



The Bible in the Critic's Den

By Earle Albert Rowell (1917)

The few Bibles of the Medieval Ages were chained, and few had access to them. It was then considered beyond the understanding of the common people. Now the "advanced" man would mutilate it, and bury it under the hypotheses of "profound learning." Nevertheless, whether chained, mutilated, or buried, it will do its God-appointed work; "for no word from God shall be void of power."

Luke 1: 37, A. R. V.



Contents

- I- THE STORM CENTER OF THE AGES
- II- IS THE CHURCH PREPARED?
- III- THE GENESIS OF HIGHER CRITICISM
- IV- DOUBT AS AN AID TO BELIEF
- V- CREMATING THE OLD TESTAMENT
- VI- NEW METHODS OF INTERPRETATION
- VII- THE MATTER OF STYLE
- VIII- HUMANIZING INSPIRATION
- IX- THE CHURCH DEGRADING CHRIST
- X- THE CHURCH DEMOLISHING ITS OWN FOUNDATION
- XI- MANUFACTURING A NEW GOSPEL
- XII- EVAPORATING THE SUPERNATURAL
- XIII- THE SURE WORD OF GOD
- XIV- THE WITNESS OF PROPHECY
- XV- WITNESS OF PROPHECY-GOD'S PEOPLE

Introductory

A GREATER crisis confronts the religious world today than confronts the civil. The civil is for a time; the religious deals with eternity. This is not saying that the kind and character of civil government are not important. They are. But the principles which have eternal issue in character are infinitely more important.

For many centuries, the Bible has been considered by the Christian church, nominally at least, the standard or test by which all creeds should be measured, all moral conduct judged.

That there has been wide diversion from the standard, and perversion of its teaching, goes without saying; but the nominal standard has been held, the Bible exalted, as the very citadel of faith and morals.

Now the citadel is under bombardment. The holy standard is under fire. Moral rule of conduct, atonement, miracle, and resurrection are under the dissecting knives of learned doctors of theology, professed friends of the Christian religion.

Formerly infidelity was outside the pale of the church. Now its proponents are men in canonicals, who have taken sacerdotal vows as shepherds in the flock of God.

The author of this little book was himself once an infidel. He did not then know the Bible or its Giver. He had read and studied works of infidelity to confirm his non-belief. Interested and eager, yet he found no rest, no satisfaction.

When he came to see divinity in the Word, righteousness and life the central aim and purpose of the Book, Christ Jesus, Saviour and Friend, vicarious Sacrifice and coming King, he gave himself to the militant army of faith, and against the false theories which would undermine the confidence, guide, and hope, of humanity.

Needless to say that much more could be written, has been written; but publishers and author have deemed best to give a small work a large circulation rather than a more pretentious volume a limited sale.

The Bible in the Critic's Den

This book is sent forth with the prayer that it may confirm the faith of the believing, and turn from the darkness of doubt those who feel themselves slipping from the foundation of God's eternal verities.

THE PUBLISHERS.



THE SPIRIT OF HIGHER CRITICISM
And what remains of the Bible Beloved is divinely inspired

It is related as a fact that a parishioner of a higher critic kept note of the Bible books criticized by his pastor, and cut from his Bible the portions criticized, till nothing was left but the empty covers, which he presented to the minister. Higher criticism, if followed, leaves the world without hope in the morass of sin.

CHAPTER I

The Storm Center of the Ages

THE most bitterly hated book in all the world is the Bible. Men have written thousands of volumes, and spent millions of dollars, to disprove it. Fifteen hundred years ago, the emperor Julian brought to bear the vast wealth and powerful army of Rome to reestablish the Jewish temple and religion, in order to disprove the prophecies of the Bible. A few years ago, Sir William Ramsay journeyed over Asia Minor to demonstrate that the New Testament could not be true, and ended by writing books proving its truth.

In their furious endeavor to annihilate the Bible, men have turned the key, lifted the headsman's ax, pulled the rope, applied the fagot, betrayed son and daughter, father and mother, to horrible fates, soaked the soil of Europe and written the pages of history with the blood of the world's noblest and best.

The Bible in the Critic's Den

Why this strange obsession? Why this animosity, as fresh and acrimonious to-day as when the Word Himself hung upon the accursed tree, the victim of the murderous rage of a whole people He had come to benefit? Why this virulent passion of 1,900 years of cyclonic vindictiveness towards a religion whose basic principle is love to God and love to man? This is an enigma that has saddened the hearts of those who feel, and puzzled the intellects of those who think.

The Bible is the most expensive possession of the human race. It has cost the blood of millions of martyrs. The earth's greatest and wisest have gladly given their lives that it might live. The Son of God shed His precious lifeblood that "every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people" might read it.

Around the Bible have raged, in varying fury, the storms of the ages. All the moral and intellectual forces of the centuries have mustered their strength in attack and defense of this one Book, and its product, Christianity.

The attack, and therefore the defense, have altered in form only to increase in intensity as the centuries have passed. Never for a moment has the battle ceased. There have been lulls, invariably followed by a fiercer attack upon some other point. No other book could have withstood a thousandth part of the fiendish, seductive, deceptive, insidious, infuriate assault that has been directed for so many centuries against the Bible. How, then, it may be asked, can the Bible endure it?

The Bible is more than a book, though it is the greatest of all books. It is more than a compendium of ethics, though it has revolutionized ethics. It is more than a system of morals, though it is the basis of morals. It is more than a philosophy of life, though it has transformed life. It is more than a religion, though it is the source of Christianity, the world's only true religion. The Bible is all of this and infinitely more. It is the life of God expressed in words and exemplified in the life of His Son; and this life it is which flows into the soul of the believer, making him the heir of eternity.

Man is not saved by theology, new or old, nor by creeds, good or bad, but by Christ. What we need is not a new theology, but a new heart; not a change of legislation, but a change of character. The recent attempt to tinker the Ten Commandments and the Bible to suit man's disposition, so as to save man the trouble of suiting his disposition to the Ten Commandments and the Bible, is not the way to save man, but to damn him; is but the age-old battle raging *within* the gospel fort.

While the Bible is the result of God's seeking man, all human philosophies and isms are the fruit of man's seeking God. While "destiny without God is a riddle, and history without God is a tragedy," salvation without Christ is suicide, and Christianity without the Bible is the doom of nations, the end of the world.

Infidelity takes many forms. When to be a Christian is to court death, there are few infidels within the pale of the church; but when Christianity lowers the standard to include the world, inevitably the skeptics come in. Paul, ages ago, said that wolves would enter the flock and not spare it. Christ foretold as much, more than once. It should not surprise us, then, to find this a fact. Sad as it will be, it is our duty to defend the Bible against the skepticism of its professed defenders when these professors adopt the infidelity of the past and exalt it in the church as new light. Many churches are yet stanch and true, and are trying to keep the insidious unbelief of some ministers out of their pulpits and church literature.

The ocean storms and waves have been beating about the rock for ages, and dashing their thundering volumes upon its invulnerable strength. But the rock still stands, a foundation for the beneficent lighthouse, which sends its guiding waves over the stormy deep. The Bible is God's rock of truth. Sometimes men fail in furnishing the light, but the Rock of the Word stands fast forever!

The Bible in the Critic's Den

What neither the ignorance of the bigot nor the hatred of the armed oppressor, the narrowness of the pedant nor the scoffing malice of the infidel, could accomplish, the defection of some of the trusted religious leaders has done. While for centuries the combined might of the Bible's enemies beat vauntingly, fiercely, but in vain, against the bulwarks of Christianity, ecclesiastical hands, pledged to the defense of the heavenly country, have torn the banner of Christ from the tower staff, and opened the gates of the fort to the enemies of the Bible, so that now the battle over the Bible rages, for the first time since the Master's death, within the church and around the pulpit.

As we look at present-day events, we are compelled to ask: "Are the convulsions of society the harbingers of a better era? Are the throes through which humanity is passing the birth pangs that are to give us a grander civilization, or are they the death agonies of the human race? Are the doubts of the doctors of divinity the germs of a higher belief, or the final and most audacious entrenchment of infidelity within the church? Is the skepticism of the church's leaders a nobler spirituality, or has every doubt a sin sticking to its roots? Are the pulverized Bible and a fallible human Jesus the foundation of a diviner religion, a surer salvation, or the certain evidence of religious decay and dissolution?"

The church, it has been said, has done everything with the Scriptures except obey them. They have been read aloud in homes, enshrined in magnificent edifices of worship, honored in gorgeous ceremonies, commented on, trimmed, and glossed, till now many ministers and their flocks regard them as a sort of Arabian tales, and Jesus as merely a purer Buddha or a wiser Socrates. The man who proclaims a belief in the infallibility of the Bible and in the deity of Christ is in many religious circles a religious curiosity, a survival of an antique superstition.

"They shall put you out of the synagogues," said Jesus; "yea, the hour cometh, that whosoever killeth you shall think that he offereth service unto God. And these things will they do, because they have not known the Father, nor Me." John 16:2,3.

The history of hundreds of years, and the torturous death of many martyrs, are a horrible but practical commentary upon these words of Jesus. Theism alone, a mere belief in God, is so far from being sufficient, that Christ's own death was consummated by men of fervent theistic faith. The Mohammedans are the most rigid and enthusiastic monotheists in the world, but their history also shows them to exercise in behalf of their religion, cruelty, immense and unsparing.

Herein lies much of the danger of the present-day destructive criticism that is indulged by all too many ministers, many of them ignorant of the threatening dangers of their teachings. The faith of the critical ministers is not based on nor derived from the Bible. They are drifting, without knowing it, towards theism, pure and simple, like Unitarianism. However numerous the eddies of the present current of destructive criticism, and no matter whether found in or out of the church, the whole stream has been in one direction – to demolish Christ as our Saviour, the Decalogue as the standard of moral law, and the Bible as the infallible will of God, leaving us evolution in place of a Saviour, human conceptions of right in place of the Decalogue, and *philosophy* in place of the Bible.

If the little Rome of Marius could hurl back the hordes of invading Cimbri and Teutons, says Charles Jefferson, who would have dreamed that the mighty Rome of Augustus would fall a prey to the weak descendants of the invaders? If the few believers of the apostolic days were victorious against the hatred of the Jew, the subtlety of the Greek, and the iron might of Rome, combined, who would have dreamed that scores of millions of Christians in the twentieth century would surrender their faith to the ridicule of the modern critics?

Still the battle goes on, with the Bible as the battle center in every charge. It has survived the hatred of the infidel, the blind, unreasoning zeal of the fanatic, and the contemptuous indifference of the self-seeker. Will it survive the combined attacks of avowed infidels without, and baptized, secret infidels within? Never before in all the long and tempestuous history of war against the Bible, have its

open enemies and its professed friends combined to discredit it. How will it fare under this Ingersoll-Judas onslaught? In every church are many who are aroused to ask this question, and who seek to unite with the friends of the Bible in concerted defense against its enemies wherever found. It is the purpose of this little book to aid in this defense.

God's word spoke light to the primitive earth; that Word is light still to the soul of faith.

CHAPTER II

Is the Church Prepared?

PREPAREDNESS" is the great word of the hour, the word to conjure with. It has even supplanted so mighty and so popular a word as "efficient." Preparedness is efficiency for the future - is being efficient for an event which we believe or know to be inevitable. Preparedness, then, is the foresight of efficiency, is efficiency carried to the highest point of service.

Preparedness postulates the ability not only to arm for an emergency, but also to foresee what the emergency will be. Obviously, to prepare for something that never could happen, would be folly. The only reason a nation prepares for war is because it believes war to be either possible or inevitable. Likewise, if a nation, in preparing, could, by some fortunate eventuality, know just what kind of fighting engines would be most effective in the future, that nation would concentrate on their manufacture. To prepare for war, then, presumes the possibility of war, coupled with a belief that certain armaments will afford efficient protection.

How relieved and delighted would our statesmen be if a true prophet should arise and tell them not only the how and the when of future national trouble, but also detail to them how to be prepared for it all!

While nations do not expect and will not receive such coveted guidance, the church of God has had detailed information on all points of controversy and trial that ever would harass it, together with a complete set of instructions, which, if followed, infallibly insure victory for her in every conflict.

Preparedness has been a fundamental teaching of the prophets for ages. Amos, 2,700 years ago, issued the startling warning to the church, "Prepare to meet thy God, O Israel." Amos 4:12.

Isaiah, the great prophet of the Messiah's coming, understood the necessity of preparing for that event hundreds of years in advance. Realizing that a comprehension; on the part of Israel, of the significance of Christ's coming would purify their religious life, he sent forth the flaming message, "Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God." Isa. 40:3.

Malachi, the last prophet of the Old Testament, bore, as we would expect, a warning and a prophecy of preparedness for Jesus' coming. "Behold, I will send My messenger, and he shall prepare the way before Me." Mal. 3: 1.

Jesus said of John the Baptist that "this is he, of whom it is written, Behold, I send My messenger before Thy face, which shall prepare Thy way before Thee." Matt. 11:10. See also Luke 1:76. John the Baptist's message of preparedness emphasized two things: First, the certainty of the Messiah's soon coming. "The kingdom of heaven is at hand." Second, the only way to prepare for that great and long-looked-for event. "Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." Matt. 3:2. John's work is expressly stated to have been "to make ready a people prepared for the Lord." Luke 1:17. This preparation was to be accomplished, not by the erection of expensive temples, not by higher education, not by science, but by the simple though effective method of repentance.

The Bible in the Critic's Den

Just before Jesus left this earth, He told of the campaign of preparedness He would carry on in heaven: "I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye I may be also." John 14:2, 3. Thus we see that the whole activity of Christ's preparedness campaign looked toward His second advent. That this is true Jesus makes clear in a parable: "If that servant say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming, . . . that servant, which knew his lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes." Luke 12: 45, 47.

While the nations are saying, "Proclaim ye this among the gentiles; Prepare war" (Joel 3:9), Christ has sent His servants to sound another preparedness message: "Prepare to meet thy God."

While the nations are preparing for Armageddon, are the churches preparing for Christ's return? Are the churches taking advantage of the supernatural revelation of the future as outlined in the Bible, and preparing to meet the awful events it foretells? The nations, not knowing infallibly what the future holds, may be excused for being taken unawares by circumstances. But what excuse can the church give? She has multiplied millions of Bibles in her ranks, each Bible telling clearly what to prepare for and how to prepare. Since the church has no excuse to offer for lack of preparation should she be found in that sad state, it may be pertinent to inquire, Is the church prepared for the emergencies of the present and the horrors of the future?

Let us see what her own leaders say. Dr. Washington Gladden, who is usually an enthusiastic optimist, says : "The failure of modern evangelism is not conjectural; the yearbooks show it. . . . It is idle to blink these conditions; we must face them and find out what they mean."-"The Church and Modern Life," pages 179, 180.

Many other leading divines concur with Dr. Gladden in this stricture of the results of modern evangelism. If the present methods are a failure, what are the prospects for the future? The future of the church depends largely, as all will admit, upon the number and quality of its leaders. Here, too, we find conditions serious.

"The decline in the number of young men in training for the ministry is notorious," says G. B. Thompson, in "Churches and Wage Earners," page 192.

Even this, serious as it is, is by no means the worst. Dr. George L. Raymond says, "For years, while occupying a professorship necessarily bringing me into close relation with students proficient in oratory, I have noticed a gradual decrease in the proportionate number and quality of those entering the Christian ministry." "Psychology of Inspiration," page 4.

Dr. Joseph Henry Crooker says that between 1898 and 1908, there was a relative decrease in the number of students in the American divinity schools, of thirty per cent. ("The Church of To-Day," page 50.)

Modern evangelism a failure, an alarming decrease in both number and quality of those entering the ministry! Is this the preparedness Christ has a right to expect? No wonder that Dr. Mott is greatly exercised over these facts. "What calamity," cries he, "next to the withdrawal of Christ's presence, would be more dreaded than to have young men of genius and large equipment withdraw themselves from responding to the call of the Christian ministry?"-"The Future Leadership of the Church," page 4.

He admits that the new theologians are responsible for this. "Their views are unsettled as to the nature and authority of the Bible. One finds not only questioning as to the nature of Old Testament revelation, but a serious recrudescence of skepticism about the New Testament. This sense of uncertainty about the character and scope of divine revelation is deepened in the minds of these young men by their observation of ministers who themselves are unsettled and who give public expression to their doubts." - Id., page 73.

The Bible in the Critic's Den

Desperate efforts are put forth to increase the quota of ministerial students, just as is done to increase church membership in too many cases. As some churches lower the standard to increase their popularity, so, in order to increase the number of clerical candidates, those who are practically infidels are not only accepted, but encouraged to enter the ministry.

Dr. Mott tries to put as good a face as possible on this ugly fact. Concerning it, he says: "Such difficulties [skepticism as to the fundamentals of Christianity] operate less now than formerly, because Christian leaders have come to feel that a wise tolerance as to formal belief at this period best facilitates the leading of such young men into settled convictions regarding substantial religious truths. They concede that a certain latitude in such matters may be permitted."- Id., page 75.

Dr. Mott is known the world over as a great Christian leader, as a man of fervent personal faith. When he gives voice to such discouraging statements as the above, it is only because the facts themselves must force him to admissions that pain him. It is indeed painful to contemplate putting into the ministry, because of a growing decrease of the more desirable, men who are avowed doubters.

How can a doubting ministry be expected to make a believing church? The fruit of faith does not grow on the tree of doubt. But we are amazed when we consider the kind of instruction given to the decreasing number and poorer quality who do finally attend the theological colleges. "A theological student," says Dr. Charles Jefferson, "at the end of the first year of his seminary course, is the most demoralized individual to be found on this earth. His early conception of the Bible has been torn down all the way to the cellar, and he is obliged to build up a new conception from the foundations."- "Things Fundamental," pages 120, 121.

The "new conception" is the new theology, or higher criticism, which is so popular today. To prepare a church for the strenuous present and the still more strenuous future, with leaders who are "the most demoralized individuals to be found on this earth," will certainly be a tremendous task. Is this preparing for Christ's coming? Is this the way for the church to prepare for any religious work?

What teaching is this that so demoralizes the students? Let a leader of the religious thought of this country and of the world answer. Dr. Charles Augustus Briggs, for many years instructor in the Union Theological Seminary, and author of various books used in the theological colleges of the world, teaches that "we are obliged to admit that there are scientific errors in the Bible, errors of astronomy, of geology, of zoology, of botany, and of anthropology. . . . There are chronological, geographical, and other circumstantial inconsistencies and errors. . . . In all matters which constitute the framework of divine instruction, errors may be found."-"Study of Holy Scripture," pages 627, 634.

From the above, it would seem impossible for the world to contain a more erroneous book than the Bible. When we realize that such instruction as this is a commonplace in scores of theological schools, we no longer wonder that the students become "the most demoralized individuals to be found on this earth." That these numerous "errors" are never shown does not matter; for the young theological student naturally supposes that his instructors, sworn to the defense of the gospel, would never admit such errors unless they had to do so. Hence he assumes that the learned professors have ample proof for such sweeping statements; and instead of investigating to learn the truth, he too often allows his faith to be blasted by such falsehoods.

Need we any longer wonder, in view of the foregoing facts, that the many churches fed with this kind of spiritual poison are fast dying, instead of growing strong and active in preparation for Christ's second coming?

The awful calamities thrust upon us by the world war, and the consequent unsettled condition of society, make the demands on the church heavier than ever before in history. At a time when men's faith is being shattered by terrible events, the world turns to the church for aid, and for a robust faith to carry it through its time of dire distress. And what does it find? -The church too often unprepared, without faith

The Bible in the Critic's Den

in the Book which foretold the terrible events of the present, and foretells those still future, and also warns and instructs how to prepare to meet them.

Church leaders everywhere recognize the fact that the church is at the parting of the ways; that while, in ages past, she has been called to face many a crisis, the most critical of her history presses at the gates.

Dr. Crocker says: "The increasing paganism of America is no mere fear or fancy of a timorous pessimist. The thunderheads of a coming storm are on our civic and social horizons. He who will not see them and do what he can to avert the impending storm is either unfortunately blind or criminally indifferent."-"The Church of Today," page 143.

What is the present-day tendency within the church in many places? Is it towards greater faith in the Bible as God's infallible Word, or increasing doubt concerning much of it?

Let Canon Cheyne, one of the leaders of English Biblical scholarship, answer: "Every competent scholar knows that the 'sober' criticism of to-day was considered 'extravagant' yesterday."-"Bible Problems," page 54. May we infer that the extravagant criticism of today will be considered sober tomorrow?

Concerning the term "liberal orthodox," the Rev. M. J. Savage says, "It means, when you interpret it and put it in straight English, that they have given up the old-time belief in almost every one of the points that used to be regarded as absolutely essential."-"Religion for To-Day," page 11.

Professor Jordon, of Kingston, puts it "in straight English" also "It is no use attempting to minimize the difference between the traditional view and the critical treatment of the Old Testament. The difference is immense; they involve different views as to the course of Israel's history, progress of revelation, and the nature of inspiration."-"American Journal of Theology," January, 1902, page 114.

Dr. Hazzard claims that the two views "are nothing short of mutually destructive."-"Reasons for the Higher Criticism of the Hexateuch," page 17.

The Rev. Isaac Gibson affirms that "the traditional and critical views are face to face in open antagonism."-Id., page 100.

The Rev. Dr. McFadyen sums up the whole situation clearly "Almost every representative of both parties . . . stands within the church; and that is what constitutes the real pathos of the whole situation. If the critics were all without the church, careless of her interests and indifferent to her Lord, while their opponents were all within the church, alone in their devotion to the service of Christ, the situation might be easily and plausibly explained. But it is not so."-"Old Testament Criticism and the Christian Church," page 313.

Shortly after the crucifixion, the banner of faith and practice was held high by the church in spotless purity. Soon some of the leaders reasoned that the pure religion of Christ would be more successful and popular if its demands were not so stringent. Sad was the day for humanity when such a diabolical idea was advocated, and sadder yet the day when it was carried into practice. In the black records of the Dark Ages is written the account of that fatal defection from the high standard of Christ. Terrible was the delusion, blind the reasoning, that led to such a course, and awful was the penalty.

The results of that course are much more evident today than they were when it was inaugurated. Criminals at heart now seek the respectability of church membership, the better to carry on their nefarious operations. Two things peculiar to this age conspire to make this possible: the popularity of Christianity as compared with the apostolic age, and the gradual lowering of the standard in many places.

That famous divine and author, the late Dr. Josiah Strong, than whom no one had the good of the church more at heart, observed with alarm this tendency. Said he: "Immorality and crime are increasing much more rapidly than church membership. That is, the dangerous and destructive elements are making

The Bible in the Critic's Den

decidedly greater progress than the conservative. Our churches are growing, our missionary operations extending, our benefactions swelling, and we congratulate ourselves upon our progress; but we have only to continue making the same kind of progress long enough, and our destruction is sure."-"Our Country," page 216.

This is a tremendously startling statement. It comes from one of the most acute observers of modern times, and one who was never sensational for effect; yet it is one of the most sensational statements made in this generation. While we see the many activities of the church growing, and congratulate ourselves upon our progress, if we keep on as we are going, our destruction is inevitable.

Then we are simply progressing downward. It is a thought of awful import; and Dr. Strong, who was an incurable optimist, would never have given voice to it if he had not been forced to do so by the ugly facts.

Dr. Crooker observes the danger, and raises his voice in warning: "The cheapening of the church is one of the alarming signs of the times. . . . Piety has never been made plentiful by being made easy. Sensationalism is not the way to spirituality. . . . Trying to make the church attractive by making it worldly will never enable it to conquer the world."-"The Church of To-Day," pages 55, 56.

In order to hold the people who are pleasure-bent, many churches have formed literary clubs, established gymnasiums, swimming clubs, photographic clubs, rambling clubs, tennis and croquet clubs, added billiard rooms, smoking rooms, restaurants, even dance halls and theaters. A "religious" saloon was opened by Bishop Potter, of New York, to keep the drinking class in touch with the church. But do these efforts avail to bring people to church?

In 1840, Boston had one Protestant church to every 1,228 souls; in 1900, one to every 2,234. In New York City, in 1840, there was one to every 955; in 1900, one to every 4,736. There are only one half as many churches to-day, in proportion to the population, as fifty years ago. (Dr. Strong, "Challenge of the City," page 54.) How can we expect other than failure, asks Dr. Strong, when the church dallies with God, and coquets with Satan?

During twenty years in New York, a population of 200,000 moved in below Fourteenth Street, and eighty-seven Protestant churches moved out. In Philadelphia, in one section, while the population increased fourfold, twenty-five Protestant churches died or moved out. This is more than a retreat; it is a rout—a stampede. ("Challenge of the City," pages 121, 122.)

(Temcat's note: Remember the urgency with which Ellen White was urging the evangelism of the great cities at that time!)

When, as Dr. Strong estimated, church members spend \$200,000,000 a year for cigars, and \$7,000,000 a year for missions, one can hardly expect to find overcrowded churches.

"Investigation made by the writer," says the Rev. G. B. Thompson, "in New England, and by a friend in a large part of Boston, would not warrant an estimate of even fifteen per cent of the population as regular attendants."-"The Churches and Wage Earners," page 6.

"Within recent years," says Stelzle, "forty Protestant churches moved out of the district below Twentieth Street in New York City, while 300,000 people moved in."-"Christianity's Storm Center," page 17.

On Sunday, March 19, 1911, the New York Church Association took the census of church attendance of all Christians, Protestants and Catholics, of Manhattan Island, and found that ten per cent of the people were in church. Where were the ninety per cent?

It is evident, from the facts presented, that an exceedingly serious condition confronts us in the general condition of the church. The godly men of all denominations recognize the danger, and are seeking to know its meaning, and how to overcome it. It is always wiser to diagnose before prescribing.

In the next few chapters, we will inquire into the nature of the trouble, the effects of which are all about us. In the final chapters, we will seek the remedy.

CHAPTER III

The Genesis of Higher Criticism

THE year 1914 saw the beginning of the most horrible catastrophe the world has ever seen since the Flood. This war has devastated a dozen nations, thrown the whole world into a tumult of apprehension, killed and wounded many millions. That this should or could happen in the most highly civilized and Christianized nations of earth has led the whole world to ask, "Is Christianity a failure?"

This frightful carnage among Christian peoples, butchering one another with all the ferocity of savages, has given point to the infidel's sneer that after nineteen hundred years of Christianity, the world is no better than in the time of the monster Nero, and seems in some respects worse. Is the cause of this war to be found, as skeptics assert, in the failure of Christianity? Or is it to be found in the rejection of Christianity by those who profess to accept it? That the so-called Christian nations have failed somewhere, none can deny.

But are the nations as Christianized as we have been led to suppose? Even in the United States, only about a third of the inhabitants so much as make a profession of Christianity. "Are all those who profess religion real believers in the Bible?" is a question that is asked more insistently, as evidence becomes clearer that many of the religious leaders are teaching infidelity.

The Rev. G. A. Gordon, of Boston, is known throughout the nation as a careful, scholarly minister. He recognizes something new in the history of religion. "A new mood has arisen in the sphere of religion. It fills the educated world. It reaches the entire intelligence of the time. Is this new mood for better, or for worse? Is there any law or force upon which one may look for control of the fearful flood? When Christian scholars, teachers, preachers, disciples of the Lord, have, in one degree or another, abandoned immemorial traditions, is there any guide on whom we may rely?"-"Religion and Miracle," pages 149, 150.

The Rev. R. F. Horton, one of the leaders of English religious thought, observes the same tendency. "The Bible, which was declared by Chillingworth to be the religion of the Protestants, has been dissected, analyzed, discredited, denied, by Protestant scholars."-"My Belief," page 88.

The Rev. Dr. G. A. Smith, known internationally as conservative, is likewise aware of this new movement and its results. Higher criticism "has shaken the belief of some in the fundamentals of religion, distracted others from the zealous service of God, and benumbed the preaching of Christ's gospel."-"Modern Criticism and Preaching of the Old Testament."

A new movement that is so prolific of disastrous results is worthy of careful study—yes, demands most serious consideration; for if these men are right, the greatest danger that ever confronted the church is even now besetting her, and immediate aid is needed.

The attack on the church and the Bible has changed greatly in the last generation. Today there is not the crude and violent unbelief that repels by its coarseness. Infidelity is just as infidelic, but it is more refined. It has taken on culture and learning. It no longer inhabits mainly the taverns and the gambling hells. Its headquarters are now in the great universities and some of the renowned theological institutions, and its propagators are often their learned professors and theologians.

But in neither place is it called by its right name. In the university, infidelity parades under the garb of science; and in the church, it is called higher criticism. It everywhere scorns the coarse unbelief of

The Bible in the Critic's Den

Paine, while adopting his very arguments. It eschews with a shudder the vulgarity of Rousseau, while vigorously maintaining his conclusions. It clothes itself in the pleasing livery of culture and learning, or the grave habiliments of Christianity.

For hundreds of years, the thinking of Europe was held in thrall by the speculations and superstitions of the ancients and the traditions of the fathers. When, however, the mind began to free itself, the power of superstition was broken, tradition lost its strength, and men ventured to think for themselves. From believing everything, they swung to the opposite extreme. Thus we find thinkers of the eighteenth century, led by Descartes, Hume, and Gibbon, doubting everything. They went so far as to doubt not only the truth of the Bible, but the existence of God, and even their own existence. Finally some leaders of religious thought, in search for intellectual novelty, imbibed freely of the rising critical movement among unbelievers, and began gradually to apply the principles of doubting to the Bible.

"Criticism is not this or that opinion," says Professor Nash, "neither is it this or that body of opinions. It is an intellectual temperament, a mental disposition."-"History of Higher Criticism," pages 84, 85. It is a movement of doubt, of denial, of skepticism, that is gathering force in both the world and the church with each passing year. Its roots are in heathenism, its poisonous fruitage is in the professedly Christian church.

This new form of infidelity –higher criticism– must not be confounded with lower or textual criticism, which has to do solely with ascertaining from the oldest documents the exact text of Scripture. This study was made increasingly necessary by the advent of the wholesale criticism, which ran like wildfire over the world of thought. All honor to those noble scholars who, like *Tischendorf, and Tregelles, and Griesbach, and Westcott, and Hort,** have devoted the energies of their great minds and long lives to the humble but important work of textual investigation. (*This is to be queried. -temcat)

Higher criticism is an entirely different affair. It devotes itself to considering the "integrity, authenticity, literary form, and reliability" of the Bible.-Charles A. Briggs, D. D., "Study of Holy Scripture," page 92.

This sounds innocent enough; but when the results of this method are to destroy the integrity, deny the authority, alter the literary form, and evaporate the reliability of the Scriptures, an investigation is seriously demanded.

Richard Simon, a Roman Catholic priest, is called the "father of higher criticism." In 1678, he advanced the new theory that only the ordinances and commands of the books of Moses were written by him, while the history was the product of various other writers, fused into its present form either by him or by some one else. Simon's declared purpose was "to show that the Protestants had no assured principle for their religion." How it saddens the heart to see leading Protestants eagerly engaged in aiding this very work!

Simon's views were so vigorously attacked at the time, that they lay dormant for scores of years; but in 1753, higher criticism again raised its hideous form from the dust. In this year, Jean Astruc, another Roman Catholic, by the publication of his "Conjectures," inaugurated the main movement which for a hundred and fifty, years has been growing with accelerating influence, until to-day it is the dominant theological conception in the religious world.

In these "Conjectures," Astruc called attention to the fact that in Genesis, the word for "Creator is sometimes "God" (Elohim) and sometimes "Lord" (Jehovah). For instance, in Gen. 1:1, we read that "God created the heaven and the earth;" and in Gen. 4:9, "The Lord said unto Cain." Absurd as it may seem, it is a fact that the use of "God" in one place and "Lord" in another was adduced as proof that the accounts in which these words are found were written by different men at widely different times.

This is the beginning and foundation of that top-heavy structure of higher criticism, which overshadows everything else in the religious world to-day and is casting the black shadow of doubt across

The Bible in the Critic's Den

every page of Holy Writ. Thus in the Catholic Church was conceived, born, and nursed the modern child of unbelief. With shame I must write that it has been adopted by Protestantism, like many another child of error born of Catholicism, and is eagerly heralded by Protestant divines as the child of light.

In 1771, the German critic Semler published the book "Treatise on the Free Investigation of the Canon," which gave a new impulse to the movement. He maintained that as the canon was not formed at one stroke, but gradually, the documents composing the Bible were produced by a like growth. While this theory contained a grain of truth, it was soon warped out of all semblance to fact.

The next step was taken in 1780, by J. G. Eichhorn, who combined in one work all the results of previous critics; claimed, in addition, to see other differences between the two "sections" than in the divine name; extended the theory over the whole of the Old Testament; laid down the rule, now, universally accepted by higher critics, that Bible "writings are to be read as human productions and tested in human ways;" and for the first time, gave the process the name of "higher criticism."

In 1792, still another Roman Catholic divine, Dr. Geddes, advanced the movement by promulgation of the "fragmentary hypothesis," which resolved the first six books into an agglomeration of longer and shorter fragments between which no threads of connection existed, put together in the reign of Solomon. All this, however, was mild compared with what was soon to follow.

The Armory from Which Our Lord's Effective Weapons Were Drawn

(Compare Matt. 4 : 4, 7, 10)

"Man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord." Deut. 8: 3.

"Ye shall not tempt the Lord your God." Deut. 6: 16.

"Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve." Deut. 6:13, Septuagint.

With De Wette's essays, in 1805, began the bold unbelief of higher criticism proper. He flatly refused to find anything in the books of Moses but legend and poetry – history, he maintained, there was none. He advanced the now accepted critical theory that the date of the discovery of the book of Deuteronomy in the temple 624 B. C. was also the date of its composition. It was declared to be a pious fraud perpetrated by priests to establish their power, and hidden by them in the temple, to be discovered by one of themselves. That ministers of the gospel believe and teach such a thing is an astounding fact. That leading ministers of the world believe and teach that one of the sublimest compositions in the world is only a lie, manufactured by hypocritical religious leaders for purposes of fraud, is startling evidence of the pernicious character of the higher critical theory.

While the distinction of the divine names failed after Exodus 6, the lynx-eyed critics claimed to detect other linguistic phenomena which served as well. So Bleek in 1822, Ewald in 1831, and Stahelm in 1835, developed the new theories. In 1835, a long stride was taken in higher criticism. That year saw the publication of Vate's "Old Testament Theology," Baur's "Pastoral Epistles," and Strauss's "Life of Jesus." The violent religious controversy arising from these productions lasted till 1853, when Hupfeld superseded the "fragmentary hypothesis" with the "document hypothesis," which found three main documents instead of two.

The finishing touches were now given in rapid succession. The "document hypothesis" soon gave way to the present prevailing theory, the "development hypothesis," formulated by Reuss, and made public in 1866 by Graf, who turned a critical somersault by advancing the theory that Leviticus was written two hundred years after Deuteronomy. Since 1883, Wellhausen has been elaborating this theory, till his views dominate higher criticism the world over. They have crossed the mountains and permeate France, passed over the channel and control England, sailed the ocean and prevail in America.

The Bible in the Critic's Den

There were now four sources recognized in the first half of the Old Testament, designated by the capitals J, E, D, and P. But this was by no means all. These four sources were found to be inadequate to account for all the contents of these books ; so the critics, in an endeavor to make their preposterous theory stand upright, made a further division and subdivision. The original J and E of Astruc were dissolved into this nebulous series: J¹, J², J³, J⁴; E¹, E², E³, E⁴, etc., or equivalents, all of which are now part of the recognized critical apparatus of higher critical books and magazines.

But the end is not yet. The heights of absurdity might seem to have been reached; but no, the masterpiece of foolishness was yet to come. Having got themselves entangled in the critical cogs, it was impossible to escape. The Rev. C. A. Briggs, D. D., gravely informs us that "there were groups of earlier Ephraimitic (E) and Judaic (J) writers, and they were followed by groups of Deuteronomic (D) and Priestly (P) writers."-"Study of Holy Scripture," page 290. (See also Gunkel, "Genesis," page 58; Cheyne, "Founders of Criticism," page 39; Dr. Driver, "Genesis," page 16.)

Charles Foster Kent, professor of Biblical literature in Yale University, tells us there were whole schools of writers at work for centuries on the "task of collecting, arranging, and combining the earlier writings of their race."-"Beginnings of Hebrew History," page 42. (See also McFadyen, "Messages of Prophecy and Priestly Historians," page 22.)

So at last we have arrived by the critical route at the present position of the new theology, –that whole "schools of writers" were continuously engaged for centuries in patching, revising, tessellating, resetting, altering, and embellishing the work of their predecessors, some of which was fraud and forgery! This is what our leading Protestant scholars believe to be the origin and foundation of the Christian religion!

Reluctantly we are led to admit, in the words of Hugh McIntosh, that higher criticism "would bury an expired Christianity with an incredible Bible, beside a dead Christ, in a hopeless grave, from which there is no resurrection; and bury along with them the only consolation of a sorrowful humanity amid the desolations of death and the darkness of futurity, without one ray of hope to alleviate the eternal gloom; and would turn mankind backward millenniums, and convert the dawn of a new century into a midnight darkness and a world's despair."

However harshly I may criticize the theories of higher critics, I desire to make it emphatically understood that at no time have I anything to say against the morals of a single higher critic. I admire their many noble thoughts, their profound learning. It is not their motive I impeach or even question. But I exercise the same freedom in criticizing their theories that they have already used in criticizing the Bible. It is not because I desire to criticize either these gentlemen or their theories that I have written; it is because, after studying their writings for years, I am more firmly convinced, each passing year, that the greatest danger which ever threatened the church lurks in these very theories. I agree with Principal Andrew Fairbairn that "we ought never to have controversy with men, only with false systems; and with what is false only that we may win the fitter opportunity to speak the truth."-"Studies in Religion and Theology," page 137.

It is not the iniquitous life of the abandoned sinner, nor the debauching example of the libertine, that corrupts men, so much as the subtle influence of harmful opinions fostered and advocated by moral men, noble men, who, under the delusion that they are propagating principles for the good of humanity, exert their great learning and charming genius to lead to eternal ruin.

As noble a man as ever lived may, in walking along a hillside, loosen with his foot a stone above the heads of people below. No matter how many errands of mercy those feet have traveled, the danger to those beneath will not be lessened one whit thereby, nor the stone be made any softer when it comes crushing upon them. If I see the stone loosened by feet even now bent on an errand of mercy, shall I hold my peace because the man is noble, religious? Must I hold my peace and see innocent people killed

because, perchance, the man who kills them is a gentle-souled Samaritan? Who is so lost to the nobler feelings of humanity, who so indifferent, that he would not cry out with all his might, "Out from under!"

CHAPTER IV

Doubt as an Aid to Belief

THE tendency of modern science is to eliminate old methods; that of modern philosophy, to discard antique theories; that of modern Christianity, to use modern science and modern speculative philosophy to subvert, annihilate, "the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints." Jude 3, A. R. V.

The horse is being supplanted by the automobile, the steam engine by the electric engine, and the telegraph by wireless. In like manner, not to be outdone in the process of substitution, modern ministers, in many churches, are producing numerous volumes in every country in a Herculean endeavor to give us an up-to-date religion, a Christless Bible nay, – a Bibleless Christianity.

Man has become so skilled in art, so successful in science, so potent in war, that his pride revolts at the thought or suggestion of there being anything beyond the wonderful scope of his progressive, versatile, adjustive, or creative genius. To hint at a limitation of his achievements is to insult his ability; to criticize his methods is to malign his morals; to disagree with his conclusions is to flout his genius; and to deprecate his emasculated religion is to traduce mankind.

In the overweening pride of his progress, man is rearing a lofty intellectual Tower of Babel. Like the tower on the plain of Shinar, its top is designed to "reach unto heaven"- in sooth, to God Himself. But let man beware lest his modern Babel share the fate of the ancient tower; for "the secret things belong unto the Lord." Through the veil of the Infinite, man cannot penetrate. Here the daring of his speculation is the measure of his folly. Here the bowed head is the highest wisdom, and silence the noblest eloquence.

The world is being filled with pleasing fables, wooing man from the stony upward path of virtue to the flowery, easy highway of gratification, luring him to pleasant dreams of Oriental languor in Elysian palaces of bliss. Honest truth-seekers thus encompassed with a seducing salvation of enrapturing ease, find their minds often clouded in perplexity, and their souls shrouded in darkness. The world in general is tossed to and fro by every wind of doctrine, without anchor, without compass, without chart, and without Captain. This, in an ever increasing degree, is the work of the new theology.

Once the attack upon the Bible was from without. Once the devastating criticism was led by a Voltaire. A century ago, a Paine was mightiest in hurling invectives at Christianity. Nay, only two decades ago, an Ingersoll or a Bradlaugh held highest the banner of Bible criticism. Then the friends of the Bible knew its enemies, for they were open and avowed.

But to-day the divine stories upon which our parents were nurtured, around which their affections entwined, and by which their faith was supported, are declared by the theological professors of many of the greatest colleges in the world to be not only untrue in some parts, but false in every particular –the myths of a superstitious and ignorant people, generated in an age of darkness.

Thus has the banner of infidelity been wrested from the Paines and the Ingersolls, and held aloft by religious leaders. I feel with grief and write with sadness that the foundations of our faith are thus ruthlessly torn away, not by men who, like Gibbon and Voltaire, are the declared enemies of Christianity, but by the world's renowned professed believers. Thus is the Bible smitten by hand of a friend. Thus is it betrayed, like its Master, with a kiss.

The modern religious teachers and leaders not only adopt the old infidel arguments, but enlarge them; not only endorse the conclusions of the most rabid infidels, but strengthen them; not only repeat the

old infidel slogans, but invent new ones even more revolutionary. The violent unbelief of Voltaire has been baptized, and rechristened higher criticism, or new theology, or liberal Christianity. In the doubting minds and the sordid hearts of the scoffing skeptics of a century or more ago were planted the seeds of the rampant unbelief which, under the sedulous cultivation of learned divines, is opening into full bloom in the devastating higher criticism of to-day. Fallacies and frauds advanced a score of times in the past, and a thousand times exploded, are by the higher critics gravely repeated as new and important truths.

The higher critic's maxim, that the Bible must be studied like any other book, is the basis of all present criticism. And this theory has led to its corollary that the Bible must be like any other book. They denounce Christ's teaching that "Thy word is truth," because it contradicts their own.

But either the Bible is true or it is not. It is the word of God or a delusion. It is absolutely reliable or not at all reliable. It is, either infallible or utterly untrustworthy. There is no middle ground. One must take his position either with Christ, Paul, and John, or with Paine, Voltaire, and Ingersoll. But the higher critic is trying to manufacture a middle ground. He endeavors to be at once both infidel and Christian, and succeeds in being only infidel.

That I have not exaggerated; that the higher critic is a doubter first, last, and all the time; that doubting is not only a pleasant pastime, but a serious business with him, is easy of proof. A religious instructor in the Wesleyan University wrote in the North American Review for April, 1900, as follows:

"In every sphere of investigation, he should begin with doubt and the student will make the most rapid progress who has acquired the art of doubting well. . . . We ask that every student of theology take up the subject precisely as he would any other science: that he begin with doubt. . . . We believe that even the teachings of Jesus should be viewed from this standpoint, and should be accepted or rejected on the grounds of their inherent reasonableness."

Doubt is the means by which unsanctified reason always works. Self is its mainspring, and self its goal; self its element, and the worship of self its result. But "O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?" Matt. 14: 31. "Neither be ye of doubtful mind (Luke 12: 29); for "whatsoever is not of faith is sin" (Rom. 14: 23), and "without faith it is impossible to please Him" (Heb. 11:6), while on the other hand, "all things are possible to him that believeth" (Mark 9:23).

The wisdom of the higher critic is dangerous; for "the world through its wisdom knew not God." I Cor. 1:21, A. R. V. All these theological exalters of reason should obey the urgent words of Paul counseling them about "casting down reasonings, . . . and bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ." 2 Cor. 10:5, A. R. V., margin.

In face of these scriptures, the fact that "the art of doubting" is actually-- taught as the most essential qualification for learning religion in a divinity school, is a most appalling condition of affairs, and is significant of the trend and effect of all the teaching of the new theology. Its foundation is doubt, and its object is to promulgate doubt. Doubt is its essence, infidelity its sphere, and atheism its result.

The destructive critic has the advantage over the constructive scholar. The critic, having no house of his own, can without risk, set fire to his neighbor's. And of course the burning of a house attracts more attention than the building of one.

CHAPTER V

Cremating the Old Testament

THE teaching of doubt as an aid to belief has resulted in numerous such statements as the following: "Exquisitely beautiful often are those Hebrew representations of the universe, full of richest poetry of nature; but honest exegesis can find there *no faintest gleam of the light of science.*" W. N. Rice, professor of geology in Wesleyan University, "Christian Faith in an Age of Science," page 6.

The Bible in the Critic's Den

"The descriptions of the exodus from Egypt, the wandering in the desert, and the conquest and partition of Canaan, . . . to put it in a word, are *utterly unhistorical*."-Kuenen, "Hexateuch," page 42. (Italics his.)

"The mighty patriarchs of the early days were not men of flesh and blood at all; they are reduced by criticism to personification of virtues, or to tribes, or at best to tribal heroes."-Dr. McFadyen, "Old Testament Criticism," page 9.

The Rev. Dr. C. A. Briggs, one of the leading higher critics of the world, is pleased with this result. "It is safe to say that the Bible has become a new book to the modern scholar, as the result of all these historical studies and the researches of historical criticism. The material has been in large part sifted and scientifically arranged."-"Study of Holy Scripture," page 508.

But unfortunately for the "scientific" advocates, their theories have resulted not only in no agreement, but in endless confusion. This is evident from the lack of harmony among themselves, which even a casual reading of their works makes irritatingly apparent. For instance, there is a difference of a thousand years in the dating of the Decalogue by men equally scientific. The same psalms are placed nine hundred years apart by men of equal critical acumen. There is a divergence of eleven hundred years as to the date of Job among critics of the first rank. This is the same as if one were unable to determine whether Columbus lived in the time of Constantine or was a contemporary of Queen Isabella. Such are some of the results of the boasted "scientific arrangement."

But while there is disagreement concerning the dates of the composition and the methods of production, Dr. Briggs voices the almost unanimous sentiment of higher critics when he says that "in all matters which core within the sphere of human observation, and which constitute the framework of divine instruction, errors may be found."

It is the veriest commonplace of the new theology to deny utterly all historical truth to the Genesis account of creation, Eden, the fall, the Deluge, and the Tower of Babel, which are called variously, according to the taste or training of the critic, myth, lie, forgery, legend, or poetry –but fact never. ("Study of Holy Scripture," page 634.)

Cain and Abel, along with Noah and Joseph, are relegated to the limbo of oblivion. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, Lot and his wife, likewise even Saul, David, and Solomon, are regarded as but myths.

The vast body of laws found in Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers, including the accounts of the tabernacle, constitutes what the critics call the Priestly Code, designated by P. But the elaborate descriptions of the tabernacle and its contents, the disposition of the wilderness camp, choice of the Levites, the origin of the Passover, etc., are all a "product of the imagination."

It is claimed that when Ezra, in 444 B. c., as related in Nehemiah 8, read laws to the people, this was their first appearance. Says Kuenen: "They were not laws which had been long in existence, and which were now proclaimed afresh and accepted by the people, after having been forgotten for a while. The priestly ordinances were made known and imposed upon the Jewish nation now for the first time."

On this theory, a greater set of falsifiers never lived than the promulgators of this code; for there never was a tithe system for support of priests and Levites, nor sin offerings, nor trespass offerings, nor day of atonement, nor tabernacle, nor feasts, nor any of the other numerous things mentioned! And the manufacturers of this code knew it, for they were themselves its inventors! The giving of the law at Sinai was only the private concoction of some inventive priest in Babylon ten centuries after it was supposed to have been given!

How do they prove all this? the reader asks. They not only do not prove it, but they do not even attempt to do so; they boldly avow that they "infer" it.

The Bible in the Critic's Den

Says Wellhausen on this point: "As we are accustomed to infer the date of the composition of Deuteronomy from its publication and introduction by Josiah, so we must infer the date of the composition of the Priestly Code from its publication and introduction by Ezra and Nehemiah."-"History of Israel," page 408.

In fact, the whole history of higher criticism is little more than the account of "inferences" which, in the effort to sustain their theories, they "must" make.

In 444 B. C., for the first time, the people hear of a day of atonement and the solemn and elaborate ritual of observance! Yet the thought that this was never known in their history before does not occur to them! The Levites show no surprise when they learn, for the first time, that they had been especially set apart by God a thousand years previously, and that ample provision had then been made for their necessities, and even whole cities had been appointed for them to dwell in! Critics can believe all of this, yet be unable to believe that Moses wrote the Pentateuch!

Not only common sense, but the evidence, is all against such a perversion of history. The likeness, in many points, between Ezekiel 40-48 and Leviticus 17-26 was explained first by supposing an acquaintance of Ezekiel with Leviticus. But when the critics changed their theory, they had to change everything else; so now we are gravely informed that Leviticus is an imitation of Ezekiel!

The critics' view of Deuteronomy is no better. In the eighteenth year of King Josiah, B.C. 622, it was found, and appeared for the first time, say the critics. They calmly tell us that it was deliberately forged by the priests, and hidden in the temple, to be discovered by one of themselves, and effect the very reformation it did, in order that their power might be enhanced. Not only were the priests a set of liars and rogues, but even the prophetess Huldah, a woman of God, was deceived by their forgery, and thought it the word of God! (2 Kings 22: 14-16.) The reformation that the discovery of this "book of lies" wrought has been equaled only by the discovery, twenty-two centuries later, of a Bible at Erfurt, chained to a convent wall. The critics who believe that such a reform was founded on a forgery, have more faith in the power of lies and fraud to raise man up and inspire him with noble ideals, than they have in the power of truth to uplift him.

Those who urge that if Deuteronomy had been known previously, it could never have been lost, forget that by the close of the century in which Charlemagne lived, his great code was almost totally forgotten, and in another half century, it had sunk into total oblivion, where it remained for centuries.

But the fact that the high priest Hilkiah said, "I have found the book of the law" (2 Kings 22:8), proves that there was a knowledge of its former existence, and that he knew enough about it to know when it was discovered.

The German theologian De Wette says of Deuteronomy that it is proved "to rest entirely on fiction, and indeed so much so that, while the preceding books, amidst myths, contained traditional data, here tradition does not seem in any instance to have supplied any materials." The more baseless the theory, the broader the assertion. The higher critic's certainty of his position is in exact ratio to his lack of evidence: the less the evidence, the greater the certainty.

The astute and learned higher critic of England, Dr. Driver, gravely tells us that "Deuteronomy does, not claim to be written by Moses." "Introduction," page 89. Yet in spite of the learned doctor's dictum, we read in as clear language as ever was written: "And it came to pass, when Moses had made an end of writing the words of this law in a book, until they were finished, that Moses commanded the Levites, that bare the ark of the covenant of Jehovah, saying, Take this book of the law, and put it by the side of the ark of the covenant of Jehovah your God, that it may be there for a witness against thee." Deut. 31: 24-26, A. R. V. See also verses 9, 22.

The Bible in the Critic's Den

Thus does it still witness against those who try to overthrow the word of God with their own puny assertions; and thus will it witness against them whenever they try to break the Scriptures, which "cannot be broken."

Cornill says Deuteronomy is "an instructive proof that only under the name of Moses did a later writer believe himself able to reckon on a hearing as a religious lawgiver." Where, it may be pertinent to ask, did all of this influence come from, if Moses was but a myth?

It is amusing and almost pathetic to see with what learning and genius they first exalt the personality and work of Moses in order to explain how all the legislation in the Old Testament is connected with his name; and on the other hand, with what eager trepidation they hasten to accomplish the equally necessary but exceedingly difficult feat of minimizing to a vanishing point his influence, in order to give a semblance of sense to their theory that he actually gave Israel no laws at all, and in fact never lived. (Wellhausen, "History of Israel," page 432 ff.; and Kuenen, "Religion of Israel," volume I, page 272 ff.)

If, as the critics assume, the book was written in the time of King Josiah, what earthly use could be injunctions to "utterly destroy" the sanctuaries, altars, pillars, and graven images of the former inhabitants of Canaan, when these had been destroyed centuries before? But especially ludicrous would be the laws to exterminate the Canaanites, when none remained to be exterminated; and to destroy the long extinct Amalekites. This would be like an enactment now for the defense of New York City against the Iroquois.

In fact, all evidence and everything in the book is suitable to the time of Moses, and fits it exactly, and is out of place and completely irrelevant as a production of the age of Josiah, whether the book be considered as forgery or fact.

Of course, in the new theology Bible, Job, Esther, Ruth, Daniel, and Jonah are works of the imagination, without a trace of history. (Dr. Briggs, "Study of Holy Scripture," page 94.) Not only did Ezra and Solomon not write anything, but "the wish was the father to the thought, and the thought gave rise to the story of Ezra. Ezra was the ideal scribe, as Solomon was the ideal king, projected upon the background of an earlier age."-Dr. H. P. Smith, "Old Testament History," pages 396, 397.

The case of Samson is even worse, for we are seriously asked to believe that he was a product of the imagination at work to produce a Hebrew Hercules. (Briggs, "Study of Holy Scripture," pages 333, 334.) So then the story is only a recasting of the myth of Hercules! Hence Samson is only the shadow of a myth!

As to the psalms, Kuenen, Reuss, Toy, and Canon Cheyne all assert boldly, but without an iota of proof, that David never wrote a single one of the psalms ascribed to him. (Sunderland, "The Bible," page 113; Cheyne, "Bampton Lectures." "Contents of the Psalter.") But the whole of Peter's great Pentecostal sermon is based entirely upon the fact of David's authorship of the two psalms Peter quoted. If David did not write them, the higher critics have made absurdity of Peter's argument. That, however, is their object; for their favorite method of discounting the Bible is to make it appear childish.

To follow all the involutions and evolutions and twistings and squirmings of the critical theories would be neither interesting nor profitable, even if it were possible; but enough of the absurdities have been given to show how solemnly these learned men base huge superstructures upon chimerical assertions, and rear lofty systems upon imaginary facts. It is sufficient to add that all the rest of the Old Testament is treated in a similar manner by these ecclesiastical dignitaries.

JESUS AND MOSES

THINK not that I will accuse you to the Father: there is one that accuseth you, even Moses, on whom ye have set your hope. For if ye believed Moses, ye would believe Me; for he wrote of Me. But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe My words? John 5: 45-47.

Of the thousand quotations from and references to the Old Testament in the New, not one gives a particle of evidence for any of the above critical theories; but in every case, the Scriptures are used as the infallible, divine rule of God, which cannot be violated in a single word (John 10: 35), or pass away in one tittle (Matt. 5: 18), or be changed one iota without judgment (Rev. 22: 19).

Christ recognized not only the existence of Moses, but his authorship of the Pentateuch; also the existence of Abraham, David, and Jonah; also of Elijah, Isaiah, and Daniel, Noah and the Flood, besides much else familiar to every student of the New Testament, all of which is cast aside by the higher critics, with an impatient sneer or a condescending smile of superiority.

"O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken ! . . . And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, He expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself." Luke 24: 25, 27. Those who own the authority of Christ at all must see that we are to know that all in all the Scriptures is inspired, and concerns Jesus, our divine Saviour. And surely what concerns Him it is suicidal to cast aside as of no importance to us, who are to be saved by Him.

CHAPTER VI

New Methods of Interpretation

"If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?" Ps. 11: 3.

ARE you seeking truth? Then look not to the men, but to the teaching. This is the Bible method, and the only effectual one. "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." Isa. 8:20. Adopting this principle, let us fearlessly apply it to the higher criticism.

The interpretation of the Old Testament by New Testament writers is marked by their practice of seeing Christ in all parts of the Old Testament. But the interpretation of the Old Testament by higher critics is, on the contrary, marked by their practice of excluding Him from it entirely.

Says the most recent, and, from the higher critical viewpoint, the most authoritative history of interpretation: "There is no evidence that Jesus saw a predictive element in the Old Testament; no evidence that, in His thought, any Old Testament author had foreseen His historical appearance, the circumstances of His ministry, His death and resurrection."- Dr. Gilbert, "History of Interpretation," page 71.

What about Christ's quoting Isa. 61: 1, 2 in Luke 4: 17-21, and saying, "To-day hath this scripture been fulfilled in your ears"? And still further: "And beginning from Moses and from all the prophets, He interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself." Luke 24: 27. And yet, there is "no evidence that, in His thought, any Old Testament author had foreseen His historical appearance"!

In order to exalt their own authority and infallibility, they must first insist that Christ's methods of interpretation were not only faulty, but mistaken. "Of what in modern times is regarded as the technical qualification for scientific exegesis, He had, of course, no more than the generation in which He belonged."- Dr. Gilbert, "History of Interpretation," page 72. So Christ Himself is held up to ridicule

The Bible in the Critic's Den

because He does not doubt His own words, because He was not a higher critic, because, forsooth, He was not an infidel!

Higher critics defend their position-by illustration. "Many people are alarmed, as if, when we begin to remove the dirt from an old master, we were going to destroy the glorious picture itself. But we remove the dirt which has become incrustated, that the picture may be more clearly seen and better appreciated than before." Joseph Wood, "The Bible," page 12.

What should we think of the student of art who brought a microscope with him into an art gallery, and when he saw what looked like a flyspeck off in the corner of a picture, immediately turned his microscope upon it, and lost himself in examination of that flyspeck, and left the gallery without having even noticed the picture itself, but discoursed learnedly and wrote profound tomes upon the chemistry, etc., of the flyspeck in the corner? But one who is not willing to spend time in erudite investigation of supposed flyspecks, but prefers to devote it to the study of the majesties, splendors, and unrivaled beauties of the Bible, is laughed to scorn as ignorant, if not an imbecile.

Their principles of interpretation lead the critics far astray. One of their primary principles, tacitly used or openly avowed, is this: Given a scripture which admits of two meanings, one making sense and the other nonsense, choose the latter as the only meaning admissible, criticize according to higher criticism, and eliminate from the Bible, as evidence of the ignorance of the writer, and proof that the Bible is "full of errors, imperfections, contradictions, prejudices, passions, . . . that it had its birth in the mind of man." Bampforth, "The Bible from the Standpoint of Higher Criticism," volume 2, page 263.

Disagreements are confessedly assumed, and then the whole account is discredited because of this disagreement. This is one of the higher critical favorite methods of attack.

Another principle of interpretation is one laid down by Dr. Briggs: "The argument from silence is of great importance in the higher criticism of Holy Scripture."- "Study of Holy Scripture," page 307. In this way, critics can prove almost anything. So they proceed to build, with all gravity, massive systems of theology, or lack of theology, upon things not in the Bible or any other book, only in their own imaginations.

For instance, we are told: "From the silence of the periods of Samuel and the kings regarding the Priest's Code, it is reasoned that the provisions of this code were unknown at the time; hence they were not in existence; for they must have been known if they existed; hence the books commonly ascribed to Moses, the Pentateuch,- in which alone we have a record of the alleged origin of the Priest's Code,-were not in existence at the time of Samuel and kings."-Zenos, "Elements of Higher Criticism," page 88.

But let us admit this loss for the present, and see if it proves anything. Says Sir James Stephen: "When the barbarism of the domestic government [under the Carlovingian dynasty] had thus succeeded the barbarism of the government of the state, one of the most remarkable results of that political change was the disappearance of the laws and institutions by which Charlemagne had endeavored to elevate and civilize his subjects. Before the close of the century in which he died, the whole body of his laws had fallen into utter disuse throughout the whole extent of his Gallic dominions. They who have studied the characters, laws, and chronicles of the later Carlovingian princes most diligently, are unanimous in declaring that they indicate either absolute ignorance or an entire forgetfulness of the legislation of Charlemagne."-"Lectures on the History of France," lecture 4, page 94.

This case, taken together with the even more remarkable one of the utter loss and eradication from all secular records, for over four thousand years, of the extensive laws of Hammurabi, demonstrates that it is possible for not only the observance but all knowledge of a law to perish.

Thus we see how futile is the argument from silence in this case, even granting the premises, - that the law was forgotten during the time; but there is no evidence that such was the case. On the

The Bible in the Critic's Den

contrary, there is abundant reference, in both the books of Samuel, to the law, or code. See I Sam. 2: 28, 29; 3:3; 4:3; 7:9; 8; etc.

But the most remarkable use ever made of the argument from silence must be accredited to the Rev. Dr. Briggs: "A careful study of all the ethical passages of the Old Testament convinces me that there is an entire absence of censure of the sin of falsehood until after the exile; and then largely under the influence of Persian ethics."-"Study of the Holy Scripture," pages 308, 309.

No censure of falsehood until after the sixth century B. C., and even then borrowed from Persia! What does the discerning reader think of such a statement, in the teeth of "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor," "Thou shalt not take up a false report," not to mention the multitudes of scathing rebukes poured forth in burning eloquence by the prophets prior to the exile? See Ex. 20:16; 23:1, 7; Deut. 5:20; 19:16-19; Judges 16:10; Ex. 18:21; et al.

Dr. Briggs then pauses to admire the results and the method of his work: "These are examples of the methods by which the evidences of the higher criticism may be applied to Holy Scripture. They are constantly applied by scholars all over the world, in all the ranges of Biblical literature. If carefully applied, tested, and verified, they lead to sure results."-"Study of Holy Scripture," page 309.

Says Dr. Briggs in another place, "Joel used to be regarded as the earliest of the prophets; he is now commonly considered one of the latest."-Id. This is how "sure" their results are, himself being the judge.

Another principle of interpretation is this: If two writers record the same event in the same or practically the same language, as do Matthew and Mark, then they both borrowed their ideas from some common source, and are not to be relied upon, because we do not know how trustworthy that common source is.

On the other hand, if two writers see the same event from different but equally true angles, as do James and Paul, then one or the other must be wrong, probably both, and the higher critic constructs a theory which alone can be right.

If a certain event is recorded by only one writer, it is not to be credited, because it is unsupported by other testimony! And the moment it should receive such support, it would be ruled out of court on other grounds!

But this is not all; for if a writer is silent concerning a certain event which the higher critics think he ought to have written about, of course he is then adjudged as ignorant of it, and held up to ridicule because of this ignorance, and branded as unreliable in everything else. Even Christ has been denounced by higher critics because He was silent concerning a hundred things they think He ought to have left teachings about. And because He did not, He has been called ignorant of them.

This is no trivial matter for the Christian. It strikes at the very foundations of his faith; for if the higher critic's methods of interpretation are true, then every inspired writer is discredited, on one pretext or another, as ignorant, or denounced as maliciously deceiving, and faith in the Bible is absurd, and faith in Christ impossible, for the means for knowing Him have been destroyed.

Seeing where these principles lead us, we need no other proof that they are not only false, but the baseless figment of a chimerical imagination. And we are led back to the consideration of the fact that the only safe, the only true method of interpretation is that employed by our divine Lord and Master: "Beginning from Moses and from all the prophets, He interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself." Luke 24:27.

CHAPTER VII

The Matter of Style

"AS analysis has been carried gradually further, it has become increasingly evident that the critical question is far more difficult and involved than was at first supposed, and the solutions which seemed to have been secured have been in whole or in part brought into question again."-Kuenen, "Hexateuch," page 139.

In their desperate effort to make their theories stand the "acid test" of common sense, the critics are driven into difficult positions; and in their attempts to escape from a dilemma, they often flounder into worse embarrassment, or sink into quicksands of absurdity. The whole theory is one huge absurdity; but strangest of all is the fact that the very theories upon which they most pride themselves, and upon which they lay the most stress, are the ones most open to exposure, and most clearly the product of baseless imagination.

Let one of their experts tell us the foundation principles of higher criticism: "Any one familiar with literature knows how difficult it is for a well-known writer to disguise his hand. It will often be recognized through all guises, even by those who are not expert."-Dr. Briggs, "Study of Holy Scripture," page 99.

It is upon stylistic differences in the various parts of a Bible book that higher criticism is based. The whole top-heavy theory is built upon the supposed detection of different writers by a variation in style. Says Dr. Briggs, "Difference of style implies difference of author and period of composition."-Id., page 97.

Since "higher criticism is a science, and its results as sure as those of any other science" (Id., page 105), let us push our inquiry a little further, and ascertain some of the scientific results of this new science when applied to the phenomena of style.

Dr. Briggs says: "It is agreed among critics that the Ephraimitic writer is brief, terse, and archaic in style; the Judaic writer is poetic and descriptive. The Priestly writer is annalistic and diffuse, fond of names and dates. He aims at precision and compactness. The logical faculty prevails. There is little coloring. The Deuteronomic writer is rhetorical and hortatory, practical and earnest. His aim is instruction and guidance."- Id., page 301.

Without inquiring too closely how he came into possession of all this information, we are now equipped with the means for tearing assunder the books of Moses, and apportioning to each of the above mentioned four writers his individual production. But hold!

"It seems to be evident that there were groups of earlier Ephraimitic and Judaic writers, and these were followed by groups of Deuteronomic and Priestly writers, and the composition of the Old Testament was a much more elaborate affair than the earlier critics supposed."- Id., page 290.

So instead of four writers, we now have hundreds! But many of them write so much alike that they cannot be distinguished! We are now gravely advised of this, in spite of the fact that we before were just as seriously informed that the whole theory rests upon the "scientific" ability of the critics infallibly to distinguish all the different writers, no matter how numerous, by their differences of style –which differences, we were told, could be detected by a nonexpert, they were so obvious!

But let us see how obvious the differences are. Says Bishop Colenso - I prefer to let the critics refute each other: "The style of the two writers [E and J] is so very similar, except for the use of the divine names, that it is impossible to distinguish them by considerations of style alone."-"Pentateuch," volume 5, page 59.

The Bible in the Critic's Den

Even Dr. Driver admits the difficulty; but he is so wedded to the theory, that he is driven to the following logic in its defense:

"Indeed, stylistic criteria alone would not generally suffice to distinguish J and E; though when the distinction has been effected by other means, slight differences of style appear to disclose themselves."-"Introduction," page 126.

When learned men are driven to such absurdities of logic to defend a hypothesis, it is self-evident that they have an absurd hypothesis to defend.

Take Deuteronomy. The first four chapters are declared by most recent critics to be the work of a different writer from the rest, though "the usage of speech is the same as in chapter 5-11" Otelli, "Commentary on Deuteronomy," page 9.

This unwelcome difficulty is easily overcome by the naïve ingenuity of another higher critic: "The great similarity of language must be explained as the result of imitation."- Kuenen, "Hexateuch," page 117. How beautifully simple!

It is no wonder that occasionally a higher critic becomes so ashamed of such childish methods that he admits their absurdity. The wonder is that more do not. Their theory is so pulverized by its own weight that Addis has to admit, after years of study on this very subject, that "attempts have been made to separate the component documents. . . . But the task seems to be hopeless, and there is nothing like agreement in result."-"Hexateuch," volume 1, page 165. This in spite of the dictum of Dr. Briggs, that it is so easy to detect differences in style that these differences cannot be disguised from the novice.

Higher critics rest their whole case upon their ability to dissect the Bible records according to individuality of style. So sure was Canon Cheyne of his ability to do this, that he actually published a Bible in colors, "The Polychrome," or rainbow Bible, in which each color represented a different author. Often a single verse was so variously colored that it looked more like the gorgeous hues of an Indian blanket or a Turkish rug than a serious finding, of "the assured results of scientific scholarship."

Since the leading higher critics of the world openly proclaim that their "assured results" are based upon detected differences in style, the subject is deserving of more serious consideration than is generally given it. In reading the productions of a higher critic, one is often led to wonder how he knows that a certain section or verse, and in some instances a lonely word, was inserted four or five hundred years later in such and such a country.

We are told that they have such a marvelously acute literary sensitiveness that it detects, almost automatically, any variation of authorship. That no two thus endowed agree in results does not matter—the theory is correct anyway!

Says Professor Zenos: "Critics are accustomed to speak of 'critical divination' in a way to confuse the inexperienced layman. The phrase is an apt one, and may be used as a very convenient designation of a power which the successful critic has or must have." "Elements of Higher Criticism," page 116.

Two Selections of Different Styles from the Same Author

"Ef you take a sword an' dror it,

An' go stick a Teller through,

Gov'ment ain't to answer for it,

God'll send the bill to you."

"Biglow Papers."

*"Careless seems the great Avenger; history's pages but record
One death grapple in the darkness 'twixt old systems and the Word;
Truth forever on the scaffold, Wrong for ever on the throne,
Yet Yet that scaffold sways the future, and, behind the dim unknown,
Standeth God within the shadow, keeping watch above His own."
"The Present Crisis."*

With their verbal contortions and metaphysical jugglery, they have almost deceived the public into believing that negation is scholarship, doubt is liberal thinking, and assertion is proof. But if it is so easy to apportion to the proper period and person fused documents two and three thousand years old, how is it that the same infallibly delicate literary sensitiveness does not avail to discover the true author of the comparatively recent and world-famous "Letters of Junius"? The honor has been given to no fewer than fifty-six men, by various advocates.

Why not apply some of this "critical divination" to Shakespeare's plays, and determine for us just what he wrote, or whether he wrote at all? And why have these gifted gentlemen not separated the individual work of Beaumont and Fletcher? How is it, with such an infallible, literary weather vane among us, that for two hundred years Lord Bacon was regarded as the author of a work of which he never wrote a word?

Bryant was not only a poet but a newspaper man. Yet what a "difference of style" there was between his poetry and his editorials! Clarence Stedman was both a poet and a Wall Street banker. But who would expect to find his commercial letters identical in style with his poetry?

Who that has read Madame d'Arblay does not know that she has not only two styles but even four? And who that has read Henry James is unfamiliar with the vast difference between the style of his first books and his present productions?

Says Prof. John Earle: "The difference of manner in different parts of Johnson's writings is notorious; and it is satisfactorily explained by differences either in the circumstances of the writer, or in the occasion or subject of his composition."-"English Prose," Page 468.

A student of Thucydides sees that he makes an unmistakable difference between the style of the narrative portions of his history, and the speeches which he puts into the mouths of his characters. "And so great is this difference, that it is necessary to treat the two separately, one might almost say, on different principles. . . . If the speeches were to be collected into one volume under the title of 'The Orations of Thucydides,' and the history were to be put by itself, the characteristic differences might have led the critics to ascribe the two writings to different authors."- Zenos, "Elements of Higher Criticism," page 59.

It is only by being untrue to their own principles that they do not declare that the orations and the history are by different writers; for "difference of style implies difference of author and period of composition," as Dr. Briggs informs us.

By no less a writer than Herbert Spencer, in his famous essay on the "Philosophy of Style," there are laid down principles and facts which utterly demolish the higher critical analysis of the Bible:

"One in whom the powers of expression fully respond to the state of feeling, would unconsciously use that variety in the mode of presenting his thoughts, which art demands. This constant employment of one species of phraseology, which all have now to strive against, implies an undeveloped faculty of language. . . . Let the powers of speech be fully developed, however— let the ability of the intellect to utter the emotions be complete—and this fixity will disappear. The perfect writer will express himself as Junius when in a Junius frame of mind; when he feels as Lamb felt, will use a like familiar

The Bible in the Critic's Den

speech; and will fall into the ruggedness of Carlyle when in a Carlylean mood. Now he will be rhythmical and now irregular; here his language will be plain and there ornate; sometimes his sentences will be balanced and at other times unsymmetrical; for a while there will be considerable sameness, and then again great variety. His mode of expression naturally responding to his state of feeling, there will flow from his pen a composition changing to the same degree that the aspects of his subject change."

A consideration of these facts will surely lead us, with Professor Gwatkin, to protest against "the special pleading of a mechanical criticism, which ignores human nature in its chase after literary possibilities, and can only make out a plausible case by first assuming unlimited falsification and then correcting it with unlimited guesswork."-"Knowledge of God," volume 2, page 21.

Similar absurdities are everywhere prevalent in the new theology writings on the New Testament. I have space for but one example. P. W. Schmiedel, professor of New Testament exegesis in the University of Zurich, in his article on Acts in the "Encyclopedia Biblica," begins by telling us that Acts contains "a whole series of demonstrable inaccuracies." Then we are informed that "no statement merits immediate acceptance on the mere ground of its presence in the book. . . Positive proofs of the trustworthiness of Acts must be tested with the greatest caution." In other words, it must be regarded as a liar until proved true.

With surprise we read that "with regard to the speeches, it is beyond doubt that the author constructed them in each case are to his own conception of the situation." These speeches, then, are pure imagination, absolute fiction! Thus in one sweep of the pen, the learned Bible professor throws into the wastebasket the eloquent discourses of Paul, and the earnest orations of Peter.

In consternation we may wonder what is left in Acts of value. He tells us: "In short, almost the only element that is historically important is the Christology of the speeches of Peter." And we have just learned that these speeches are pure fiction!

This is monstrous enough; but further on, we reach a still more startling statement: "The value of Acts as a devout and edifying work cannot be impaired by criticism. Indeed, the book is helped by criticism, which leads beyond a mere blind faith in its contents."

To such lengths as this a person is always led when he casts aside the "Word of truth," and is "blown about by every wind of doctrine." In the place of "sound doctrine," we have here an air of knowledge, a cant of advanced thought, and a sound of wisdom.

The reader may be puzzled to determine upon just what grounds the higher critics base all these unproved theories and absurd and contradictory conclusions. Dr. Driver, one of the foremost higher critics of England, and considered "conservative," tells us frankly all about it

"We can only argue upon grounds of probability, derived from our views of the progress of the art of writing, or of literary composition, or of the rise and growth of the prophetic tone and feeling in ancient Israel, or of the period in which traditions contained in the narrative might have taken shape, or of the probability that they would have been written down before the impetus given to culture by the monarchy had taken effect, and similar considerations, for estimating most of which, though plausible arguments on one side or the other may be advanced, a standard on which we can confidently rely scarcely admits of being fixed."-"Old Testament Literature," sixth edition, page 123.

This is what the "assured results" of "scientific criticism" amount to. Here is the whole thing summed up in one comprehensive sentence by one of the world's leading higher critics; and upon his own showing, we see how utterly absurd, how absolutely flimsy, are their theories, how baseless their conclusions. This is the boasted higher criticism, which proves the Bible to be a tissue of pious lies. It utters infidelic nonsense as old as Celsus, with the gravity of a philosopher announcing the birth of a new and solemn truth.

This is the way scholarship of the world is blackening the Bible, and then scorning it because it looks black to them. Are these "grounds of probability," "plausible arguments," which "may" be founded upon "our views"—are such inane puerilities to be accepted in preference to the authority of Christ, one of whose words should "not be broken," and who, has "the bread of life"? Shall we discard our confidence in the divine Book upon such baseless theories and pitiable logic? Shall we not the rather stand unmovable upon the eternal, fact that "*Thy word is true from the beginning*"? Ps. 119:160. The most momentous conflict between right and wrong of all the ages is just upon us; and only those who stand with both feet firmly planted upon the Word that "cannot be broken" will endure when the coming storm bursts in all its threatened fury.

CHAPTER VIII

Humanizing Inspiration

"THE Bible, then, does not claim to be infallible, does not claim to be exceptionally inspired. No claims are made for it except such as are made for the scriptures of other people. The Chinese, the Hindus, the Brahmins, the Buddhists, the Mohammedans, the Egyptians, the Greeks and Romans,—almost all of the ancient nations of the world, —the Norse people, have had their infallible scriptures. And let me tell you, friends, they have precisely the same and as much reason for regarding their scriptures as infallibly inspired as we have for so looking upon ours." The Rev. M. I. Savage, "Religion for Today," page 545.

Since we have found that the higher critics' theories are so utterly contrary to Bible teaching and facts, we need not be surprised if their views of inspiration are also unscriptural. They claim that mistakes are necessary, otherwise "the writers were lifted above opinions, and were not allowed to think." -Id., page 360.

What strange logic: The more mistakes a man makes, the better thinker he is! It is to such reasoning as this that higher criticism is driven in defense of its basic theories. It was left for twentieth century intellectual giants to produce such an abortion in logic.

Even the words of Christ are not regarded as inspired. "The authority and finality which they deny to the New Testament in general, they deny to Him in particular," says another of the higher critics.-McFadyen, "Old Testament Criticism and the Christian Church," page 11. They write and talk learnedly of "the mistakes of Christ." Absolutely nothing under the sun is sacred to them.

Another reason for their denial of the inspiration of the Bible, lies in the fact that they ignore where they do not deny the supernatural. To get rid of the miracles, the inspiration of their account must be denied. As McFadyen says, "Its watchword is evolution, and it has no place for miracle." Since inspiration itself is supernatural, its existence cannot be allowed; or if admitted, it must be granted to every one, even the enemies of God.

Dr. Briggs maintains that inspired Scripture authors err in their religion, and "they err in their morals. But errors in moral precept were such as were necessary in order to educate Israel for a nobler time."-"Study of Holy Scripture," pages 643, 644. They even go so far as to assert that Bible errors are "innumerable, and the erroneousness indefinite and indefinable, and the untrustworthiness unlimited and illimitable."

Many persons think that higher criticism is the outcome of an honest endeavor to obtain the truth. But the history of the movement as written by themselves dispels such a notion as a delusion. Of Eichhorn, the real founder of Old Testament criticism, Dr. Cheyne writes that "it was his hope to contribute to the winning back of the educated classes to religion."-"Founders of Old Testament Criticism." To attain this worthy end, he set himself to eliminating everything from the Bible to which the

The Bible in the Critic's Den

rationalists could take exception. With the empty covers of the Bible in his hand, he loudly proclaimed that what was left of the Bible was divinely inspired!

The views of inspiration resulting from such a position are many; but while differing in details, they agree in the fundamentals. The most prevalent theory among higher critics is that of Dr. G. A. Smith in his "Isaiah": "Isaiah prophesied and predicted all he did from loyalty to two simple truths, which he tells us he received from God Himself: that sin must be punished, and that the people of God must be saved. This simple faith, acting along with a wonderful knowledge of human nature and ceaseless vigilance of affairs, constituted inspiration for Isaiah."-Page 373.

He then consistently illustrates his view by telling us that men of science, "by their knowledge of laws and principles of nature," or some generals, by "taking for granted" that the sun will rise, all had "the same divine movement on their natures," and are as much inspired as any writer of the Bible. The writings of Browning, of Carlyle, of Ruskin, are, on this theory, as much inspired as the works of Moses, of Isaiah, or Paul.

But that is by no means the logical end of this conception of inspiration. Its consistent and inescapable conclusion has been seen and boldly stated by America's greatest higher critic, Dr. Briggs, when he solemnly tells us that infidels like "Hume, Strauss, and Voltaire *were guided in their attacks on the Bible by God.*"-"*Study of Holy Scripture,*" page 80.

Mark well that pregnant sentence, my Christian friends who are coquetting with unbelief in the form of higher criticism. Pick up your Hume or your Voltaire. Turn to those passages which most violently insult Christ and most openly and contemptuously degrade Him and His word, and upon your knees, drink in their God-inspired utterances, and imbibe freely of their Heaven-sent teaching. Do not read anything else written by these infidels except their attacks on the Bible; for they "were guided in their attacks on the Bible by God," but not in their other utterances! Only their infidelity is inspired! God inspired infidelity! God rending His own word in pieces, and inspiring His enemies for that noble work! This is the message of higher criticism's eminent apostle, in one of the greatest theological seminaries in America. Mark it well, for this is the boasted new theology.

Do you want inspiration pure and unadulterated? Then cast aside your Bible, take up Strauss, feed on Hume, and drink in Voltaire; and where they most degrade, attack, and revile Christ and the Bible, just there you have inspiration from God in its unpolluted form! Ho, all ye infidels, come ye to the fount of infidelity, and drink of the waters of unbelief God-given! Fling your Bibles into the gutter, all ye sin-burdened souls, and cast your reliance upon the gospel of hate and doubt as revealed in the Heaven-inspired pages of Voltaire! Ho, all ye Christians, spurn that deceptive and lying Book you have so long made the grounds of your hope, and feed upon the bread of hate, and drink the waters of doubt, as found in the gospel of no-miracles, no-Christ, no-salvation, revealed in the inspired works of St. Hume, St. Strauss, St. Voltaire!

No other conclusion is possible to the critics. They found that they were believing exactly what the infidels had been proclaiming for hundreds of years. Then there was nothing left for them to do but step out of the Christian pulpit, and admit themselves infidels, or proclaim that the infidels were inspired Christians. This was the alternative before the new theology. As we have just seen, it has boldly, defiantly taken the latter course. This is progress! This is "scientific Bible criticism"! This is the brand-new Christianity, warranted to be without miracles, Christ, sin, repentance, atonement, or any such foolish, antiquated thing!

This new theology was born of rationalism, cradled in skepticism, nursed by infidelity, and is now baptized, and clothed in a new suit of clothes stolen from Christianity, and adopted into the church. Strange blindness! Woeful infatuation! Terrible will be the awakening, awful the penalty, when those who now so flippantly discard the sacred word of God for the gutter thoughts of Voltaire,

The Bible in the Critic's Den

meet, in that day so soon to arrive, "the word that I have spoken"; for "the same shall judge him in the last day." John 12:48.

When we turn to Christ, what a difference! We find with what reverence He always quotes the Old Testament Scriptures, "which cannot be broken"; how He pointed the sorrowing disciples for comfort to the references to Himself "in all the Scriptures," from Genesis to Malachi; with what power He repels Satan's temptations by appeal to the Word - "It is written"; with what ease He refutes and confuses the wily Jews, always by appeal to the Word.

But when we enter the theological institutions founded in His name and established to teach His word, how great, how infinitely sad, the change! We find there the world's religious leaders with contemptuous solemnity lopping off chapters and whole books, because, forsooth, they do not understand them or do not agree with them! The very chapters and verses quoted by Christ are cast aside with a condescending smile of superiority, and even the very words of Christ Himself are brushed into the wastebasket with an easy wave of the theological hand. What will the harvest of this awful repudiation of God's word be? Thank God, a few faithful voices are lifted in clarion warning. But thousands are so poisoned by the critical opium as to be stupefied, sunk into a spiritual lethargy, from which it seems almost impossible to awaken them.

These higher critics may be presidents of theological colleges, or pastors of renowned and influential churches; but the humble child of God knows that "if they speak not according to this Word, it is because there is no light in them." Isa. 8: 20. The Christian can never be moved who stands with both feet firmly planted upon the Gibraltar fact that "all Scripture is given by inspiration of God."

Only a moment's thought is required to see the use the skeptic can make of such a gospel as the higher critic offers. He can logically urge such questions and conclusions as the following:

"If there are errors in the Bible in many things, why not in most, why not in all? If I am told to disbelieve part of it, why should I believe any of it? Besides, by what process am I to distinguish between the false and the true? Since you higher critical experts disagree as to how far the unreliability of the Bible extends, by what unerring standard may I separate the wheat from the chaff? Your position so far surrenders the whole case, that there is nothing of Christianity left to defend. It is as if an army were to hasten to defend a fort that had been captured and burned.

"You assure me that the Bible is no more inspired than the attacks of the skeptics upon it; that it contains innumerable errors, hoary superstitions, lies, forgeries, frauds, and vice; and you expound its shortcomings so enthusiastically that I can only express my increasing wonder that you still adhere to an exploded Book and teach the people a religion founded upon what you now so abundantly show me is baseless authority.

"I must at least express my gratitude to you for so completely justifying my skepticism, and fully warranting my utter rejection of a Book which you solemnly inform me teems with error, and is the product of imposture. When you, the professed friends of the Bible, say more and harsher things against it than did ever Celsus or Paine, we skeptics may indeed take our ease, and leave its progressive destruction to its professed friends. We may yet, with you, in the near future, sing a requiem over the burial of an extinct Christianity, which was palmed off upon a credulous people by the imposture of an inspired Book, and the fiction of a divine revelation, and the delusion of an incarnate God, and the fable of a risen Christ. And when you have omitted all the supernatural, all the miracles, all that I object to, pray what will be left that I do not already possess? Especially when you tell me that my own strictures upon the Bible, and criticisms of Christ, are more inspired of God than the Book and its Author, why should I accept your decadent religion? Why should you not instead accept my gospel of skepticism, unbelief, infidelity, atheism, which you proclaim is more inspired than your Bible?"

CHAPTER IX

The Church Degrading Christ

"I CONCLUDE, therefore, that the fate of Jesus and His gospel is in no way bound up with the fate of miracle. It is evident, even if naturalism is to control men's views of all history, that the really great things in Christ and His gospel abide. . . . Only the fringe of the evangelical career is torn away. We lose the stilling of the storm, the walking on the sea, the feeding of the multitude, the raising of the widow's only son and the dead Lazarus," and His bodily resurrection." - The Rev. G. A. Gordon, "Religion and Miracle," page 130.

"Who do men say that the Son of man is?" Matt. 16:13, A. R. V.

After dissecting the Old Testament, the higher critics turned their scalpel upon the New Testament, and have now been dissecting it with an ever-growing boldness, and would fain turn their weapon of destruction upon Christ Himself.

Dr. Briggs, who holds a brief for higher criticism, says that "the higher criticism of Holy Scripture is a science, and its results as sure as those of any other science."-"Study of Holy Scripture," page 105. Let us see, then, what some of the "sure results" of this "science" are when applied to Christ.

"Back to Christ" has been the cry; and so in the last fifty years, more lives of Christ have been written than in all the eighteen hundred years previous. Having discarded most of the Old Testament as useless husk, and discredited a large part of the New as myth and legend, the higher critics at last awoke to the realization of the fact that they were on dangerous ground.

To excuse their course, and steel their arm for further dissecting, they claimed that they were discarding only the inconsequential husk, or outer shell, to get to the kernel—Christ. Yet in spite of their claim to sacrifice nothing essential, they are making desperate efforts to convince themselves and the church that they have not given up Jesus. When it is pointed out that their understanding of Him is contrary to ours in the fundamentals, they inform us, with a pitying smile, that they have "rediscovered Jesus," that they have "cast new light upon His life."

When Paul or James or John contradicts their interpretation of Him, they calmly tell us that the apostles were wrong. When the facts are against the theory, why, of course, the facts must be altered or excluded, that the theory may stand! In short, though Christ gave His Spirit to guide His disciples "into all truth," these Spirit-guided disciples "misinterpreted Christ" in many instances, falsified Him in others; and it has been left to the infallible "critical divination" of the modern higher critic to interpret Him aright! Now let us briefly review a few points of this new interpretation, which is casting so much "new light" on Christ, and is such an improvement over the antiquated views of the bosom friends of Jesus.

Since the critics had previously branded the fall, the Flood, the destruction of Sodom, the exodus, and much else, as "utterly unhistorical," and all the persons mentioned in the books of Moses, with Moses himself, and Job, Jonah, David, Solomon, and even Ezra, as alike pure myths; when they found that Christ, in every instance that He has occasion to refer to any of these persons or events, invariably accepts them as actual, historical, and never as legend or myth, they were for a while staggered, and endeavored, with a zeal worthy of a better cause, to reconcile the facts with their theory. It never occurred to them to alter their theory to fit the facts.

But they soon recognized the impossibility of such a reconciliation, and so the inexorable logic of their theory forced them to take another step in the history of the movement—they boldly proclaimed that Christ was mistaken in His belief in these accounts. The Rev. Dr. Clarke tells us that He had "ideas inherited from an expiring age, existing side by side with His vision of eternal truth," and that He conceived "the coming kingdom in the mistaken manner of the time."-"Use of Scripture," page 109.

The Bible in the Critic's Den

Christ, then, erred! He was deceived! And since He taught these deceptions, He was also a deceiver! For hadn't they, the higher critics, proved that Moses and Abraham were myths, and the Flood and the destruction of Sodom the silliest legends? Christ believed these old legends and childish accounts as actual history, and thus taught them; so here was an open disagreement between the critics and Christ. The critics could not be wrong, so of course Christ must be! What a sight—a deceived Saviour still further deceiving a deluded people!

When Ingersoll lectured on "the mistakes of Moses," the Christian world was shocked, and held up its hands in horror; but to-day, when hundreds of professed Christian ministers are lecturing to professed Christian churches, from their own pulpits, on "the mistakes of Christ," there is hardly a whispered protest in the same churches that were so horrified by Ingersoll. Once the attacks were made by skeptics upon despicable trivialities; but now they are made by ministers, in Christian pulpits the world over, against the foundations of the Christian religion.

Since the fall is discarded as a legend, the fact of sin is ignored or denied; or as Campbell, minister of London City Temple, says, "Sin is, after all; a quest for God."—"New Theology," page 151. But, says the Bible: "Sin is the transgression of the law." "He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning." 1 John 3: 4, 8. The devil, then, was engaged in "a quest for God." But in spite of Campbell's dictum, we know that "the wages of sin is death" (Rom. 6:23), and not, as this sugarcoated theology would have us believe, eternal life.

Since the atonement is founded upon the fact that "all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23), and is the very heart of our redemption, and the burden of the Bible, and the object of the gospel, we need not be surprised that their logic compels them to reject this also. Nay, they spurn it.

"The doctrine of the atonement, as popularly held," says the Rev. R. J. Campbell, "is not only not true, but it ought not to be true: it is a serious hindrance to spiritual religion. Why in the world should God require such a sacrifice before feeling Himself free to forgive His erring children?"—"New Theology," page 115. Such a question reveals a lamentably false conception of what the claims of justice are.

But this is the view everywhere prevalent in new theology books, and is the logical outcome of their fundamentally infidelic theories. The prevalence of such vicious doctrines is sapping the spirituality and cutting the sinews of faith in the Christian church.

Of course, with the atonement goes the belief in the incarnation. "The nativity stories belong to the poetry of religion, not to history. To regard them as narratives of actual fact, is to misunderstand them." "The simple and natural conclusion is that Jesus was the child of Joseph and Mary."—"New Theology," pages 101, 102.

Other exponents of the new theology, like Canon Cheyne, of England, and Pfleider, professor of theology in the University of Berlin, carry this conception to its logical conclusion. The latter seriously informs us that "to the men of old, the Christ of modern thought would have been incomprehensible and therefore untrue; while to the mind of to-day, simple faith in the antique mythical epic is no longer possible."—"Early Christian Conception of Christ," page 13.

Having assumed that which most needs proof, he proceeds to tell us that "an attempt has been made, by means of separating away later accretions and by falling back upon the oldest historic sources [which sources, by the way, the critics themselves manufacture, as we shall see later], to approach as nearly as possible to the historical truth concerning the Founder of our religion, and to present His form in its simple human grandeur and stripped of all mythical accessories."— Id., pages 7, 8.

Having swept away the accumulated evidences of nineteen centuries of research, in one jaunty sentence, he then delves into the musty accounts of the hoary myths of the ancient religions of Egypt, Greece, Persia, and India, and upon finding among the thousands of puerile absurdities of these religions, a legend here and there remotely similar to the New Testament accounts of Christ, he triumphantly points

The Bible in the Critic's Den

to it as the origin of the New Testament record. "In the history of religion, many parallels," he says, "are found to all these traits of the New Testament conception of Christ as the Saviour of the world."-Id., pages 86, 87. The stories of Christianity are dependent upon "the myths and legends of universal history."-Id., page 14. And so, in the teeth of all evidence to the contrary, he pens the monstrous sentence that "all the miracles [of the New Testament] find countless parallels in the legends of pagan heroes."-Id., page 65.

The logic of such a conception leads him, and numberless others who hold such views, to the conclusion that Christianity "sprang up in the world of those days as the ripe fruit of ages of development, and in a soil already prepared. Now it is of course easily comprehended that this evolutionist method of inquiry should have a disturbing influence upon many persons, . . . because it appears to be nothing more than a combination of ideas that had existed for ages," in heathen and degraded minds. (Id., pages 152, 153.)

What! you exclaim. Did Christianity emanate from heathen darkness? Is our New Testament but a garbled edition of the crudities of a superstitious people who worshiped stocks and stones? Are the accounts of Him who calmed 'the raging sea, spoke peace to the soul, and went about doing good, the fruit of the immoral superstitions of a people who ate one another?

No, these infidel theories are not the ravings of a Voltaire, nor the sneers of a Paine. They are the sober and earnest statements of a number of the greatest religious teachers of the world, standing in the van of Biblical scholarship, high in the councils of the church. And their ideas are eagerly absorbed by thousands of young ministers, anxious to distinguish themselves by their "broad scholarship" and "liberal theology," and are retailed to their congregations in graduated and sugar-coated doses. Thus hypodermic injections of spiritual poison are given to the church by her "doctors of divinity"; and with her spiritual nerves paralyzed, she is sinking into a deathlike lethargy, from which only the last fiery message of the Holy Spirit can arouse her.

But the Bible, you say, teaches the deity of Christ; and He said of His own words, "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My words shall not pass away." Matt. 24: 35. True; but "one of the greatest stumblingblocks in the way of many devout and intelligent minds to-day is that of the supposed binding authority of the letter of Scripture." -The Rev. R. J. Campbell, "New Theology," page 176.

Then in order to excuse themselves for casting overboard the Bible, this new theology solemnly informs us that Christ was the first to do it, and that they are only piously following the example consecrated by Him.

"The official teachers began everything with 'It is written,' and then followed elaborate expositions. . . . *Jesus simply ignored this whole method.* He did not need it for Himself; and what is more remarkable, He took it for granted that His hearers did not need it. . . . One would have difficulty to find more complete emancipation from authority than He represented in His own person. . . In point of method, then, Jesus made as complete a break with Scriptural authority as could well be."-G. A. Coe, "Religion of a Mature Mind," page 97.

In like manner says Prof. G. W. Knox : "No book, however sacred, no law, though written by the finger of God on tablets of stone, no temple, though in its most holy place Jehovah had His dwelling, could command or silence Him."-"The Gospel of Jesus," Page 82.

Yet God opened the heavens to say, "This is My beloved Son: hear Him," Mark 9: 7. And Christ said, "The word which ye hear is not Mine, but the Father's who sent Me;" and : "The word that I spake, the same shall judge him in the last day. For I spake not from Myself; but the Father that sent Me, He hath given Me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak. And I know that His commandment is life eternal; the things therefore which I speak, even as the Father hath said unto Me, so I speak." John, 14:24; 12: 48-50. Again and again He meets the arch tempter and his subtleties with "It is written."

The Bible in the Critic's Den

Open your Gospels almost at random, and you will find that if one doctrine is more prominent than another, it is that Christ was absolutely subject, in the most minute particular, to the will of His Father as revealed in the Old Testament, and as revealed to Him from day to day in those lonely watches on the mountain, while His disciples lay wrapped in slumber. Is it any wonder, when one reads such open, barefaced contradictions of the Bible as just quoted, that one is led to doubt if the higher critics read the Bible at all?

While claiming to return to the historical Christ, this new theology disbelieves His most explicit utterances, disowns His lordship over them, repudiates His claims to deity, calls His belief in the Old Testament a snare and a delusion, rejects completely His authenticated miracles, criticizes, discards, and even spurns much of the Gospel accounts of Him as largely fiction, and always wholly subject to any man's ignorant caprice. In fact, these higher critics not only exclude the supernatural, and deny and ridicule prophecy, but hand over nature to science, relegate history to secular writers, abandon truth to philosophy, and leave only feeling, imagination, and illusion, deception, fraud, and legends, to religion.

We are roundly told that the words of Christ recorded in the Gospel of John "are wholly unhistorical, and existed only in the imagination of the unknown writer, who considered them necessary to elucidate his idea of the Logos-Messiah."- Picton, "Man and the Bible," page 225. And other eminent divines assert, in similar uncompromising ways, the utterly unhistorical character of the rest of the New Testament.

What emerges from this man-made chaos is not the Christianity of the apostles, nor the "mind of the Master," but a perversion, a miserable mongrel, that is, another gospel, which indeed is not another. In order to evade the damaging force of their open denial of the authority of Christ, the claim is made that while much of the Gospels is myth and legend, this is really better than if they were true history! Says the Rev. R. J. Campbell, "Myth and legend are truer than history, for they take us to the inside of things, whereas history only shows us the outside."-"New Theology," page 255.

This is a most astonishing statement. Lies and error truer than truth! Deception the core and center, and truth only the useless outside or husk! Such a vain imagination refutes itself; but it shows to what illogical, unspeakable makeshifts the new theologians are driven in order to defend their actual infidelity.

But with it all, and through it all, higher critics doggedly affirm that they at least have saved enough out of the wreck for salvation; that the kernel of God's truth imbedded in the Bible myths and legends remains untouched by their scorching fires of criticism. But who shall say what and how much is essential to salvation? And what agreement could be expected among the critics as to these essentials? What would be considered essential by one is rejected by another, until the whole Bible is set aside. Their sweeping declarations of Bible imperfections, and their constant disagreements save only in the errancy of the Scriptures, would lead to the unavoidable but unwelcome conclusion that it is not trustworthy in anything, is not needful, and may be a superfluity. Why bother, then, to cut out parts of the Bible—why not be consistent, and pitch the whole discredited Bible away?

That this is not a far-fetched conclusion deduced from their theories, is evident from the bold declaration of one of the higher critical preachers already extensively quoted, the Rev. R. J. Campbell: "I close by solemnly adding: Never mind what the Bible says, if you, are in search for truth, but trust the voice of God within you."-"New Theology," page 199.

As if the truth which came direct from God through Jesus (John 12:49, 50), who is "the Way, the Truth, and the Life" (John 14: 6), and who is "full of grace and truth" (John 1:14), and who said of the Bible, "Thy word is truth" (John 17: 17)—as if this truth contained in the Scriptures, which "cannot be broken," could be contradicted by the God of truth speaking in the heart!

Thus are opened the floodgates for the deluge of every kind of unsanctified delusion, based upon the "voice of God" in the heart, regardless of its agreement or disagreement with the most solemn

teachings of prophets, apostles, and Christ, who sealed their testimony with their blood. Even though "the heart is deceitful above all things" (Jer. 17:9), still this deceitful heart is to be exalted above the sublime words of Christ, which He tells us are every one given Him by the almighty Father. Surely higher critics "rush in where angels fear to tread."

What, then, is Christ to this new theology, which demands, in so arrogant a manner, the obedience of the Christian church? Let one of the greatest of the "liberal Christians" in America, the Rev. G. A. Gordon, tell us: "We have the record of His life and teaching, the record of what He said, of what He did, of what He suffered, of what He was. But the record is simply a symbol, a sublime memory."- "Religion and Miracle," page 119.

That's all – only a memory, just a mystic symbol, merely a vague finger pointing upward! Why, Voltaire, Rousseau, Gibbon, proclaim Him to be more than that! We have at last reached the astounding period in the world's history when infidels and skeptics, who have spent their lives in deriding the Bible, and before whose scathing scorn many a Christian had shuddered and fallen, actually have a higher regard for Christ than have the leaders of His own professed church.

But this is by no means all. Fred Cornwallis Conybeare, doctor of theology in Oxford, in his book "Myth, Magic, and Morals" (1910), page 357, says: "The very idea of a chosen people belongs to a forgotten mythology, and so do other cardinal notions on which Christianity reposes, such as the fall of man, original sin, and redemption. We begin to realize that, if any one needed redemption, it was Jehovah, and not Adam, nor even Satan. Thus the entire circle of ideas entertained by Christ and Paul are alien and strange to us to-day, and have lost all actuality and living interest. . . . Jesus Himself is seen to have lived and died for an illusion, which Paul and the apostles shared."

While the most rabid skeptics of all the ages, from Celsus to Bradlaugh, bare their heads before the mighty, lovable presence of Jesus, the "doctors of divinity" are ruthlessly stripping from Christ His kingly robes, trampling them in the mire of impious doubt. Still the church has not aroused from its lethargy. What would the dauntless Luther say of such sacrilege? What the gentle-souled Melancthon? Nay, what would Christ Himself say to these modern disciples, who, like Peter of old, repeatedly deny Him? Oh that they, like Peter, would repent, and be converted, and strengthen the brethren! What a glorious Pentecost would follow!

CHAPTER X

The Church Demolishing Its Own Foundation

WE "have a touchstone by means of which we may judge of all that does not suit the simple grandeur of Jesus, and may assign it to a later development." This touchstone is higher criticism; for "if we wish to arrive at our Lord's genuine teaching, we must submit the material transmitted in the Gospels to a careful sifting." More than that, "seeing that all the books of the New Testament, in so far as they were not written by St. Paul himself, probably date from the post-Pauline period, it is difficult to work backwards from them through St. Paul to a correct appreciation of the Lord's teaching."- Dr. Meyer, "Jesus or Paul," pages 66, 63, 60.

"Matthew, Mark, and Luke are compilations, which reached their present form only after several redactions."- Sunderland, "The Bible," page 121.

"Christianity, like every other religion, has its mythology—a mythology so intertwined with the veritable facts of its early history, so braided and welded with its first beginnings, that history and myth are not always distinguishable the one from the other." Dr. Frederick H. Hedge, "Ways of the Spirit," page 338.

The Bible in the Critic's Den

Having arrived at the conclusion that Christ was but a symbol, a memory, the learned divines were now confronted with the fact that the body of the records concerning Christ in the New Testament was diametrically opposed to their theories. Since their conclusion must not be disturbed, no matter what the facts to the contrary, they one and all set out to manufacture the premises on which to base their conclusions, and they were naively indifferent as to the scrap heap from which they chose their material.

In order, however, to gain a hearing, their first effort was to make great claims of giving "new light," even while in the very act of extinguishing all the light they had. Says Dr. Wernle: "What is crucial in these [the words of Jesus] is trust in God, purity of heart, compassion, humility, forgiveness, aspiration –this and nothing else. This is the will of God, as epitomized in the Sermon on the Mount. . . *And if Christendom has forgotten, for almost two thousand years, what the Master desired first and before all things, it shines forth upon us again out of the gospel to-day as bright and wonderful as if the sun were but now newly risen, to drive away with its conquering beams all ghosts and shadows of the night.*"- "Sources," Page 162.

This sounds fine; but an examination of the passage shows the presumption of stating that belief in a few passages of the ethical teachings of the Sermon on the Mount constitutes the whole of the will of God, and that in accepting all of Christ's teachings, instead of just these few, Christendom for nineteen centuries has been deluded and deceived, –until rescued from this sad condition by the newly risen sun of higher criticism. Thus we find the learned divines of the world busy at the astonishing and rather difficult feat of endeavoring to prove that one twentieth of the teaching of Christ contains more light than all His teaching; that one dollar is more than twenty; that the sun in nineteen twentieths eclipse is brighter than its unobscured brilliancy at noonday.

We must now choose between the Christ of the Bible and the Christ of the critics, and the two are entirely dissimilar. According to higher critics, a garland of legends, beautiful or absurd, according to the taste of the critic, has been wound about His head, and must be resolutely torn away in order to find the true Christ behind.

Since Paul was regarded as the actual creator of Christianity as a world religion, and as Paul was biased by his Jewish education, he warped the teaching of Jesus; and as it passed through the alembic of his mind, it became something different from the Master's message. Consequently, the critics tell us, it is only by critical processes that we can come to a knowledge of true Christianity. So "scientific criticism" has girded itself to give us the true religion of Jesus. Meanwhile we are to go without, till they have decided upon the question. Only the aristocracy of culture and the hierarchy of learning understand the gospel. The higher critics make the truth of the Bible possible only to the learned; for they claim that the Bible is not the revelation of God, but that the revealed truth is in the Bible, buried under a mass of errors, and only a man of Hebrew and Greek scholarship and gigantic learning can unearth it.

But who has the right gospel, the genuine gospel of Christ, Ritschl or Herrmann, Holzmann or Baldensperger, Harnack or Cheyne, Sabatier or Briggs? Must we wait until these learned gentlemen come to an agreement before we know if Jesus be "our Lord and our God"?

Let us not, however, be alarmed by great names; but let us come to close quarters with their teachings. Great men are not infallible. Perchance we may be allowed to exercise our own judgment on a question which concerns our eternal welfare.

The lack of agreement, the mercurial decisions, of higher critics can be no better stated than has been done by Adolf Harnack, himself a world-famous higher critic and divine. He says: "The common people are like reeds swaying with the blasts of the most extreme and mutually exclusive hypotheses, and find everything in this connection which is offered them `very worthy of consideration.' To-day, they are ready to believe that there was no such person as Jesus, while yesterday they regarded Him' as a neurotic visionary, shown to be such with convincing force by His own words; and yet the day before yesterday, none of these words were His own; and perhaps on the very same day, it was accounted correct to regard

Him as belonging to some Greek sect of esoteric Gnostics - a sect which still remains to be discovered.

Or, rather, He was an anarchist monk like Tolstoy; or, still better, a genuine Buddhist, who had, however, come under the influence of ideas originating in ancient Babylon, Persia, Egypt, and Greece; or, better still, He was the eponymous hero of the mildly revolutionary and moderately radical fourth estate in the capital of the Roman world. It is evident, forsooth, that He *may possibly* [italics Harnack's] have been all of these things, and may be assumed to have been one of them. If, therefore, one only keeps hold of all these reins, naturally with a loose hand, one is shielded from the reproach of not being up to date; and this is more important by far than the knowledge of the facts themselves, which indeed do not much concern us, seeing that in this twentieth century, we must of course wean ourselves from a contemptible dependence upon history in matters of religion." - "Sayings of Jesus," page 13, note.

Upon what basis or principle is it possible to arrive at conclusions at once so absurd and so contradictory? While all critics vary in their results, they are quite unanimous in their guiding principle, as stated by Harnack: "Nothing in the Gospels strikes us as stranger than the frequently recurring stories of demons, and the great importance which the evangelists attach to them. For many minds among us, the very fact that these writings report such absurdities is sufficient for declining to accept them." - "What Is Christianity?" page 63.

Paul Sabatier does not hesitate to tell us that "the miracle is immoral" ("Life of St. Francis," page 433); and Prof. G. B. Foster proclaims that "an intelligent man who now affirms his faith in such stories as actual facts can hardly know what intellectual honesty means." - "Finality of the Christian Religion," page 132.

Thus in a most arbitrary manner, contrary to all real scientific procedure, of which they boast themselves the chief ornaments, they assume the thing that is to be proved, -that miracles are impossible, -tear out of the Bible all accounts containing them, and brand as "immoral" and "dishonest" both the account and one who believes it. Is this argument? Is this logic? Is this science? Yet this is higher criticism.

Another favorite method of filling the Bible with "errors" is to discredit Paul sufficiently to weaken his truthfulness, and thus clear the ground for their own vacuous theories. Dr. Meyer says that by Paul, "*we are led so far from Jesus that it will be difficult to trace any longer the lines of connection with Him.* And yet St. Paul professes to be a disciple of Jesus Christ!" - "Jesus or Paul," page 40.

Perhaps the reader is curious to learn by what intricate but infallible process of reasoning the doctor arrives at his astonishing results. He very obligingly tells us in no uncertain language: "In the Christ of the first three Gospels, we are dealing not with the historical Jesus, but with the conception formed of Him by the faith and tradition of the primitive communitive, a conception which must have been influenced by St. Paul, *seeing that it was written after his times.*" - Id., page 12.

What logic! The first three Gospels simply "must" be the product of Pauline influence, because they were written after Paul's time! By a parity of reasoning, the Gospels would equally be the product of Peter's influence, for they were written after his time. In the same manner, they can be proved to be the product of any of the other apostles. Yet it is upon such broken reeds of logic and smoking flax of evidence that the reliability of the whole New Testament is abjured. It is upon such baseless reasoning that Paul is made out a religious neurotic, liar, and hypocrite, founding the Christian church upon a nightmare.

The facility and agility with which the higher critical mind can leap from a pin point of evidence to a whole encyclopedia of wild conclusions is one of the wonders of the century. The certainty with which they proclaim the truth and infallibility of their own conclusions is in direct proportion to the lack of evidence to support them.

The words of Dr. Paul Wernle are not less emphatic in their assumption of a complete knowledge of all the events of Christ's time: "Christ did not discourse in the Synoptic and also in the Johannine way.

The Bible in the Critic's Den

Either He spoke as a layman, a poet, a prophet, or else as a theologian. Either He testified of the kingdom of God and the will of God, or else of His own person. Either He looked forwards, to His return, or else backwards, to His existence in heaven. He either preached that the doing of God's will was the only way into the kingdom of God, or else that all depended upon belief in His divine sonship." -"Sources of Our Knowledge of the Life of Jesus Christ," pages 43, 44.

I confess that I am amazed to find a man of learning seriously arguing that because one Gospel represents Christ as speaking of His preexistence, and another of His coming again, therefore one or the other must be false. More than that, the same Gospels speak of both. How does the fact of Christ's having existed before the world was created preclude His coming again? Or why is His second advent incompatible with His preexistence? On the contrary, is not His preexistence a strong presumption in favor of His ability to come again, and therefore its likelihood, since He tells us He will?

Robert Browning was a layman, a poet, a theologian, and many think him a prophet. But Wernle denies to the Son of the infinite God the ability to be any more than one of these.

The four Gospels, then, are unreliable! But Harnack has something better than the Gospels of the poor deluded and deceiving apostles. He, along with other higher critics, has constructed a Gospel of his own, actually rewriting the Gospels. This new Gospel is called "Logia," or is designated by the capital Q. Who or what is this Q that is so much more valuable than Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John all together?

Concerning Q, Harnack says, "The portrait of Jesus as given in the sayings of a has remained in the foreground."-"Sayings of Jesus," page 250. Is this very valuable document a new Gospel by another of the apostles -by Peter, perchance? Is it a life of Christ from the vigorous pen of Paul, mayhap?

Says Harnack, in the preface to his "Sayings of Jesus," "In the following pages, an attempt is made to determine exactly the second source of St. Matthew and St. Luke both in regard to its extent and its contents, and to estimate its value both in itself and relatively to the Gospel of St. Mark."

Who then was the author of Q? "Whoever the author, or rather the redactor, of Q may have been, he was a man deserving of highest respect. To his reverence and faithfulness, to his simpleminded common sense, we owe this priceless compilation of the sayings of Jesus."-Id., page 249.

Backed by the name of Harnack, this raises great curiosity as to what this Q is. How long has it been in existence? "We cannot tell how long this compilation remained in existence."-Id., page 251. What! It is not in existence now? Why, then, this furor about it? What became of it?

"It found its grave in the Gospels of St. Matthew and St. Luke, and probably elsewhere in the apocryphal Gospels. . . . The final blow to the independent existence of Q was dealt when it was incorporated in the Gospels of St. Luke and St. Matthew."-Id.

Thus we see how long this wonderful Q was in existence. It was written, according to higher critics, only a few years before the Gospels, and found its grave in them. Then how did they know it ever existed? -Why, by the wonderful force of their great reasoning powers, or by their "critical divination." The Gospels record parallel accounts of the same event, and therefore there must have been a common source from which they drew; and so these omniscient critics proceed to construct that source from the Gospels, call the result Q, and then criticize the Gospels by their own reconstructed Q. In all, Q contains only 201 verses out of the 3,779 in the Gospels, or only one nineteenth of the whole. (Id., pages 253-271.) With this they supplant the Gospels.

One may think that these things are not important; -but when we find that so renowned a man as Henry Churchill King, president of Oberlin College, publishes a book on "The Ethics of Jesus" (1910), and that all its data is avowedly derived from this source, and not in any instance from the Gospels, it is high time that the attention of the public was called to this perversion of Scripture. Dr. King, along with the other higher critics, thinks that Q is more reliable than any of the Gospels; yet it is derived by the

higher critics from the Gospels. "It is hardly too much," says he, "to say that in Q we probably have an even older source for the life and teachings of Jesus than in Mark."- "Ethics of Jesus," page 87.

So he uses Harnack's reconstruction. It is amusing to see how the theologians take one nineteenth of the data we possess, and then found their life of Jesus upon this meager material, and call it "New Light on the Life of Jesus"- the title of a book by Dr. Briggs.

The New Testament is so immoral that they have written one of their own! "Luke is especially full of teachings quite as hard for the conscience as the wonder stories of the Bible are difficult for the reason."-Dole, "What We Know About Jesus," page 46.

Says Dr. King: "Various attempts to reconstruct the document Q have been made by Wendt, Resch, A. Wright, Reville, Wernle, Hawkins, Wellhausen (1905), Harriack (1907), and B. Weiss (1908). With the exception of Weiss's, Harnack's reconstruction is the most recent, and may also be regarded as the fruit of the most thoroughgoing study. . . . Our study will be based upon Harnack's reconstruction."- "Ethics of Jesus," page 10.

Speaking of Q, Wernle says, "On the whole, the historical value of these discourses is very high, higher than that of anything else."-"Sources," page 138. So Dr. King accepts this as the "assured results of criticism."-"Ethics of Jesus," page 76.

Dr. Burkitt, however, does not accept even all of the meager Q. He selects only what he calls the "double attested sayings," which amount to thirty-one, and sets these up as all we know of Jesus. ("The Gospel History and Its Transmission.") Q contains 201 verses, but Burkitt's reconstruction admits only one third of this.

Professor Schmiedel, the peer of Harnack as a higher critic, narrows the data still more: "I select nine such passages [not open to question], and in order to emphasize their importance, give them a special name; *I call them the foundation pillars of a really scientific life of Christ.*"-"Jesus in Modern Criticism," page 24. And here is the principle upon which he so arbitrarily selects them : the passages that run counter to the exalting of Jesus. "When we first make our acquaintance with a historical person in a book which is throughout influenced by a feeling of worship for Jesus, *in the first rank of credibility we place those passages of the book which really run counter to this feeling.*"-"Jesus in Modern Criticism," page 24.

So we find the great churchmen selecting for the life of Christ only the passages that are held in common (Harnack's Q), those that are doubly attested (Burkitt), and those that are exceptional (Schmiedel). We are now reduced to just twenty-five verses, or one one hundred and fifty-first of the whole four Gospels, for a "scientific" life of Christ. At this rate, it will not be long before the critics arrive at the conclusion that we have no basis for a life of Jesus, and no foundation upon which to build our hopes of salvation.

To the present-day presumption of infallible and omniscient higher criticism, nothing is impossible. The ease with which they accomplish the impossible is nothing short of amazing. In one sweeping sentence, without reason or evidence, they disdainfully brush aside all the New Testament records of Christ, and with a knowledge as superior to Christ's own familiar friends as nearly two millenniums' distance from Him can give them, they noisily and in all seriousness sit down to write anew the gospel of Jesus, to tell us of His words and His actions away back in distant Palestine!

Wisdom, it appears, was born with the critics. Although Christ said that the Holy Spirit would bring to the apostles' minds all He had said, and lead them into all truth, it appears that the poor, deluded apostles were never so led, and that Christ really meant the twentieth century higher critics! They treat with apathetic contempt or tolerant scorn all who are simple enough to believe the words of Christ and the records of the apostles –all who are so old-fashioned as to believe in the exploded doctrine of salvation through the merits of and belief in Jesus, or so foolish as to come to Him that they may find rest for their souls.

The wonder is not so much that these things are said, but that they are said by professed Christians; not in a corner, but all over the earth; not by obscure men, but by the church's greatest. It may seriously be doubted whether the avowed enemies of the Bible have ever said either as many or half as harsh things against it as its declared believers are now saying under cover of higher criticism.

When Voltaire made his famous boast that though twelve men founded Christianity, one man would serve to overthrow it, he did not dream that the theological savants of Europe, Asia, and America would combine in the twentieth century to aid him in his nefarious design.

Neither did Tom Paine imagine, when he vauntingly "unshackled his lion," the "Age of Reason"—which was to devour the Bible that twentieth century "doctors of divinity" would revile the Bible in a manner to have made him stand aghast at their bolder infidelity. Verily, higher criticism makes strange bedfellows.

CHAPTER XI

Manufacturing a New Gospel

WE read that "all the Athenians and the strangers sojourning there spent their time in nothing else, but either to tell or to hear some new thing." Acts 17:21. As we have seen, this is the attitude of the higher critics. Any theory, any gospel, so long as it is new! Having discarded the ancient gospel of Christ, which "is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth" (Rom. 1: 16), and having taught doubt as essential to their gospel, they proceed to patch up a new gospel — an up-to-date gospel.

Those critics who place the authority of Jesus very high, immediately place their own higher. The teachings of Christ are not often directly controverted, but they are often ignored, or treated as counsel of perfection which we are to admire rather than to obey. Listen to Harnack and Herrmann

"It is obvious that in this workaday world, such principles are impracticable; no business can be conducted on these lines. Yet that is just what Jesus seems to want."

"Had He meant these words to be universal rules, He would have been worse than the rabbis whose teaching He opposed."

"The character of Jesus is made up of compassion and modesty, love and asceticism; and consequently He is no leader for men who with the means given them in this world wish to attain some definite object."

"With regard to the utterances of Jesus, we confess that we cannot simply comply with them, since we do not share His conception of the universe, and so are living in a different world. On the other hand, the mind which they reveal should be present also in us; that is, the will to act in accordance with our own convictions." - "The Social Gospel," pages 1,59, 204, 212, 207.

This, then, is the new gospel. Do not follow Jesus. No matter how clearly stated is the will of Christ, "our own convictions" are to be followed in preference, especially when from them has been eliminated compassion, modesty, love, and asceticism. Yes, dear reader, such are the teachings of the new theology. Their words are before you. I would fain believe that they are the sad words read in a bitter dream; but unfortunately they are only too real.

I believe that these men are better than their teachings; but the better the personal life, the more vicious and extensive is the devastating influence of such teaching. If some drunken roué advocated the impossibility of following Jesus, of being modest, loving, compassionate, and self-controlled, those only would heed him who were more debauched than he. But when backed by the irreproachable private life, and stated with all the profound learning and charming genius, of Harnack and Herrmann, these restated teachings of the debauchee are enthusiastically applauded and blindly accepted.

That such teachings are neither isolated nor overstated, is evident from the bold avowals of Dr. Campbell, England's premier exponent of the new theology, who tells us roundly that "sin is the expansion of the individuality."-R. J. Campbell, "New Theology," page 157.

For fear that we may charitably mistake him, Mr. Campbell carries his principle to its hideous conclusion, with the blind disregard for results so often observed in higher critics: "However startling it may seem," he says, "*sin itself is a quest for God. That drunken debauch was a quest for life, a quest for God. Men in their sinful follies to-day, and their blank atheism, and their foul blasphemies, their trampling upon things that are beautiful and good, are engaged in this dim, blundering quest for God. . . . The roué you saw in Piccadilly last night, who went out to corrupt innocence and to wallow in filthiness of the flesh, was engaged in his blundering quest for God.*"-Id., pages 150, 151.

It needs no argument to prove that if these new teachings were believed by foreign missionaries, their work would become paralyzed, and foreign missionary work would not only languish, but would go rapidly from apathy to stupor, and from stupor to profound coma, from which only the impending second advent of Christ could arouse it. Is it any wonder that Christ, in looking down the stream of time to the present, said sadly, "Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall He find faith on the earth?" Luke 18:8.

In taking stock of how much of the gospel of Jesus higher criticism has left us, and seeing how scant it is, and how warped and corrupted even that little is, many unsettled souls are crying out, with Mary, "They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid Him." John 20:13.

The terrible harvest of this higher criticism is already seen in the unsettled beliefs, the destroyed faith, the multiplied infidels, even in the churches, the weakened and empty churches, and the consequent increase of crime and vice. Aliens from God, outcasts from society, broken-hearted millions curse their miserable existence, and long for death as a desired release. From Africa's burning sands, from Russia's frigid steppes, from India's arid plains, from China's crowded lands, from the rocky cliffs of countless islands –from every land, in every clime –the cry of human woe is ascending in increasing volume, from the destitute, the afflicted, the diseased, and the dying.

To these misery-laden souls, higher criticism can give only a gospel of scientific doubt, a Bible of shreds and patches, a book of myths and legends –a Christless Bible. Nothing but husks have the new theologians to offer the sin-burdened, empty-souled, world-weary child of the world.

Since the story of the curse is held to be only a voice from the realm of fable, redemption must necessarily be the decadent fruitage of a hydra-headed myth; and a fabulous redemption from a fabulous curse is effected only by a nebulous, mystical, and mythical Christ, the fabulous product of unscrupulous deceivers, imposed upon an ignorant and superstitious people in an age of darkness. This theory is so prevalent among higher critics, and is taught so assiduously, that among the laymen, theories of Christ are rife, conclusions diverse, and faith wavering. The open or secret cry is, "We will not have this Man to reign over us."

In this crude and mongrel system of Christianity, this incoherent conglomerate of antiscriptural religion, false philosophy, and infidel science, all the lifeblood of Christianity has been drawn from Christ's gospel, all the spirituality has been evaporated from His life, all the meaning from His words, and nothing is left us but muddy waters from the broken cisterns of ancient infidelity and modern "Christian" skepticism.

CHAPTER XII

Evaporating the Supernatural

The Bible in the Critic's Den

WE are firmly convinced that . . . there can be no such things as miracles."- Adolf Harnack, "What Is Christianity?" page 28.

"As soon as the drama of Calvary is thus [by higher criticism] reduced to its true proportions, it becomes what it really was, a human historic drama." -Sabatier, "The Atonement," page 130.

"Such a phenomenon [resurrection, etc.] is in itself so improbable that any alternative is preferable to its assertion." -Professor Lake, "Historical Evidence for the Resurrection," page 267.

"The questioning spirit of to-day," says Van Dyke, "everywhere asks for a reason, in the shape of a positive and scientific demonstration. When one is given, it asks for another; and when another is given, it asks for the reason of the reason. The laws of evidence, the principles of judgment, the evidence of history, the testimony of consciousness - all are called in question."-"Gospel for an Age of Doubt," page 8.

By the broad and liberal man is always meant the man who minimizes or flatly denounces the miracles and all things supernatural. He disbelieves all evidence, however well attested, that contravenes his own article of faith that "miracles do not happen." The higher critic, equally with the agnostic and the infidel, is bound by his theory to reject as impossible all accounts of miracles, and endeavor to explain the recorded phenomena as either delusions of a disordered mind, or the deliberate invention of a malicious deceiver.

No matter how much in the way of wonders may be admitted outside of the Bible, "any alternative is preferable to" acknowledging the authenticity of the Bible miracles.

The seriousness of this widespread denial of the miraculous by the church, is recognized by a writer of high standing in the theological and learned world. Dr. G. A. Gordon sums up the general situation, the problem, and his own position:

"The significance of the new question concerning miracles is that it comes from professedly religious men, and from men living and potent with the Christian church. It is a new discussion we face when the disciples of Jesus Christ in this twentieth century ask, Is miracle essential to religion? Is the essential truth of Christianity dependent upon the reality of the miracles embedded in the evangelical history? Is the message of Jesus Christ to man separable from the record of signs and wonders with which it is accompanied? Scientific men, in so far as they are under the scientific spirit, see no miracles. That is, they see no violations of the order of cause and effect; they expect no violations of their order; they believe in none. For them, the miracles of all religions are the interesting products of the human imagination; they are a chapter in the serious fiction of the world. May a member of the Christian church, may a preacher of the Christian gospel, in any degree sympathize with the attitude of science towards miracle, and yet remain loyal to his great Master? These are questions working in the religious mind wherever that mind has obtained a modern education."-"Religion and Miracle" (1909), pages 12, 13.

Thus from the old home of American orthodoxy, New England, comes a book with all the attestations of Bostonian culture, written by one of America's best known divines, and its sole purpose is to eliminate all miracles from Christianity, in order that it may be more acceptable to the scientist and skeptic. He continues:

"I am concerned to show that where miracle has ceased to be regarded as true, Christianity remains in its essence entire; that the fortune of religion is not to be identified with the fortune of miracle; that the message of Jesus Christ to the world is independent of miracle.... I conceive myself to be a genuine conservative; I am conscious that I work for the preservation of essential historic Christianity; I consider myself to be, to the extent of my power, a defender of the eternal gospel."-Id., page 10.

Reader, consider well the above statement. Has it no significance for you? Dr. Gordon is a "conservative," he says. Yet he discards all the miracles of the Bible with a sweep of the hand, and along with them, the supreme miracle of the Bible, the resurrection of Jesus. (Id., page 107.) How radical such a

The Bible in the Critic's Den

position would have been in a preacher a century ago! But it is the position of "a genuine conservative" now! How much of the Bible or Christianity would a radical leave?

More than that, he proclaims himself a defender of Christianity, of the eternal gospel, to the extent of his power. As already stated, this is the attitude taken by higher critics the world over. They are casting overboard their chart and compass, so that they may steer the ship better! The soldier is throwing away his sword, that he may the better defend himself with his bare arms! The drowning man spurns the lifeline, because it would encumber him in his efforts to save his life!

This is the conservative method of defending Christianity! I come along a deserted street at night, and spy my bosom friend in a life-and-death struggle with an assailant. I hasten valiantly to his defense, and nobly pound him over the head, and aid his enemy, to show my friend how hard I am "defending" him! Thus do higher critics "defend" Christianity and its Source. And they are desperately in earnest, too. That they are inconsistent has nothing to do with their position, except that they make up in vigor of attack what they lack in justification for the attack.

Is miracle, then, rejected without evidence? Listen: "*Miracle is not part of my working philosophy of life, . . . because I cannot be sure of its reality, and I wish to live as far as possible among things that are sure.*"-Id., page 167.

A "philosophy of life" having been adopted which excludes miracles, no amount of evidence could be allowed to disturb this precious little theory. But if being "sure" is the guiding principle of life, methinks that resting his faith upon the changing quicksands of higher critical theories is like seeking peace and quietude in a raging tempest.

But how do the higher critics become so "sure"? "In their hands, the fate of the miraculous is a foregone conclusion. The miraculous goes as the landslide goes. It falls as the avalanche falls. In the order of nature, it could not be otherwise. . . Judgment is set, and the miraculous is ruled out of court. The question is not discussed; it is assumed as settled."-Id., page 24.

Now we see how easy it is to live among things that are so comfortably "sure"! Just deny the existence of anything you are not "sure" of, without troubling yourself to investigate it! "Assume" it to be nonexistent! When you have done this, you have become a scientist and higher critic, and entered the charmed and charming circle of the learned and the wise!

Consistently with this "philosophy of life," an axiom has been invented for the guidance of higher critical investigation. "It has come to be an axiom of historical criticism, that the presence of a miraculous element in any story or record . . . casts suspicion upon it."-Sunderland, "The Bible," page 132. Comment would be superfluous.

The nature which the higher critics so ardently worship is unstrung and mistuned by man's agency in it. The nature that now is, the Bible and reflection both show, is an incomplete witness to God. How, then, may we judge the whole from the part, and that part diseased? How do we know that the laws we see are all the laws for God's universe? By what process of logic can a scientist deduce from a known law, the conclusion that God cannot have other laws operating? What man knows enough to deduce from a few observed phenomena on this earth, which is less than a trillionth part of the universe, laws which shall limit the Creator of the universe?

St. Augustine was wiser than many moderns who boast their attainments. He gave utterance to a wise saying concerning miracles, that present-day thinkers would do well to consider: "We say that all miracles are contrary to nature; but they are not. For how shall that be contrary to nature which takes place by the will of God, seeing that the will of the great Creator is the true nature of everything created? So miracle is not contrary to nature, but only to what we know of nature."-De Civitate Dei, 21, 8, quoted by Sanday, "Life of Christ in Modern Research," page 216.

The Bible in the Critic's Den

It should seem by this time that scientists, and higher critics who ape their methods, would be a little more modest in their assertions of finality in their theories. Newton honored himself as well as God when he said he had but gathered a few pebbles on the great shore of truth. Edison likewise, after many fruitful years of study, said that if scientific discoveries should proceed at the present rate of progress for a few thousand years, humanity might then begin to draw a few conclusions. This is good logic and good Scripture.

While God is expressed, He cannot be measured, by His works; least of all, by nature in its present state. We can apprehend but cannot comprehend God.

The higher critics' arguments against the miracles sound learned and cogent when presented with the trimmings of genius, or in the sesquipedalian nomenclature so often affected by writers who desire to make a little thought go a long ways. But when reduced to their lowest terms, the arguments are self-destructive. In scores of books on this subject, the corner-stone argument supporting their structure of doubt proceeds on this wise: Some accounts of miracles in the Middle Ages and at other times have been proved to be false. The Gospel accounts of Jesus contain certain records of miracles. Therefore these miracles are false, and all miracles are false.

One would be just as logical to argue thus: Some books have been proved to be trash. Isaiah and John are some books. Therefore Isaiah and John are trash, and all books are trash. To argue that all miracles are false because one is, is on a par with the argument that because one greenback is a counterfeit, all are.

Yet on the strength of such principles of reasoning, we are asked to reject the word of the eternal God, whose "word is truth," and trust for guidance and salvation to the self-destructive absurdities of the new theology, or the pseudo science of evolution, or the infidelic effusions of Hume, Strauss, and Voltaire. Shutting their eyes to the lack of reason and evidence for the support of their shifting theories, they are not slow to denounce as hypocrites those who still accept the Bible as the revealed will of God. That I have not exaggerated, note the following:

"How many preachers really believe the supernatural story from Adam to Christ, although they declare it to be one consistent whole? How many trained or scholarly teachers of youth themselves believe what they tell their pupils about Noah, and Abraham, and Jacob, and Moses, and Joshua, and Samuel, and David? How many really hold to the virgin birth while they solemnly recount it? . . . An acted part at the altar, insincerity at the teacher's desk, drag down the moral standard of our national life."- Picton, "Man and the Bible," page 266.

Here we see that the higher critic is so bent on forcing everybody to agree with him in discrediting the Bible, and aid him in his work of destroying faith in it, that he not only doubts the sincerity of those who do not believe as he does, but even boldly –one could hardly say, politely or generously –calls those hypocrites and dishonest who venture to have a different opinion. The first commandment in the higher critical decalogue is, Thou shalt have no other opinion before mine.

Yet this is the "broadmindedness" of "liberal theology." Liberal, forsooth, when any minister who declares his belief in the sacred Word is called a liar and a hypocrite, and the degradation of the nation is laid at his door because of his expressing confidence in the Bible! Is it a small thing that men are called liars, and hypocrites, and "brainless idiots," for avowing a belief in the grand truths which our Saviour Himself believed with all His heart, and died the death of the cross to establish eternally?

Right here I take issue with those who boast disbelief in the supernatural as any evidence of a "liberal mind" or a "free thinker." Since, as Gilbert Chesterton says, "a miracle is the liberty of God," those who discard the supernatural not only bind God, but fetter themselves to a certain contracted creed; for they are not free to believe miracles, no matter how great the evidence for them. So, instead of disbelief in miracles being an evidence of liberty of mind and freedom of thought, as the higher critics so loudly proclaim, it is just the reverse; for the man whose mind is ruled by a theoretical pronouncement

The Bible in the Critic's Den

which he must teach in the teeth of all contrary evidence, cannot possibly be as "free" as the man who has left his mind open to be impressed and convinced by the weight of any and all evidence. As well might one adduce a disbelief in the existence of the X ray, as proof of his breadth of thought and greatness of mind.

The man who denies the supernatural, is neither liberal nor logical. The moment a man admits the existence of an omnipotent power, while denying the possibility of a miracle, he has contradicted himself; for if he binds omnipotent power, it is obviously not omnipotent. The man in this case has conceived as impossible an idea as has the man who asked what would happen if an irresistible force came in contact with an immovable body.

Those who accept the supernatural in the Bible do so because there is ample evidence for it. Those who deny it do so mainly because they have swallowed a creed, usually in the form of evolution, whose very life is dependent upon the denial of miracle.

Thus the Christian, in accepting all evidence, is broad-minded; not the learned scientist or arrogant philosopher or doubting divine who is so creed-bound he must refuse to give credence to any evidence tending to prove the fact of miracles, declaring that "any alternative," no matter how silly or impossible, "is preferable to its assertion." Hence the course of the Christian rebukes the skeptical scientist, the doubting philosopher, and the infidelic theologian, as the narrow-minded thinkers, when not creed-bound bigots.

Renan says that "it is because they relate miracles that I say the Gospels are legends." This objection is by no means new. "The Jews therefore murmured concerning Him, because He said, I am the bread which came down out of heaven. And they said, Is not this Jesus, the Son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? how doth He now say, I am come down out of heaven?" John 6:41, 42.

The Palestinian crowd of nineteen centuries ago called Jesus a mere man, and crucified Him for His claim to deity. Pray, why should a twentieth century ecclesiastic regard himself as an "advanced thinker" when he has not advanced a hair's breadth beyond the vulgar crowds of that age? Strange indeed are the aberrations of present-day theology.

The supernatural permeates every page of the Bible. It is present in every prayer, in every action of Jesus. Christianity without the supernatural is as impossible as Christianity without Christ, for Christ is the supreme miracle.

"The supernatural runs in the lifeblood of the New Testament; and to get rid of it, the blood of the New Testament must be drawn out," is the admission of a higher critic. (The Rev. Charles E. Jefferson, in "Things Fundamental," page 160.)

The critic, with a scalpel freshly sharpened upon the whetstone of unbelief, is slashing eagerly this way and that, and now is pressing it upon the heart of Christianity, and measures his success as a "defender of the eternal gospel" according to the amount of life blood he succeeds in letting.

There has been one result to this criticism which the critics did not foresee, and greatly regret, but which it is impossible to avoid; namely, that Christ can no longer be held to be sinless, for He was deceived into believing "mistaken" things; and if deceived in these things, why not in others? Besides, a sinless Being is as much of a miracle as anything else in the Bible, and so must be eliminated.

"Jesus well knows that none is good," says Dr. Meyer, "not even Himself." ("Jesus or Paul," page 78.) The learned divine overlooks the obvious fact that when Jesus said none were good but God, He was endeavoring to show that He was God; for He elsewhere said that no one convinced Him of sin. John 8:46.

We have seen how desperately the new theology has labored to discredit all Bible miracles. The very presence of the supernatural element in any section of the Bible was sufficient reason for discarding

The Bible in the Critic's Den

that section. The Bible, we are told in a thousand different ways, is the product of the human soul evolving from savagery, during which the reign of inexorable law excludes each and every Bible miracle.

Scientists and the critics had no sooner established to their entire satisfaction the absolute "uniformity of nature" and "eternal reign of sovereign law," and demonstrated the "utter impossibility of miracles," than the phenomenon of spiritism, with its claim of performing numberless miracles, arose as if to mock their conclusions and confound their reason. Naturally they did not look kindly upon a movement whose fundamental doctrine flatly contradicted their own basic dogma. So they turned their backs upon all its evidence, and with the supercilious smile of arrogant superiority, dismissed spiritism's claim to miracle-working power, and with a contemptuous mental shrug of the shoulders cried, "Trickery! Charlatan!"

But spiritism persisted, spread, and became popular with the masses; for now, as in the time of Christ, the populace seek a sign. The easy religious demands of spiritism, along with its novelty, gave a feeling that at last a religion had arisen which would satisfy the desire for signs and wonders. Pseudo science and the critics had taken away all supernaturalism, and left the people under the rigid rule of changeless, relentless law, cruel as the juggernaut, which left only the black despair of utter annihilation for the future. Spiritism gave the lie to this doctrine, and offered proof of its claim to all who would investigate. It offered to demonstrate a future life by bringing back to this earth in bodily form those who had died. For a while, the masses doubted. But they were soon convinced by its mighty wonders; and the science of new theology that would not even investigate, much less acknowledge, the strong proofs advanced by spiritism, was laughed at by the rapidly increasing numbers of infidels, Catholics, and Protestants who had with their own eyes witnessed its unmistakable miracles.

The clamor for investigation was fair, and was an open challenge to the critics' and the scientists' boasted liberality and learning. So scores of scientists and new theologians and other leaders of thought who denied the possibility of a miracle went blithely to the investigation, expecting to expose the whole huge fraud in a day or two, and have the laugh on the gullible public, and reaffirm, with more arrogance than ever, their theory that in the law of nature, all miracles are impossible.

Men the world over, eminent for their piety and renowned for their learning, began investigating the claims of spiritism. Much fraud was detected, of course. But after they had accounted for and eliminated all fraud, there remained so much which they could not explain on any of their favorite hypotheses, that a fear gripped their hearts that perhaps they were wrong, and the ignorant populace right.

Cautiously they confessed themselves puzzled, but hoped with further investigation to reduce the unusual phenomena to some "law." Continuing their research and testing, one after another of the leading scientists and thinkers of the world surrendered to the array of evidence. Alfred Russel Wallace voiced the opinion of all who accepted spiritism, when he said, "No more evidence is needed to prove spiritualism, for no accepted fact in science has a greater or stronger array of proof in its behalf."

The scientists were the first to yield to the evidence, and they did so almost unanimously. Since the new theology had discarded all the Bible miracles in order to come into the camp of the scientists and be considered learned and progressive, it was to be expected that when the scientists revised their scientific creed to make it include the manifestations of spiritism, the new theologians would hasten to do likewise.

But both scientists and new theologians were now in a painful dilemma; for they had only just discarded forever all Bible miracles, and most of the Bible because it was guilty of recording them, when they began to accept spiritism *for precisely the reason that it was a manifestation of miracles!*

They were in desperate straits indeed; for it seemed they either had to acknowledge the miracles of the Bible – and that would destroy their most cherished theory, and put them to shame – or deny the miracles of spiritism – and this they had tried to do, but had found impossible. How to reconcile disbelief in the Bible miracles with belief in spiritistic miracles was the next problem to which the modern

ecclesiastic and the modern scientist addressed themselves. To reconcile the irreconcilable was indeed a task worthy of the greatest intellect, and he who should accomplish such an unheard-of feat might reasonably expect honor alike from the scholar and the populace.

In order to identify opposites, they had carefully to loosen the underpinning of some of their loftiest structures. Says Dr. Gordon, in a book devoted entirely to this feat of harmony:

"Only the Infinite knows whether or not the assumption of the uniformity of nature is valid. The mind that would sufficiently attest the idea of uniformity must know absolutely the entire history of the cosmos in relation to man; must know, too, the law that insures, for all time to come, an inviolable order. . . Dogmatic denial of miracle on the ground of natural law cannot, therefore, be justified by logic. No man knows enough to be able to make good the denial. . . Miracles are logical possibilities and natural impossibilities."-"Religion and Miracle," pages 29, 33.

How different this language from that of thirty years ago! The doctrine of the uniformity of nature, which was then the basis of science, has now become "an assumption" that is not valid. To be sure, there is no retreat from the old position. Oh, no! Miracles are still "naturally impossible"! But then, you see, they are "logically possible"!

Thus the retreat from the old position of the eternal uniformity of nature is made in such dignified order, under cover of the artillery of such learned phrases, that the public in general believe there has been an advance all along the line; for critics now begin to tell us that they have all the time been preparing the way for the acceptance of "true miracles" by laying down the "scientific tests" by which they may be known. The Rev. R. F. Horton thus states it

"As we learn to take a true view of the Bible, the difficulty which the modern mind feels in accepting the miraculous is considerably lessened. *We are not required to believe a miracle simply because it is recorded in the Bible.* Historical and literary criticism alike teach us to *discriminate*, to recognize that some miraculous stories in the Bible rest on a much stronger foundation than do others, and that *many make no claim at all to our belief as literal occurrences*, but are merely dressing and illustration of certain religious truths. *A miracle in the Bible is to be treated like a miracle elsewhere; it is to be treated, accepted or rejected, entirely on the evidence which is offered for it*" "My Belief," page 133.

Thus is opened the way for spiritism; for if evidence is the only thing required to authenticate a miracle, spiritism is proved, and its messages bear upon their face their credentials of authenticity.

One more step was needed before the Bible miracles could be denied while spiritistic miracles were accepted. To the Rev. Dr. Lyman Abbott and Dr. G. A. Gordon belongs the unique honor of discovering or inventing a remarkable principle: "It is clear that the unverifiable can never remain an essential part of a reasonable faith."- Gordon, "Religion and Miracle," page 28.

That sounds innocent enough and reasonable enough; but apply it to the narratives of Christ's resurrection, and what becomes of that supreme miracle of Scripture, and how are you to verify it? On that principle, how can you verify any miracle of the Bible? Obviously one cannot be transported back two thousand years and more to witness the recorded Bible miracles; so, on the above principle, these necessarily "unverified miracles" "can never remain an essential part of a reasonable faith." In plain English, the Bible miracles are false, while spiritistic miracles are true!

But we must not overlook the fact that while the above quoted principle was carefully formulated to exclude Bible miracles, it was just as carefully constructed to include spiritistic miracles; for "it is clear" that any one can verify a spiritistic miracle, since all he has to do is to go to some of their numerous and multiplying manifestations. Since, then, these spiritistic phenomena are verifiable, they must become "an essential part of a reasonable faith."

The whole antichristian world will soon be led by the professed Christian world into believing the miracles of Satan, spiritism, while denying those of Christ. When this happens, Christ will come, an-

nihilate sin and sinners, and establish His eternal kingdom of righteousness and love on the earth so cursed with wrong and hate. That this reign of sin may soon be over forever is the prayer of every true Christian.

CHAPTER XIII

The Sure Word of God

"LET intellectual and spiritual culture progress, and the human mind expand as much as it will; beyond the grandeur and the moral elevation of Christianity, as it sparkles and shines in the Gospels, the human mind will not advance."- Goethe.

As Hugh McIntosh so grandly says: "A tone of authority, an air of certainty, a breath of eternity, and a voice of God seems ever to pervade the book, and creeps around the reader's spirit like the speaking silence of the lonely mountains, and sinks down into the sympathetic soul as the voice of the eternal Father – like the deep and solemn tone of the ever sounding sea."-"Is Christ Infallible and the Bible True?" page 11.

"Nothing is to be accepted save on the authority of Scripture, since greater is that authority than all the powers of the human mind."- Augustine.

In previous chapters, we have examined many of the devious methods by which higher critics attempt to make it appear that the Bible is the word of man. Since the difficulties in the Bible are the foundation of and reason for higher criticism, I will endeavor to show that the difficulties, so far from constituting a basis for repudiating the Bible as the word of God, are among the best evidences in favor of the Bible as the divinely inspired book of God.

The carping of the critics seems not so much for the purpose of arriving at the truth as to muddle others; not so much to lead others to the light as to impress them with the critics' brilliancy. Subtlety of argument, ingenious playing upon words, eager pursuit of startling paradoxes, seem to characterize this reckless search for difficulties in the Bible. They treat the Bible as the Jewish spies who dogged the steps of Jesus treated Him, "laying wait for Him, and seeking to catch something out of His mouth, that they might accuse Him." Luke 11:54. But they may profitably bear in, mind Christ's fearful denunciation: "Woe unto you, lawyers! for ye have taken away the key of knowledge: ye entered not in yourselves, and them that were entering in ye hindered." Luke 11:52.

But how strange it is to see Christian men, in the effort to support vague theories, eagerly seeking argument where the most vitriolic foes of the faith have ever sought to find the weapons to vent their diabolic hatred in virulent attacks upon the word of God!

How amazing to see Christian writers repolishing the old arguments of Paine and Celsus, drawn from discrepancies, and then illogically imagine that they establish the Christianity of the Bible! Yet such is their vaunted purpose, and such their argument to win to Christianity. This is as if an army defending a fortified town should think to accomplish this defense the better by abandoning the city and uniting with its enemies in their attack upon it and those who still defended it.

Of course, there are difficulties in the Bible. But since when is the difficulty of comprehending a thing proof that it is false? Shall we, because we cannot comprehend fully the nature of electricity, conclude that to use electricity is folly, and disconnect our houses?

Because no one has explained the phenomena of sight, shall we conclude that sight has no value, and put out our eyes? Because process by which our bodies assimilate food has never been understood, shall we refuse to eat?

The Bible in the Critic's Den

The Bible, however, recognizes its own difficulties, but adds a caution in regard to them, much needed at this time. Writing of Paul's epistles, Peter says they contain "some things hard to be understood, which the ignorant and unsteadfast wrest, as they do also the other Scriptures, unto their own destruction." 2 Peter 3:16. This clearly teaches that in all the Bible there are things hard to understand. When the infidel or the critic approaches us with difficulties, we need not be either surprised or alarmed; for the Bible says they are there, and to say they are not would be to deny the Bible. The only thing that concerns us is whether we wrest them to our destruction.

If the words of the Bible are enshrined in the heart and shine out in the life, it will be a savor of life unto life; but if, on the other hand, it is wrested to support sin in the heart and iniquity in the life—if lies are dressed up as truth—it will be a savor of death unto death, and the brilliant light will turn into denser darkness.

Now, the difficulties of the Bible are of two kinds, those made by man and those inherent in the subject. Those made by man may be removed by man. They consist of wrong interpretations and false inferences which are charged to the Bible as Scriptural teaching and then made the grounds for repudiating the Bible. This is the infidelic and critical favorite method of procedure.

Other difficulties arise because the language in which the Book was written is disused. Many of the expressions, images, and thoughts are of countries, ages, and persons entirely different from anything we see. The manners and customs it describes have largely passed away. Its history covers thousands of years, and the greater part of the earth's surface. Its precepts refer to both worlds, and are necessarily expressed in terms of only one. And the whole is comprised in one brief volume. Keeping these facts in mind, it is evident that there must be difficulties of many and various kinds.

Much is made of the historical difficulties and supposed contradictions between the Bible and other authentic records. But the whole tendency of recent investigation, historical and archaeological, is beyond doubt to establish not only the historicity and authenticity, but in many cases even the minute accuracy, of the Bible record. This is shown by the vast and accumulating mass of literature by the foremost experts and highest authorities upon the testimony of the monuments, tablets, resurrected cities, mounds, libraries, and other records of ancient Egypt, Babylonia and Assyria, Syria, Palestine, Sinai, as well as the immense amount of corroborative evidense from Asia Minor, Greece, Rome, etc., together with the testimony from the literature, lands, and usages of the peoples of the East who were in touch with the people of Israel.

These discoveries have exploded many of the most confidently assumed critical theories, and shown the baselessness of the bold assumptions upon which the critics build their imposing structures of cavil, and have disproved many of their finespun philological theories. Since this recent knowledge has removed many once formidable objections, it establishes the principle of vanishing difficulties, and makes possible, if not probable, the complete removal of all such difficulties with greater research and completer knowledge.

The alleged discords between the Bible and science have arisen mainly from overlooking the fact that the Bible is a popular book, written not in scientific terminology, but in the language of the people. For instance, the same skeptical scientist who ridicules the Bible for unscientifically speaking of the sun as "rising" and "setting," invariably uses the same words when he comes to describe the same event. His objection to the Bible, in such a case is a mere subterfuge, and should not deceive the simplest.

Concerning the common belief that science and Christianity are and have been engaged in a life-and-death combat, it is a fact that nearly all the great discoverers and pioneers in science have been devout men, such as Newton, Cuvier, Faraday, Herschel, Galileo, and scores of others. It is by telling the people that all scientists are with them that the new theologians would quarantine the people—to keep them immune from the bacillus of belief in the Bible.

The Bible in the Critic's Den

As to the famous differences between the records of Genesis concerning the formation of the earth and the evolutionary doctrines of geology, botany, and zoology, it is only necessary to say that the difficulties have been created by the evolutionists' gigantic assumptions of absolutely unproved theories. The whole situation simmers down to this: Shall the baseless hypotheses of skeptics be accepted instead of God's facts?

The discoveries of science are corroborating the Bible statements in a most wonderful manner. Difficulties that have existed for thousands of years are now vanishing before the light of modern research, and here also the principle of vanishing difficulties is established.

The solution of these difficulties has been gradual, and for the best of reasons. Each age has had its own difficulties to face, and has faced them with its own peculiar evidence. The gradual solution of these difficulties has supplied each age with fresh evidence of the truthfulness and trustworthiness of the Bible, and excited continued and increasing interest in it. Thus God has used the puzzling things in the Bible to incite to its study and lead to new truths.

The fact that the sins and immoralities of the peoples, and even of the chosen people and their leaders, are laid bare, has been a stumblingblock in the way of many who are accustomed to the modern panegyrics called biographies. But, as Dr. Barrows says

"It faces things as they are in a world gone wrong; and as the scenes in human life are not arranged with the elegant luxury of a French salon, where every object attracts and pleases the sensitive and critical eye, so the Bible, the Book of life, is not the dilettante's book. . . . It aims not to flatter the drawing-room fastidiousness which cares for words rather than for things, and is more shocked by a breach of conventional etiquette than by the breaking of the statutes of Mount Sinai."-"Christianity the World Religion," pages 182, 183.

Thus what is advanced as a poser against it is one of its strongest claims to credence. It condemns sinful man in all his ways, calls him a shadow, as grass that withers, as smoke that blows away, fallen, depraved, desperately wicked, his intellect darkened, his righteousness but filthy rags. All the nations of the world are represented as nothing, as less than nothing; and it exalts God alone, as ruler of the universe and man, and points the only road to salvation and true greatness.

Mankind, however, is so enamored of "self-government" that it would fain silence this one troublesome Book that so insistently sounds its unwelcome claims of sovereignty in the unwilling ears of rebellious humanity. Higher criticism has come to the aid of those who would be free from what Dr. Gordon calls "bondage to a Book," and in pulpit and pew, is prating of "religious free thought," and pointing to the mountains of stumblingblocks they have found in the Bible, as evidence of their "Christian liberty." Since the Bible will not be silenced, since it still proclaims man as fallen and sinful, waxing "worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived" (2 Tim. 3: 13), in desperate need of a Saviour, and since critics and infidels claim to be risen, to be their own gods, modern ministers now cut the knot of the perplexity by saying boldly, "Never mind what the Bible says." Away with the old Book anyway! We will not have this Book to rule over us.

But if critics and skeptics set such store by dilemmas, let them face the overwhelming objections and attempt to remove the monster difficulties of their own theories, and the principle that leads them to repudiate the Bible will equally compel them to abandon their own theories.

Besides the kinds of objections mentioned above, there are difficulties as to inspiration, prayer, miracles, the incarnation and resurrection of Christ; difficulties relating to the Trinity, the atonement, the love of God in the midst of pain, and much else, all of which is universally discussed in the pew and from the pulpit, and eagerly repeated by popular journals, echoed by unthinking readers, treasured by skeptics, and repeated by critics upon every occasion.

The Bible in the Critic's Den

Such difficulties as attend, for instance, belief in the atonement of Christ are such as are inherent in the doctrine; and no amount of reasoning or research will ever avail to remove them, any more than it could ever be possible to pour the Pacific Ocean into a pint cup. The atonement is infinite in its meaning; and for the finite to comprehend the infinite so that no difficulty shall exist is patently impossible. Hence the presence of perplexities concerning these doctrines stands as a bulwark of proof that the Bible is the word of God.

If anything purporting to be of divine origin contained no mysteries, we might then wonder, and be disposed to question if such a revelation could possibly be from the infinite God. The very difficulties of the Bible show its divinity; and the absence of mystery would be the greatest difficulty of all, and the basis of more plausible objections than can be made from its mysteries now.

To expect the solution of every perplexity were foolish. "The last step of reason," says Pascal, "is to know that there is an infinitude of things which surpass it." As we contemplate the Bible's many and great "mysteries of godliness," we are led to exclaim with Paul: "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God; how unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out!"

If we were to wait till every difficulty is removed before believing, we should believe very little of anything. Even the primal truth of science, the law of gravitation, is not free from grave difficulties; and the primal truth of the Bible, that God is love, is not free from the difficulties caused by the prevalence of suffering. But these difficulties do not prevent us from believing in gravitation, nor in God.

It would be well in this connection to remember the words of an eminent scholar who spent all his life considering the difficulties of Scripture. Says Dr. Westcott: "Even in those passages which present greatest difficulties, there are traces of unrecorded facts which, if fully known, would probably explain the whole. And besides all this, there are so many tokens of unrecorded facts in the brief summaries which are preserved, that no argument can be based upon apparent discrepancies, sufficient to prove the existence of absolute error."-"Introduction to the Study of the Gospels," pages 380, 400.

The difficulties of the Bible, in the purpose of God, serve high ends for the good of man. They tax our minds, and reveal our ignorance. They teach us humility, and train us in patience. They try our faith, and in its trial strengthen it. They lead us to a simpler dependence upon God, and thus increase our spirituality. Because of its difficulties, the Bible has exhaustless fullness, perennial freshness, everlasting newness, infinite depth. Every Christian finds in it something that no other has found. Every age finds it adequate to its varied demands, and every nation finds it stored with treasures suited to its peculiar needs. Thus have the passing ages, with their blasting criticism, and rigid tests, served only to disclose its accumulating riches; and still the mine of truth seems to be as filled with precious metal as ever, awaiting the eager search of the honest and earnest investigator.

Besides all of this, is the evidence of the Christian who has answered the call to "taste and see that the Lord is good." The most prevalent evidence of the divinity of the Bible is the fruit of its teaching when received in the heart and worked out in the life.

Scores of thousands the world over are living testimony to the divinity of the Word; and even the hypocrites who parade in the name of Christ are but further proof of the truth of the Bible, for their existence was foretold.

At once the greatest difficulty in the Bible and the weightiest proof of its divinity is Jesus Christ. He stands out commandingly among all the sons of men, unapproached and unapproachable. He walks down the ages with the tread of a conqueror, while around Him shines a lonely moral splendor that has compelled even skepticism to bow the head in hushed reverence. Yes, even the vitriolic pen of Tom Paine paused to praise Him. Upon the impregnable Rock of Ages, all criticisms are baffled, broken, and shivered. Christ is the great spiritual magnet drawing all men to Himself.

From heaven, with the accumulated love of eternity in His heart, came this King of kings, to be one with humanity, to suffer the vilest mockery, endure the strongest temptations, and experience the lowest of deaths, that you and I might know what love is, that we might be reconciled to God, be restored to Edenic innocence and happiness. Around Him, all truth clusters and revolves, as do the planets about the sun. Roman greed and Jewish hate and Greek subtlety united to stamp out the truths given by Him. Such a powerful combination has no parallel in history. But the banner of the cross has been unfurled in far-off regions where even "the wings of the Roman eagle" never flew, and where the fame of the sons of fortune never sounded. Babylonia, Persia, Greece, and Rome, those mighty empires which bore such arrogant sway upon the earth where are they? Their glory is dimmed and their power departed forever. The dust of centuries, the blood of millions, lie upon their well-nigh forgotten ruins. But the glory and power of the lowly Galilean, who spoke as never man spoke, is gathering beauty and momentum with every attack, with every age. And His word, as He foretold, is going rapidly to every nation, tongue, and people; and wherever the Bible goes, civilization, morals, and light arise.

But the devout Christian need not be alarmed by the boastings of criticism. All he needs remember is that "Thy word is truth," and that no matter what the claims of this new "science falsely so called," nor how much like "an angel of light" its advocates, "the Scripture cannot be broken."

Finally, in the words of Hugh McIntosh: "And so will progress in the knowledge and experience of its infinite depths of grace and truth go on, as, through the night of doubt and sorrow, the church of the living God is led by the providence of God, and the teaching of the Spirit of God, into the meaning of the word of God, till the day dawn, and the day-star arise in our hearts, amid the full blaze of the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ in all the glory of His appearing. Then, and not till then, will the written Word vanish in the light of the eternal Word as fades the morning star into the glory of the noonday sun."

CHAPTER XIV

The Sure Word, of Prophecy

"To make thee know the certainty of the words of truth." Prov. 22:21.

PROPHECY is equivalent to any miracle, and is itself miraculous. Alexander Keith, in "Evidence of Prophecy," page 13, truly says: "If the prophecies of the Scriptures can be proved to be genuine; if they be of such a nature as no foresight of man could possibly have predicted; if the events foretold in them were described hundreds or even thousands of years before those events became parts of the history of man; and if the history itself correspond with the prediction, then the evidence which the prophecies impart is a sign and a wonder to every age; no clearer testimony or greater assurance of truth can be given; and if men do not believe Moses and the prophets, neither would they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead."

If the prophecies were false, nothing could admit of easier detection; if true, nothing could be more impossible to have been conceived by man. Time infallibly must refute or realize them. Of the thousand predictions made in the Bible, some eight hundred have been fulfilled, and others are fulfilling now. Some prophecies are admittedly symbolic, and therefore not easy of interpretation. Men who desire to discredit the Bible prophecies refer to the symbolic utterances as not clear, and use them to discredit the prophecies known as literal. But such a proceeding is neither honest nor scientific. In science, we always proceed from the simple to the complex, from the easy to the difficult. The study of prophecy would fill many volumes like this. However, a few proofs may be given of the many that might be given, any one of which establishes the divine authority of the Scriptures.

The Bible in the Critic's Den

The wisest of historians admit that no human can foretell the future. John Clark Ridpath, in *Christian Work*, December 27, 1894, said: "There is not a philosopher in the world who can forecast the historical evolution to the extent of a single day. . . . The tallest son of the morning can neither foretell nor foresee the nature of what is to come in the year that already stands knocking at the door."

It is to be expected, however, that the higher critic will sneer at "arguments from miracles and prophecies which offend rather than impress the modern mind."-"Program of Modernism," page 98.

This attitude reminds us of that of the Jews: "For they that dwell at Jerusalem, and their rulers, because they knew Him not, nor yet the voices of the prophets which are read every Sabbath day, they have fulfilled them in condemning Him." Acts 13:27. The "arguments from miracles and prophecies" offended the "modern" Jewish mind of the first century even more than it offends the minds of our higher critical friends of today.

And no wonder the critics are offended by arguments from the prophecies; for the prophecies prove the utter foolishness of their critical fancies, and establish firmer than the foundations of the earth the eternal infallibility of the Bible.

In the uncertainty which prevails everywhere, in the paralyzing dread of some sudden and crushing catastrophe, men naturally desire and frantically seek some grounds of certainty with reference to the future. They feel that this soul-harrowing suspense is worse than certainty of even misfortune. The swelling cry is for surety. We have seen that it certainly is not in man and his isms; that it resides only in God's word. And here is where we shall seek it.

Man is not alone in seeking to learn of the future, for we find that there are "things the angels desire to look into." I Peter 1:12. They might well search the Scriptures along with man; "for no prophecy ever came by the will of man: but men spake from God, being moved by the Holy Spirit." 2 Peter 1:21. Coming from such a source, the prophecies are to be accepted as trustworthy. "And we have the word of prophecy made more sure; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a lamp shining in a dark place." 2 Peter 1:19. Even "the prophets sought and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: searching what time or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did point unto, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glories that should follow them. To whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto you, did they minister these things." I Peter 1:10-12. And we are told that "God hath spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began." Acts 3:21.

A few of the more direct and literal prophecies will now be briefly considered. Not one of them has ever been disproved. Leading writers of all denominations are agreed as to the facts. And if these prophecies are true, both the unbelief of infidels and the cavilings of higher critics are forever discredited.

Nineveh and Assyria bulk large in the history of ancient times. In a few simple words, the Bible tells the whole story: "And He will stretch out His hand against the north, and destroy Assyria, and will make Nineveh a desolation, and dry like the wilderness. And herds shall lie down in the midst of her, all the beasts of the nations: both the pelican and the porcupine shall lodge in the capitals thereof; their voice shall sing in the windows; desolation shall be in the thresholds. . . . This is the joyous city that dwelt carelessly, that said in her heart, I am, and there is none besides me: how is she become a desolation, a place for beasts to lie down in!" Zeph. 2:13-15.

True to the prophetic Word, Nineveh has lain in desolation for ages, her very site forgotten for centuries. The one who wrote that, be he who he may, made a remarkable prediction, which history has proved to be in every detail true. How did he know? Was it a clever guess?

Much is said regarding Tyre in Ezekiel: "Behold, I am against thee, O Tyrus, and will cause many nations to come up against thee, as the sea causeth his waves to come up. And they shall destroy the walls of Tyrus, and break down her towers: I will also scrape her dust from her, and make her like the top of a

rock. . . . And they shall make a spoil of thy riches, and make a prey of thy merchandise: and they shall break down thy walls, and destroy thy pleasant houses: and they shall lay thy stones and thy timber and thy dust in the midst of the water. . . . And I will make thee like the top of a rock: thou shalt be a place to spread nets upon; thou shalt be built no more: for I the Lord have spoken it, saith the Lord God." Ezek. 26:3, 4, 12, 14.

Nebuchadnezzar soon took the city and spoiled it. The sound of her harps was no more heard (verse 13), the sound of her songs had ceased, and the great and joyous city was desolate. The remaining inhabitants removed to an island half a mile from shore, and here built a new city.

The ruins of the old city still remained. The prophecy had declared that the timbers and the stones and even the very dust should be cast into the sea, leaving a bare rock. These words were not fulfilled, and it seemed improbable that they ever would be; for if Nebuchadnezzar, in his anger, had taken a full vengeance, and had not thought of this, who was likely to care enough about the ruins of the city to wreak such a vengeance? It would be the very frenzy of madness. But meanwhile there the words stood in the Book of which Jesus said that not one word should be broken.

Two and a half centuries passed away, and still the ruins stood, a challenge to the accuracy of prophecy. Then through the east the fame of Alexander the Great sent a thrill of terror. He marched to the attack of Tyre. Reaching the shore, he saw the city he had come to take, with half a mile of water between them, built upon an island.

Alexander's plan of attack was speedily formed and executed. He took the walls, towers, timbers, and ruined houses and palaces of the ancient city, and with them, built a solid causeway through the half-mile of sea to the island city. Even her mounds of ruins were carried away; and so great was the demand for material, that the very dust was scraped from the site and laid in the sea. The city was to be built no more. This divine sentence of judgment has for centuries been a challenge to all time. It is unanswered still.

Take Babylon. "And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldeans' pride, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. It shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation: neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there; neither shall shepherds make their flocks to lie down there. But wild beasts of the desert shall lie there; and their houses shall be full of doleful creatures; and ostriches shall dwell there, and wild goats shall dance there. And wolves shall cry in their castles, and jackals in the pleasant palaces." "I will also make it a possession for the porcupine, and pools of water: and I will sweep it with the besom of destruction, saith Jehovah of hosts." Isa. 13:19-22; 14:23.

"Behold, I am against thee, O destroying mountain, saith the Lord, which destroyest all the earth: and I will stretch out Mine hand upon thee, and roll thee down from the rocks, and will make thee a burnt mountain. And they shall not take of thee a stone for a corner, nor a stone for foundations; but thou shalt be desolate forever, saith the Lord." Jer. 51:25, 26.

Here is no ambiguity, no stammering. Here we find a man who was able to write, twenty-five hundred years ago, a history which has been true for all ages, and is undeniably true to-day. No writer of the present time could in so few words, with all the records of twenty-five centuries in his hands, write a more accurate account of Babylon.

Hundreds of years passed after that prophecy was uttered, and there seemed to be no signs of its fulfillment. When captured by Alexander, Babylon was still so great that he contemplated making it his capital. At the beginning of the Christian era, the work of destruction was visible; but a small part of the ancient city was still inhabited, and the prophecy was not yet fulfilled. In A. D. 40, Caligula still further reduced its inhabitants by persecution. In 460, Theodoret tells us that only a few Jews had their habitations scattered among the ruins. The ocean of human life was gradually receding from this immense city. Still the prophecy was unfulfilled, for the city was inhabited. In the twelfth century, however, Benja-

min of Tudela passed the utterly desolate site of Chaldea's ancient capital, but was unable to investigate the ruins, because of the prevalence of vast numbers of scorpions and serpents.

Other cities in prophecy became folds for flocks, but this one was not to have any such history. But, as Rawlinson says, "On the actual ruins of Babylon, the Arabian neither pitches his tent nor pastures his flocks—in the first place, because the nitrous soil produces no pasture to tempt him; secondly, because an evil reputation attaches to the entire site, which is thought to be the haunt of evil spirits."—"Egypt and Babylon," page 206.

"There is one fact," says Mr. Rassam, "connected with the destruction of Babylon and the marvelous fulfillment of prophecy, which struck me more than anything else, which fact seems never to have been noticed by any traveler; and that is the nonexistence, in the several modern buildings in the neighborhood of Babylon, of any sign of stone which had been dug up from its ancient ruins. It seems that in digging for old materials, the Arabs used the bricks for building purposes, but always burnt the stone thus discovered for lime, which fact wonderfully fulfills the divine words of Jeremiah, namely, `And they shall not take of thee a stone for a corner, nor a stone for foundations; but thou shalt be desolate forever, saith the Lord.'"

Turn to the records of historians, and their accounts teem with records of wild animals and wild birds and pests that infest the ruins of Babylon, and of the lagoons of stagnant water. "Thou shalt be desolate forever," was the verdict written by the divine hand over its ruins; and many centuries she has been desolate, her very site a matter of speculation.

Why have not the infidels, whether in the church or out, who are so eager to disprove God's word, gone and inhabited Babylon? God's very words on multiplied millions of Bible pages stand a challenge to them to prove that the verdict passed on Babylon is untrue. But despite the pratings of those who say prophecy is history written after the event, no one has ever yet claimed that this prediction was written in this century; yet if their contention be true, the prophecy of the desolation of Assyria and Babylonia must have been written in recent years.

Notwithstanding the blind cavils of unbelievers, there lie the ruins of two magnificent world-ruling empires as impregnable proof of the divine foresight given the writers of these prophecies. Or do the higher critics prefer to account for the remarkable fulfillment of these predictions on the score of clever guessing? It is not the fulfillment they deny—that is unquestionable; but they deny that the writers had the wisdom to foretell. Hence the fulfillment was all accident!

Let us turn to another of the more ancient kingdoms. Of the destruction of Egypt's two ancient capitals, Thebes and Memphis, we read in Ezek. 30:13, A. R. V., "I will also destroy the idols, and I will cause the images to cease from Memphis." Memphis was founded by Menes, and Brugsch Bey speaks of it as "the great temple city of Egypt." In the course of the centuries, Thebes was reduced to ruins, but Memphis retained her glory. At the beginning of the Christian era, the fulfillment of this prophecy seemed more improbable still; for not only were images to be found all over Egypt, Thebes, though in ruins for centuries, being no exception, but Strabo found Memphis "large and populous, next to Alexandria in size," and tells us of its gods and temples and statues. Even as late as the seventh century, it was the residence of the governor of Egypt. But there remained on the pages of prophecy the assertion that though the idols and images of the other cities of Egypt would not be destroyed, those of Memphis would be. How the skeptic of that day might have sneered at the prediction, and taunted the Christian with his fallible Bible and failing prophecies, since there stood Memphis in power and glory nearly fifteen hundred years after its predicted destruction!

Even in the thirteenth century, its ruins struck the beholder with admiration. But today? Let the "Encyclopedia Britannica" tell us: "Now the ruins of the city, the great temple of Ptah, the dwelling of Apis, and the palaces of the kings, are traceable only by a few stones among the palm trees and fields and heaps of rubbish." Eleventh edition, article "Memphis."

The Bible in the Critic's Den

But where are her idols and images and gods and statues? "This is all that remains of Memphis, eldest of cities," says Miss Amelia B. Edwards,— "a few large rubbish heaps, a dozen or so of broken statues, and a name. One can hardly believe a great city ever flourished on this spot, or understand how it should have been effaced so utterly."—"A Thousand Miles up the Nile," pages 97-99.

The prophecies concerning Egypt itself were abundant and minute, and a detailed application of them is fascinating; but only a few of them can be admitted here, illustrative of the character of the rest.

It was foretold that the canals of Egypt should be dried up, and the rivers be wasted and stink. Ezek. 30:12; Isa. 19:5, 6.

"The entire river became a marsh, through which, by the great pressure of water, the stream oozed through innumerable small channels. In fact, the White Nile had disappeared."—"Encyclopedia Britannica," article "Nile."

"The great difference between the Nile of Egypt in the present day and in ancient times is caused by the failure of some of its branches. . . . The river was famous for its seven branches; and under Roman dominion, eleven were counted, of which, however, there were but seven principal ones. . . . Now, as for a long period past, there are no navigable and unobstructed branches but those two that Herodotus distinguishes as the work of man." Reginald Stuart Poole, "Egypt as It Is," page 5.

Wilkinson speaks of the "noxious vapors that rise when the water has retired and left a bed of liquid mud."

Concerning the canals, Mr. Villiers Stuart, who was deputed by the British government to examine into the state of Egypt, says "Canals exist, but many have been allowed to silt up. They all want deepening, and they ought to be connected together on a scientific system."—"Egypt After the War," page 241.

"The reeds and flags shall wither away. The meadows by the Nile, by the brink of the Nile, and all the sown fields of the Nile, shall become dry, be driven away, and be no more." Isa. 19:6, 7.

At one time, the papyrus and the lotus were so abundant that they were symbols respectively of Upper and Lower Egypt. Even till the seventh century, papyrus was found in its ancient home. But the prophecy said it should be no more; and today we read that "the plant is now unknown in Egypt,"—Wilkinson, "Ancient Egyptians," volume 2, page 97. Says another writer: "It is a curious fact that no water plants or weeds grow on the banks of the Nile. A sedgy margin is never to be met with in this country."

"The fishers shall lament, and all they that cast angle into the Nile shall mourn, and they that spread nets upon the waters shall languish." Isa. 19:8.

For many hundred years, fish was the food of the poor, and was caught in such abundance that from Lake Morris alone the Pharaohs derived a revenue of five hundred thousand dollars a year. But today, Poole tells us, "the fisheries are scarcely of any moment."

But worst of all: "Moreover they that work in combed flax, and they that weave white cloth, shall be confounded. And the pillars of Egypt shall be broken in pieces; all they that work for hire shall be grieved in soul. . . . Neither shall there be for Egypt any work, which head or tail, palm branch or rush, may do." Isa. 19:9,10, 15.

The arts and industries of Egypt were her chief glories. The combed flax sold for its weight in gold. The other products of Egypt were famed as the best in the world. It would seem that if all the industries of Egypt passed away, so that there was no work of this kind left for high or low to do, the kingdom could not continue. But the prophecy says only that they shall be grieved in soul.

The Bible in the Critic's Den

As the centuries passed, these words seemed unlikely of fulfillment. When Alexander conquered Egypt, new markets were opened up, and the destruction of Tyre and Sidon gave new life to her industries. Pliny, a hundred years after Christ, still speaks of the arts and commerce of Egypt as at their height. But today agriculture is her one stay and employment, and it is so unskillfully carried on as to awaken the scorn and pity of the nations.

"And I will make the rivers dry, and sell the land into the hand of the wicked: and I will make the land waste, and all that is therein, by the hand of strangers: I the Lord have spoken it." Ezek. 30:12.

Thus in one brief sentence is summed up the whole history of Egypt since the occupation of the first conquerors, Volney called it a country "of slavery and tyranny." Malte-Brun speaks of "the arbitrary sway of the ruffian masters of Egypt." Much as the Egyptian hated the foreigner and his ways, it seems a poetic punishment that Egypt, the land that oppressed God's people for hundreds of years, should be oppressed in turn by strangers. Egypt has been treated, for two thousand years and more, as she treated her slaves. The hand of the wicked stranger has made Egyptian history for ages, as the prophet declared.

"It shall be the basest of the kingdoms; neither shall it any more lift itself up above the nations: and I will diminish them, that they shall no more rule over the nations." "And there shall be no more a prince from the land of Egypt." Ezek. 29:15; 30:13.

And what has history to say? Assyria and Babylonia have been destroyed as the prophecy said; but this kingdom was not to be destroyed, but degraded, debased, the oppressed land of rapacious tyrants during all the rest of her history. For two millenniums, she has been subject successively to the Persians, the Greeks, the Romans, the Byzantine Greeks, the Saracens, the Turks, the French, and the British. Not once in that time has one of her own princes risen to power.

"They shall cry unto Jehovah because of oppressors, and He will send them a savior, and a defender, and He will deliver them. . . . And Jehovah will smite Egypt, smiting and healing; and they shall return unto Jehovah, and He will be entreated of them, and will heal them." Isa. 19:20-22.

Since the English occupation, thirty years ago, the population of Egypt has doubled. The land under cultivation has doubled in area, as well as increased in productiveness, owing to the modern scientific system of irrigation. Manufactures have multiplied, commerce has increased, schools have been established, Christianity is spreading fast. In fact, "the prosperity of the country became more manifest each succeeding year."-"Encyclopedia Britannica," article "Egypt."

Suppose the ancient prophets of the Old Testament, in making their predictions concerning Assyria, Babylon, and Egypt, had by any accident transposed their predictions—that we were told Egypt should never be inhabited, but should remain desolate forever, while Babylon was to be degraded, and her people were to continue subjects of a foreign power. How quick the critics would be to bring forward the fact of non-fulfillment of prophecy! But when history teems with facts which attest the accuracy of predictions made, even, as we have seen, when they extend more than two thousand years beyond the time in which even the most rabid critic claims they were written, he shuts his eyes to the facts, and talks learnedly of prophecy's being history written after the event!

How can man, without divine aid, foretell the future for ten years, not to say twice ten centuries? Who, in 1905, dreamed of the revolution in Turkey? Who, in 1900, could have foretold the lightning-like rapidity of the revolution in the most sluggish and cumbersome of all nations -who, in short, could have foreseen a Chinese republic? Who, in July, 1914, foretold the beginning, in a few days, of the world's most awful war?

But in the Bible, we have not one instance of such foresight, but hundreds, reaching not ten years into the future, but thousands. If those who foresaw these things were not prophets with divine foresight, those ancient writers are a far greater miracle than we claim for them, and it will tax the acutest ingenuity of the most ingenious critics, whose whole lives are an effort to explain away the truths of the Bible by

ingenuity –it will, I say, tax to the utmost all their cautious cunning to explain as guesswork such stupendous foresight.

CHAPTER XV

Witness of Prophecy: God's People

"Behold, I have told you beforehand."-Jesus.

NOT only is the history of the heathen nations foretold, but as might be expected, the fortunes of God's people have been faithfully delineated.

Nearly thirty-five centuries ago, Moses outlined the history of the Jews to the close of time: "And I will destroy your high places. . . . And I will make your cities a waste, and will bring your sanctuaries unto desolation, and I will not smell the savor of your sweet odors. And I will bring the land into desolation; and your enemies that dwell therein shall be astonished at it. And you will I scatter among the nations, and I will draw out the sword after you: and your land shall be a desolation, and your cities shall be a waste." Lev.26:30-33.

In their stubbornness of heart, the Jews crucified the Saviour, and brought all this woe upon their head. No one can deny that the sanctuaries of the Jews were destroyed, the temple demolished, and the people themselves scattered, "rooted out" of their own land, as Moses said they would be. "Then men shall say, . . . The Lord rooted them out of their land in anger." Deut. 29:25, 28.

Not only were they to be deprived of their land, but their enemies should dwell in it. Still the land and the cities were to be desolate and ruined. Dean Stanley is convinced that "above all other countries in the world it is a land of ruins."-"Syria and Palestine,"

It is a strange fact of history that a land so filled with ruins should be inhabited, or being inhabited, the ruins should not have been utilized or removed. Moses foresaw, and so stated the fact. The land flowing with milk and honey became desolate. Dr. Olin remarks: "The very labor which was expended on these sterile hills in former times has increased their present sterility. The natural vegetation has been swept away, and no human cultivation now occupies the terraces which once took the place of forests and pastures." Speaking of the district about Lake Huleh, Mark Twain said: "It is seven in the morning; and as we are in the country, the grass ought to be sparkling with dew, the flowers enriching the air with their fragrance, and the birds singing in the trees. But alas, there is no dew here, nor flowers, nor birds, nor trees. There is a plain and an unshaded lake, and beyond them some barren mountains."-"The New Pilgrim's Progress," page 124.

Though ruined, desolate, bereft of her own people, Palestine was nevertheless to be preeminently a land of pilgrimages; for Moses said that attention should be called to the condition of the country by "the foreigner that shall come from a far land." Deut. 29:22. There was to be no wealth to allure, no beauty to attract; still it was to be the land to which the stranger from afar should come. To-day fifty languages are spoken in Jerusalem alone, so numerous are the different peoples represented. ("Encyclopedia Britannica," eleventh edition, article "Palestine.")

"And Jehovah will scatter thee among all peoples, from the one end of the earth even unto the other end of the earth. . . . And among these nations, shalt thou find no ease, and there shall be no rest for the sole of thy foot. . . . And thy life shall hang in doubt before thee; and thou shalt fear night and day, and shalt have no assurance of thy life." Deut. 28:64-66.

The Bible in the Critic's Den

There is nothing in all history so pathetic and so terrible as the tale of the Jews. Two millions were killed or starved to death or sold into slavery worse than death in A. D. 70. Over half a million more were slaughtered by the Romans sixty years later. The history of the Jews has been but the record of the slaughter of a nation, extending over nineteen centuries. "No fanatic monk," says Milman, "set the populace in commotion, no public calamity took place, no atrocious or extravagant report was propagated, but it fell upon the heads of this unhappy caste. In Germany, the black plague raged in all its fury; and wild superstition charged the Jews, as elsewhere, with causing and aggravating the misery, and themselves enjoying a guilty comparative security amid the universal desolation. . . . The same dark stories were industriously propagated, readily believed, and ferociously avenged, of fountains poisoned, children crucified, the Host stolen and outraged. . . . Still, persecuted in one city, they fled to another, and thus spread over the whole of Germany, Brunswick, Austria, Franconia, the Rhine provinces, Silesia, Brandenburg, Bohemia, Lithuania, and Poland. Oppressed by the nobles, anathematized by the clergy, hated as rivals in trade by burghers in commercial cities, despised and abhorred by the populace, their existence is known by the chronicle, rarely of protective edicts, more often of their massacres."-"History of the Jews," volume 3, pages 222, 223.

Strange as it seems, rooted out of their own land, without central government, without ruler, scattered over the whole earth, they have nevertheless been preserved. "Massacred by thousands, yet springing up again from their undying stock, the Jews appear at all times and in all regions. Their perpetuity, their national immortality, is at once the most curious problem to the political inquirer; to the religious man a subject of profound and awful admiration."-Milman, "History of the Jews," volume 2, pages 398, 399.

Even to-day we are often startled and shocked by the news of some dread and sudden massacre of the Jews in foreign lands, reminding us that the sword is still drawn out after this unfortunate people.

But that is not all. "Jehovah will bring thee, and thy king whom thou shalt set over thee, unto a nation that thou hast not known, thou nor thy fathers; and there shalt thou serve other gods, wood and stone." Deut. 28:36. In verse 64, the same doom is repeated when they shall be scattered over the earth.

The temple of Jupiter Capitolinus and the temple of Jerusalem were destroyed the same day. The temple tax of half a shekel paid by every Jew for the maintenance of their temple was after this, used to help rebuild the Roman temple. In vain they refused to pay. They were compelled to lay their offering on the altar of Jove. Not only were they thus obliged to worship the idols of heathen Rome, but papal Rome exacted a greater toll from them, forcing thousands of them to build for her houses of worship, and to supply the money for the adorning and worshiped images; and many of the Jews were compelled to worship these images on pain of death. Thus they worshiped gods, which neither they nor their fathers had known.

Still further, "The children of Israel shall abide many days without king, and without prince, and without sacrifice, and without pillar, and without ephod or teraphim." Hosea 3:4.

As we know, the last king perished in the first century; but a prince of the captivity was honored for centuries. The last prince of the captivity perished on the scaffold in the eleventh century. And they have now been "many days without king, and without prince."

They were to be "without sacrifice, and without pillar." The pillar has reference to even the rudest holy place for sacrifice. For eighteen centuries, there has been neither sacrifice nor holy place to Israel an almost unbearable punishment.

They were likewise to be "without ephod or teraphim." These were used in the priestly ministrations in the endeavor to learn the mind of God. In the destruction of Jerusalem, the entire priesthood perished. (Milman, "History of the Jews," volume 3, page 414.) The rabbi has taken the place of the priest, and the synagogue has succeeded to the sacred service of the holy temple.

The Bible in the Critic's Den

The critics, who endeavor to account for these phenomenal forecasts on the supposition of guesswork or accident, are more credulous than the Christians, who believe the obvious fact that the prophecies were inspired—history written in advance. The critics rather elude than elucidate the facts. If men are such good guessers, how does it happen that only in the Bible have we accounts of the successful guesses of men? If Plato, for instance, had accurately forecast the history of Greece for a hundred years, not to say two thousand, how eagerly the unbelievers would have seized upon the fact to exalt Plato! Even as it is, this heathen philosopher is lauded as inspired. But the Bible has foretold the history of all the great nations of the world, not merely for a hundred years, nor for a thousand, but for all time. The historians can add only the details of fulfillment of the prophecies. Puny man, who cannot himself tell what a day will bring forth, calls this guesswork. Such arrogance and willful ignorance stand rebuked before the fact that the men who so confidently exclaim, "Mere guessing!" are themselves unable to predict a single event, not to mention a whole series of them, all contrary to probability—for nothing seemed more improbable than that a nation could be scattered to every nation on earth, hated and killed by them all, yet remain for two thousand years distinct.

In pronouncing judgment upon the last king of Israel, Ezekiel also outlined, with a few epic strokes of the pen, the whole history of the world till the second coming of Jesus: "Thus saith the Lord God; Remove the diadem, and take off the crown: . . . exalt him that is low, and abase him that is high. I will overturn, overturn, overturn, it: and it shall be no more, until He come whose right it is; and I will give it Him." Ezek. 21:26, 27.

The crown thus removed from Israel passed successively to Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome, Note the historic truth of prediction. Babylon was conquered by Medo-Persia, Medo-Persia by Greece, and Greece by Rome; but concerning Rome, the prophet says, not that it shall be "overturned" by another power, but "it shall be no more," it shall fade away, and there shall be no other universal kingdoms until Jesus, the King of kings, shall come,

In the brief space of five hundred years, four universal kingdoms successively bore undisputed sway, as prophecy had said; but in all the two thousand years since the establishment of the universal empire of Rome, there has been no successor to the mighty four. Contrary to all human analogy and reason, four universal empires in five centuries have been followed by twenty centuries in which, instead of sixteen more universal kingdoms, there has been not so much as one set up, despite the desperate attempts of ambitious Napoleons. The history of the Christian era is an almost uncanny commentary upon the words, "It shall be no more, until He come whose right it is."

Babylon's golden pomp, Persia's innumerable hosts, Greece's brilliant sway, Rome's invincible might—where are they all? These world powers, which seemed destined to rule forever—where are they?—Vanished into the dim mists of long ago, sunk into the oblivion of dust-covered antiquity. All that is left of their once proud power is a few moldy ruins and a name. As "the flower of the grass" they have perished, and only the ashes of their former greatness remain to attest the eternal truth of the inspired record, and to comfort us with the increasingly evident truth that "surely the Lord Jehovah will do nothing, except He reveal His secret unto His servants the prophets." Amos 3:7. "God hath spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began." Acts 3:21.

Since we find such unequivocal testimony to the truthfulness and inspiration of Old Testament prophets, let us turn to the New Testament prophets. We should expect at least equal authority for them. Let us pass directly to the greatest of all prophets—Jesus. "For Moses truly said unto the fathers, A Prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; Him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever He shall say unto you. And it shall come to pass, that every soul, which will not hear that Prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people." Acts 3:22, 23.

From all who recognize any authority whatever in the Bible, such inevitable testimony commands attention. Let us listen to His words where He explicitly claims the prophetic gift: "Behold, I have told you beforehand." Matt. 24:25. In answer to the disciples' anxious request that He tell them when

would be the destruction of Jerusalem, and the sign of His coming and of the end of the world, Jesus told them, in a few graphic sentences of awful significance, the punishment that would befall those who were to utter those historic words, "His blood be on us, and on our children," and the tribulation of the faithful, down the ages to the end of time.

Christ said that when Jerusalem was overthrown, not one stone of the temple should remain on another. After the most horrible siege in all history, in which a million Jews perished, Jerusalem was destroyed by Titus in A. D. 70. Later the Jews began to return; and sixty years after the destruction of the city, all the Jews were banished, and the site of the temple was plowed up. (Angus, "Encyclopedic Handbook of the Bible," page 285.) Thus were literally fulfilled not only the Saviour's words, but also Micah's, spoken eight hundred years previously: "Therefore shall Zion for your sake be plowed as a field, and Jerusalem shall become heaps." Micah 3:12.

Then in a few terse sentences, bursting with meaning, Jesus foretold the history of the world from the time when Rome was to "be no more," "for nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; and there shall be famines and earthquakes in divers places." The political history of the world was not, as before, one universal kingdom following another, nor even one kingdom ruling another; but "kingdom against kingdom" was the divine phrase which foretold nineteen hundred years of bloody warfare. In no other instance was so much political history ever embodied in so few words. With awe and amazement we read, on the pages of history, the accounts of a thousand such movements of kingdom against kingdom; and the end is not yet. Nineteen centuries are but one long commentary upon Christ's words.

So much for the civil history of the world. Christ next outlined as graphically the religious history of all time: "Then shall they deliver you up unto tribulation, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all the nations for My name's sake. And then shall many stumble, and shall deliver up one another, and shall hate one another."

Again let history speak. Have Christians been in tribulation? Let the unanimous reply of historians from Tacitus the heathen to Gibbon the infidel tell us. Have Christians been killed? Let the blood of millions of martyrs testify. Have the nations hated the Christians? Again let the pages of the past bear witness to the universal execration in which they have been held. But saddest of all, besides being hated of nations and killed by hostile powers, have Christians hated and betrayed one another? What infidel does not taunt the Christian with the obvious, infinitely sad fact? What Tom Paine lets slip an opportunity to ridicule, denounce, revile, and hold up to fiendish contempt the Christianity that saturated the soil of Europe with the blood of its professed brothers, in the name of the gentle Jesus? How strangely true, in the light of history, are those mysterious words of Jesus, "I came not to send peace, but a sword."

But let not the Christian's faith in Christianity falter and faint when some all too ready skeptic, whether in the church or out, sneers at Christianity because of Christians' betrayal and slaughter of one another; but let him see therein only one more evidence of the exact truthfulness of the Scriptures. Every taunt of the unbeliever against Christianity, based upon the grounds of its bloody past, is an unconscious, unwilling, and therefore valuable testimony to the unaltering fact that the Bible is not only true in its accounts of the past, but minutely accurate in its forecast of all ages.

The Christian may well blush at the fierce hatred displayed by his ancestors toward one another; but when mocked with it, he should rejoice that in the very fact of Christianity's greatest shame lies one of the most impregnable proofs of the divine origin of the Christianity that is derided—a proof which even his enemies never tire of thrusting into his face. Instead of blushing and stammering and apologizing, then, let him arouse, and grasp firmly the proof so openly offered by his enemies, of the truth of Christianity, and upon the impregnable rock of the Saviour's fulfilled words build a victorious faith. Let him grasp firmly, gladly, aggressively the weapons thus put into his hands by the enemies of the gospel. Let him rejoice whenever higher critics or infidels pile up books telling of the world's hatred of Christians, of the Christians' hatred of one another; for they are only adding proof upon proof that as Jesus

The Bible in the Critic's Den

said upon this very occasion, "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My words shall not pass away." Thus what the unbeliever in his blindness thinks is a weapon to demolish Christianity and the Bible will prove to be but a boomerang that will in time destroy him and his puny power.

That Christ's words shall not pass away He tells us in even more unequivocal language: "This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world for a testimony unto all the nations; and then shall the end come." For hundreds of years, nothing seemed more unlikely than the spreading of the gospel to all nations of the earth. For fourteen hundred years, no headway was made. In fact, ground was lost. Then a new continent, doubling the size of the known world, was discovered, making the prospect of the fulfillment of Christ's prediction recede into the remote future. Well might the skeptic of that day laugh at the simplicity of the Christian who believed Christ's prediction.

Yet in God's own good time, a missionary zeal stirred the hearts of His faithful children, and the Reformation was born in a travail of blood. And what do we see now? –The Bible, which was nearly extinct in the Middle Ages, printed by the hundreds of millions in half a thousand languages and dialects, carried and taught by missionaries in every nation under the sun. All the rest of Christ's prophetic forecast has been fulfilled. The next event, according to the divine Word, which "cannot be broken," is the end of the world, and the coming of Christ Himself in the clouds of heaven, to gather His elect, to reward His faithful of all ages.

In addition to all of this, archaeology has in late years been pouring an abundance of light upon the past, all proving the divinity of Scripture. As Archibald Sayce, the world's leading archeologist, puts it, "Every turn of the spade has furnished corroborative evidence of the minute truthfulness of Scripture history." The points where archeology has corroborated the Bible would fill a large volume, One instance is all we have space for:

In Joshua and Kings are many references that imply the existence of a very powerful Hittite empire north of Palestine. Nowhere in all the world outside of the Bible was there a single reference to this nation. Yet it was represented as equal in power with Egypt. Naturally here was matter for the derision of the higher critics. When they will not believe Bible statements which are supported by abundance of secular evidence, surely we would not look for faith in the unsupported statements of Scripture. So we find them sneering at the Bible account, jeering at those who were simple-minded enough –feeble-minded enough, they called it –to believe that such an empire ever existed. Why, the very fact that the Bible related such a preposterous history of a nation that never existed, was in itself all the proof needed to blast forever the foolish, grandmotherly notion that unsupported statements of the Bible should receive a grain of credence! For hundreds of years, skeptics made merry over the deluded Christians who believed in the former existence of the Hittites. The higher critics copied their arguments, seasoning them with a few eloquent phrases of learned scientific ignorance, and with condescending pity for the abysmal stupidity of the Christian believer. They condescended to show him how "unscientific" it was to believe that a nation so powerful and long-lived as the Bible represented the Hittites to be, could possibly have escaped record in secular history. They demonstrated their position with all the mathematical precision of Euclid; and then, when the Christian still maintained that because the Bible said the nation existed, he would believe it in spite of all their proof, they lost patience, and called him a fool, and other names not altogether conducive to harmony.

But now, from both Egyptian and Assyrian inscriptions, we learn that the Hittite empire for a thousand years was a great power in Syria and western Asia, and was as extensive and as powerful as either Egypt or Assyria, and its history now fills volumes. It is found to be even stronger and more extensive than the Bible led us to believe. To human reasoning, it seems impossible that so vast and so mighty a nation could exist for ten centuries –seven times as long as the United States –and escape completely all profane record. Yet we know such to be the case. Thus is the Christian's faith in his Bible vindicated where there seemed least likelihood that it could be.

The Bible in the Critic's Den

The Bible prophecies relate not to things done in a corner, but to the mightiest nations of earth. Alexander Keith, in "Evidence of Prophecy," pages 17, 18, sums up a few of the leading events that have been foretold and fulfilled:

"Jerusalem was destroyed and laid waste by the Romans; the land of Palestine, and the surrounding countries, are now thinly inhabited, and, in comparison of their former fertility, have been almost converted into deserts; the Jews have been scattered among the nations; and remain to this day a dispersed and yet a distinct people; Egypt, one of the first and most powerful of nations, has long since ceased to be a kingdom; Nineveh is no more; Babylon is now a ruin; the Persian empire succeeded to the Babylonian; the Grecian empire succeeded to the Persian, and the Roman to the Grecian; the old Roman empire has been divided into several kingdoms; Rome itself became the seat of a government of a different nature from any other that ever existed in the world; the doctrine of the gospel was transformed into a system of spiritual tyranny and of temporal power; the authority of the pope was held supreme in Europe for many ages; the Saracens obtained a sudden and mighty power, overran a great part of Asia and of Europe, and many parts of Christendom suffered much from their incursions; the Arabs maintain their warlike character and retain possession of their own land; the Africans are a humble race, and are still treated as slaves; the Turkish empire attained to great power it continued to rise for the space of several centuries, but it paused in its progress, has since decayed, and now evidently verges to its fall.

"These form some of the most prominent and remarkable facts of the history of the world from the ages of the prophets to the present time; and if to each and all of them, from the first to the last, an index is to be found in the prophecies, we may warrantably conclude that they could only have been revealed by the Ruler among the nations, and that they afford more than human testimony of the truth of Christianity."

God has so filled earth, sea, sky, and history with the proofs of His word, has buried in the earth for centuries so many wonderful proofs that the Bible is the infallible word of the living God, that only those who are determined not to accept evidence, can remain unconvinced. All through the New Testament are scattered multiplied prophecies, giving many different signs of the imminent second coming of Christ. This is the one great event of prophecy toward which all events trend, to which all prophecies point, for which the church has for ages hoped.

"He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly."

"Even so, come, Lord Jesus."