in glory" (Col. 3:4).

So we are told that from the very first the Thessalonian believers turned to God from idols to serve a living and true God, and to await from the heavens His Son, whom He raised from out of dead [men], Jesus our deliverer from the coming wrath (1 Thess. 1:9, 10). If more were needed, much more could be added in proof; that as tradition has never known or kept up the true faith and hope, so none in Christendom could more thoroughly renounce revelation in this respect than this self-vaunting new party. Who ever heard of so much as one neologist absorbed, as all Christians ought to be, by "the blessed hope," of any devoted, as not of the world, to the indisputably primitive and faithful attitude in awaiting Christ's coming as our constant hope? Who can tell us of one new critic separate from the world, enjoying grace, suffering from Christ's reproach and withal filled with joy?

But there is the dark and awful side which follows that hope, the day of the Lord's judging the inhabited earth (Acts 17:31). His day for the everlasting downfall of all man's worldly and fleshly glory (Isa. 2, 1 Thess. 5). It is grievous to say that the New Testament speaks unambiguously on the special guilt of false teachers in Christendom, whether sanctimonious like the traditionalists, or audacious and profane like most of the

new pretenders to know the Scriptures better than the Lord and His inspired ambassadors, who in effect make Him and them to err in declaring, for instance, that Moses, David, Isaiah, Daniel wrote what they did not write. It is nonsense to talk, as rationalists habitually do, of the superiority of their own day, of modern progress, of new modes of thought and more searching methods of literary and historical investigation; as if God's Word did not stand on ground peculiar to itself, and not therefore to be treated confessedly, "as any other work."

Inspiration in any proper sense, and allowing for errors of copyists, etc., is essentially superior to the advances of knowledge in material things or in human experience. It is therefore unreasonable to expect that any increase of such knowledge should affect the truth committed to the church; so distinct are the things of man from those of God. As man's spirit knows the things of man, and of the lower creation set under man, so the things of God knows no man but the Spirit of God. Are the leaders of this new movement, abroad or at home, such as could uprightly say, "Now we received not the spirit of the world but the Spirit that is of God, that we might know [consciously know] the things freely given to us by God?" I do not allude to the wilful disputers of this age, if men of this stamp ever were; but would the few reverent ones avow that they have the anointing Spirit abiding in them, which another apostle declares that the very babes of God's family received from the Holy One? If they would not (and I have sure ground for saying that they venture not), are these, whatever their ability or acquirement, entitled to the least weight where angels would fear to tread? They are as a class restrained by no such scruple; for they have never learnt from God their

own nothingness in His things; yea, if not renewed and indwelt by His Spirit, that they have only the mind of flesh which is enmity against God.

Hence, because they know not God by His teaching, they shrink from claiming life eternal as a present possession, and have never faced their sins before God so as to know themselves become His righteousness in Christ. They talk of His revelation as progressive. Now, the revelation of God is itself, and does not admit of that progress which man boasts. Take the grand intimation of deliverance from the serpent's malicious and deadly power in man's fall. Expressly was it not to be through the merit of virtue of fallen man; it stood in Another. And in this first announcement after sin and death entered, we cannot but see, unless we be blind, that the Deliverer is human because He is the woman's seed, and that He is divine, for He will utterly crush the mighty angelic rebel, the liar and murderer from the beginning. If the Oxford and Cambridge Professors know of a revelation in the O. T. progressive beyond this, who would not hail the discovery with joy?

There was a very different revelation of divine wrath, recorded early in the same book of Genesis, which swept away all mankind, save eight persons, the family of Noah, whom grace preserved for the righteous man's sake who believed. Do they count this progressive as compared with God's announcement of the bruised Deliverer from the coming wrath? It is hard to conceive that any could so reckon who know God or themselves. Again, we have the self-centring pride of man judged at Babel, and the hitherto united race confounded by the difference of languages and nations, but (as we learn from Joshua 24) serving other gods. And the God of

glory appears to call Abram to Himself from the strange gods of which we then first hear (a call of grace so absolute as to separate him from country, kin, and father's house), the depository of promise for a seed both fleshly and spiritual (see Rom., Gal., and Heb.), the grand result for heaven and earth being not yet seen. But can even that or its repetition to Isaac and Jacob be rightly deemed progress on the woman's Seed and, after suffering, His triumph over the power of the wicked one?

Then long after, the law-giving at Sinai, so awe-inspiring and terrific as to make Moses its mediator "exceedingly fear and quake," was a revelation of God to all Israel which every true Christian accepts literally as recorded in Ex. 19, 20. Is it the fact that the new school are as incredulous of the display at Sinai as of the creation recorded in Gen. 1, 2? Are not their German leaders as scoffingly infidel in regard to both as the French Encyclopaedists, T. Paine and G. Bradlaugh? Do the best of the British guides differ at heart, or is it only in decency of tone, whilst equally unbelieving? But as to progressive revelation, was the law at Sinai an advance on the woman's Seed? or even on the promises to Abraham and to his seed? On these the apostle argues with care and energy to show their precedence by 430 years, and the unconditional grace they held out to the believers, in contrast with the law which was added for the sake (not of sins, but) of transgressions until the Seed came to whom the promise was made. Does not the apostle Paul thereby refute this progressive theory? The promises assuredly were the support of faith through the ages; as the law, right, wise and needed in God's

ways with man, could only condemn the guilty and destroy all hopes of a standing or escape on that ground.

It is needless to enumerate the divine interventions that studded the history of the chosen nation, which equally refute the progressive assumption. God had taken care that grace on His part should precede law, not only from the lost paradise of Eden but in the world that now is from the call of Abram; and whatever was vouchsafed in fresh revelations only confirmed both the one and the other which met in Christ. Then when the people were ruined and driven out of His land for their idolatry, and the unbelief of the returned remnant to still greater sins and severer punishment rejected His and their Messiah, it was not only revelations from God but God Himself revealed in His Son Jesus our Lord, in His person, His life, His death, His resurrection, and His ascension to God's right hand and throne in heaven.

This, no doubt, is beyond comparison. It is not promise merely but accomplishment, the ground of God's glad tidings of grace and of Christ's glory, the soul's redemption secured to God's glory, the church united by the Spirit to the Head, in readiness to save the last member of the body for Christ's coming and His subsequent revelation before the universe manifestly put under Him. Does the new school truly believe in this glorious issue as God reveals it? Does it accept in God-fearing simplicity any one of these revelations past, present, or future? To think of progress, since the fulness of the Godhead dwelt and dwells in Christ, is such presumptuous unbelief as to be no less than blasphemy against the necessarily complete and final revelation of God in His person. May they be preserved at least from that revolt! what can one think of any one

so deceived by the enemy? Christ is not a divine dealing or a doctrine merely, but a divine person in manhood fully revealed for life eternal, redemption, and glory.

Some, we know, speak of their faith in inspiration; and personally one may have clung to hope against fear that the faith might be living under the wretched incubus of their complicated cobweb on cobweb, woven by the brains of Teutonic legendmongers, without a single solid fact. A most amiable apologist puts it thus: — Jehovist1, J2, J3; Elohist1, E2; J E combination of Jehovistic with Elohistic; D Dh Dp, the author of the Urdeuteronomium with two later redactors; J E D, combination of J E with Deuteronomy; P P1 P2 Px, the author of the priestly code with its later editions (Px=P3 P4 P5 etc.); Rj, the editor who combines J and E; Rd Rd2, two authors or editors, the first of whom combines J E with P, contributes to Joshua and Judges, and writes most of Kings, while the second is a later redactor of that work; Rp, the editor who combines J E D with P!

The credulity of the incredulous is proverbial. When did inspiration enter this extravagant patchwork? Was it with the first or the last? or were all these cobblers inspired? He who cites gravely such speculations from another's scheme tells us that this critical apparatus goes up to the furthest limits "as yet reached." He may be assured that so wild an appetite must grow without end. He speaks of the "enormous amount of labour which will be apt to seem wasted;" but such minds as leave God out of labour, "accurate" as they may think, must always waste it. Only he who does God's will abides for eternity; and was any thing farther from God's will than this nothingarian quest? He magnifies His word above all His name, and will avenge the insult

done to Scripture on all the guilty. He may warn those that add to or take from the things in one book, peculiarly the scorn of erudite unbelief; but His indignation is not limited to that book. It is deplorable to look to any specialists who trust in themselves and each other but not in the word and the Holy Spirit who imparts it, and alas! “our own scholars!” “to decide judiciously.” “Thus saith Jehovah; Cursed is the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from Jehovah.” May the Christian profit by Israel’s danger, a danger never more real than now. It is the precursor of the apostasy (2 Thess 2:3).

Prophets wrote the O.T. books; prophets authenticated the original drafts, and added as they were led of the Spirit such confirmations at a later date as were called for in the days of the kings, and the still more factious time of the return from captivity when the Jews were subjected to the Persian, Greek, and Roman powers. But the crowning mercy was the presence of Messiah, the Son of God, not only to suffer for our sins but to give to believers understanding to know Him that is True. Hence the all-importance of His pronouncement on the O.T. and promise of the Holy Spirit for the apostles and prophets as to the final scriptures in the tongue of the Gentiles. No moment was so wise and necessary or auspicious. Never was the O. T. so verified and honoured, as when the so-called N. T. was to follow, all given before the first century A. D. closed.

For the Lord did strikingly seal the truth of the law of Moses, and the Prophets, and the Psalms, not only in the days of His flesh but in His risen state (Luke 24:44). Even His own when raised shall be superior to the prejudice of time and sense and shall know as they are

known. Both He and His inspired servants alike bear the testimony of divine authority to all, and particularly to Moses, David, Isaiah, and Daniel, the most assailed by vain and empty sciolists, the last men in the world to trust for origin, date, literary structure, character, or meaning of scripture, because their system does its worst to unsettle for themselves and the faithless world godly heed, and find pleasure in doubt. As a Christian student, I may be allowed to say that I have been tolerably familiar with the arguments of the new school long before these Professors of Oxford and Cambridge; and I fail to recall a single service of value any one of them has rendered to revealed truth. How could it be otherwise? Since it is the essence of rationalism to deny God's authority and mind in scripture as a whole, not one of them can rightly estimate any of its parts. Is anything more "settled," as the first article of their unbelief, than that there is not nor can be for most of them true miracle or prophecy? Yet every Christian knows that scripture itself is both miraculous and prophetic, to say nothing of the many miracles and prophecies it attests.

But the extraordinary and distracting phenomenon presents itself of a crowd of speculators who still claim the name of Christian and busy themselves, not on the Koran or the Hindu Vedas or the Parsee Avesta, but on the O.T., and represent "an enormous amount of labour, which will be apt to seem wasted" if on fabrications and priestly impostures. Does it not rather seem the homage which infidelity pays to the truth they dislike, dread, and fain would destroy, yet in vain and, alas! to their own destruction, unless they repent? It is the more extraordinary that the people whom the critics despise

as so prejudiced transmitted to us as sacred those very prophecies which denounced their disobedience, corruption, and idolatries, and predicted their consequently present anomalous state. “For the children of Israel shall abide many days without king and without prince, and without sacrifice, and without pillar, and without ephod and teraphim.” Who but an infidel can deny that Hosea 3:4 is fulfilled? Which of the new school believes that his ver. 5 will as surely be to the joy of all the earth? “Afterward shall the children of Israel [mark, Israel] return and seek Jehovah their God and David their king; and shall come with fear to Jehovah and to his goodness at the end of the days.” Blinded as the Jews are judicially, they are not so unbelieving as the neologists.

Let us now come to the earliest charge of “false science” in Gen. 1 laid by the Lady Margaret’s Prof. of Divinity, Cambridge. “It was once as easy as it was natural to regard the first chapter of Genesis as a literal account of the way in which the universe was brought into being; now that we have read the records of the rocks, and learnt some fragments of the mystery of the heavens, we know that it cannot be regarded as literal history” (p. 4). Dr. Driver (Regius Prof. of Hebrew, Oxford) is if possible more curt and peremptory (p. 52), and alludes to Gen. 1 as “this imperfect and in many respects false science.” Is such language becoming from professing Christian teachers about God’s word? It is calm and deliberate, and therefore far more guilty than from an avowed enemy of revelation. Now I distinctly affirm that these two Professors do not understand the chapter. There is no collision whatever between it and the ascertained facts of geology. It is ignorance in both to affirm any

such contradiction. Room is left for the geologic ages of science, with the strata and their fossils before the six days; but scripture is silent thereon. There is therefore no excuse for the evil insinuation, invented by infidel scientists, and repeated by these D.Ds.

The chapter starts with the grand truth of creation, of which many geologists really are as ignorant now as the ancient philosophers of every age and school: a truth which idolatry of old as willingly ignored as modern science in its desire to forget and exclude God. From neither was it learnt. “By faith we understand that the worlds have been framed by the word of God, so that what is seen hath not been made out of things which do appear.”

Thus it was, even before Moses wrote, known from Adam downward among the faithful. And from Rom. 1:19, 20 it appears that creation was not doubted for a long while afterward. For we do not hear of idolatry till after the deluge. But when Moses wrote by God’s inspiration, details were added of the deepest import, far beyond the general truth. What was the testimony on which faith rested? Mainly and literally on these opening words of the Bible: a truth subversive of heathenism and immeasurably nobler, higher, deeper, and more spiritually instructive than all the discoveries of astronomy, geology, and of other sciences put together.

No science, ancient or modern, ever taught this great truth, any more than later Gentile tradition. The heathen oracles assumed and gave out falsehood on eternal matter which issued in atheism and pantheism, or what Gibbon, ever heartless, called the “elegant mythologies of Greece and Rome,” the basest and most demoralising

of all, reducing their divinities to very wicked males and females like themselves. Here the oracles of all science are dumb now as ever. For science as science knows nothing beyond its own subject matter and cannot speak aright of God. Hence men the most disposed to cry up the triumphs of science are compelled to allow its total failure in this respect. J. S. Mill (Logic, 8th ed., 398), owns that "we can give no account of the origin of the permanent causes themselves" [such as the earth's rotation]. So H. Spencer says of science, "It conducts us to a blank wall by a method which is wholly powerless to penetrate the mystery which lies behind." How strange that the professedly Christian teachers should not acknowledge where geology and every other science failed! Moses was inspired to communicate this fundamental revelation, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth": a sublime truth, stated in as noble simplicity, to begin the Bible, as God alone knew and made it known through His servant by the Holy Spirit.

Ver. 2 is most important in its way: for it reveals without limitation of date, yet as a subsequent fact, that the earth was made waste and empty, with darkness upon the face of the deep. Not only does the expression of the Hebrew verb in the 1st clause lend itself to this (for so is it used often even in this chapter as elsewhere), but Isa. 45:18 is to my mind decisive in its favour. "For thus saith Jehovah that created the heavens, He is God; that formed the earth and made it, He established it, He created it not a waste; He formed it to be inhabited." He did not create it in the chaotic state, but for good and wise reasons threw it into that state. We can readily understand that only so could man when it was

inhabited get at the coal, the marbles, and the metals, etc., so useful afterwards. For as the chapter itself shows that acts of creating followed the origination, so there may have been of destructive and temporary breakup as the strata sufficiently indicate to the geologist. It is here that the geologic times would come in, but this could be no matter of revelation. That science like others was left for man. But room is left for it, before the “days” of getting ready the earth as it was to be for Adam and his race. These begin with ver. 3; and “the evening and the morning” point to literal days, so suited to and connected with man on the earth, not with the vast periods when other conditions prevailed, and man was not. And this is corroborated by the sabbath that followed man’s creation, which a prolonged geologic age would not.

Is it not plain that this is the genuine meaning of Gen. 1 - 2:3? Does it not refute the hasty misinterpretation, not confined to mere men of science, but common among the theologians of Christendom who read this scripture without sufficient waiting on God to apprehend its comprehensive scope and the exact bearing of its distinct parts? Yet not a few have thus seen and taught for more than the half century of a modern Gothic irruption, which may damage romancists, but is powerless against the word of God. British Darwinism, like the kindred metamorphosis of Lamarck, is no doubt set aside as an unbelieving dream by the distinct species attributed to God’s will in Gen. 1 to both the vegetable and the animal kingdoms with which the human race is conversant. Yet there are men of science apart from faith who refuse the fashionable decease which undermines the fixed laws that God has thus impressed,

without which science could not be, with a decision which puts to shame these higher critics so ready to believe it, and not God. Development to that extent is absurd and would destroy science. What scheme more unworthy of God or even man ever was invented by his feverish brain?

Take only the swamping of the human race with the brute in contrast with the affectingly solemn and self-evidently true place assigned to man, as the chief ruler of creation in Gen. 1, and in moral relation to God as well as the creature in Gen. 2 where we hear of Jehovah Elohim inbreathing his soul alone of all beings on the earth. Is this nothing? or is it "false science?" The fact is that it is not science at all; and the exactest science could not attest it. It is the revealed light of God, which is the truth, and immeasurably above all science. One can only grieve over professing Christians beguiled by such conundrums; but we must be indignant that they claim to be Christian ministers, seeing that they slight the scriptures though divinely inspired, and bow to the passing delusions to which scientists are notoriously liable like others. Never has any savant of any land or tongue produced an account of creation to compare with Gen. 1, still less with its profound and necessary supplement in Gen. 2.

Gross ignorance of and positive fall from the light of Christianity appear on Dr. K.'s own showing: "Times of change must be times of trial. They call for faith, courage, patience, sympathy: — for faith that God is still teaching His Church, as He taught it of old, πολυμερῶς καὶ πολυτρόπως, 'by divers portions and in divers manners' (Heb. 1:1); for courage to go forward trustfully, following the light of the reason which God

has given us," etc. (pp. 4, 5). Now the scripture cited contradicts the sense for which it is cited. Of old God spoke thus to the fathers in the prophets; at the end of these days He spoke to us in a Son. There had been revelations from God on a deliverer, on the deluge, on promise, on law, on a kingdom in Israel, on Gentile dominion; prophecies fully while Israel so existed; prophecies sufficiently when Israel became Lo-ammi. Now it is Himself revealed in the person and redemption work of His Son: a revelation absolutely perfect, of which it is not only false but blasphemous to think that it admits of development. Those who pretend to progress after this are apostates, even if they call themselves Christians. Nor is it the great apostle only who taught so, but the Gospel of John (John 1:18), and emphatically his First Epistle (1 John 2:24-27), as also 2 John 3. Equally does Dr. K. offend when he substitutes for the divine guidance of the Holy Spirit the characteristic power of the Christian and of the church, "following the reason which God has given us;" as if we were no better off in this respect than the most benighted heathen! Could any one ask clearer proof that Higher Criticism leads even its ablest guides into the ditch of infidelity?

Next we are told whereby these moderns trust to subvert not merely what the church has believed for many centuries, but what the Lord and the apostles taught of the scriptures. 1, Textual criticism, which is in no way their province. 2, Linguistic criticism, which surely belongs to competent Christian students. 3, Their pet "higher criticism," the most visionary attempt to imagine a variety of interpolators instead of the alleged author. 4, Historical criticism, sought to be distinguished from the Higher, it is hard to say why. 5, Archaeology

and comparative religion. In these and other ways they hope to revolutionize men's thoughts of the Bible, and urge the clergy to understand their methods, to estimate its results, and to consider how these affect their teaching (pp. 5-7).

Now in the face of this conspiracy of soi-disant experts to shake the O.T. to its centre and cast the Law, the Psalms, and the Prophets avowedly into a sea of uncertainty, we have the sure fact of infinite comfort to every believer that the incarnate Son of God ruled the divine authority of these very scriptures, and that, risen from the dead, when prejudices disappear from the weakest of saints. The Lord authenticated them as testimonies to Himself in the flattest contradiction of modern criticism. So did the Holy Spirit sent forth from heaven from Him glorified, and this both to such ecclesiastical rulers as Timothy and Titus, and with no less freedom and fulness to the mass of the faithful in the Epistles, remarkably anticipating the sceptical attacks on Moses and David, Isaiah and Daniel, by declaring each the writer of the books attributed to them, as for instance of the latter part of Isaiah no less than the former. "He [Moses] wrote of Me."

To faith this is and ought to be the end of controversy. Splitting such investigation into higher and historical or others makes no difference worthy to speak of; nor does calling it "literary" mitigate the awful presumption of giving the lie to the Son of God, or of the unbelief that attributes ignorance of what must have been known to a divine person. Think of Him who is to judge quick and dead, and who searches the reins and heart of every child of man, not knowing who wrote the Pentateuch! Think of those who call themselves Christians and

Christian teachers denying to His face that Moses wrote of Him, and seeking by all sorts of vain perversions to make it seem a patchwork, contributed by a rabble of nobody-knows-who; and this last pretended largely to be Jehovah's words spoken to Moses for His people, yet designated as "the God-given record of God's special revelation of Himself through Israel in preparation for the Incarnation, and as such of permanent significance for the Christian Church" (p. 7)! Is not this to betray with a kiss?

That the world hearkens to these men in our day, beyond the old Encyclopaedists or individual freethinkers who preceded them, is true. They are, therefore, encouraged to dare greater things. Believers on the contrary are all the more distressed, both for the dishonour done to God's word, and for their guilt who are not only misled but misleaders. In 1 Timothy 4 the apostle referred to the ascetic and legend-loving spirit which early led some to apostatize from the faith; but in 2 Timothy 3 he speaks of a later and more prevalent departure from God, when men having a form of piety should deny its power, and advance in evil. In 2 Tim. 4 he says that the time shall be when they will not bear sound teaching, but according to their lusts will heap up to themselves teachers, having an itching ear; and they will turn away their ear from the truth, and will turn aside to fables. In fine, as he wrote in 2 Thess. 2:3, the apostasy will come, the rejection of Christian truth by Christendom itself. Can any means be conceived more suited to bring this about than the modern criticism? Their denial and despising of prophecy will blind them so much the more to the godless movement. For this is what will characterize the consummation of the present evil age,

and bring on not only God's preparatory dealings in judgment, but the Son of man's appearing in the clouds of heaven to trample His enemies under His feet. The universal establishment of God's world-kingdom follows (Rev. 11:15; 19, 20).

In p. 10 Dr. K. admits that "The results of literary [or Higher] criticism are at best only probable, though in many cases the probability amounts to practical certainty" (!); but literary criticism has been pushed to the wildest extremes, as for instance when we are told that we have "no genuine writings of the prophet Jeremiah except," etc. Now this discloses in its confession what we know from the entire spirit and language and aim of the school, that, like Romanism, modern criticism has no divine faith. Its results are at best only "probable."

The school of literary criticism comes to the same result in principle as the school of ecclesiastical tradition. The faith of both turns out to be without absolute truth to rest on. Such only is scripture, the word of God who cannot lie. This was what Cardinal Newman laid down in his Grammar of Assent when a full-blown Romanist, confounding the church "probability" men must act on with the certainty of a divine testimony to faith. As begotten of God I believe Him because He has written, and believe neither the church on the one hand (for how often has it erred!), nor these modern critics who believe in man's disproof of what the Son of God authenticated, as well as the apostles and prophets inspired by the Holy Spirit. If as a Christian I am bound to reject the church intervening between God and my soul as to His revelation, how much more to reject men who evince their unspirituality by their ignorance of His

mind in scripture, and flee to Babylonian, Assyrian, Egyptian, and other heathen sources of the flimsiest kind for that external knowledge of which they never weary of boasting!

On his three points wherein modern criticism, he says, affects theology, we need not dwell now: the mode of revelation, the character of prophecy, and the nature of inspiration. The use of “revelation” is a blind; for, in the growth they contend for, God is really excluded, as really as in the imaginary development of nature with which it is compared. In both the believer owns divine design — in scripture, and even in creation defaced as it is by sin. But it is an utter mistake that the Lord taught us anything inconsistent with its divine authority. He was, as befitted His person, introducing the heavens’ light with His Father’s name for those destined to the Father’s kingdom; but He insists in the plainest terms on its divine authority for God’s end in it. “Think not that I came to destroy the law or the prophets: I came not to destroy but to complete. For verily I say to you, Till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass away till all be fulfilled. Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments shall be called least in the kingdom of the heavens; but whosoever shall do and teach them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of the heavens” (Matt. 5:17-19). If God spoke in the scriptures, woe to those who say I must judge them first! His word will judge them at the last day. It is not so that any man was ever brought to God; he believes God and is blessed; as those who set up to first pronounce on all the canon are going the direct road to lose their own souls. The enemy lures these to hope that the way of “modern criticism” is to have “our

theology" liberated, deepened, and strengthened. The more they seem to succeed in their blind glorying in man, the sooner will fall divine retribution on their inventions against the word which abides for ever. You might challenge the entire multitude to produce a single truth of God which the Higher Criticism has rescued from the darkness of unbelief. What future can rationalism have but judgment for despising God's word and God's Son? Unbelief may destroy as far as God allows, but can produce nothing.

It seems bold to speak of "prophesy" as Dr. K. does; for he knows well that scarce any conclusion is more "settled" and accepted by the great majority of his school than that there is neither prophecy nor miracle in any real sense. A few like himself admit prediction to a small extent. But all reduce it more or less to what the apostle Peter stigmatises as of "private interpretation" i.e. its own particular solution, instead of each one forming part of the divinely given scheme of predictive testimony to God's glory in Christ, which is to sum up in Him, the head, all creation in heaven and on earth (Eph. 1:10). Is any one of his company, even of those who shrink from applying the knife to the N.T. as they do to the O.T., really living with that divine purpose of glory for Christ before his soul as his living hope? Is one of them truly waiting for His coming again to reign over the universe heavenly and earthly to God's glory?

Now no system, Patristic, Papal, or Protestant, however short of what scripture contemplates, is so directly opposed to this purpose of God in the written word as that of modern criticism; for it is essentially infidel. God's word is incompatible with the assumption of human growth or patchwork. Disbelieving in any real

unity given to all scripture by the inspiring Spirit, they exclude the governing counsel of God in its every part, and thus lose every true conception of His mind, and only deceive themselves in calling their motley aggregate “a message from God.” The liberation claimed is from divine authority, which leaves no room for man’s wisdom and will; the deepening is but in external research which swamps all seeking for and delight in the Christ of scripture; the strengthening is in value for the dust and dry bones of heathen history. The effect is departure from the fulness of God in Christ so richly revealed as to leave no room for development, save in the imagination of those who say that they see; whose sin therefore remains.

How far the school is from believing that “the one” — not — “far off divine event” — the establishment of His kingdom, over the world and all the universe, must be preceded by the day of the Lord in unsparing judgment, not only of Israel and the nations, but of Christendom yet more sternly because of its greater privilege, as man will share the apostasy, to which sceptical criticism of scripture is one of the guiltiest incentives and ingredient.

II. — The Old Testament In The Light Of Today.

But let us turn to what Dr. Driver says as to this. He is most jubilant over the spirit of the age and its successes. “A great intellectual awakening” he claims for it, as well as “great discoveries”; sciences new, yet “arrived at a vigorous and independent manhood”; and the older branches worked as never before by better methods “to startling and unexpected results.” It is not so that their best living representative, Lord Kelvin, spoke at his

jubilee in Glasgow a short time ago. And as he is neither pessimist nor optimist but known for his sobriety, no less than his depth and extent, for his own discoveries as well as his practical power in turning them to every day use, such a testimony on what has been the most ardent and distinguished work of his life outweighs a host of men comparatively in no way his equals. “One word characterises the most strenuous of the efforts for the advancement of science that I have made perseveringly for fifty-five years, and that word is — failure. I know no more of electric and magnetic force, or of the relation between either electricity and ponderable matter, or of chemical affinity, than I knew fifty years ago.”

But if the progress in natural and experimental science were ever so immense (and I should not wonder at it where God is forgotten or made light of), what is the worth of any such or of knowledge morally even? God’s revelation stands on wholly different ground, has a character necessarily peculiar to itself, and is for the end of His glory in the spiritual blessing of the soul, with an eternity of bliss or of woe, the issue for every child of man who believes or who does not. This must differentiate scripture from all else that is written or spoken, or in any way appeals to man. The inspired word of God, first in trying man by a commandment, and then by His law and every help of ordinance, and priest, etc. in the O.T.; next by revealing Himself in His Son in the N.T., with the Holy Spirit given to the believer as never before, with suited words to explain and yield power and enjoyment as well as an answer to every other want. To argue from the natural to the supernatural, from man to God, is not only false but unbelieving to the last degree. Though it is sought to conceal the impiety of putting in

question the written word of God, by the plea that it is only the exterior that is challenged on literary grounds, and historic investigation, or the like, no book has ever been subjected as the Bible to such extravagance of imagination as to its construction. Where is one solid fact to countenance such a manipulation in denial of the writings and writers accepted by faith, and with blindness to the effect of obliterating all its just claim to be God's word, inspired by Him, and possessing His authority no less than if He directly addressed each as from heaven?

There is another awful consequence of this baseless pride of knowledge, that it involves the destruction of confidence in the Son of God and of His inspired servants, who are beyond doubt and thoroughly committed to the honour and certainty of scripture, both O.T. and N.T. So radical is the opposition of the sceptical criticism, that its more open advocates do not hesitate to say, as the necessary inference, that they know the growth of the Bible as did neither the Lord nor His apostles! Such daring unbelief and irreverence ought to alarm the feeblest saint, as every intelligent Christian must abhor it as an exhalation of the bottomless pit. The last writer of the N.T. is he who insists most on this safe-guard in the last hour of many antichrists, "Let that therefore abide in you which ye heard from the beginning" (1 John 2:24).

From the beginning our Lord decided beforehand against the modern imposture, which is quite independent of Hebrew or Greek erudition, and springs out of real ignorance of the truth of God. It is due to reckless fancy in perverting the divine names and their accompanying difference of thought and expressions,

into supposed difference of legends, compiled very late, they say, and in times really unsuitable to the O.T. as a true history. Confessedly the Lord and the apostles sustain the faith in scripture which all the saints and martyrs of early Christian times confessed, and leave no room for the wild insinuation of Astruc, which modern Germans have sought to swell into the most gigantic of fables. The believer's safety and joy is to depend on Christ, who came at the interval when the old things came to an end, and the new had to be ushered in on divine authority. And He has taught us with divine authority that the scriptures even of the O.T. are to be received as they then existed with simple trust. So more than one apostle vouched no less for the N.T. Thus "the light of today" in its presumptuous unbelief was anticipatively condemned and excluded. The modern theory by their own showing was unknown as having the smallest credit "from the beginning"; but room was left for it as a "fable," which men love who are weary of the truth, and delight in the fruit of man's ingenuity.

Thus in p. 20 says Dr. Driver. "I may assume on the part of those who hear me a general familiarity with the new light in which, to those who do not refuse to open their eyes, the Old Testament appears today. The historical books are now seen to be not, as was once supposed, the works (for instance) of Moses, or Joshua, or Samuel!" Not a few who read the new brochure have examined for half a century the new criticism, and are assured that it is the darkness of the natural mind, yielding to speculative fancy on the surface of the scriptures, and destitute of the Holy Spirit's guidance, because they evade and despise the authority of Christ who pronounces against them, root and branch. He and His

apostles accepted the scriptures as written by Moses and David, etc., to Isaiah, Daniel, and even to Malachi, as Christians have held for many centuries, and leave no room for this development of scepticism. “Have ye not read (said He) in the book of Moses,” etc. (Mark 12:26)? “And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Isaiah; and when he had opened the book, he found the place (Isa. 61) where it was written, The Spirit,” etc. (Luke 4:17). To Luke these men dare to give the lie, pretending the writer to be unknown. “They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them” (Luke 16:29). “If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead” (Luke 16:31). “Behold we go up to Jerusalem, and all things that are written by the prophets concerning (not an “ideal” sufferer, but) the Son of man shall be accomplished” (Luke 18:31). “David himself saith in the book of Psalms,” etc. (Luke 20:42). “Had “ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me; for he wrote of me” (John 5:46). “The scripture cannot be broken” (John 10:35). So in John 12:38-41, Isaiah is quoted as such from Isa. 53:1 no less than from Isa. 6:9, etc., as is also “Daniel the prophet” in Matt. 24:15.

How is it then that these critics reject the positive testimony of the Lord and His apostles? If believed, it overthrows their system. But they far prefer their own thoughts to scripture. Alas! they do not believe the Lord. To them applies as to sceptics in His day, “Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures nor the power of God” (Matt. 22:29). Nor does anything strike one more than, with indefatigable research on external appearances easily misapplied, they seem wholly insensible to God’s mind, and thus sink into the ready service of the enemy for

defaming and seeking to destroy divine revelation, though they think the contrary.

For there is scarce anything in which the new critics more generally agree than in finding not a few Elohists and Jehovists in the Pentateuch and elsewhere. Now this depends mainly on the repeated occurrence of one or other of the O.T. divine names of God with a corresponding difference of words and subjects, out of which they invented the notion of different documents. This was mere ignorance flowing out of unbelief. For the names have respectively an exact propriety, which demands their usage for the different truths intended, and moreover requires other thoughts and words suitable for each. Elohim is God in the history, and in His sovereign operations, as in creation; Jehovah is His name in relationship and moral dealings. So it is in the Psalms, and Prophets, where differing writers would be out of the question. But these critics trust themselves and do not trust God or His word, and hence are of all schools the most pretentious and the most superficial; as all must be who fail to see one divine mind, which amidst wonderful variety impresses a general design on the scriptures as a whole, and on each particular as contributing its special design in its own part. But their system ignores and denies both a general and a special design, quite above the understanding of the writers generally if not universally. It is a dream no better than of a fortuitous concourse of atoms which others imagined for the universe. The reality of God actually moving in every part of this spiritual creation is foreign to their minds and incompatible with their reveries. Theirs is the characteristic principle of infidelity; and they even call the product of so many cobblers

inspiration, scripture, and God's word! Does this improve matters? It enables them to retain their chairs, canonries, etc.

Hence one must deny, not of course different groups of laws in the Pentateuch, but that there is the least solid basis for insinuating different strata at widely different periods of the national life. The attempt to vilify Deuteronomy as an invention of Josiah's day, instead of being the closing book of Moses, is in itself a fraud of which no mind could be capable but of an enemy to God and His word. It is remarkable as the book which our blessed Lord honoured at each of His temptations by Satan; and even this was as due to that inspired book of Moses as to His own position when tempted. Of both this system incapacitates for seeing, because devoid of faith it cannot please God or know His word.

"The Old Testament in the Light of Today" is the title of Dr. Driver's First Paper. It shows clearly enough where the new school is. Their eyes are turned away from the light of God, from Christ the true Light to the darkness of man to-day, the darkness of "this present evil age" which He is soon coming to judge and punish. "If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is the darkness!"

When God spoke in His Son, what the believer knows to be the Light shone not only on the O.T. but on every person. Indeed every thing was thus manifested as it is. He is the truth objectively, as the Holy Spirit is in power for the believer (1 John 5:6), who therefore becomes light in the Lord. Never does scripture treat man's thoughts or discoveries as anything of the kind; still less to allow the least comparison with Him that speaks from

heaven (Heb. 12:25) and will speak “once” more in a judgment which will shake not only the earth but also the heavens. Hence for the Christian all is out in the light of God through His word. Flaws there are through man’s weakness or wrong, both in text and in translation, and intelligence may be at fault. But the truth is completely revealed as to both God and man, and this right on to “the day of God, by reason of which heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and elements shall melt with fervent heat. But according to His promise we await new heavens and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness” (2 Peter 3:12, 13).

Where is Dr. Driver’s faith of God’s elect and knowledge of truth which is according to godliness? Far from me to judge him personally. His heart one leaves to the blessed God. We would speak only of his testimony as to revealed truth. What we have throughout his paper is but glorying in man, and especially the men of this day. They if modest and wise must see their nothingness, and measureless need of God’s pity and grace, instead of repeating the old folly which Job reproved in his friends, “No doubt ye are the people, and wisdom shall die with you.” Alas! indeed men now look for indefinite progress. But what a shock to Christian conscience, when scholars bearing the Lord’s name, and in the position of clergymen as eminent and influential as they could well attain in great seats of learning, boast of things, compared with the grace and truth of Christ, as the advances in our experimental science, and their dependent mechanical arts, in Anthropology, Archaeology and other such sciences, as with other branches of human knowledge! These investigations may well be left, like the hewing of wood or the drawing

of water to those who enjoy not the title of entrance into the holies; but they are beneath those who by grace are made kings and priests to God.

I do not think the slight of the A.V. as compared with the Revision in our day justified. It is true that there were singular mistakes and shortcomings in the old version, and more correctness in some respects in the oldest English translation of W. Tyndale. But there are not a few errors of such deep import in the Revision that one can only thank God that as yet so great a failure has not gained general acceptance. At any rate crying up our own day in this respect seems strangely uncalled for. Even Bishop Lightfoot to whom Dr. Driver refers, great scholar as he was, proves that a deeper knowledge of Christian truth than he possessed is essential to guard from e.g. the evident and serious blunder he made, followed by the Revisers in 2 Cor. 5:14, 15. For he translates it so as to favour a sense not only false in itself but contrary to its own context; for it contrasts the universal death of man outside Christ, for whom He died, with those who live to Him who also rose to this end. It is therefore the death of all in their sins, not death with Christ which is the portion only of those who live to Him, as they live in Him, which “all” are very far from.

Take further, if we only glance at the beginning of Luke, such plain error as the Revisers adopted in Luke 2:14; and their failure to see that the true parenthesis in Luke 3:23 is “being the son as was supposed of Joseph,” leaving the genealogy to begin with “of Eli” (etc.) whom even the Talmud admits to have been father of Mary. This line is here given, not Joseph’s in the Solomonic branch which Matt. 1 requires, each suiting its own

Gospel according to that specific divine design which the books of Scripture possess by inspiration.

Again what ignorance and presumption to omit the amply supported “second-first” in Luke 6:1! No doubt its singularity made it unintelligible to most, and led to its omission in some MSS. and versions. But it has an important sense, if any intimate with that season would feel for Jewish hearts subject to the law. It is unaccountable unless genuine. Again in ver. 35 can one conceive anything more beneath scripture than their rendering “never despairing”? May it remain alone in its shame among all versions, good, bad and indifferent! In some of these and many more, such as Rom. 3:22, in the Epistles, the Revisers have changed the more correct readings and renderings of the A.V. for the worse. The vaunt of present-day exactitude is unbecoming.

It is hardly necessary to say that one regards with horror what is said in p. 23, that “the tablets brought from the library of Asshur-banipal have disclosed to us the source of the material elements upon which the Biblical narratives of the Creation and the Deluge have been constructed.” That the Gentiles had widely spread traditions about the earth’s origin and man’s, and of the deluge, is true and long known, but withal corrupted everywhere with their false gods to whom they were adapted. But that fabulous traditions, such as Asshur-banipal’s tablets represent, disclose the source of the Biblical account is a slander of which infidelity is alone capable. The fact is that as far as I am aware not one Gentile first or last can be proved to have believed that “in the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.” It is a truth which faith alone receives; and I fear that the new school no more believe it than Asshur-

banipal did; for it is avowed that the doctrine of development goes along with the new literary method. It is an abuse of language for a Darwinian to speak of crediting creation, as it is for the new critic to say that he believes in inspiration. In both cases it is a growth, not God's work.

It is painful in the extreme to read the words of professed teachers of revealed truth; a glorying in man which is natural to an unbeliever who lauds the progress of the age and claims for the present generation an advance beyond parallel. "It may have been most conspicuous and brilliant in the physical sciences, and in the great mechanical arts based upon them; but it has been not less real in many other branches of knowledge, in language, in history, in archaeology, in anthropology. How much, in all these departments of knowledge is known now, which a century ago was unknown, and even unsuspected!... But the same spirit of scientific study and research which has inspired new life into so many other departments of knowledge, and even in some instances created them altogether, has also pervaded Biblical and Oriental learning; and there is hardly any branch of these subjects, whether language, or literature, or antiquities, or history, in which the stimulus of the nineteenth century has not made itself felt, and in which improved methods of investigation have not conducted to new and important results" (pp. 18-20). Are not we today the world's wonders?

Is this the mind of one delivered from the power of darkness and translated into the kingdom of the Son of God's love? Could one consciously so blessed put these accessions of human knowledge, supposing it ever so real and great, side by side with that of scripture

imparted by the operation of the Holy Spirit? Yet who in it cries up the letter that kills? Is it not the Spirit that quickens? The world's knowledge which the natural man can acquire leaves sin unremoved and judgment with its dread issue awaiting its votaries. Did not God in the cross of Christ make foolish the wisdom of this world? "For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom knew not God, it was God's good pleasure through the foolishness of the preaching to save those that believe" (1 Cor. 1:21).

To lump, after this fashion, the Bible with such acquisitions is blindness to the truth of God, and a heinous offence against grace and truth. It is well to have the word in its integrity and freed from accretion; but the incomparably more momentous thing is to have and enjoy the fruit, which all this external activity does not enable a single soul to taste. "For who of men knoweth the things of man, save the spirit of the man which is in him? even so the things of God none knoweth save the Spirit of God. But we received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit that is of God; that we might know the things granted to us by God" (1 Cor. 2:11, 12). As a dog, no matter how sagacious, cannot understand a watch, which as a human work a man can; so a man is incapable of entering into revealed truth save by the Spirit of God; not only born anew, and redeemed, but needing and having received the Holy Spirit to this end. Not all the possible human progress in profane or sacred departments avails. One must be "taught of God" wholly above man, as the Lord declared according to the prophets.

Nor can there be a more superficial or unbelieving inference than what is drawn in p. 22: "The net results

of these discoveries is that the ancient Hebrews are taken out of the isolation in which, as a nation, they formerly seemed to stand; and it is seen now that many of their institutions and beliefs were not peculiar to themselves; they existed in more or less similar form among their neighbours; they were only in Israel developed in special directions, subordinated to special ends, and made the vehicle of special ideas." Even Balaam, wicked man and false prophet as he was, uttered under the compulsion of God's Spirit the truth which flatly contradicts such Gentile pride. "Lo, a people that shall dwell alone and shall not be reckoned among the nations'' (Num. 23:9). Nor is God's thought about Israel only separateness to Himself, but in ver. 21 their justification in sovereign grace; in Num. 24:5-7 their given beauty; and in 17-19 their glory when the Star out of Jacob shines in power. Doubtless this seems strange, as the O.T. is the history of their failure under the law. But they are kept for Messiah and the new covenant, when the Unchanging One, to whom they are still blind, shall change all things in their favour. And the mind of God regularly looks on to that day in His love for His people.

Alas! the next p. 23 is daring infidelity. "The monuments of Egypt and Babylon combine to establish the presence of man upon the earth, and the existence of entirely distinct languages, at periods considerably more ancient than is allowed for by the figures in the Book of Genesis; and the tablets brought from the library of Asshur-banipal have disclosed to us the source (!) of the material elements upon which the Biblical narratives of the Creation (!) and the Deluge have been constructed"!! Thus openly does the Hebrew Professor

of Oxford dare to avow that he believes the vain monuments of men, and gives the lie to God's testimony. The Confusion of Tongues, as well as the accounts of Creation and of the Deluge, are fables constructed out of the heathen tablets of the noble Asnapper's library! What French or German has defamed scripture more daringly?1 It is an assumption without the smallest proof save of ill-will, and no indication whatever "that in the early chapters of Genesis we are not reading literal history." The Lord and the apostles have decided otherwise, and as Christians we believe them, not in the least degree the Higher Critics, whom we can only regard as infatuated enemies of revelation.

So also we regard the speculation on the poetical books and prophets, as abandoning light for darkness in all spiritual respects. The divine who defined prophecy as "the history of events before they come to pass" was celebrated for his metaphysical power and his evidential prowess against Deism, in no way for his knowledge of scripture,2 which gives a larger and deeper thought of prophecy, and was so recognised by intelligent students quite apart from the neologian school. Indeed it is evident not only in the O.T. but also in the N.T. So the Samaritan at Sychar when she told the Lord, who had then said not a word about the future, "I perceive that thou art a prophet." Yet immediately He told her of the profound change which no man on earth knew, when Jerusalem and its national worship of Jehovah should pass for the incomparable blessedness of Christianity, and the true worshippers to worship the Father in spirit and truth. Crasser ignorance spiritually cannot be than to learn that "the materials afforded by the inscriptions of Assyria and Babylonia," whatever their trifling use

externally, yielded one ray of light on the prophets. The prophets' writings are the only and the full proof that they dealt morally with their own generations on God's behalf, but with the richest certainty of the future, when His intervention by the Son of man, the rejected Messiah, shall put down all evil and enemies, establish His righteous reign, and fill all the earth with His glory. The first intimation is announced in Num. 14:21, quite as clearly as in the varied forms of Isaiah 11:9, and of Hab. 2:14. Not one sprang out of the circumstances of the then age, but out of God's purpose, whatever might be the occasion: it is worthy of God, in contrast with all those varying times of evil, and suited, but no natural reason.

Hence the Jews, dark as they were, were not so depraved as these modern pretenders, and justly called the writers of the O.T. historical books "the early prophets," as distinguished from the later where there is little or no history. Again the prophetic element is still more manifest in the poetical books; but they all have the predictive in plain words, in type, or expressive figures, with its glorious issue, wholly independent of anything then visible or at work, and only possible for God to declare and insure. Nothing more opposed to the empty ideas of the new school, whose knowledge is human and sets up nature, not God and His word.

It is plain too that the apostle designates the Epistles in Rom. 16:26 as "prophetic scriptures," not "the scriptures of the prophets," which is the strange and certain blunder of the Revisers no less than of the A.V. The context is no less incompatible than the phrase itself. For a mystery or secret is in question which "had been kept silent, but was now manifested and by

prophetic scriptures made known, according to the eternal God's commandment, for obedience of faith unto all the nations." This was done pre-eminently afterward in the Epistles to the Ephesians and the Colossians. It clearly gives "prophetic scriptures" a wider and deeper scope than is usually seen. Now the mystery of Christ and of the church is inseparable from the exaltation of Christ and His joint-heirs over all the universe in the day of glory. It includes the bright future according to God's own grace and power.

But the error comes out plainly in the discussion of "inspiration" that follows from p. 26. The Oxford Professor could count on a pretty cordial appreciation of his own unbelief from his congregational audience. It is not true that among believers there is any haze on that essential truth. Explanation of literary structure is academic guess; prying into the manner of God's communication is irreverent, even if possible beyond the inspired. Faith is demanded to the exclusion of theory. But there is the divine dictum: "every scripture [is] God-breathed," or "being God-breathed [is]… profitable" etc. (2 Tim. 3:16): in the first rendering asserted; in the second, assumed; so that the main truth remains intact either way.

This too is confirmed by the facts of its own statement throughout. That the inspired drew their narrative from the heathen, out of whom they were separated at all costs as the first of duties to Jehovah their God, is an abominable and baseless slander; that the heathen had traditions of Creation and of the Deluge which they clothed with their idolatries, is true. But take the law and its stages in Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers, and the equivalent in Deuteronomy. The constant word

generally is, “And Jehovah said to Moses.” To deny its possibility is clearly infidel and irrational. Is it true or false? Take again what David says (2 Sam. 23:2), “The Spirit of Jehovah spoke by me, and His word was on my tongue. The God of Israel said, the rock of Israel spoke to me,” etc. Law or Psalm, it was God’s word, and scripture; and this is what inspiration means, and what the faithful believe. Is it necessary for every writer to present himself as in the opening of a play of Euripides? Would this suit the simple dignity of God’s messengers to His people “Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth; for Jehovah hath spoken,” says one of the greatest of prophets. “Thus speaketh Jehovah of hosts” says Haggai, one of the least, as the very last opens with the “Burden of the word of Jehovah.” Was all this a flourish, a literary fiction, or the solemn truth of God? It is a theory, and a theory of unbelief, that God inspired His servants, and withal left them like other men to write mistakes, instead of its resulting essence to be the perfect communication of His mind. If God’s Spirit moved in the work, was it to effectuate God’s will? or to leave it after all imperfect and misleading? The human element was in individual style; not in error, which could only frustrate the express aim and object of scripture. There had better be no inspiration than to give divine authority to what was man’s erring word, not God’s. The scripture, and every scripture, is God-breathed authenticity and authority as His word.

So in what follows in p. 25 on the Prophets and the Psalms, the effect is to reduce to man’s mind and circumstances, and exclude the supernatural energy of the Holy Spirit. No one denies that there was, or may have been, a present experience, as the occasion. As the

rule, it was Israel's growing wickedness and ruin. This the prophet was raised up to judge, but also to disclose both God's final dealing and a partial one nearer then, the pledge of the complete, when the glorious hope of Messiah's Kingdom will be realised without a word of exaggeration "in that day." No doubt the Fathers, the Romanists, the Reformers, the Puritans, and the divines of Christendom who followed, Nationalist and Dissenting, have applied to themselves what really awaits repentant Israel at the end of the age. This the new school in a slight measure see. But do any of them truly believe in the revealed purpose of God to set the Lord Jesus as Head over all things heavenly and earthly, with the glorified saints on high, and Israel here below with all the nations in subjection and peace with universal joy even for the long groaning creation? They write vaguely if such be their living and assured hope, perhaps unwilling to wound the great mass of their incredulous associates who believe in prophecy no more than in miracles, seemingly little more than dead men. An ideal vision is not a real prophecy. Many were the true and even minute predictions of Christ's first advent; very many more and on the largest scale await His second. Do they frankly believe this? So at least say the scriptures.

The question is then raised, (1) How do the facts bear on the inspiration of the O.T.? (2) How do they affect our estimate of its moral and doctrinal value? (3) What practical conclusions may be deduced? 1) But to my mind, they are not facts but flimsy speculations on the surface of scripture, and total lack of God's teaching by it. 2) The effect is to lose, in contrast with the first man, Christ the object of the Spirit throughout. 3) The

practical result, is to turn from the light of God's word to fill souls with the darkness and vanity of man's records, as if these shed light on scripture. Even when they cannot but fully confirm the revealed word, how can one call this "light"? It may prove the folly of unbelief, and silence an objector. But Christ only, the word of God, the truth, sheds divine light.

Before his own answers, Dr. D. emphasises a double element in scripture, a human not less than a divine. No intelligent Christian denies but recognises it. Only he means the human element left to its weakness and mistakes, instead of the divine sustaining it against error. As it was in Christ's person, so it is in scripture. Nothing short would have weight with a believing soul. But these critics lower Christ as much as the scriptures; for they regard Him as knowing no better than the scribes, or, if He did, accommodating Himself to the ignorance of His day! He cites in a note 2 Tim. 3:16, 17, not from the A.V. but the R.V. which is far from being accepted as the true construction3. What unbounded presumption in themselves! What blind confidence in petty knowledge of any in what is not God's word! "The use of the word will not guide us; for it occurs only in the passage referred to. Clearly the only course open to us [i.e. granting the misconstruction] is to examine, patiently and carefully, the book which is termed inspired, and ascertain what characters attach to it" (p. 28) Now inspiration, though equally divine, did not always assume the same form, though we are told little, and perhaps could not learn more, about it. Why should we? Let us hear then the scriptures.

If we take the central book of the Pentateuch, what does it distinctly claim? "And Jehovah called unto Moses, and

spoke unto him" etc. "Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When any man" etc. And so, with slight historic exceptions the book of Leviticus attaches to itself the character of direct dictation from Jehovah throughout. But these critics flatly refuse to believe. Faithful men accept it as literal truth, the law given through Moses. This is surely inspiration; and He who revealed it empowered the human medium to communicate it, not only piecemeal by the way, but written as a whole.

Would it not be an eminently human way to expect every or any book of scripture to open with "I am inspired" or its equivalent? No creature witnessed creation. None but God could vouch for it. Adam and his sons were called into being long after. Legends could but guess unless God made it known, as He assuredly did to Moses, if we believe our Lord. Was this so wonderful as to give him to write of Christ? The first of his books presents the far simpler and nobler words, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth": a truth which had been utterly forgotten and denied long before the days of Moses. Where is its truth in one of those boasted monuments of Babylon, Nineveh, or Egypt, which professing Christians, and Christian teachers in the highest position, are not ashamed to allege against the word and authority of scripture? They of the monuments, one and all, worshipped idols or strange gods; and so the error was not secondary but fundamental. Their religion was based on a deadly falsehood which vitiates all possible reliance on them for truth or holiness. What can one think of men so infatuated; as to impute the Bible to heathen trash? Is not this what all neo-critics do without a blush? Can it

be denied with the least appearance of candour? Now who could speak as Moses writes authoritatively, of creation but the Creator? That Babylonians and others borrowed and corrupted the tradition is the homage that lies pay to the truth. Wickedness alone would make their forgeries the source of scripture.

But even Genesis is full of prophecy from the beginning, as well in direct terms (partly fulfilled, more to be so, and not to faith only but manifested to every eye), as indirectly yet more largely in its types throughout, save to blind eyes. Who but God could have thus revealed? Where is its reality outside scripture? Here most of these critics are as sceptically depraved as D. Hume and E. Gibbon, or as frivolous as J. J. Rousseau and A. de Voltaire.

Next Exodus attests stupendous miracles on which the monuments are as dumb, as they ignore and defy the Ten Words, and the judgments of God on Egypt's king and people; and the annexed copies of the things in the heavens shown to Moses inspired for communication to Israel for their worship and our still deeper instruction. Here the records of all the monuments are silent; but these critics grow bolder in their unbelief. For they dare to speculate, on the simple finding (after much disorder and idolatry) of the long-neglected book of the law in Josiah's day, that it must be a fabrication then got up, pretending to a Tabernacle after the Exodus, if ever there was an Exodus. Can they believe that the true God gave no better revelation to Israel than a bundle of lies, which contradict each other? or that Israel (yea — the Lord) had to wait for German sceptics to find it out?

Then in Leviticus, which is almost entirely characterised by the words, “And Jehovah spoke to Moses,” and ends with “These are the commandments which Jehovah commanded Moses for the children of Israel in Mount Sinai,” how daring is the impiety which allows a doubt! Here they have not the plea of heathen writers for confirmation, whom they venerate as they distrust the scriptures. It is the love of doubt which they confound with the love of truth, the assurance of systematic self-will and independent speculation, and not the faith of God’s Son and God’s word.

Numbers seems to be equally impossible to be attributed to any other than Moses, making allowance for an inspired editor’s slight additions. For it presents the circumstances of the march through the wilderness with the suited commandments of Jehovah, It has (if we believe the apostle in 1 Cor. 10) a spiritual bearing on the Christian pilgrim which only divine wisdom could have combined, yet characteristic of the prophets, and of one only inferior to the highest, who had ample leisure and conferred power to indite as God enjoined, with love for Israel and yet more for Jehovah. This spared neither the people nor the misleaders, neither Aaron, nor Miriam, nor himself. Is not this as edifying as it contrasts with any pretended sacred book of man?

Deuteronomy closes the law, and is so self-evidently Mosaic with its personal pathos, that one may wonder that any man of spiritual perception could fail to recognise that none but the saintly legislator could have written it, as he intimates himself with death immediately in view, yet with undismayed spirit, and natural force unabated, and all his profound affections for Israel just about to enter the land of promise from

which he was debarred. This and more necessarily gave a peculiar solemnity, adapted to the new generation who had not personally shared the departure from Egypt, the law imposed at Sinai, and but little of God's discipline through the wilderness, which form its wondrous rehearsal for instruction, encouragement, and warning, quite unexampled in the O.T.

1. "God-breathed," then, is ample to convey the source, character and authority of scripture to a believing soul. As to the manner in which the Divine will was communicated to the writers, the Church, as it could say nothing reliable, was still less authorised to speculate presumptuously. And what more inconsistent with reverence than to propound "a theory" on "its literary structure"? or the stages by which historically inspiration proceeded? But the same apostle long before his last Epistle had given light from God, which it is seasonable to recall. 1 Cor. 2 lets us into much of the deepest interest and importance, (which the Higher Critics gloss over,) in impressing on the light-minded Corinthians the fulness and variety of the Holy Spirit's operation in this respect and in others for the blessing of the faithful. Even what Isaiah confessed to be hidden from man's eye, ear, and heart, is now revealed to the Christian since Christ's redemption, and the Spirit's descent (vers. 9-12); "which things also we speak, not in words taught by human wisdom; but in those taught by the Spirit, communicating (or expounding) spiritual things by spiritual" [words]. For it is evident to any who inspect with care that the apostle is here treating of the further stage of communicating the revelation in ver. 13, before carrying it on to the reception of the inspired words in vers. 14, 15; where the reception by the

Christian is declared to be by the same Holy Spirit in contrast with the inability of the natural man. "Comparing" therefore, though quite right in the different context of 2 Cor. 10:12, does not give the sense of συγκρίνοντες here as the intermediate act. Nor does "combining" which is here without any intelligible force, but "interpreting" as in the Revisers' margin, though the simpler "communicating" seems in so peculiar a connection the fittest of all.

This being the apostle's pronouncement, how can any professing Christian doubt "that an inspired writing must be absolutely consistent in all its parts, and free from all discrepancy or error"? The Bible both makes and satisfies these requirements. This is inspiration's account of inspiration. The "words" are Spirit-taught no less than the ideas. But the gift of the Spirit is essential to receive them. The lack of the Spirit is the true reason for insubjection to the truth, and the invention of such terms as "Bibliolatry," "verbal" inspiration or other such slurs. No intelligent believer denies but asserts individuality of style: what he abhors is that God's Spirit sanctions or allows error. There is nothing in the plea that it is "man's word," with which the apostle contrasts it expressly in 1 Thess. 2:13: "when ye received from us God's word of message (or, report), ye accepted not men's word but even as it is truly God's word which also worketh in you that believe." But these critics do not so believe God's revelation. They believe in themselves and their unbelieving leaders; and so continuing they "shall both fall into a pit."

It is false therefore that "the inerrancy of Scripture... is a principle which is nowhere asserted or claimed in Scripture itself" (p. 31). "Theologians" on the contrary,

as the rule, are habitually weak from the beginning, like Origen, the most learned of the Greek Fathers, who read allegory, and not history in the fall of Adam and the primitive state. It is no question of à priori any more than à posteriori, but of faith. Before Scripture and doctrine claimed to be in Spirit-taught words, no one put such honour on it as the Lord of all when He set it as authoritative testimony (John 5:47) above His own oral words, though they were of life eternal, spirit and life as He Himself asserted. And what means His declaration in John 10:35 that "the Scripture cannot be broken"? Does this imply that man's infirmity could enter to vitiate it? or does it not mean that the Holy Spirit wrought to make it absolutely true? Nor is it so, as the Prof. says that "it is the facts which force upon us the necessity of a revision of current theories of inspiration"; for as to "current theories" of it, a Christian is entitled to disregard them all. The age is full of unbelief, and therefore abounds in fables on this head and almost every other. But the very passage in 2 Tim. 3 which these men seek to weaken is the great safeguard in the grievous times of the last days, against those who deceive and are deceived; and therefore the effort to annul its weight and meaning! The neo-critical principle is not only arbitrary, unbelieving, and excessively artificial, but at direct issue with the Lord and His apostles, and scripture itself, which all join to prove that the foundations of faith are undermined by the blasphemy that God's word contains error in its Spirit-taught words.

2. To say that "the vital truths declared in the Bible appear... wholly unaffected by critical inquiries or critical conclusions" may seem natural to their zealous

propagandist, but it is egregious to a believer. If the words are God's; as they so often claim to be in the O.T., if the greatest apostle in the N.T. declares that they and not the thoughts only are Spirit-taught, do they not compose "the external form.... in which these truths appear"? It is not sense to say that "the truths themselves lie beyond its range." The apostle as we have seen asserts that the Spirit of God is the true author of both. How can the truth be untouched if you touch the form? And what presumption for any man to meddle with the Spirit-taught words! Dr. D. is obliged to admit that some of the leading spirits are plainly unbelievers (avowed Unitarians, etc.), but covers such infidelity as ''some anterior philosophical principles." No wonder that "evil communications (or, company) corrupt good manners." Ought not others if they fear God to awake up righteously? If they believe with heart, why join arms in divine things with such as have no knowledge of God? As to "different degrees" of inspiration (p. 33) it is unknown to scripture, which does state difference in form.

But "every scripture" is asserted or assumed to be God-breathed. The revelation of God in His word differs essentially from the testimony of nature fallen as it is. As we own in Christ a "human element " as well as the "Divine"; but as he who abuses this union to lower the perfection of Christ's person is fundamentally heterodox, so is he, if only in a less degree, who thus degrades God's written word (p. 34). It is a Psalm of David (Ps. 19) which declares that the law (the O.T. word) of Jehovah is perfect, converting or restoring the soul as nothing else can do; His testimony trustworthy, giving wisdom to the simple (what else does?); His

precepts upright, rejoicing the heart; His commandment pure, giving light [spiritually] to the eyes. Yet the law, as Heb. 7 says, perfected nothing. This was from no defect in God's word, but because the Lord had not yet come to give life eternal and to accomplish everlasting redemption for such as believe; who thereon are anointed of God and receive the earnest of the Spirit in their hearts. Even Dr. D. is obliged to own "some special charisma of supernatural insight into the ways of God" granted to the O.T. religious teachers (p. 36). Scripture claims immeasurably more.

3. On the practical suggestions of pp. 37-43 I would say little, as one cannot doubt that his first is sound: that a first-hand knowledge of the Bible itself is the basis for a Biblical scholar. But that the young should be impregnated with the critical notions against the text of scripture is an advice which comes only from one who knows not the scriptures as taught of God, but as perverted by incredulity. What he calls "a natural consequence of the condition under which the authors [of the O.T.] wrote" (p. 43) flows from his unbelief in the power of the Holy Spirit, the true author of all scripture. This is the first and last requisite.

But his error, the ordinary false assumption as to Luke, calls for a more particular notice. "No historical writer ever claims to derive the materials for his narrative from a supernatural source (cf. Luke 1:1-4); and so far as we are aware, it has not pleased God in this respect to correct, where they existed, the imperfections attaching to the natural position of the writer" (p. 44). This passage was long the refuge of open infidels in Germany, England, etc., to make believe that a so-called inspired Evangelist disclaims anything supernatural in writing

his Gospel, and that he founded it like any other literary man from eye-witnesses in all care and diligence for its accuracy. The Oxford Reg. Prof. of Hebrew uses it for the self-same purpose, as others much less carried away, like the late Dean Alford and many more.

This however is not to read Scripture aright, but slovenly misinterpretation through evil influence. Let us heed what is written. Of the Four, the third is the one inspired to present the Son of God as man in the walk of every day, surrounded by all sorts and conditions of men, the perfect manifestation of grace, finding utter weakness and alienation, with enmity from those who trusting in themselves despised others and hated the Holy One of God. He gives all that exercises the conscience, purges the heart by faith, and strengthens disciples in a walk of love, patience and holiness without anxiety, blessed in being found watching for Christ's coming, and also working for Him as His faithful bondmen. Accordingly Luke alone tells from the outset John the Baptist's birth, and Christ's earliest and youthful days in this aspect; alone tells of the Lord's genealogy up to Adam, of the initiatory scene in the synagogue at Nazareth, of Simon searched yet drawn by faith at the lake; of the widow's only son raised again at Nain; of the sinful woman forgiven and sent away in peace, of the seventy and their final message, of the good Samaritan, of Martha and Mary discriminated, and, to cut short the list, of the prodigal and his father's love, and of the robber following the Lord from the cross to Paradise the same day. He is the great moralist but in a divine way, as beseemed such a life of Jesus; man's heart detected, God's heart revealed in grace. He alone with the same divine design writes a preface with his

motives to a fellow-saint. And this furnishes the occasion for free-thinking malice to deny his inspiration, of which divine power the book itself is the best witness, like the other three, though not one presents it as Luke does.

Hence at the start our Evangelist shows his heart drawn out to one begotten of God that needed the truth fully, a Gentile of rank if not actually a governor, with “his excellency” dropped in Acts 1:1, as no doubt he would prefer when more matured. This marked personal dealing would appeal all the more to other hearts, Jews as well as Gentiles. “Whereas many undertook to draw up a narrative concerning the matters fully assured among us, even as they that from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word delivered them to us, it seemed good to me also, having closely followed up from the outset all things accurately, to write to thee in regular order, most excellent Theophilus, that thou mightest fully know the certainty concerning accounts (words, or things), wherein thou wast instructed.” These words distinguish the statements of many, though founded on what eye-witnesses and ministers of the word delivered to us. For instead of referring Theophilus to what they had drawn up, he tells us that it seemed good to him also, as having followed closely all things from the very first (ἄνωθεν) and thus having thorough acquaintance of all, to write accurately to him in regular order, that he might fully know the certainty concerning accounts in which he was instructed. He does not, like a literary man, explain his sources or authorities. Far from saying that he compiled his Gospel from eye-witnesses as others had done, he simply avers his own careful perfect acquaintance with all from the outset, and his writing accurately and in order, that the one addressed

might fully know the certainty respecting the accounts wherein he was instructed. The narratives he refers to might be correct and interesting. But they could not give God's mind and specially as his who was inspired. Only instead of asserting inspiration, he like the other three leaves this to prove itself by its character. But unlike them he adds the loving desire of his heart to help his brother young in the truth in accordance with the spirit of his Gospel pre-eminently.

Many who had taken it in hand did not satisfy him; and therefore he wrote to supply the lack. But he goes into no details of his own work, unless to affirm its thoroughness and accuracy more than any did. Hypothesis is vain here. Far from apologising for "imperfection," all he says is to inspire perfect confidence, for which nothing can account to a believer but "a supernatural source."

It is admitted that God did employ eye-witnesses, as for instance two such in Matthew and John as to their Gospels. But He employed two who were not, Mark and Luke; and who can deny that they are minute and graphic? Yet even in the case of the apostles themselves we find them rising above eye-sight by divine power, according to the design He impressed on the particular writer or the book written, which quite overthrows the unbelieving theory. Take John 18 as the proof. John alone recounts the Lord's answer to the armed band that came to arrest Him, "I am [he];" which caused them to go backward and fall to the ground. Yet Matthew who beheld it says about so striking an event no more than Mark or Luke. It did not come within God's design for their Gospels, but distinctly for John, who accordingly attests it. On the other hand, John is totally silent on the

same occasion as to the agony in Gethsemane, on which the other three dwell, though he alone was of the favoured three whom the Lord took apart from the rest to be comparatively near in that hour of deep sorrow and bloody sweat. Yet it was given to Matthew, and even to Mark and Luke to record it, as dwelling not on His deity but His human sufferings in accordance with the design in each of their Gospels. But God is not really in the thoughts of these critics, but man; and this incapacitates them from seeing the truth, as the Christian is entitled to do.

Then is repeated the wholly fanciful notion of "two writers" in the opening chapters of Genesis, and the absurd assumption that "the Hebrews" thus pictured the beginning of the world and the early history of man: a task immeasurably above the Higher Critics or any that ever lived without God's inspiration most absolutely; and the shameless invention that, even as to this, "borrowing their materials in some cases from popular tradition or belief, in others, directly or indirectly, from the distant East, they had breathed into them a new spirit, and constructed with their aid narratives replete with noble and deep truths respecting God and man;" etc., etc. How any with the fear of God could thus speak is past comprehension if one did not bear in mind the blinding, defiling, and deadly influence of scepticism. No doubt the history of Israel is rife with their readiness to depart from Jehovah and to adopt the loathsome idolatries of the nations, which the true prophets resisted till there was no remedy. But that the Bible denounces any such importations as the worst sin against the One True God is as plain as words can speak from Genesis to Malachi. In pp. 44-46 is nothing but human fancy and indifference

to God's majesty and truth in the O.T. Nor can one conceive less moral feeling than to impute to the inspired word His breathing a new spirit of holiness and truth on narratives drawn from the lying productions from wicked and rebellious heathens and the unclean spirits which misled them. Compare Deut. 4, 7, 8, 12, 13, 15, 17, 29.

"These things hast thou done, and I kept silence: thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one as thyself: but I will reprove thee, and set them in order before shine eyes" (Ps. 50:21).

III. The Permanent Religious Value Of The O.T.

The closing paper is, like the second, by Prof. Driver, D.D.

The less may here be said because it has been already reviewed briefly when it appeared in the Interpreter for January, 1905.

In pp. 51-56 Dr. D. lays down that the "first and primary claim, then, to permanent and religious value which the O.T. possesses, consists in the surprisingly lofty and elevated conceptions of God which prevail in it," more than can "be found in any other literature, save only in that of the N.T." But no such elevated conceptions can long bear the strain put upon the O.T. if it fails in real truth, and is only "an accommodation to the immature stage of religious belief," colouring the narratives and even the prophecies with "'particularistic' features" unworthy of God. Here he begins with the "imperfect" and even "false" (!) science of Genesis. How can godly souls regard such an unholy alliance as emanating from God Himself? Where science might come in for

describing the great geologic successions, there is silence. God left this to man to find out as he has done, in a general way at least. In the first two verses we have the principle of God creating, and then of a chaos that followed. Some of the best informed experts have given excellent reasons for inferring that these changes in the crust of the earth have recurred some twenty-nine or thirty times, of great moment for the race that was to be, and demanding great differences as well as almost equally indispensable destructions, from which man was to derive profit as he discovered the rich provision made for him, and more or less laid bare by the violent upheavals which occurred from time to time. In these two verses we have only the principle. Had details been given it would have been science taught by scripture; but this is exactly what the Bible avoids. Nevertheless room is here left for all those great changes which followed the primary creation of the earth.

Verse 3 opens the work of God after the geologic ages, and dwells upon what God created with a direct view to man, account of whom also is given within the six days. But it is revelation and not science given us in the verses that follow to the end of the chapter: the earth formed for the immediate appearance and dwelling of man upon it. This is what scripture supplies for our instruction. It has moral roots which could not be where the work was purely material. God would have every man to understand in a general way that form of creation of which he is the head.

Is it not striking that mere scientists and philosophers who are avowed rationalists are more intelligent as to this question than the new critical divines? I refer again to two eminent philosophers who do not pretend to

derive anything from scripture, but allow and even insist on that which overthrows this first example which the new critics of all lands pervert to disparage the Bible.

John S. Mill and Herbert Spencer little knew or even suspected that they laid their axe to the root of theological scepticism as far as Gen. 1 is concerned. They and others who differ from them acknowledge boldly that science can give no account of permanent and primary causes of the universe as it is. Science begins where creation ends. Science can investigate the effects of creation but can give no account of the wonderful powers which wrought in creating. Science is the discovery of the movements, the cause of which it knows not, from the facts before man's eyes; however governed by general laws, — fixed laws as they call them. But it acknowledges that it can give no account of these primeval causes. So Mill declares in words already cited; and Herbert Spencer (of a distinct school of philosophy) cites his words with approval and adds that the only thing science can do is to conduct its students to a blind wall, on the other side of which lies the solution wholly outside science. This it is which, not science but, the Bible reveals with a simplicity and majesty and truth peculiar to God's revelation.

How strange that these scholarly divines seem so unacquainted with that which the philosophers admit of the limits of science, and its essential inability to explain what God's word makes plain to every believer. Of creative power and ways they confess that science knows nothing and can say nothing. They confess that there must have been such powers, to produce the facts which, carefully observed and adequately generalised, are the fixed laws, so called, of science. These

necessarily only began to exist, long after that to be adequately generalised into various departments of physical science.

But even the most extreme materialist sage acknowledges that science knows nothing of that creating of which Gen. 1 treats. Yet here we have these learned divines boasting of what science wholly ignores and cannot possibly reach. For on the assumption that true science does know better than Gen. 1, they manifest their own lack of acquaintance with the confessed ignorance of science, and venture to ground on that ignorance the charge of false science on God's word. They are therefore guilty of setting up science against scripture which the experts of science admit to be unfounded. The higher criticism was too eager to impute mistake even to the first chapter of the Bible. Nor does it require science to see that these theologians are less candid and less intelligent than the experts of rationalistic philosophy. It is false that "the science of this chapter is antiquated." There is no science in the chapter. There is divine light on God's work which must precede all science. This the scientists themselves, however sceptical, confess as a necessary principle. It is the divines in their hurry to disparage scripture who assume that science explains creation differently from the Bible. Whereas the fact is that science confesses its total ignorance, because it lacks the faith to believe the word of God. How sad that these professedly Christian teachers should assume a triumph for science which worldly rationalists admit to be absolutely non-existent!

The truth however, is that these men explain away the second and third chapters of the same book as an allegory rather than a history, and talk of

anthropomorphism, instead of seeing the beautiful simplicity in describing God's ways where His special interest in man is thus expressed, however real the facts.

We need not follow Dr. D. to the inspired prophecies. He is obliged to confess that Amos, Hosea, and Isaiah represent the God of Israel (however long-suffering to the people of His choice) as the God of all the families of the earth, the contrast of Jewish narrowness, and looking onward to the day when He must expel Israel from the land because of their iniquity, and open wide the day of grace to the Gentile; who in their turn shall forfeit His favour, for the full and final restoration of penitent and believing Israel. Then also He will bless all the nations of the earth when Messiah shall reign over it and fill it with blessing and glory.

II. Dr. D. claims for the O.T. permanent value on account of the clearness and emphasis with which it proclaims the duty of man both toward God and toward his fellow-man. Here again if the Bible be not the truth of God, a clear statement of duty will never preserve its authority over the conscience.

III. Any religious sanction of the more general duties also must fail for the same reason.

IV. How can examples of high character in the O.T., which is candid as to their failures also, sustain absolute authority over the conscience, if the word of God be stained, as these divines insist, with mistakes and falsehoods attributed to God Himself?

V. The same remark applies to the devotional portions like the Psalms, etc. Wonderfully as they may express

the heart's feelings in distress, confession, supplication, confidence and faith, as well as thanksgiving and praise, to set scripture against scripture is the work of the enemy and still more to insinuate falsehood against the God of truth, as represented by the O.T.

VI. Still less can the great idea of human life and society in the O.T. redeem itself and the God who speaks throughout it from the libels endorsed by the higher critics. No doubt the grosser pollutions of heathenism are, since Christ, ashamed to be seen in the light, and retreat into congenial darkness. But as to real advance for the world, the N.T. does not flatter any more than the O.T. Both show that the end of this age will be profoundly wicked and utterly godless save for little remnants of Jews and Gentiles; and divine judgment will surely be executed upon the whole earth, on Jerusalem especially, on the Beast and the False Prophet, as well as on the N.T. Babylon. It will be the apostasy and the man of sin, the lawless Beast of Rev. 13 and his religious associate the antichrist, or all civil and religious iniquity. This is the consummation which both Testaments announce by the holy Prophets. It is direct contradiction of scripture that human endeavour shall ever realise the restitution of all things; for it is reserved only for the one Man, the glorified Son of man, to make good the kingdom of God in manifest power and glory. All others have failed and have been saved wholly of grace. He only is the worthy One, the power and the wisdom of God. For Him at His coming again is this glory here below reserved, and then, as now in the heavens. Only then do we see power exercised and glory displayed. Man as such is to be brought low, and judgment on the quick take place, before the times of refreshing shall

come from God through our Lord Jesus for the long guilty, weary, and misled earth.

VII. The stress laid upon a pure and spiritual religion did not avail of old any more than the gospel now to make good the glory of God here below. No believer doubts its reality and especially in that which Christ introduced for the N.T. when the hour came for Jerusalem and Samaria alike to disappear, and the worship of the Father in spirit and truth was revealed. It is man that fails, the first man. The grand change awaits the Second Man to judge the first as living on the earth and to maintain God's glory in the highest and peace on earth. This He will surely accomplish. But even His kingdom on earth will be followed by an uprising of rebellion which God will destroy by fire from heaven. Then will come His judgment on the great white throne, when all the wicked dead since the world began shall be judged, and eternity issues with a new heaven and a new earth in the fullest sense, as well as the lake of fire for all the cowardly, unbelieving, false, corrupt, and wicked. No qualities can condone lack of truth.

W.K.

1 * The note from Dr. F. Watson at the bottom is an instance of these slovenly perversions; for the Bible does not describe the plain of Babylonia as "the aboriginal home of the human race," but as the land to which they journeyed some 1500 years after the aboriginal home, and some time even after the Deluge.

2 * Bishop Jos. Butler never realised even the gospel of salvation for his own soul till he came to his dying illness, having been up to that a prey to doubts and fears.

3 * The Revisers say, “Every scripture inspired of God is also profitable,” etc. They turn a plain construction into one not only awkward but ambiguous. For their rendering might mean “as being inspired,” and thus it would only differ in assuming what the A.V. gives as asserting; which would not help the desired end. But taken to mean “if inspired,” it contradicts the N.T. norma loquendi of γραφή which is appropriated therein to no writing but God’s inspired word. Not so γράμματα in ver. 15, which required ἱερα; to designate the O.T.;

πᾶσα γραφὴ here means “every scripture” old or new. Every such is inspired.

The New Development 1890

Urged from all sides to say a little on this painful question, I hesitate not to speak plainly. Had it been dealt with in the Spirit and not without righteous indignation, when it first oozed out, it might as it ought to have been judged and repudiated. But seeing that souls are everywhere perplexed and grieved by the long tampering and diligent debates of partisans, and even by the palliation of some who were at first as shocked as any; and yet more, now that a world-wide separation ensues of those who refuse a lie of the enemy, it is charity to speak out the truth for the Lord's sake and His own. One can sympathise with unwillingness at first to suspect ill, especially as the language (from whatever motive) was obscure, and many a reader wholly ignorant of oral statements less guarded which helped to disclose a system of error underneath. Indeed one of the unhappy moral features of the case, which soon appeared even to those not directly conversant, was the dropping of offensive clauses without the least acknowledgement of error, any more than adequate grief felt and expressed.

To a Christian nothing is so near the heart as Christ, nothing so offensive and evil as His dishonour. Where then are those whose speculations led them to say in substance, whatever the variation of phrase, "Fancy a helpless babe an expression of eternal life?" The unbelief and the irreverence of such a speech seem to have been by no means confined to one; but it was laid, not without ground at the door of perhaps the boldest in the new school. The coolness with which he denied the

imputation made one tremble for the zealous brother, who characterised the affront to our Lord as it deserved. But it comes out long after, without confession or apparently intention but by the evident hand of God, that the actual words were “Think of a helpless infant being the exhibition of eternal life.”

Now the former report (avowedly hearsay) imputes pretty much what in fact was written. Yet the writer, when appealed to, said he was satisfied he never used these words! Was this Christian candour? or even common honesty? But so it is ever: the truth of Christ lost for one who bears His name is the loss of truthfulness. Nor this only: the brother who resented the reported dishonour of Christ was challenged to produce the letter containing it, in the very place where the letter was, and was known to be unless destroyed! Now what can one think of concealing it deliberately, not only to shield the evildoer, but to subject the brother jealous for the glory of Christ to the charge of unrighteousness, and to threats of more or less discipline? Shame on such as conspired in the Name against that Name! If honest once, to what have error and party spirit and a bad conscience degraded them? Is this the holiness of God’s house? It is not Greenwich only: the same fellowship was at work to the same ends at Ealing, and in how many other spots we know not. It is Christ flouted by all such, with moral wrong flowing directly from it as flagrant as the doctrinal error, leaven in both ways.

Did Park Street then stand for Christ? It has been forward, in the face of the most solemn protests from without as well as within, not only to excuse or explain away, but to accept as its own what has drawn out the holy abhorrence and gravest warning of many choice

servants of God (one may say perhaps) all over the world no less than in Great Britain. After indulging throughout London and elsewhere in grievous discussions about the person of the Incarnate Word, utterly inconsistent with faith in or at least true reverence for His inscrutable glory, they are not ashamed to turn round and claim credit for charging those already compromised to beware of this unworthy prying and profound disrespect. Alas! the worst mischief is done, and by none outside Greenwich and Ealing more decidedly than by Park Street, so as to influence similarly all it can in town and country. No scruple hitherto where the unhallowed analysis of the Holy One could win light and daring spirits. As this was known to repel the pious and godly, souls are now gravely dissuaded from it! It is high time indeed, after so long and incessant and rude handling, but rather strong that it should be by the same guides. Is there then repentance at last? Sad to say, each step seems but a turn for party and a fear of further losses; whilst some appear grieved and ashamed, who if truly so, will allow of no excuses or shams.

It is no mere fault of expression, however serious. The life, the service, and the testimony of Christ are no more spared than His infancy. It is His Person that has been so wantonly divided. Will it be believed by sober saints that Jesus at the well of Sychar was denied to be the manifestation of eternal life? It was said “that eternal life never wept,” “never eat nor drank,” nor “commended His mother to the care of His loved disciple,” etc., etc.

Let us weigh these flippancies in the light of the scriptures referred to.

The total absence of spirituality and holy intelligence is apparent in thus treating the Lord at Sychar. It is as a whole the most striking opening out of the new thing thus far in the Gospel of John. Hence His Person shines in it peculiarly to all save the blind. “If thou knewest the gift of God, and Who it is that saith to thee, Give Me to drink, thou wouldest have asked of Him, and He would have given thee living water,” not eternal life as in the chapter before, but the Spirit as its power, a fountain of water within, springing up into eternal life. But this school, bent on self-justification, will say that they do not deny He expressed eternal life in some things He said to the Samaritan; they only exclude it from His sitting wearied with His journey at the spring, and saying, Give me to drink! Thus they take the line, not of open infidels, but of the rationalistic sceptics who allow Divine inspiration in the theological element, but can see only what is human expressed in history of facts, etc. Now, if we scout such dishonour on the unity of holy scripture, how much should saints resent this base and perilous handling of our Lord. Undoubtedly there was infinite grace in stooping so low as to ask the woman (and such a woman!) for a drink of water in His thirst and weariness; but oh! the infatuation that severs from that act and those words the Son of God thus expressing the Father and seeking a worshipper in spirit and truth, even in one so untoward and far off.

Again, kindred blasphemy (for another person figures) lays its defiling hands on that most touching scene, the Creator a Man, weeping at the grave of Lazarus, just after uttering the words “I am the Resurrection and the Life,” and about to express Himself in the deed of raising the dead and buried man. It was a scene, as even

the Holy Spirit says, for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby. Yes, it is our solace and joy and thanksgiving that the Saviour Son of God did shed tears; but what were these not with His sighs and groans to God! They were not the expression of eternal life, says this unworthy school. Ah! let them weep over their sin, and hate themselves for putting the Son of God to shame, where trueness of heart would have been the more at His feet. God forbid that any should think their purpose was to dishonour the Saviour any more than E. Irving so meant. But they have been so inflated that they have blindly fallen into the fault of the devil. And where are they that allow unity, or the fear of division, to quench their hatred of this evil? or even to apologise for it, as three or four Irish brothers have done, to say nothing of English partisans? Yet I give them credit for better feelings in their hearts, or privately expressed. But how then their printed essays to defend what is indefensible? Was this in the faith and love and honour of Christ?

Alas! even now, we have not done with all the vileness of some in their eagerness to push their “high truth.” For they have dared to say (what one shrinks from repeating even to refute its shallow irreverence) that “eternal life never eat nor drank.” Let those guilty of what is either silliness or the grossest carnal licence with the Son of God read their own censure Luke 24:42, 43, Acts 10:41. Our Lord partook of food expressly in the risen state, where He was manifested as the Eternal Life even as to the body, the Firstborn from the dead “exhibited” in that final and blessed condition which is according to God’s everlasting counsels. Yet this libel on Christ is said to

have come first of all from a chief man who is not known to have repented in dust and ashes.

Need one recall the reality of Jesus from the cross entrusting to John His bereaved mother? For here too the new school pursues its heartless way. We know that some of them have taught, and taught falsely for many years, death to nature. Does that unjudged error induce them now to think and speak so slightingly of His perfection? of His filial feeling, and of His confidence in the beloved disciple? How can they overlook in that very same action His infinite superiority to all the circumstances which would have absorbed and governed all others but Himself? Avaunt, spirit of error: no longer darken God's children. Let them learn what they ought to have known, and to have ever held fast, that Jesus is never more manifestly God than when He shows Himself the perfect man. Distinguish, if you can, rightly; but dare not split asunder that holy and indissoluble union. These evil speculations tend to divide His person recklessly.

But another of these errors it is well to expose for the sake of the weak. It is alleged that John, among the Gospels the great witness of eternal life, does not give the Lord's birth or early days. In vain the argument. Mark does not any more, though each for reasons wholly different from the insinuation. But the fact is that of all the Evangelists none makes so much of the Incarnation as John, and so in the First Epistle too. This we see in John 1:14 ("The Word was made flesh, etc."), in the Sent One often, above all in John 4:33-51, Luke gives the wondrous birth fully as a fact.

Indeed the theory traverses the truth of both Old Testament and New. For nothing is laid more deeply in the structure of both than the jealousy of the Holy Ghost, when treating of His Deity to bring in His humanity, when treating of His sufferings to introduce unmistakably His divine glory (see Psalm 45:6, 7; Psalm 102:23-27; Isaiah 9:6; Isaiah 50:3, 4; Zechariah 13:7). Of the New Testament something has been said already. But it may be added here that, although Matthew has it for his allotted province from God to present Jesus as the Messiah, the utmost care is taken from the first chapter to show that God's Anointed (whatever fallen Jews might dream) was God, Emmanuel, yea Jehovah. Mark, again, though presenting Jesus in His service, was led to give us the healing of the leper ere chapter 1 concludes: "I will; be thou clean." Now, Who could say "I will," if He was not "I am?" And the Man who was the true God was also the Eternal Life: in Him they are together inseparably. The reasoning from the absence of any description of His birth in John is good for nothing save to deceive oneself, and to mislead the unwary.

On the same principle eternal life, or rather the exhibition of that life, must be eliminated both from Christ's birth and from His death! Where then is His person? Where is His work? It is only made manifest for the first time as such to human eyes in resurrection! as a northern victim of this heterodoxy has the hardihood to affirm. It is a grief to answer that these are not "the teachings of wisdom" but the depths of Satan. Indeed it would be difficult to show where there is a brighter manifestation of Eternal Life than in the birth of God's Son if it be not in His death and resurrection. Before that the life was in the Divine Word, but it was not

manifested till He partook of blood and flesh. Then and there according to 1 John 1 the manifestation was made And manifestation to chosen witnesses is added, in order to authenticate the truth to others. But even the apostles, how far did they spiritually discern till He died and rose and ascended, and the Holy Spirit was given? As to all this there seems nothing but confusion through overlooking what is written and importing what is not. His very “emptying” and “humbling” Himself was the manifest witness of Eternal Life, as was His laying down His life to take it again. He and He only is or could be said to have “delivered up His spirit” as in John 19:29.

In the destructive departure from truth we had to face more than forty years ago it would be hard to find any more insolently false, though one forbears to repeat what is still more outrageous because now “withdrawn,” as was also done then. But “withdrawal” under pressure and with some shame cannot inspire confidence. One looks for sorrow, self-judgment, and even horror at thus pouring contempt on Christ’s glory. Is the root yet reached? Which of them will affirm this? If not, it will assuredly spring up again, and worse than has yet appeared.

It is said that more than one have given utterance to these varied aspersions of Christ? This is exactly what proves the active working of the leaven, the energy of an evil spirit. They have a common source and character, and not so recently heard of. No one imputes to them the intention of wounding our Lord afresh; but what does it all mean? How did Satan gain such opportunity to do what he meant? He intended, and succeeded, in using them to Christ’s personal dishonour.

Humanly it is a highly pretentious school, as fully confident of their own intelligence as scornful of others. The form the evil has taken is systematic slight of the Lord of glory, under the plea of asserting the dignity of eternal life. For the substantive and distinctive truth of Christianity evaporates for this school in their utterances. They have lost the constant objective fact of the Eternal Life manifested in Jesus, the Word made flesh and dwelling among us. They will have the manifestation or "exhibition" only occasional. This is in effect to give up and do away with the plainest scripture.

How refreshing to turn to the grand safeguard against the antichrists of the last time! "That which was from the beginning, that which we have heard, that which we have seen with our eyes, that which we contemplated, and our hands handled, concerning the Word of Life (and the life was manifested, and we have seen, and bear witness, and report to you the Eternal Life, which was with the Father and was manifested to us)" (1 John 1:1, 2) Observe that the Holy Spirit carefully begins with the infinite truth as it really is, an actually subsisting fact here below, before a single chosen witness had heard or seen. This is of the utmost importance; because it lays as a foundation the reality concerning the Word of Life in this world before John or any other apostle heard Him. Here is the foundation; not Adam, but Christ. It is the Word made flesh, the Person of Christ. His work comes in afterwards, vindicates God as to sin, lays the ground of reconciliation (though for this we have to hear the testimony of Paul), whether of things or of persons, and displays His righteousness toward all and upon all that believe. But the Person was there on earth in all moral and divine perfection, yet true man, to be attested

(as was meet and as sovereign love willed) in the fullest and most familiar way. It was Jesus Christ come in the flesh.

It may be noticed too that in verse 1 “that which we have heard” precedes “that which we have seen.” This cannot be said to be the order of the senses; and it strikes the more, both because we are just about to have minute witness in this kind detailed to us, and because the latter is the order followed in verse 3 (“that which we have seen and heard”). The reason I apprehend to be, that the Spirit would give the basis of divine authority as the starting-point, not their sight, but His words (and they were the words the Father had given Him) for them to hear. Thus was it hearing the Good Shepherd’s voice and believing, as we read in the deeply interesting latter half of John 1. But then they did see, contemplate, and handle. This it is which the petty activity of man’s mind would now sever from the manifestation of the Eternal Life, to the unutterable loss of those that allow it; what is such unbelief in the Father’s eyes and in Christ’s? What to Him Who is here to glorify Christ?

Again, it is to be remarked that in verse 2, where the manifestation of the life is asserted (and I trust that here at least there will be no sickening equivoque, but an unhesitating acknowledgement that “eternal” life is in question), the hearing of faith found in verse 1 is not stated, but simply “and we have seen and bear witness and report.” No doubt there was good reason to speak only of the great personal and apostolic witnesses in the context. But there is no ground to limit ἐφανερώθη, as in fact it is stated even here absolutely. It is just what Incarnation covers. It applies to the Person of Christ

right through His course on earth, and gives the flattest negative to the statement “that life was manifested by overcoming death.” Had it been said defined in power by resurrection, there would have been truth. It is not “having suffered death, He appeared among His own;” nor does the Holy Ghost add in the first instance “manifested unto us.” In the beginning of the verse He says and means only that the life was manifested; He adds at the end the manifestation “unto us” after the momentous clause that precedes, and before verse 3. It is not at all the mistake of confounding “appearing” with manifestation (though who really is guilty of it?): what strikes one is the shutting of the eyes to scripture, the missing and perversion of God’s mind apparent in this dear brother’s “Brief Account”. He certainly is not the originator of the evil. Yet it is an awful proof of the havoc wrought by a theory not only unwarranted by God’s word but directly antagonistic. And notoriously it was here as elsewhere put forth as new and higher truth, an advance on all; till the manifest errors made the defence necessary that it was the old truth (!) we were familiar with, notably in the writings of J.N.D. — a defence which is as unfounded as the previous boast.

It seems plain that “manifestation” is misunderstood by all who defend these speculations or deny their heterodoxy. They confound it with faith’s apprehension and hence would restrict it to believers. Now its true force is simply that what existed but was hidden has come to view. Faith of course profits by it, and in some cases for testimony to others; but the manifestation is complete independently of its effects. This is true even where the object is expressed to whom the manifestation was made, as is certain from John 1:31.

For our Lord was manifested to Israel; yet they, His own, received Him not. God brought Him to light for the very people that refused Him.

So it is with the great standing fact of God's righteousness by faith of Jesus Christ. It has been and is manifested. Rom. 3:21, 22 It is apart from law, and being God's, not man's, it is for all, though it only takes effect upon all those that believe.

"Who saw it" is not the question in manifestation but is implied in "appearing." Still less correct is the confusion which these misleaders make of "revelation" with "manifestation." Everyone, however, cannot be expected to understand delicate shades of expression like these. Only such utter ignorance is not of God's Spirit, especially when combined with great pretension and self-complacency. Manifestation may be absolute on God's part in Christ. Discerning is by faith and in the power of the Spirit in us. Still more distinct is my being able to say in truth of heart and ways, "for me to live is Christ."

Note also that, whatever the different views of commentators old or new, nobody of weight among orthodox men denies that the preposition πρὸς is intended to indicate the distinction of the Persons. But it is quite a fallacy that this would make the Eternal Life all that the Son is, any more than that the Spirit is no more than the Comforter or Paraclete. This seems to be the favourite plea; but it quite fails. Christ is also once called Paraclete or Advocate, so that infrequency does not disprove or even render doubtful. Nor is it more personal than the Eternal Life in 1 John 1:2, as to which

some affect strange difficulty. There is difficulty where there is will.

Nor is it John only who is so distinct and full and peremptory on the Divine personality of our Lord, and the Eternal Life in Him which is bound up with it. Not only had the apostle Paul for his work to bring out the righteousness of God and His purpose and counsels in Christ, but none was more jealous of His intrinsic glory, none more unsparing of those that lowered His honour. I am not prepared to accept the late Dean Burgon's decision on the disputed reading of the received text in 1 Tim. 3:16. But, even if that preferred by most stand, how bright is the witness to Christ! "He Who was manifested in flesh." His Deity is pre-supposed, if not asserted; and what can be stronger than that? No mere man could with propriety be described as manifested in flesh. To be a man is necessarily to be so born, or made like Adam. But a Divine Person is not so conditioned. The Son might, if He pleased, have been manifested in angelic guise or otherwise. In love, and to accomplish redemption, He became man, He was manifested in flesh; but He Who was thus manifested was God, even if here it be only implied and not expressed. And He Who was manifested was manifested in flesh: so it is written absolutely. He, in love beyond all thought of man, deigned to become incarnate. Before Incarnation He was not manifested thus. And if He the true God was manifested in flesh, assuredly eternal life also. For scripture binds the two together in His Person, and in the most unrestricted way. It is true that in resurrection He was seen and heard, touched and handled; but he who so reads 1 John 1:1, 2, misinterprets God's word

and risks the subversion of foundation truth to sustain his heresy.

Not that there is the smallest ground to think that the Greenwich doctrine was meant to oppose Mr. Darby's writings. On the contrary, the tracts or letters which have issued thence are a manifest cento of Mr. Darby's words. But the Spirit of truth characterises the one, as that of error distinguishes the other. It would be difficult to match these papers in the absence of unction, simplicity, reverence, and edification. Cold and lifeless, they abound in errors on the most fundamental truths, while pretending in a degree most unusual, to minute accuracy. The very broaching of such and so strong statements on the nicest and highest matters of Divine revelation was highly unwise and presumptuous. The strange doctrine at Witney, subsequently modified and dropped, ought to have been a danger-signal to himself and his friends. But what has been disseminated, in papers written and even printed pieces, proves that the evil spirit is in no way exorcised by prayer and fasting, but that there is a root of deep and systematic evil, which (every now and then, and all over the land in persons who may have no direct communication) breaks out in profanity, even as to Christ Himself. It is idle to imagine that this open antagonism (all the worse because unconscious and of course unintentional) to Christ's glory has no source in error and falsehood. It appears plainly to spring from unhallowed speculation as to eternal life, the more confidently followed up because the faith of these men, assuming to be and accepted as intelligent teachers of the first water, has been founded on J.N.D. (what horror this would have

been to him!), not on a Spirit-taught subjection to God's word.

And it is quite a dream that one is safe as to the doctrine of Christ, if kept from speculating on the union of the Deity and the humanity, like Nestorius and Eutyches of old, or before them like Apollinaris, friend though he was of Athanasius. A prophetic theory drew its devotee into anti-christian error, without any direct assault on the truth of the Person; for it was rather an overthrow of Christ's true relation to God. In that which now troubles saints of God, the error is nearer still, quite as subtle, and no less real, as is now evidenced by the slights, according to common report, put so widely on our Lord, mainly, if not altogether, flowing from the mist and malaria of the novel system as to eternal life.

An effort has been made by more than one to relieve the heterodoxy, and indeed to place the seceding protesters in the wrong, by extracts from Mr. D's Synopsis on Joshua 3, especially in its latest edition. Now the distinction of pilgrimage on earth from the heavenly communion and warfare with spiritual wickedness is certain, and, though by no means seized by all saints, of great moment for the Christian to enjoy, as not of the world. But Mr. D., while thus wholly separating them in character, as is necessarily true, carefully said that Christ's life among men, however distinct, was the ever perfect expression of the effect of His life of heavenly communion and of the Divine nature. Obedience and suffering here below are wholly different from the outflow of grace and truth, and the display of Divine love to man and the like. What we repudiate is that the Eternal Life was not always exercised in the earthly lines as well as the heavenly. But this, though the clear

truth of scripture, is forbidden by this anti-christian theory. That heaven is the congenial and destined "sphere," is true for the Christian: how much more for Christ! But there He (the Son) might have been for ever, but for the love of the Father that sent Him, and His own grace that came down at all cost. Otherwise there had been no such Divine manifestation.

But He was manifested in flesh. The Eternal Life that was with the Father was manifested: how this was, the preceding verse carefully declares. No one denies that Christ is the true God and Eternal Life in resurrection glory. But it is false that 1 John 5:20 limits to this, or even gives that condition prominence. He was so always, equally from His birth till He rose from the dead and went on high. Indeed the emphasis of John is on His manifestation on earth: so utterly opposed to the current of the word and the Spirit of truth is this system of error. And the apostle Paul, as we have seen in 1 Tim. 3:16, though habitually presenting Christ in heavenly glory, declares that the manifestation was in flesh, not in the risen and glorified condition, not therefore in heaven but here below. No one says He was manifested to be the Person save to faith. Still He was manifested in the broadest and most absolute manner, if we believe the Word. Mr. D. treats of quite a different truth in Notes ii. 386. He is opposing the prevalent error of a spiritual second coming of our Lord, and labours to prove that, rightly viewed, His first coming was really the spiritual one, i.e., the Son seen then in moral fact only, as we see Him now; whereas every eye shall see Him personally returning in power and glory. What has this to do with the question of His true manifestation in manhood, true

God and the Eternal Life as He was? It is well for dear brethren to understand before catching at quotations.

On the other hand, even when dealing with a system of exaggeration and one-sidedness, it is well to steer clear of exaggeration. “The life to which sin attached” is a phrase of J.N.D’s and only distinguishes His life in flesh from that in resurrection which can have nothing to do with death for sin.

Take another of those audaciously false statements — “to talk of a person having eternal life without the Spirit is absurd.” Is this “substantially the truth as to Christianity in its proper heavenly character?” Our blessed Lord is in His own person its refutation; for while undeniably He was ever the true God and Eternal Life, yet even He on earth was not sealed till, baptised of John, He entered on His ministry, the Father Himself bearing witness of Him. And so it was with the apostles as well as the disciples in general. They had been children of God but were not baptised with (ἐν) the Holy Spirit till Pentecost. That this gift was sure is true; that the former precedes the latter is no less true; and therefore so scornful a denial is a fresh proof of opposition to revealed truth. John 4, 5, 20; Rom. 8; and Gal. 5 lend no support to the error, but are quite consistent with the rest of scripture. This perhaps may be said to be now dropped. But the prefatory reason assigned for omitting the last paragraph is anything but an honest confession, and nothing seems said why the questions and replies disappear. Further, it is too strong to volunteer that F.E.R. holds firmly that Eternal Life is Christ, when he notoriously has changed all this, and emphatically denies, as do most of his supporters in England, what J.N.D. did not scruple to write (Letters iii.

171). Was he inaccurate? or did he in this slight the Deity of Christ? No believer holds that Christ was not more than Eternal Life.

But again, in the part reiterated, what is the meaning of the hazy, ambiguous clause, “he [the believer] having been born of God to receive it”? The testimony? or the life? One or other it must be; and either is flagrantly false. It is the testimony God has testified of the Son which gives life. To be born of God to receive one or other supposes another life from God to prepare the way for eternal life. If this is not really meant, though it seems also fully confirmed in the last existing paragraph, can we escape the conclusion that there is the most painful inability to convey what is even intended, right or wrong? One, not less self-confident, ventured to pronounce that on this issue of eternal life God is with him who is now before us; but he had soon to acknowledge himself no true prophet. Would that the evil were really discerned and judged! It is to deceive oneself, and perhaps others, to speak of an unguarded and unbalanced way of writing, or to take advantage of the fact that some things obscurely said have been misapprehended. Further, is it not false in the face of 1 John 5:11. [“God hath given to us eternal life”], to state that “Scripture does not, I think, speak of our having had eternal life imparted to us?” If God has given it to us, we surely have had it imparted to us. It is fully owned that we have life only in the Son, and the all-importance of not severing the stream from the source. But woe to him who enfeebles that we have what God has in this way given to us. Not a word in the verse about “life in the power of the Spirit,” “a well,” etc. God declares positively what we hear now, not so positively

but withal daringly, denied. Conscious enjoyment is in the Spirit, but this is an added privilege. Life, eternal life, precedes that gift, as does known remission of sins.

Indeed there is a fatality of error in what is laid down ever so guardedly on this subject. Thus, in one letter it is said, “He gives the Spirit as the capacity;” whereas eternal life is the capacity, and the Spirit given is the subsequent power. In a much later one (March 20, 1890), “power is an essential of life,” which is essentially erroneous, for “life” exists in dependence and conscious weakness: “power” is in the Holy Spirit given (2 Tim. 1:7, and indeed all scripture). And when the writer said in his earlier letter, “the Spirit in the believer is life,” what can one hope at best but that this was blank ignorance on a question of eternal life? For the allusion must have been to Rom. 8:6 But this is “life” solely in the practical sense, as the connected “peace” is of the heart, not of the conscience with God as in Rom. 5:1. It was therefore lack of intelligence, if not sophistry. Where was and is divine teaching? John 6:45.

Every unbiased mind may see that there is of set purpose only a single truth, but of the deepest account, here pressed. It would have been easy to have exposed a vast deal more of important bearing both for the truth and to the saints; as the title of believers now to divine righteousness as well as eternal life. So too the unsettling of faith’s absolute language because of our mixed condition is an inexcusable error, which no tinkering, on the part of the maker or his journeymen, can mend, still less justify. Nothing is further from the mind of the Spirit in 2 Cor. 5:21, than qualifying His absolute statement of grace in Christ, because of the believer’s mixed condition for the present. Nor is it in

the least true that future glory is here spoken of. Efforts at explanation are but a cloak of pride, where humiliation in the fear of God is due and befitting. And the mitigations of others who know better are conscienceless party-work. There might be said not a little on the weakening of simple subjection to the word. One simply warns souls against a thrust at the foundation which no added truth can alter, but rather make the error more insidious, though one may mourn over men of God drawn by one means or another to apologise for error which may soon inveigle them, even if quite free now and only blind to its virus.

B.W.N. was no less full of his recognition of Christ's deity, and of other truths. But like him the new school insinuate what saps it, and is incompatible. To all such the Christian must say that "no lie is of the truth."

How then can any spiritual mind venture to say before the Lord, on weighing all this on one truth only in question, that he sees nothing beyond what might have been profitably discussed in brotherly confidence? Research had better not be shirked if this were that "pretending to accuracy which destroys reverence and leads to infidelity." The Holy Spirit can and does give an accuracy in heart and conscience that deepens reverence and strengthens faith; and Mr. Darby was a bright sample of it. The fact is, one of the most offensive and unfailing traits of the new school is this very pretension; yet, strange to say, along with it goes a solemn and misplaced deprecation of criticism! This one does not wonder at. They have every reason to dread criticism, and they have had it honestly and ably, and in general fairly, from some who ought to be above suspicion on the score of either hostile or unworthy

feelings. On the other hand, it cannot be said that a single defence which has been set up faces the real question at issue.

The system before us, in my judgment, so clouds, lowers, and undermines the truth of eternal life (and thus far Christ's person) that it is to me inconceivable for any child of God to learn the truth from the Greenwich papers or those akin. Even those who have known the truth more or less fully can only have the eyes of their heart darkened by accepting them. They can but mislead, defile, and destroy. Can one doubt that the righteous souls among the five hundred brethren who met on the 7th Oct. at Park St. loathed the profanities so strange and startling among Brethren? But their resolution betrays too much irritation against such as have served the Lord in exposing sad and shameful evil long trifled with, and too little willingness to believe that so malignant a symptom implies a deeply seated malady or an active poison. It will soon be seen whether the meetings holily judge the more open offenders. If common rumour be true, they are far too many, and not far to seek. Not a few of the most prominent men are more or less so committed that it is difficult to suppose the local meetings will purge out the evil. Only one of the five hundred is reported to have spoken with a just sense of what is at work; and he, it is said, is not actually breaking bread: who can wonder, save that he was there? For they have dealt pretty summarily with a poor man who protested, and boast of no charge even before Greenwich! Mr. R. yielded to the entreaty to withdraw in a way the sentence that most shocked his brethren; but he reserved the latter part! so much so, that he would go out of fellowship rather than

give up that! And a colleague protested against giving up the first part, as this would compromise the truth! Another again denied any root of error to all the profanity! allowing no more than a low moral state. The low state is true, of course, and the most distressing highmindedness to boot; but not to see Satan in this wide and deep stream of unjudged evil, some of the worst kind against Christ, is spiritual darkness. I have only glanced at the report since this tract was written and in type. The good Lord guard and guide His sheep.

W.K.

The Revelation of God - 1 John 4:9, 16

It is an immense thing to have a revelation of God. I do not mean merely a revelation from God, but a revelation of God Himself. God has given us both: revelations, again and again, revelations of the most varied character; revelations in the most suitable order; but, most of all, and specially with the view to this, the revelation of Himself, the revelation of Himself in this world.

For little as this world may be, compared with other parts of the creation of God, it is here that man is — here now; and this is a very solemn consideration for you and for me. It is here that we are put to the test as moral beings; here that we are lost or saved.

Men may speculate about other worlds, but no man has any real ground to say that God has ever revealed Himself except here, or indeed that there are others to whom He would reveal Himself as He has revealed Himself here. May I go farther, and venture to say this — He never revealed Himself anywhere as He has done here? It is here that He sent His Son; it is here that He sent Him to be a man (unspeakable witness of His grace towards man!), and remember when man was fallen. Not till then was there the very smallest word of it from God, but man was no sooner fallen than He speaks; and now the word that God spoke so long past is become a great substantial fact, which puts every heart, every conscience of every man, woman, and child, completely to the proof. Do I prefer sin to God? Do I prefer my selfishness, my misery, the darkness and guilt of sin, to God and His grace?

For when God did send His Son into the world, it was to deal with sin, it was to deal with Satan, it was to bring in what man could find nowhere, else, LIFE — eternal life! Life that could feel according to God, life that could have pleasure in the presence of God, life that could take delight in the will of God, life capable of knowing and enjoying God! And where was this found? Where is it? Is it in man's heart? In ordinances? Nowhere but in the Son of God! But (wondrous to see now) the Son of God a real man! certainly much more than a man, but a man. He was God from everlasting to everlasting, but He became a MAN. Assuredly He did not cease to be God; nor will He ever cease to be a man! and there it is that God has given in itself the most astonishing pledge and proof that He has no designs against man, nay, that He had the fullest love towards man.

Yet this was what man was so slow to credit. And why so? Most of all because he is a sinner. He has a bad conscience; he is afraid of God. And good reason he has to be afraid of God, as far as he is concerned; the best reason has he if there be none other than he. But there is. There is one man that is God — I will not say like God. He is never said to be "like God." And I will tell you why. Because He is God. He is said to be the "image of God." He has given me to see what God is. He has brought the very image of God before my heart, before me in this world. He is the "image of the invisible God." But He is never called His likeness, for this were to deny His glory. He is God's very transcript. He is the true God and Eternal Life; and this is the One that God sent into the world to save, to save all that believe — not to be a judge, yet He will judge. Every man, as man, nay, every man absolutely, must give account — I do not say be

judged. Every man as man must be judged, but every soul, every saint even, must give account of all that he has done in the body.

You observe that I have spoken of a difference in these two things, and there is one. It is not understood generally, but I will tell you what and why it is. It is because salvation is not understood! Thanks be to God, people do not lose salvation because they do not understand it. Wretched were it so, that is, if God only blessed according to their measure, but He blesses according to Christ. And is there any measure there? On the contrary, what a fulness, fulness infinite, according to Himself, according to all His grace and His truth.

Such is the Saviour! Is He yours? Do you know Him? Tell me not that He cannot be known. Are you a heathen, or a Jew? You, a Christian, to say that God cannot be known! What sort of Christianity is that? More guilty than Judaism or even heathenism. A heathen, just because he was a heathen, had not the knowledge of God. He had therefore gone after false gods, gods that were no gods. No wonder he should say God cannot be known; but even a Jew knew something about God, though he did not know God Himself. And you who take the place of being a “Christian,” even if it be on the slenderest confession, be it so! But what Christianity is based upon is this, that God has revealed Himself; yet you, you call yourself a “Christian,” and do not know Him! perishing, in the presence of the richest abundance! dying, although eternal life has come here in the person of the Saviour!

It is for sinners, life has come; not for those who have life. Though I grant that all that can strengthen, all that

can fill the heart, all that can guide and bless, is found in that same One who is “Eternal Life.” But I ask, For whom was He sent, and for what? Here we have it. “In this was manifested the love of God towards us; in that God sent His only-begotten Son into the world that we might live through Him.” And this is so true that no man can see the Son and believe in the Son, without having eternal life. So this very inspired writer says; and you must remember an inspired writer means one who gives the sure unfailing truth of God. It is impossible for God to lie, and this is the way He speaks in His word. Surely there is One who had the words of God when He was here. He is the Word of God. But the apostle says, “He that knoweth God, heareth us.” He could be known, then. The apostles were raised up, they were inspired, for the very purpose of communicating God’s word.

“Heareth us.” One does not pretend to be above the apostles, or to do without the apostles, for we have their writings, but hears them. “He that is not of God heareth not us.” And do you hear not the apostles? When you say that God cannot be known, you certainly do not hear the apostles. You never learned that from them. On the contrary, you have learned it from men who speak as of the world, and the world hears them. I do not say they speak “for” the apostles, for they speak against their word, though they may call themselves, ever so much, their successors. And this is exactly the state in which Christendom now is. These high pretensions always go with denying the sure present knowledge of God by faith.

That We Might Live Through Him

But let us hear what he says who writes these divine words: “In this was manifested the love of God towards us, in that God sent His only begotten Son into the world that we might live through Him.” This was His very object. There was no life here, nor could life be got through any other. It was not enough to point to the Son in heaven; that would not satisfy God. No, God sent His Son into the world that we might live through Him; and it is in this way that souls do live. He sets before us this One, and tells us who the Son of God is, even Jesus — undoubtedly the son of man, but the Son of God, the only-begotten Son of the Father, yet God just as much as His Father. You are a man if you are the son of your father. In a still more glorious, ineffable way was the only-begotten Son of God Son of the Father. And in this also it is that God triumphs, because man had only believed a lie, judging of God by Himself — the sure way to be lost. You cannot by searching find out God. The Son of God, “the only-begotten Son who is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.” “And this is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.” Thus the simplest believer knows the only true God; there is none he knows so well. He is known by my need, by my wants, in His own divine love and skill meeting me where I am and in spite of all that I am.

It is evident that, if the only-begotten Son was sent into the world that we might live through Him, there was no life without Him, for life does not mean mere existence. True, the soul is immortal, but the immortality of the soul does not hinder the soul from being lost. The soul is immortal; and, further, the body will be raised. Oh! it is

an awful thought that the body will be raised to be bound to the guilty soul, that both soul and body should prove what it is to have despised God — to have hated Him — and to have proved it by despising the Son. It is not merely for his sins that man is lost, but because he refused this unspeakable love of God who sent His Son. He is too proud, too given up to selfishness; he does not want to give up his sins, above all, he will not be beholden to God; he would rather risk it.

There it is that the Spirit of grace works to touch the conscience of the sinner. Where does he turn then? To the very God he has wronged, avoided, dreaded, hated too. There is no surer proof of hatred than that you never care to see a person's face. Now you who have not the knowledge of God, is not this what you would like best — if you could only be sure you could always escape God; if you could go on as you like, and never face God, never have to give account of your sins? If you could go on with your pursuits, your pleasures, without being cast into hell, would you not like that? You are dead in sins!

But the Spirit of God, when He works, makes the truth quickening. I am a sinner. I am ashamed to think of my sins, ashamed to tell them to God. I feel I have been most guilty. Yet such an one turns by Christ to God. He confesses his guilt, cost what it may. If God were to cast him into hell on the confession of his guilt, it would be just, and man must justify God. He tells it all out to God. He must draw near — the consciously shameful, shameless, guilty soul — and pour out the confession of his sins into the ear of God. And what does God tell out to him? "In this was manifested the love of God toward

us, in that God sent His only-begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him."

The Propitiation For Our Sins

Is that all? Most blessed it is, but not all. Then we find immediately in a still fuller way God coming in to that poor soul feeling its state, its incapacity to love God, and it learns, "Herein is love, not that we loved God," but the very reverse. We endeavoured to escape God, we desired not the knowledge of His ways. Such was our wretched history. But "He loved us and sent His Son, the propitiation for our sins." It was not enough " that we might live through Him"; because, if we lived, if we felt what was due to God, if we had a desire to do the will of God, it must be still immense misery, and constant fear, in the sense of His holiness and of our utter unfitness for His presence.

When there is no life one tries to get rid of God's presence — to drown oneself in pleasure; one turns even duties into ruin by occupying oneself with anything to shut out the sense of having to do with God. But where there is a conscience, one must go to Him. "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him," said one of old. There is a distinct desire after Him, while one maintains His righteous character. But how little is He known as Saviour, for this is what He is — One who has thoughts of good, and not of evil — One who (when a man thus espouses the cause of God against himself, when he heeds the word that condemns him out end out) sent His Son the propitiation, for my sins! Thus not only does He give a nature that hates sin, but the mighty work of the Lord Jesus Christ is to take away all my guilt out of His sight. Ah! there is love indeed — not merely that I might

have spiritual feelings instead of natural religion, not merely that I might groan over my evil, but that I might be justified. And this is secured by the work of Christ's atonement for me. I see it in all its perfection. He sent His Son for me to live, for Him to die! What does He give me in His death? Propitiation for my sins. In this twofold way God has proved His love.

It is in this world — in no world but this — that eternal life is given. It is not to any other world but here that Jesus came. We have not the smallest ground to believe that the Son of God ever came, ever died, in any world but this. God is not looking for great people but for wretched sinners. He is not looking for great worlds any more than people, but a sinful earth! He is seeking wretched sinners. But now that the Son is come and I believe in Him, He is my life, and my sins are sent away. Is that not enough? No; He is coming to take me on high. Would you like to be in heaven? No place you would enjoy so little, if in your sins! You would dread it, although you do not like to say so, more than any spot in God's creation. The light, the love, the holiness of God, would be unbearable to you. But God, who has searched you through and through sent His Son. Why? He has but one Son — the only begotten, yet His Son was sent to sinners. He is the "propitiation for our sins." Why fear, if you believe on Him?

The glory of His person is maintained. Take a poor guilty woman caught in the vilest sin. The moment Christ speaks a word, they who had accused her were the first to turn from His presence. Thus the glory of the Lord, the light in His person, is far more confounding than in the law. One ray from Him — they fled from His presence! What will it be with you when you stand to

give account of yourself to God? Stand and give account now. Faith does not wait for the day of judgment. Those who believe are willing to tell out their sins now. What do they find? Judgment? Life eternal, a new nature, the knowledge and love of God, their sins forgiven. Men say that they believe in the remission of sins. Well, are your sins gone? “Oh no,” you will answer. Is there then no such thing as the certainty of the truth? If I do not know them gone, can I say truly that I know God? It is not a question of activity, or depth, of mind. Thank God the gospel is for the poor, and for persons of feeble mind too, for God has saved many such. It has nothing to do with any particular power of this kind; but I will tell you with what it has to do — with my bowing to God’s word that condemns me and puts me down as a sinner without life, who yet has his sins; and there they are, crying out for the judgment of God. My being such a sinner is a shame to me, but to believe in His Son is life and glory. Oh, what delight God has in having souls who believe in His Son! Do you suppose it honours God to wait, to hesitate? Do you suppose that not to receive His word is the way to believe? May God give you to hearken, to believe and to know what this is by the Spirit of God! Naturally you are afraid, and indifferent, or hostile, because you are full of self-will and bent upon pleasing yourself; and this with consciousness of sin, with judgment before you, but in presence of God sending His only-begotten Son to bless you in His love if you bow to Him now.

But there are those who receive Christ, and what is the result? They possess the fulness of God’s love. Who are they? Every believer. There is no believer that has not life according to it. It may be very feeble — that is, there

may be what is of himself which shrouds and enfeebles — and God has His way of taking down all that thus hinders His own work; but I affirm that every soul thus born of God loves God. The apostle does not say ‘We ought to love God’ because we do. It is a necessity of the new nature, of the life of God, in every believer. But he does say, “We ought to love one another” — we love God, but as to one another — well, one sees plenty of faults, and surely (if conscience is in the light of God) most in oneself. Doubtless this hinders, but God has His way of using all for good, while humbling us for our faults. Do you think God loves His children less because they are faulty? You have a child that other people don’t think much of, whatever you do. But do you love that child less because of its faults? It may be you spoil the poor child. I scarce ever knew a parent that had not his affections, his heart, drawn out by those faults of the child. God loves us, and this love is so real that our faults only draw out the wonderful resources of His love. If you love a child of yours it is thus with you. I do not mean God makes light of anything wrong: but He never turns aside His love, and people who think so do not know God as He has revealed Himself. They have a very feeble knowledge of who and what He is.

He Hath Given Us Of His Spirit

“No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another God dwelleth in us, and His love is perfected in us.” When Christ was here He was the great witness, and now, wonderful to say, Christians are the witness. Oh, how ashamed of ourselves we ought to be when our levity blots out the testimony God looks for in this world! It is a great deal more than knowing the love. Now if one

of us had written these words, he must have been thought most presumptuous. Yet are they true. Hereby we know, “because He hath given us of His Spirit.” I admit it is a very strong word, and that no man could have ever said it or gathered it except by divine teaching. The apostle writes it calmly and quietly, as the real truth about the Christian, “because He hath given us of His Spirit.”

It is not merely “the Spirit,” because the Spirit was given occasionally to persons who were not renewed. Mighty power wrought in people, said to be partakers of the Spirit, who were not born of God. Here it is more than that. “He hath given us of His Spirit” implies, not merely power but communion of nature, and that is the force of the difference. It is what characterises God’s own nature, and that is the force of the difference: It is what characterises God’s own nature and that in divine power, and this is what belongs to the Christian now. It is not only life. The Lord Jesus is eternal life, and we live by Him. Perhaps there is some soul miserable enough here, who yet has eternal life. If I do not give God credit that He has truly blotted out my sins, I cannot have peace. If I really believe God’s love that the Saviour came down for it, why am I still troubled about my sins?

‘But I don’t walk as I ought.’ Well, my dear friend, let us settle one thing at a time. There is no such encouragement for walk afterwards as that all is secured between God and the soul. The Holy Ghost is given, sealing the person and working in this new divine nature. That is what I call the communion of nature, the Holy Ghost being the power. Now the result of this is, that we not only go to God, but we dwell in God. Is not this much more than going to Him in time of trouble? It

is not merely occasional visits, nor merely that life is eternal, but as the Holy Ghost, dwells in us, so we dwell in God.

The Saviour Of The World

“And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world” (ver. 14). That is the effect of being thus blessed of God. We have a special testimony to which we are called. The apostle does not speak about the law; God has put the Christian on an entirely different ground. It is not commandments, though there are commandments that are most suited, because there is a Living Person to obey. There is a Divine Person that has quickened us, sealed us, and come down as power; not merely to cheer us, not merely as Comforter. The Holy Ghost is always the Spirit of power. It is in communion with God, with His mind and His affections; and this is what characterises the Christian. “We have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world.” “We have seen” — what a sight! Greater than Moses ever saw! It was never made known till He (the Lord Jesus) came that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world. Now it is the testimony of every Christian. The believer who does not testify this does not understand Christianity. The truth has been spoiled; there is that which is wrong mixed up with it. Half Jewish, half Christian, are their thoughts; but here it is Christian testimony, that “the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour,” not merely of Israel, but “of the world.” No matter how bad, how distant, how dark, the individual sinner might be found, He is the Saviour; and such a Saviour could not be confined to any portion of mankind.

Confessing Jesus The Son Of God

“Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God” (ver. 15). Whosoever shall confess! Oh, weigh it well, you that have never yet confessed. Here is what will save your soul. “Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God (not merely shall be saved, but) God dwelleth in him and he in God.” Oh, what a wonderful thing! Is this true? Nothing more so. How is it made true? The Holy Ghost has taken His place in that man, that woman, that child. “God dwelleth in him,” and as a consequence of it, “he in God.” The heart has an abiding rest in God. I am certain of God; I can be certain of no one else. You may have perhaps that most faithful, blameless, devoted friend. Ah, you are not always certain of your friend. There may come the moment when you will be disappointed; but never in God. The simplest Christian knows it. I do not say he may not be foolish and forget, but he knows it is his folly. The apostle is looking at the consequence of thus confessing that Jesus is the Son of God. It is there that God dwells. It was not miraculous outward power, but what was always greater, what could not be seen. “Jesus died and rose again.” Is that all? “Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God.”

We Have Known And Believed The Love

“And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us” (ver. 16). He goes back to the same great truth. “God is love, and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him.” Now, observe the change of order here.

The reason is this. Where he is speaking of the confession of Christ, the object is to give the soul confidence in Him who fills the soul with His own pure grace. He has received the Spirit. The consequence is that his heart goes out to God. But now he is walking like a Christian; he is dwelling in love. Instead of being occupied with evil he is occupied with love, and dwelling in love. What is the consequence? “He dwelleth in God,” he rises above all that is here, and the result is that God puts fresh blessing upon him, working in power, God dwells in him.

Not merely is it the fact of the Holy Ghost dwelling in him, true as it is. First of all, God gives him the Spirit. God dwells in him and he in God. “Hereby we know that we dwell in him and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit.” Then, as the effect of that, my heart goes out to Him; I have confidence in Him; I spread out great and small into His bosom. But if I am walking in love, in the midst of all that is calculated to act upon the flesh and distract, God makes me enjoy fresh blessing, acting in me by the Spirit. It is not merely the fact of having the Holy Ghost, but God working in us by it — and not less than this is the Christian’s portion. The least Christian should say that God dwells in him and he in God; but the most spiritual cannot rise beyond this, that, as he dwells in God, God dwells in him. This is the privilege of communion, as that is of faith. And if I know the one, I ought to seek the other. If blessed by grace let us walk in the fellowship of His love (Gal. 5:25).

Oh, may those that confess Jesus to be the Son of God not fear to take their stand, that this is the truth, that this is their portion. Blessed portion! for if God dwells in me, and I in Him, He is training me in that which will be

the greatest joy for eternity. Of course then only will all the hindrances be gone, and the circumstances in which we now are; but I am not speaking of circumstances, but of God dwelling in me and I in Him. This is the portion that grace gives to the simplest confessor of Jesus. Fear not then to take it, fear not to confess Him. This honours God if I speak and act upon the truth of God. If this be the case, I can confide in Him for everything. It is not only a hope; it is not merely cherishing desires. It is a great, glorious, divine fact for faith only. It is not that blessedness first, and then I believe: I believe first, and then the blessedness comes. Next follows deep enjoyment, which becomes powerful in our dependence on God, and works according to God.

May the Lord bless His own word, both to those who do confess, and to those who have never yet confessed, that Jesus is the Son of God! Amen.

W. K.

The Word of God - 2 Tim. 3:16

When God made man, He did not make him as he is, any more than the world as it is. He made everything good, but He was not pleased to put forth His power to keep everything good. He was pleased to put the creature to the proof. He tried the creature in two great spheres — above and below. The angels fell before man; and the chief of those that fell above is the great tempter. No man can account for sin, for the ruin of the world, in any other way than Scripture reveals. Many a man has essayed to do so. The brightest wits and the greatest minds have attempted it; but they have never conceived anything that was not rubbish when they have not followed the word of God. Some have endeavoured to account for sin by supposing that there are two Gods — a good one and a bad one; because there are evidences of goodness all around us, and there are too plainly the evidences of badness. This hypothesis, I need not stay to show, is sheer folly. There is but one who is Almighty; and man cannot get rid of the consciousness of One — not merely one thing but One Being — One who has power and will and purpose, One who has affections no less than mind, but who, nevertheless, subjects the creatures that He made to a moral probation. If He kept everything from falling, there could be no such trial at all. All would be mechanical or chemical; and the wonderful scene of the conflict of good and evil — of good wrought by His grace in the heart of man, and rising above Satan’s power and wiles of evil — would be quite lost. What is still more important, the active display of love and righteousness on God’s part, of moral qualities reproduced in repentant believing man, would

be completely destroyed, if it were merely divine power so keeping the creature that there could be no failure.

But evil never came from God — only from the creature once innocent, now fallen, that kept not his first estate, but chose to do his own will and have his own way. An angel did this first. Man was misled by him who, straying and exalting himself, beguiled others both in heaven and on earth. That creature is called Satan — the Devil. All efforts to get rid of this fact have proved utterly vain, so much so that the boasted lights of antiquity fell consequently into one or other of these notions: either that God is everything, which denies sin; or, secondly, that there is no such being as God at all; while both cases led to worshipping ever so many false gods. Witness now the two greatest philosophers of Greece who have exercised perhaps the largest and most enduring influence over civilised men outside the Bible — the one the head of Pantheism, the other of Atheism. There is what man's thought ends in when it is logically carried out. Man in his fallen estate may reason God away; yet he excludes God, not from his conscience, but in his reason; for at the bottom of the man's heart who does so there is the uneasy feeling that what he sees around him did not grow like a potato — least of all, he himself and his fellows. He feels that, though fallen, he is a moral being who will have to give an account of his action; and to whom but to God — the One who made him and all things?

The creature, having fallen from God, has lost the truth. No longer innocent, he has God as his Judge. Satan lost Him first, for ever, and his angels. Man and his race have lost Him; but oh what mercy now shines on us! Yet you, dear friends, every one of you, like myself, once had

Him not. Have you found Him? Do you know Him? Do not tell me you cannot. You cannot of yourselves: man cannot by searching find out God. But God can reveal Himself. It is true, a keen infidel who is still living [?] said the contrary — said it was impossible for God to make a revelation of Himself; but the book in which he, a Deist, said this proved the folly of it. If an infidel can make a revelation of his mind to do people mischief, I suppose God can make a revelation of His mind to do men good. Is not this reasoning a sound and sufficient answer? Can any man, save an atheist, deny the force or the reality of it? If a bad being can reveal his mind to ruin, cannot the All-wise and All-good reveal His mind to save? Of course He can. The notion, therefore, that God cannot reveal His mind is not only false but denies that He is light and love — a falsehood that is contradicted by the very effort to argue in its support. The writer makes a revelation of his mind, such as it is; and we reply, If man can make a revelation of his mind, surely God can of His: otherwise you are reduced to the absurdity, that what is possible to man is impossible to God. Is this reasonable, or is it folly? Can any man in this room maintain that, what a man can do in his feeble way, God cannot do in His blessed and almighty way?

Now the Bible lets us see from the first — and it is worthy of God — that no sooner had man turned against God through the instigation of a mightier rebel than himself, than a way of escape for man on God’s part was opened up in hope. Man succumbed to Satan working upon the will of the woman. Ah! how natural it is, as most know quite well — how true to the heart of both. The woman’s feelings get entangled, and she is deceived. A man, if God were not concerned, properly

loves his wife, and can not bear to leave her alone. His affections engage him; everything as a man and a husband combines to make him go along with her, although here alas! it was rebellion against God. This is exactly what Scripture lets us see in Adam and Eve. The devil knew what he was about. Eve was deceived — Adam was not. She was drawn into sin, and, through her, Satan misled Adam into sin boldly; and such has been the history of many a man and woman since then. This does not throw blame on the woman only. They must divide the sin between them; and he is a base man who would try, as Adam did afterwards, to throw the whole on his wife. But it is the effect of sin. He, who ought to have been her shelter and protector, first followed the bad example and then betrayed her — as it were, an informer against her. How degrading is sin ! So it was from the first, and is to the last.

Now, let us look at God. We have seen enough of Satan and enough of man for the moment; let us turn to Him who here comes on the scene, and whose first word shows the havoc that the devil had made. “Adam, where art thou?” No readiness to meet God now — no candour, confidence, or truthfulness; man hides himself, in despair, behind the trees in the garden, with a bad conscience. “Adam, where art thou?” Man was gone from God. This is the state of man still, of all mankind, of every one of us naturally. I do not say that we all abide there now. Thanks be to God, He is a Saviour God. But He judges sin. In Himself He is light and He is love. Our sins make Him a Judge: His grace made Him a Saviour. We all naturally think of God as a Judge, because we all naturally more or less have a sense of sin; and guilt always dreads a moral account, the retribution, the

judgment of God. Conscience erects a judgment-seat, even before man must rise from the grave to stand before the great white throne and give in his account. A man may try to get rid of it, and he may do so while pre-occupied. He may drug himself with ample material in this poor stupefying world, with its varied and intoxicating pleasures; but the moment of sobriety, the anguish of self-judgment, comes, and God is on the judgment-seat of conscience.

Scripture says that God did then deal with man — fallen man — to lay his sin upon his conscience, and to trace its root to the evil personage that had brought it in, and to announce the glorious truth of grace meeting the evil and ruin, of grace providing a righteous way of escape. If ever there was a worthy purpose for revelation, this must be one. And this is exactly what Scripture reveals. It is not the dream of the gods coming down to indulge themselves in wickedness, as some of the greatest wits in this world have believed. They had sunk low enough to receive that their deities were drunkards, fornicators, thieves and liars. Such were they whom the heathen adored, and amongst the heathen were some of the brightest men that ever lived. It was not for want of intellect or refined culture, nor for want of learning any more than logical power, that they fell into such gross deceits. No one can say this who knows the history of the world, and of the men upon it.

Apart from the Bible, there is sin, misery, ruin, and death. Scripture lets in the light of God, and that light assuredly is far from being the lurid menace of punishment merely. It reveals incomparably more and brighter things than the awful scene where sinners are judged for their sins. This there is and ought to be for

those who defy and reject grace — for those who in the face of the Saviour's cross deny God coming down to man, deeply pitying him, and fully providing for his salvation. The Bible accounts for sin but never justifies or slights it. Man, under Satan, wrought that evil thing. The Bible shows the way out of sin, and that the only way to the Father is by the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, coming into this world, and that, too, given and sent by God, not implored by man. Not man devised the plan or even sought that God would of His mercy carry it out. Man never thought of it; for he with a bad conscience never expects good from God. For his soul to be saved, and his sins to be blotted out, for God to love him, and to put the best robe upon the poor ragged prodigal, for the father at the very start to embrace him, and then to bring him into such a place of joy as he never knew before — man never had so much as an inkling of grace like this.

Yet this the Bible shows is God's love to sinners, especially in the New Testament. But the man that does not believe the Old Testament is not to be trusted about the New. If a soul cavils about Genesis, I should not trust him about Romans. I know there are men who say that the New Testament is a grand book, and will confess that the first chapter of John is more sublime than anything Plato or Aristotle ever wrote. To be sure it is, infinitely so. But the man that pretends to exalt John and depreciate Moses I would not trust for a moment, because that which Moses was the instrument of revealing lays the foundation for all that John gives us. You cannot understand the blessing of the Second man — the last Adam — unless you have seen the creation and fall of the first man, Adam. There is, therefore,

between the Old and New Testaments an organic unity. Nothing more remarkable than this, however much one may differ from the other.

When you see a tree, you do not require a philosopher to tell you that, when it is complete, it has all its parts with striking appropriateness — that the deep root, which penetrates the soil and gathers the materials of nourishment for the trunk and its offshoots, is as necessary for its growth as the branches and the leaves — that what is unseen is as thoroughly ordered by One who perfectly knew, as that which is visible; and that from the tree man reaps benefit, and even the cattle, for God takes in everything. Not a little tiny insect, not the greatest of quadrupeds, not a human being, that does not in some way or another reap all suited good from God; and even those things that might seem to be obnoxious in themselves form part of a vast scheme of God’s contrivance, of His forethought, of His abundant provision for the wants of men or beasts here below. There is no stinginess, if I may say so, about God. He does not merely give us the things we absolutely need. This is not the way God treats man or any creature. You have only to look when the sun shines, you have but to think of the rich beauty of the earth around you — though it be a groaning creation — to see what pleasure God takes in goodness abounding. He did not make things to die, but to live in endless variety. He declares that He is not the God of the dead but of the living — this no doubt said in the highest sense is in every other way true. You see a blighted earth now; but even the blighted earth everywhere bears its testimony to the beneficent wisdom of its Maker.

But earth and sea and sky just as plainly afford traces of some dreadful evil that has passed over all — of an enemy's hand that has been there and sown evil. There is not a tempest that rages, there is not a volcano that pours out its destructive lava, there is not a blast of lightning, but tells that there is, above, below, around, disorder in this once untainted universe. And how much more, when you come down to the moral evil under which groans every town, and every hamlet; ay, perhaps every home, even the happiest hearth, has had its blight. And whence comes this? From God? Never. A being of perfect goodness and power, who would make the world and man as they are, is morally an impossible thought. But God never made the world as it now is; He did make it, but He made it good. God did not create anything unworthy of Himself.

And just here is where the value of the word of God comes in. The Bible bears witness of the grace of God meeting the ruin that man and Satan have wrought between them. It is not merely goodness in natural things, but in holy love, which, recognising and judging the evil fully, nevertheless comes down to get rid of it, and this at His own expense, and, let me add, by suffering beyond all measure. What is all that the men who ever lived have had to endure compared with the sufferings of Christ? I do not speak of what man did against Christ, but above all of what God did in His cross. You do not believe it! Then you must settle this with Christ Himself. What was there so bitter or awful in the cup He had to drink as God's making Him sin for us, when He forsook Him? How do we know? He who is "the truth" declares it — said so on the cross — said so with His dying lips, when even false men will sometimes

speak the truth: how much more He who never said anything else but the truth, who is “the Way, the Truth, and the Life!” Yet for our sins He died, and tasted death as none other ever did. He tasted not merely death upon the cross, but therein the judgment of God. And there is the ground on which God can be a God of all grace, the basis of grace reigning through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord. For He who thus died is risen — risen to be the Saviour, as He is if rejected the Judge.

Accordingly the foundation principle of this — the first germ of this weightiest of truths in the Bible — is given in the same chapter which shows us man departing from God — man forsaking God, and not God forsaking man. God forsook His Son on the cross, that He might not forsake the poorest of sinners that looks to Him. In that chapter (Gen. 3) you have a Saviour revealed to hope; and such is the allusion of the “everlasting gospel” in the Revelation. Does not this show you what a wonderful book the Bible is? It stretches over many centuries. It was written, parts of it, by kings, and by shepherd-boys, by priests, by soldiers, by civilians; by what one might call comprehensively men of every class, from the fishers of the Galilean Sea to the learned Jew of Tarsus, one of the most famous seats of philosophers at that time in the world, the rival of Athens. And yet in all the vast scope of its variety, Scripture stretching in its penmen from the days of Moses to those of the last apostle, in its themes from eternity to eternity, there is under all honest tests the most perfect harmony.

Beware, then, of those who would have you give up Moses. Listen not to the siren voices that would seek to charm you away from the truth of God, and more if they

dare to tell you that they are not undermining the Bible, but only denying Moses. Alas! my good friends, to deny Moses is to undermine Christ; for Christ says that Moses wrote of Him. Christ had no question; and this is what satisfies a plain man that believes in Him. People may talk about evidences; and, of course, it is all very fine to do so with those who are not familiar with the subject, and have scanty knowledge of the original tongues. Of one thing let me remind all — whether knowing these languages or not — and it is this. Many a one knows a little Greek and some less Hebrew; but what of that? You know English; but it does not follow that you have at all a mastery of the language. Remember then that most of the young men who learn Hebrew and Greek at college are very far from having a mastery of these languages. Most have a smattering, and this is all. They are then turned off to their parishes and pulpits, where they have no time to become real scholars, as they ought not to pretend to it. This is not said out of the slightest disrespect; but simply to show you the folly of supposing that merely running through a grammar and a few works in a foreign tongue makes it really known. Not at all. Most graduates (no matter what the degree or where) would find it hard to translate unseen Hebrew or Greek. They do not know either of these languages in the least as you all know English; and yet for all that would any of you set up to be great English scholars? Even ordinarily fair and easy translation (to which few are equal without effort and preparation) is but a small step in learning. Enough however on that point.

But I press this upon you — that God has in Christ's testimony given the believer incomparably better proof than all evidences put together. Do you believe in Him

the Son of God? I am now speaking to such. Some might appeal to persons who have no living faith but a mere creed, to those who talk about the Lord Jesus Christ, as others would of Socrates or Gautama Buddha, who are yet perfectly certain that the facts are true, and that His recorded words are substantially authentic. This is coming down low enough. Yet on the lowest of all grounds, on that of creed, men have still some respect for the authority of the Word made flesh — of Him who is perfect Man and true God. Now, not only is He spoken of in this word, but He speaks of God's word authoritatively and unmistakeably.

There is no use to try and shirk the truth by mustering difficulties and saying, "Ah! we don't know that." Here is a book unlike all other books, bearing the stamp of truth and holiness upon it as no other book ever written. Here you have testimony borne to the blessed One, by His apostles, whose lives and works, miraculous or not, were a bright evidence of His divine truth, grace, and power. What totally different men they became, from what they were! They used to be prejudiced, narrow-minded Jews, utterly indifferent to souls, wholly wrapt up in their own dry traditions. See how in a short time, amazingly short indeed, all was changed, and changed in virtue of the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ applied to their souls by the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven. They gave it as their testimony — sealed not merely by blood but by a course of such lowly yet faithful devotedness as the world had never seen — that the Lord Jesus uniformly treated the Bible (that is, of course, the Old Testament) as beyond question the word of God; that Moses wrote the law; that it was not Moses' talk, which later authors wrote — not merely traditions and

legends strung together partly by himself, partly by people who lived after him: the Pentateuch was written by himself. And thus in all sorts of questions you find not only His authority coming in, but the man Moses himself, as the inspired servant of God, appealed to by the Lord. “He [Moses] wrote of me.”

How happy it is that a plain man or woman, or even a child, can feel the force of this testimony! Every one of you will stand before the Lord Jesus, who is the Judge both of the dead and of the living; and He has pronounced judgment upon this question. Ought it not to be fairly faced? Do you believe men — perhaps young daring men who have studied Hebrew, but with the most superficial knowledge of the Bible? or do you believe the Lord God in the person of Christ?

Look at the position of the world when the Son of God came down and gave this testimony. He stands between the two Testaments, as it were — at the end of the Old, at the beginning of the New. He pronounces upon the Old. He divides it into its parts — the three divisions with which every Jew was acquainted — the Law, the Psalms, and the Prophets: the Psalms taking in the poetical books, the Prophets comprehending more than we call prophetical, the Law embracing the books of Moses. There you have substantially the Scriptures called the Old Testament. The Lord, when risen from the dead, bore testimony to the authority of these books (Luke 24). Surely you do not think that even an ordinary man carries his prejudices into the life beyond the grave!

In this world men may make mistakes, but not in the next: all illusion is then over. Just think of the parable of

the rich man and Lazarus. You find the rich man there waking up to the reality of things. Then he cries “Father Abraham!” Then he feels what sin is, and its immediate torment, although there be not the final sentence, but the separate state. That rich man then feels how blessed is the once wretched beggar — wretched in this world — but blessed in the next, where angels carried him to Abraham’s bosom. Blessed picture of God’s goodness at length to a long despised sufferer, who clung in faith to His truth. In vain the rich man prays for his five brethren, that some one would go and warn them lest they should have his portion in torment. What does Scripture say? “They have Moses and the prophets.” Moses — not some prophet in the days of King Josiah who wrote a religious romance for the Bible in Moses’ name. Do you ask, Who speaks so wickedly? Possibly the voice of a faithless Jew or a blaspheming Gentile? I grieve to say it is too common a voice in Christendom, echoed in Scotland.

Is it not a portentous thing that men should come to such a pass? To deny the genuineness of the books of Moses is a daring insult, not only to the Scriptures, but to the Son of God Himself. It is giving the lie to the Saviour, and the Judge of all. Yet men are to be found who deny to Moses the Books of the Law — most audaciously of all, the last one that professes to come most directly from his mouth. Nevertheless if there is the least trustworthiness in Deuteronomy, it is what Moses said himself. It is not merely what he collected, or what he caused to be written, but what he uttered also.

Of course by this nobody means — except Jews perhaps — that Moses wrote the last chapter about his death and burial. I do not say it is impossible, and that God might

not have revealed these things to him. But there is no need to assume any such anticipation. There is an evident break after the closing and crowning song of Moses; and the last chapter is clearly, in my judgment, added by an inspired person who took up and thus continued the record of the enlarging and developing purposes of God. No need therefore, for any bit of superstition — as I conceive it is — in supposing that Moses necessarily wrote the account of his own death. There are in Scripture evident traces of the hand of an inspired editor — of one raised up by God to put the books of the Bible together. You must remember they came out separately. Not only have they been combined since, but there are, here and there, what one may call inspired insertions. God can give an inspired editor as well as an inspired writer. Every Scripture is inspired, and so was the person who edited it and added these joints and bands when the time came to close the canon of Scripture. It is only unbelief that makes difficulties out of that which is plain enough.

But what shocks every spiritual and even moral sensibility is that any person bearing the name of a Christian — nay, of a Christian minister — should couple fiction with the books of Moses, as if they were only a religious novel founded on traditional facts and documents — on what it was conceived Moses might have said — put together ever so many hundreds of years after the legislator died. Divine wisdom has taken particular pains on this point. Christ says, Moses wrote so and so; it is not somebody else imputing it to him, but Himself vouching for Moses in a way that He does rarely for any other. “If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from

the dead.” And so it has been. Those who hear not Christ in the Gospels, reject His resurrection.

We ought to feel thankful that Scripture is so written; because it is the fatality of unbelief to degrade man as well as God — not really to exalt either. Unbelief, too, is blind enough to attack the very thing that is strongest, requiring therefore no support by arguments drawn from other passages. Take a quite different illustration. There are those that idolize the virgin Mary to the depression of the Lord Jesus; yet how remarkably Scripture contradicts the notion, and protests against it by anticipation! It is left for our instruction in the Gospels that the virgin Mary never asked the Lord anything but what the Lord, instead of granting at once, modified at the least. Again see how God guards against unduly exalting Peter as the head (practically as a foundation-stone if you please) of the Christian church. In the very chapter from which men deduce the idea that he is the rock of the church, the Lord calls him Satan. Strange rock he to be sure! Peter was a very honoured servant of God, but even such an one may at times say or do something utterly reprehensible. Therefore it is we cannot trust ourselves. The Christian is a fool who trusts himself; and therefore the Lord rebuked Peter for our profit, as well as for his own. The very God who was going to use and to honour Peter still proves what Peter was in himself. The moment he looked away from the Lord, he was as liable as any other to be turned aside into some evil snare of the devil. Apart from the Lord, you are nothing and can do nothing.

But again observe God from the very earliest bringing in what the book of Revelation calls the “everlasting gospel.” How remarkable a phrase is this! Many a man

has read and cited these words in Revelation 14; many have thought of them; and not a few have explained the thought unwisely, no doubt. The phrase never occurs except in this one place. Why is it called the “everlasting gospel”? There is always a propriety and a force in every word of Scripture. Let me tell you, as far as the Lord enables me. In the last book of the New Testament the Spirit of God recalls the first revelation of Christ in the Old Testament. In the garden of Eden, in the paradise that was blighted and lost by sin, God did not fail to point to the Seed of the woman — the bruised Seed of the woman, remark — that was to bruise the serpent’s head. Is not this gospel? Has it not been blessed gospel from the very first? Is it not also the gospel to the very last — “everlasting gospel”? There is as yet no allusion to His being sacrificed for us. This could not be until offering or sacrifices distinctly came in. Nor was there yet a revelation of Him as Saviour of His people from their sins. His people, of course, had to be called first, and their ruin shown first and last, salvation being fitly explained afterwards. It is not the notion of priesthood. It is not the figure of a captain. Still less is it the truth of the head of the church. All these things were revealed in their due season. But the last book in the New Testament sends you back to the first book of the Old; and thus you hear the blessed voice of Christ, as it were, reverberating through all Scripture an “everlasting gospel.” And why so? Because God ever takes pleasure in saving souls; and, in order to save sinners, there must ever be an “everlasting gospel. “

I speak at present of those that hear the truth — of those that listen to the word of God. Infants are not now in our view. Not that there is the least doubt that God’s grace

does save little children, but there is a somewhat different way of course. It is wholly unscriptural that God punishes babes if they are not christened. There is not the slightest ground for a thought so unworthy of God, so harsh to man in one way, so self-exalting to him in another. You may ask how one can know. Do you know it? How do you know anything? Through Jesus — the same One brought in to prove the Bible. Jesus the Lord shows us very clearly that the God who gave the law is greater than the law itself, and that God was showing Himself in divine grace to be much greater than in judgment. The judgment of God is a solemn certainty; but the grace of God a still deeper truth. God manifest in the flesh, God present upon earth in the person of His own Son, shows us what God feels about little children. The disciples did not like to be troubled with them. They thought it was too bad to take up their great Master's time with mere children. How did the Lord answer it? He took them up in His arms and blessed them — a good lesson for the disciples. How often they need the Lord to correct their inadequate notions! If the Lord took up and blessed little children, does it not tell me what God feels about them. He does not bless little children on earth to send them dying to hell. But if they lived to rebel against His word and against His Son the Lord Jesus, if the children when grown up dare to despise Him that died on the cross, if they refuse to accept the Saviour proclaimed in their ears, is there anything God resents more strongly ? It is bad enough for one man to lift his hand against another; and we justly abhor the man that would lift his hand against his father or his mother. But when we think of what Father sent His Son to be a Saviour how awful the wickedness of despising both, and therein of rejecting the gospel of salvation!

People pretend that they do not mean evil when they say man is but a developed monkey. But such ideas originate from the desire in man to get rid of responsibility and of God. None of that folly! You are moral beings; you have souls, you have consciences. You know very well that you are not brute beasts. You consciously have in your souls, in spite of all efforts, a dread of God, a fear of punishment for sins. A hare does not sin, nor a horse or cow; and you would be shocked at the philosopher who tried to prove that a horse, cow, or hare, had a sense of right or wrong, no less than a man. You might not be able to answer the sophistry, but you would feel that he was deceiving you.

Man is conscious of sin, and fears God; but God sent His only-begotten Son to save sinners. Hence all is changed for those that believe, and for more too. Look at the blessed change that has come over us in these very lands. Time was when our ancestors ran wild in woods, when our forefathers were stained blue, when they sacrificed their fellow creatures, and when the most shocking immorality prevailed. Elsewhere a man might marry several wives; but in this very land several men lived with one woman; and in this very land children, and even men and women, were burned in honour of their gods who were not God. What has changed all that? The name of Jesus. Even those that are not won to the True, but try to prove there is no God at all, reap incalculable benefit from the purging away of all that detestable filth and cruelty. What swept it away ? Was there no cause for it? Leave that irrationalism to the infidel. But one cause adequately accounts for such effects: only the name of Jesus — indisputably His name. Before His name was known these abominations

flourished. Even the Romans, with all their power, only sinned after another manner — perhaps more decently; yet were they idolatrous and unclean. Is this the case where men really believe in Jesus? Nay, is this the case outwardly where men, even without living faith in the Lord Jesus, still respect the Bible?

I was speaking to a particularly wicked sceptic the other day in London, when he said to me deliberately, “I do not believe the Bible; but if I had the power, I should have the Bible read by every one.” How strange such homage to the Bible! He acknowledged the moral power of the word, and that there was nothing like it. Frankly, however, I do not believe he would thus use power if he possessed it: you can never trust men of this stamp; yet is his remark an unmistakeable and unwilling testimony to the power of Christ and His word.

On the other hand, people who hold the Bible only in the intellect are in danger of letting it slip altogether, and of becoming downright infidels. A tendency of that kind is at work among young men now. They begin more than ever to talk disrespectfully of those who are ministers. Now, it is not my business in any way to uphold the clergy; but still I have a horror of pulling down religion that is a reality, and I have the greatest love for many clergymen. Everything that is real, righteous or good — whether it be in what people call a state-church, or in a non-established Christian society — whatever is of God I would honour and love. And every one who is of God — every man who is a minister of Christ, not merely in word but in deed and in truth — is surely to be honoured and loved. I may not agree with him; and of course he may not agree with me. You cannot expect one to uphold another if they differ rather seriously. But, then, you

must remember that all other things are small compared with the word and Spirit of God, with Christ Himself and with Christ's redemption. What ecclesiastical difference is to be compared with the revelation in Christ, or of God in the Bible? Of course those differences have their due importance: and let me say that I felt them important enough to leave all that was dear to me in this way on earth. Still, we surely ought to rank Christ's person and God's word unhesitatingly above ecclesiastical questions.

And see how simple it is. The only possible means for men to know God is through His making Himself known to men. I admit that for a long time the word of God was not written. For more than two thousand years the word of God was not yet written. Men had no more than the word of God spoken, and that little word uttered in the garden of Eden — supplemented by the promises that came afterwards, as well as by manifestations that God gave from time to time — was quite enough, when God had not added more, for men to live and die and go to heaven upon. Nor is it absolutely necessary that a man should read. "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." How many had only "heard" that word, and truly looked for the coming Saviour! A man's whole life is affected by this, not by deep study, but whether he rests entirely on Christ or he is trying to save himself. What a change faith in Christ effects! Receiving Him as the Son of God with my heart, and my conscience bowing to the truth which convicts me, I love Him because He first loved me. Is not this the gospel? And there in germ at least it was in Eden — "the Seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head." It is the everlasting gospel.

Long afterwards — and there was wisdom in the arrangement — when man's age began to be shortened to its present limit, God made a written revelation. Some make merry at the idea; but the time will come when they must weep. Faith sees divine wisdom where incredulity mocks. Do you not see that when man's age is expressly said to be shortened to threescore years and ten (Ps. 90), Moses, the man of God, was first used to write down this word? Scripture, therefore, is more than the word. It was the word before Scripture, but now Scripture is God's word written by inspired men. So all Scripture teaches. Any one who is familiar with the New Testament will admit this. "Every scripture [is] given by inspiration of God." This is an important statement, because it shows that the Holy Spirit was providing for what was not yet written — for the Gospel and the Revelation of John, as examples, not yet written. Every scripture — whether what was written or what was going to be written — every scripture is given by inspiration of God.

I am perfectly aware that some learned persons translate it thus — "Every scripture, being inspired of God, [is] profitable." What difference is there? A shade in the form — nothing in the substance. The difference is that the one rendering is the assertion that it is inspired of God; the other admits or assumes that it is inspired of God. Whether it be an admission or an assertion makes no difference for anything at present before us. The point is that it is inspired of God, if you believe the apostle Paul.

The entire subject is opened out remarkably in the second chapter of First Corinthians, where is shown the part the Holy Ghost takes in three ways. It is by the Holy

Ghost that the things are given (1 Cor. 2:12); and the Holy Ghost it is by whom we receive what is by Him revealed and communicated (1 Cor. 2:4-16). Supposing you had a revelation of the mind of God, if it be not communicated in fit words, others would not be able to apprehend it. The truth would be seen but dimly; just as light passing through a coloured medium seems to alter the colour of the thing it falls upon. But the Spirit of God cares for duly communicating in words the truth of God. Then, again, your minds are not capable of taking in the truth: but the Spirit of God deigns to work in man. In what believers? The apostles or the early disciples only? God forbid we should be so unbelieving! The very thing that has preserved the church of God all through the ages has been the possession of the Spirit. This is a cardinal truth of Scripture. Every godly Presbyterian or Independent or Wesleyan Methodist or Anglican has the Holy Ghost, just as much as the people whom they call — I do not call them — Plymouth Brethren.

It is not at all a question of setting up any one class, of course one's own; to my mind a low, bad and perilous conceit. Were a man to rise with the cry, "You cannot get the Holy Ghost unless you join us," I might well reply, "My friend, has the Lord not shown you that it is never a mark of the truth for people to draw others into their ranks by promising the Holy Ghost to such as join themselves?" Such pretensions ought rather to warn off. The Spirit is received by the hearing of faith (Gal. 3:2), by believing the gospel; and, thank God, the gospel of salvation, if preached by but few, is confined to none. It is no doubt an excellent thing to have the gospel preached, not alone simply and freely, but fully; and I have a judgment where it is simply, freely, and fully

preached, though it might be unbecoming to say where. Of this it is for other people to judge in their consciences, examining the word of God. But this I do say — every real child of God who is resting by faith on the work of Christ has the Holy Ghost. Consequently he has the Spirit of power, and not life only. The new nature or life is not the same thing as the Spirit of God, because the new birth is called a new creation, and the Holy Ghost is not a creature, but a divine person. How few know they have the Spirit of God!

I remember being much struck with an instance of this some years ago. A poor christian friend had been a bad man in his early days, a smuggler; so that, as you may suppose, he was a very rough sort of man before God brought him to a knowledge of himself; but he was a genuine saint of God in the after-part of his life. A physician, who was also a friend of mine and a Christian, attended him when very ill, and ordered certain things. The man looked up simply, and said, “Well, sir, I must be careful what I do and what I take; for you know, my body is the temple of the Holy Ghost.” The physician thought the man utterly deranged; so little are people used to such language in daily walk. It is all very well, they think, to have all that in the Bible; but they never think of hearing it in common things. Yet the aim of faith is to bring the things that are in the Bible into every-day work; and it is from want of this that so many Christians do not know, walk, and worship, better than we see. They think the Bible is something to be kept quite apart from ordinary life. On the contrary, scripture is given to be inwoven and to interpenetrate with every duty and joy and sorrow of every day. Would to God that we lived, and so reflected, it better! Would to God that our

worship, wherever we might be, and all our conversation, were more simply a savour of Christ to God!

People sometimes give religious conversation a bad name, because they know that, when a rogue wants to get money, he is apt to come with a grave face and talks "Dear brother," and all that kind of thing, in order to accomplish covetous ends. But can this justify others who are afraid that it is downright hypocrisy to be brimful of the Saviour and the things of God? There can be no question, indeed, that the Saviour meant, and the apostles also, as inspired by the Holy Ghost, that we should really be every day waiting for Christ — that we should be in all things great or small serving the Lord Jesus — bearing shame and trial, insult and injury, with patience, yet joy, as pleasing the Saviour. Take, for instance, a Christian with a capricious master. If the servant does not think of Christ, he may be always murmuring and complaining of his lot; whereas if he does or bears all to Christ, he accepts each burden gladly in His name. Faith in Christ changes the whole face of things where it is a present living reality. How is this made good? In the power of the Spirit who directs the eyes to Christ.

The Spirit of God is, however, given to every man — not in the world, but in the church, to the believer only (1 Cor. 12). There is no such thing as the Holy Ghost sealing an unbeliever. The Society of Friends consists largely of morally respectable persons; but herein their doctrine is fundamentally wrong, in that they hold that the Spirit of God is given to every one absolutely. This is a total mistake. For the grand difference between the church and the world is that the world has not the Spirit

— seeing not nor knowing Him; but the church possesses the Spirit, and, what is more, the Christian also. That gift is true both individually and collectively; and the consequence is that both the church and the individual are bound to walk and worship in the Spirit. A solemn responsibility indeed! And the way it works is this; the Holy Spirit does not glorify Himself. Still less will He glorify man in his natural state. Nay, He does not even glorify the church. He is here to glorify Jesus. This is the test, the chief and best — “He shall take of mine, and shall show it unto you” (John 16:13-15).

I have not gone into any great detail. I would rejoice to enter into all the books of the Bible, as I have been doing, indeed, of late in more than one place; and therefore the subject is fresh in my mind. But I have endeavoured to speak to you in the plainest simplest manner as to that which is most important for your souls; and I do entreat of the Lord that He may awaken in your heart more firmness of faith in these days when so many are departing from the truth.

A short time ago, a certain dignitary in the land that borders this on the south published a sermon to the Jews, urging them to abandon their faith and to accept the Messiah. To this a Jew replied that he thought it would be imprudent and unreasonable for him to give up a religion which even his lordship admitted to be of divine authority, for a further revelation of which he was not sure; more particularly as so many bearing the name of Christians were now abandoning Christianity. It was a humbling rejoinder; and all too true; not that it will avail him for a moment when he stands before the Lord Jesus Christ for judgment.

Still it is a solemn fact that men are becoming sceptical: and the reason partly is this — the unreality of much profession, not to say of many who are really Christians. We ought all to take it to heart. I believe that, just so far as we do not walk according to Christ, we are hardening the hearts of unbelievers. What profanity to use the gospel to make people decent men and women without being Christians at all! For, if it is merely a creed-faith, men think there is not very much to choose between a Christian and an infidel. Though I have referred to the putting down of open immorality and downright wickedness of all kinds as the effect of Christianity even outwardly received, still the one thing for the Christian is this, that at all times he should be able to say, “For me to live is Christ” — not merely to belong to Him, but, “For me to live is Christ.” How is this done? By the Holy Ghost giving the word power in the soul, with self so judged that Christ may be all. God grant that He may work so in us all! Amen.

W. K.