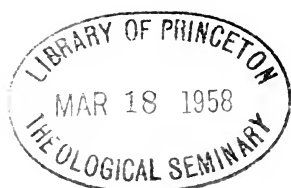


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The Bible and
Modern Criticism

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THE BIBLE
& MODERN
CRITICISM



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The BIBLE & MOD- ERN CRITICISM

By DR. FRIEDR. BETTEX, *Stuttgart, Germany*

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In thy light shall we see light



The Bible *and* Modern Criticism.

IT is undeniable that the universe, including ourselves, exists. Whence comes it all? For any clear-thinking mind there are only three possibilities. Either the universe has existed always, it produced itself, or it was created by a Divine, a Supreme Being.

The Universe Not Eternal.

The eternity of the universe is most clearly disproved by its evolution. From a scientific point of view that hypothesis is now discredited and virtually abandoned. Astronomers, physicists, biologists, philosophers, are beginning to recognize more and more, and men like Secchi, Dubois-Reymond, Lord Kelvin, Dr. Klein and others, unanimously affirm that creation has had a beginning. It always tends towards an entropy, that is, toward a perfect equilibrium

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of its forces, a complete standstill; and the fact that it has not yet reached such a condition is proof that it has not always existed. Should creation, however, ever come to a standstill, it could never again put itself in motion. It has had a beginning, and it will have an end. That is demonstrated most clearly by its still unfinished evolution. Should anyone say to us, of a growing tree or of a young child, that either of these forms of life has existed forever, we would at once reply, Why has it not then long ago, in the past eternity, grown up so as to reach the heaven of heavens? In like manner, reasons that great astronomer, William Herschel, with regard to the Milky-Way, that just as its breaking up into different parts shows that it cannot always endure, so we have, in this same fact, proof that it has not eternally existed.

God the Author of All Things.

There remains, therefore, only this alternative: either the world produced itself, or it was created. That all things came into existence spontaneously, and therefore that we must suppose an origination of immeasurably great effects without any cause,

or believe that at some time a nothing, without either willing or knowing it, and without the use of means, becomes a something—this is the most unreasonable assumption that could possibly be attributed to a human being. How could anything act before it existed? or a thing not yet created produce something? There is nothing more unreasonable than the creed of the unbeliever, notwithstanding all his prating about the excellence of reason.

But if this world did not produce itself, then it must have been created by some Higher Power, some Cause of all causes, such as was that First Principle upon which the dying Cicero called. Or, to use the words of Dr. Klein, that originating cause must have been a "Supreme Intelligence that has at its command unlimited creative power." (*Kosmologische Briefe*, p. 27.) Hence what that Intelligence does is both illimitable and unfathomable, and it can at any time either change this world or make a new one. It is therefore *prima facie* silly for us, with our prodigiously narrow experience, to set any kind of bounds to the Supreme Being; and a God who works no miracles and is the slave of his own laws implanted in nature, such a God as the New

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Theology preaches, is as much lacking in being a true Divinity as is the unconscious, but all-wise "cosmic ether" of Spiller, or the "eternal stuff" of other materialists.

We conclude, then, that the universe was created, or that God is the author of all things.

Revelation in Nature.

But now the question arises whether God, who is both the Creator of all things and the Father of spirits, has revealed Himself to His creatures, or to His own children, the work of His hands. Such a question might surely provoke one's laughter. For what is the entire universe? what is this created nature of which we form a part? what is air? and water? and fire? what are all organized beings, my body with its many parts put together in such a highly artistic and inscrutable fashion; my soul with its infinite capabilities so little understood by myself? What are all these matters but a progressive revelation of God, given to us, as it were, in a series of concentric circles rising one above another toward their Source? For this purpose it was that God created the visible, so that through it we might perceive

the invisible, and for this purpose the whole creation was made, so that through it might be manifested the invisible things of God, even His eternal power and godhead (Rom. 1:20.) Creation is only the language of "the Word that was in the beginning, and was with God, and was God, and by Whom all things were made" (John 1:1-3.) What does this Word declare? What else but the great infinite name of God the Father, the primal source of all things, the name that must be hallowed? There was a time, however, even before the world was, when there existed nothing but God and His name. All the different works of creation are only letters in this great name.

Revelation in the Bible.

But there is another revelation which God has given of Himself to men—a more definite and personal one. Thus, e. g., He declared Himself to Adam, and through Enoch and Noah to the antediluvians, and again after the flood to other generations through Noah and his sons. But because at the building of the tower of Babel men turned stubbornly away from God, He gave them up to the thoughts of their own heart,

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and selected one man, Abraham, to go out from his friends and kindred, so that in his seed all the nations of the world might be blessed. Then, first, out of Abraham came the people of Israel, to whom were committed the oracles of God; and from this period began the history of the written Word. Moses narrates the beginning of things, also records the law, and holy men of God speak and write as they are moved by the Holy Spirit. That is inspiration—a divine *in-breathing*.

But here a distinction must be made. The Bible reports matters of history, and in doing so includes many genealogies which were composed, first of all, not for us, but for those most immediately concerned, and for the angels (1 Cor. 4:9.) Also it reports many sins and shameful deeds; for just as the sun first illuminates himself and then sheds his radiance upon the ocean and the puddle, the eagle and the worm, so the Bible undertakes to represent to us not only God, but also man just as he is. In giving us these narratives it may be said, moreover, that God, who numbers the very hairs of our head, exercised a providential control, so that what was reported by His chosen men should be the real facts, and nothing

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else. To what extent He inspired those men with the very words used by them, it is not for us to know, but probably more fully than we suspect.

But when God, after having communicated the law to Moses on Mount Sinai and in the Tabernacle, communes with him as a friend with friend, and Moses writes "all the words of this law in a book" (Deut. 28:58; 31:24,) then Moses really becomes the pen of God. When God speaks to the prophets, "Behold, I put my words in thy mouth," and "all the words that thou hearest thou shalt say to this people," then these prophets become the very mouth of God. When Christ appears to John on Patmos, and says, "To the angel of the church write these things," this is an instance of verbal dictation.

But just here we are amused at these weak-minded critics who, with hackneyed phrases, talk so glibly about "mechanical instruments" and "mere verbal dictation." Does then a self-revelation of the Almighty and a making known of His counsels, a gracious act which exalts the human agent to be a co-worker with Jehovah, annihilate personal freedom? Or does it not rather enlarge that freedom, and lift it up to a

higher and more joyous activity? Am I then a "mechanical instrument" when with deep devotion and with enthusiasm I repeat after Christ, word for word, the prayer which He taught his disciples? The Bible is, consequently, a book which originated according to the will and with the co-operation of God; and as such it is our guide to eternity, conducting man, seemingly without a plan and yet with absolute certainty, all the way from the first creation and from Paradise on to the second or higher creation and to the new Jerusalem (Comp. Gen. 2:8-10 with Rev. 21:1, 2.)

Proof of the Bible's Inspiration.

How does the Bible prove itself to be a divinely inspired, heaven-given book, a communication from a Father to His children, and thus a revelation?

First, by the fact that, as does no other sacred book in the world, it condemns man and all his works. It does not praise either his wisdom, his reason, his art, or any progress that he has made; but it represents him as being in the sight of God, a miserable sinner, incapable of doing anything good, and deserving only death and endless

perdition. Truly, a book which is able thus to speak, and in consequence causes millions of men, troubled in conscience, to prostrate themselves in the dust, crying, "God be merciful to me a sinner," must contain more than mere ordinary truth.

Secondly, the Bible exalts itself far above all merely human books by its announcement of the great incomprehensible mystery that, "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (John 3:16.) Where is there a god among all heathen nations, be he Osiris, Brahma, Baal, Jupiter or Odin, that would have promised those people that, by taking upon himself the sin of the world and suffering its punishment, he would thus become a savior and redeemer to them?

Thirdly, the Bible sets the seal of its divine origin upon itself by means of the prophecies. Very appropriately does God inquire, through the prophet Isaiah, "Who, as I, shall call, and shall declare it, and set it in order for Me since I established the ancient people? and the things that are coming and shall come to pass, let them declare." (Ch. 44:7.) Or again, "I am God,

declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times, things not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all My pleasure; calling a ravenous bird from the east, and the man of My counsel from a far country. Yea, I have spoken, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed, I will also do it." (Ch. 46:10, 11.) Or, addressing Pharaoh, "Where are thy wise men, and let them tell thee, and let them know what the Lord of Hosts hath purposed upon Egypt." (Ch. 19:12.) Again we say, where is there a god, or gods, a founder of religion, such as Confucius, Buddha, or Mohammed, who could, with such certainty, have predicted the future of even his own people? Or where is there a statesman who in these times can foretell what will be the condition of things in Europe one hundred or even ten years from now? Nevertheless the prophecies of Moses and his threatened judgments upon the Israelites have been literally fulfilled. Literally also have been fulfilled, (although who at the time would have believed it?) the prophecies respecting the destruction of those great ancient cities, Babylon, Nineveh and Memphis. Who in these times would believe a like prophecy respecting London, Paris, or

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New York? Moreover, in a literal way has been fulfilled what the prophets David and Isaiah foresaw concerning the last sufferings of Christ—His death on the cross, His drinking of vinegar, and the casting of lots for His garments. And there are other prophecies which will still be most literally fulfilled, such as the promises made to Israel, the final judgment, and the end of the world. “For,” as Habakkuk says, “the vision is yet for an appointed time, and will not lie. Though it tarry, wait for it; it will surely come.” (Ch. 2:3.)

Furthermore, the Bible has demonstrated its peculiar power by its influence with the martyrs. Think of the hundreds of thousands who, at different times and among different peoples, have sacrificed their all, their wives, their children, all their possessions, and finally life itself, on account of this book. Think of how they have, on the rack and at the stake, confessed the truth of the Bible, and borne testimony to its power. However, O ye critics and despisers of God’s Word, if you will only write such a book and then die for it, we will believe you.

Lastly, the Bible shows itself every day to be a divinely given book by its beneficent

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influence among all kinds of people. It converts to a better life the ignorant and the learned, the beggar on the street and the king upon his throne, yonder poor woman dwelling in an attic, the greatest poet and the profoundest thinker, civilized Europeans and uncultured savages. Despite all the scoffing and derision of its enemies, it has been translated into hundreds of languages, and has been preached by thousands of missionaries to millions of people. It makes the proud humble and the dissolute virtuous; it consoles the unfortunate, and teaches man how to live patiently and die triumphantly. No other book or collection of books accomplishes for man the exceeding great benefits accomplished by this book of truth.

*Modern Criticism and its
Rationalistic Method.*

In these times there has appeared a criticism which, constantly growing bolder in its attacks upon this sacred book, now decrees, with all self-assurance and confidence, that it is simply a human production. Besides other faults found with it, it

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is declared to be full of errors, many of its books to be spurious, written by unknown men at later dates than those assigned, etc., etc. But we ask, upon what fundamental principle, what axiom, is this verdict of the critics based? It is upon the idea that, as Renan expressed it, reason is capable of judging all things, but is itself judged by nothing. That is surely a proud dictum, but an empty one if its character is really noticed. To be sure, God has given reason to man, so that, in his customary way of planting and building, buying and selling, he may make a practical use of created nature by which he is surrounded. But is reason, even as respects matters of this life, in accord with itself? By no means. For, if that were so, whence comes all the strife and contention of men at home and abroad, in their places of business and their public assemblies, in art and science, in legislation, religion and philosophy? Does it not all proceed from the conflicts of reason? The entire history of our race is the history of millions of men gifted with reason who have been in perpetual conflict one with another. It is with such reason, then, that sentence is to be pronounced upon a divinely given book? A purely rational revelation would

certainly be a contradiction of terms; besides, it would be wholly superfluous. But when reason undertakes to speak of things entirely supernatural, invisible and eternal, it talks as a blind man does about colors, discoursing of matters concerning which it neither knows nor can know anything; and thus it makes itself ridiculous. It has not ascended up to heaven, neither has it descended into the deep; and therefore a purely rational religion is no religion at all.

Incompetency of Reason for Spiritual Truth.

Reason alone has never inspired men with great sublime conceptions of spiritual truth, whether in the way of discovery or invention; but usually it has at first rejected and ridiculed such matters. And just so it is with these rationalistic critics, they have no appreciation or understanding of the high and sublime in God's Word. They understand neither the majesty of Isaiah, the pathos of David's repentance, the audacity of Moses' prayers, the philosophic depth of Ecclesiastes, nor the wisdom of Solomon which "uttereth her voice in the

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streets.” According to them ambitious priests, at a later date than is commonly assigned, compiled all those books to which we have alluded; also they wrote the Sinaitic law, and invented the whole story of Moses’ life. (“A magnificent fiction”—so one of the critics calls that story.) But if all this is so, then we must believe that cunning falsifiers, who were, however, so the critics say, devout men, genuine products of their day (although it calls for notice that the age in which those *devout men* lived, should, as was done to Christ, have persecuted and killed them, when usually an age loves its own children;) that is to say, we must believe not only that shallow-minded men have uncovered for us eternal truths and the most distant future, but also that vulgar, interested liars, have declared to us the inexorable righteousness of a holy God! Of course, all that is nonsense; no one can believe it.

But if these critics discourse, as sometimes they do, with great self-assurance upon topics such as the history of Israel, the peculiar work of the prophets, revelation, inspiration, the essence of Christianity, the difference between the teachings of Christ and those of Paul, anyone who in-

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telligently reads what they say is impressed with the idea that, although they display much ingenuity in their efforts, after all they do not really understand the matters concerning which they speak. In like manner they talk with much ingenuity and show of learning about men with whom they have only a far-off acquaintance; and they discuss events in the realm of the Spirit where they have had no personal experience. Thus they both illustrate and prove the truth of the Scripture teaching that "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God." These critics say that God, not being a man, cannot speak; consequently there is no word of God! Also, God cannot manifest Himself in visible form, therefore all the accounts of such epiphanies are mythical tales! Inspiration, they tell us, is unthinkable; hence all representations of such acts are diseased imagination! Of prophecy there is none; what purports to be such was written after the events! Miracles are impossible; therefore all the reports of them, as given in the Bible, are mere fictions! Men always seek, thus it is explained, their own advantage and personal glory, and just so it was with those "prophets of Israel."

Such is what they call "impartial science," "unprejudiced research," "objective demonstration."

*Nothing New in These
"New" Views.*

Moreover, these critics claim for their peculiar views that they are "new theology," and the "latest investigation." But that also is untrue. Even in the times of Christ the famous rabbi Hillel and his disciple Gamaliel substituted for the Mosaic law all manner of "traditions." (Matt. 15:2-9; 23:16-22.) Since then other learned rabbis, such as Ben Akiba, Maimonides and others, have engaged in Bible criticism, not only casting doubts upon the genuineness of various books of the Old Testament, but also denying the miracles and talking learnedly about "myths." Even eighteen hundred years ago Celsus brought forward the same objections as those now raised by modern criticism; and in his weak and bungling production, the "Life of Jesus," David Strauss has in part repeated them. Also there have been other noted heretics, such as Arius (317 A. D.,) who denied the divinity of Christ, and Pelagius in the fifth

century, who rejected the doctrine of original sin. Indeed this exceedingly new theology adopts even the unbelief of those old Sadducees who said "there is no resurrection, neither angel nor spirit." (Acts 23:8,) and whom Christ reproved with the words, "Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures nor the power of God." (Matt. 22:29.) It certainly does not argue for the spiritual progress of our race, that such a threadbare and outworn unbelieving kind of science should again, in these days, deceive and even stultify thousands of people.

No Agreement Among the Critics.

Do these critics then, to ask the least of them, agree with one another! Far from it. To be sure, they unanimously deny the inspiration of the Bible, the divinity of Christ and of the Holy Spirit, the fall of man and the forgiveness of sins through Christ; also prophecy and miracles, the resurrection of the dead, the final judgment, heaven and hell. But when it comes to their pretendedly sure results, not any two of them affirm the same things; and their numerous publications create a flood of dis-

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putable, self-contradictory and mutually destructive hypotheses. For example, the Jehovah of the Old Testament is made to be some heathen god, either a nomadic or steppe god, the weather-god Jahu, or the god of West-Semitism. It was David who first introduced this divinity; and according to some authors the peculiar worship of this god was, with its human sacrifices (!), only a continuation of the Baal-Moloch worship! Of Abraham it is sometimes affirmed that he never existed, but at other times that he was a Canaanite chief, dwelling at Hebron. No! he is the myth of the Aurora, and Sarah, or Scharratu, is the wife of the moon-god Sin, and so on. The twelve sons of Jacob are very probably the twelve months of the year. As to Moses, some teach there never was such a man, also that the ten commandments were composed in the time of Manasseh. No! the more moderate writers say that Moses is a historical character. It was in Midian that he learned about Jah, the tribal god of the Kenites; and he determined with this divinity to liberate his people. Elijah is simply a myth; or he was some unfortunate prophet who had perhaps been struck by lightning. And so, too, this modern criticism knows for sure

that it was not Solomon, but a wholly unknown king, living after the time of Ezra, who wrote Ecclesiastes; also that there never was a Daniel, but that again some unknown author wrote the book bearing that name. Moreover, Kautsch tells us that this book first made its appearance in January, 164 B. C., while other critics are positive that it was in 165. Query: Why could not that unknown author have been named Daniel?

So also Wellhausen knows of twenty-two different authors—all of them, to be sure, unknown—for the books of Moses, while Kuenen is satisfied with sixteen. The noted English critic, Canon Cheyne, is said to have taken great pains to tear the book of Isaiah's prophecies into one hundred and sixty pieces, all by unknown writers; which pieces were scattered through ten different epochs including four and a half centuries ("Modern Puritan," 1907, p. 400.) Likewise this critic knows that the first chapter of 1 Samuel originated with an unknown writer living some five hundred years after the time of that prophet; also that Hannah's glory-song, as found in 2 Kings, was written by some other "unknown." That Eli ruled over Israel for forty years is, "in all

likelihood," the unauthentic statement of a later day (Hastings' Bible Dictionary.) Why so? we may ask.—The book of Deuteronomy was written, we are told, in 561 B. C., and Ecclesiastes in 264 B. C.; and a German critic, Budde, is certain that the book of Job has somehow lost its last chapter, and that fifty-nine verses of this book should be wholly expunged.

Such are a few illustrations of the way in which Holy Scripture is treated by the criticism we are considering.

But, surely, it would not require much sagacity and intelligence for one, by applying such peculiar methods, say, to Goethe's works, to demonstrate critically that a good share of those productions, such as *Erlkoenig*, *Iphigenia*, *Goetz von Berlichingen*, the *Wahlverwandschaften*, *Faust*, (Part I and II,) belong, if judged of by their style of composition and their historical and philosophical views, to wholly different epochs, and that they originated with many different authors. Moreover, it could easily be shown that none of those authors lived in the times when Napoleon Bonaparte revolutionized Europe, since his name is not mentioned in any of the productions specified.

*Criticism as Applied to the
New Testament.*

Of course this modern criticism does not stop short of the New Testament. This part of the Bible, Harnack says, narrates for us incredible stories respecting the birth and childhood of Christ. "Nevermore," he goes on to assert, "shall we believe that he walked upon the sea and commanded the storm." It stands to reason that He did not rise from the dead. The Fourth Gospel is spurious, and so also is (according to late critical authority) the Epistle to the Romans. The Book of Revelation is only the occasion for derisive laughter on the part of these skeptical critics; and because it is so, the curse mentioned in its last chapter is made applicable to them (vs. 18, 19.) Nevertheless, these men sin most seriously against Christ. In their view the very Son of God, the Word that was in the beginning with God, and that was God, and without Whom nothing exists, is only a fanatical young rabbi; entangled in the peculiar views and superstitions of his people; and he died upon the cross only because he misconceived of the character of his own mission and the nature of his times.

Jesus "is not indispensable to the Gospel," so writes Harnack.

Now all this is what is denominated Biblical criticism. It is a jumble of mere hypotheses, imaginings and assertions, brought forward often without even the shadow of proof, and with no real certainty. Still, in these times it represents itself to thousands of nominal Christians and to hundreds of miserably deceived theological students who are to become preachers of God's word, as being the "assured results of the latest scientific research." May God have mercy, if such is the case!

What Are the Fruits of This Criticism?

Now, if these people were of the truth, and if they would only believe Him who says, "I am the way, the truth and the life," they would not be under the necessity of tediously working their way through the numerous publications (statistics show that there appear in Europe and America annually some eight hundred of these works;) but they would find in His teaching a simple and sure means for testing the character of these critical doctrines. "Ye

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shall know them by their fruits," is what Christ says of the false teachers who came in His name. "Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?" (Matt. 7:16.) Are the fruits of modern criticism good? Where are the grapes or figs that grow on this thornbush? Has not this criticism already robbed, and perhaps forever, thousands of people of their first love, their undoubting faith, and their joyous hope? Has it not sowed dissension, fostered pride and self-conceit, and injured before all the world the authority of both the church and its ministers? Has it not offended Christ's "little ones?" (Matt. 18:6, 7.) And does it not every day furnish the enemies of God with opportunities for deriding and scorning the truth? Where are the souls that it has led to God—comforting, strengthening, purifying and sanctifying them? Where are the individuals who even in the hour of death have continued to rejoice in the benefits of this criticism?

In the study-room it ensnares, in lecture-halls it makes great pretenses, for mere popular lectures it is still serviceable; but when the thunders of God's power break in upon the soul, when despair at the loss of all one has loved takes possession of the

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mind, when remembrance of a miserable lost life or of past misdeeds is felt and realized, when one is on a sick-bed and death approaches, and the soul, appreciating that it is now on the brink of eternity, calls for a Savior—just at this time when its help is most needed, this modern religion utterly fails. In the year 1864, in Geneva, one of those modern theologians was summoned to prepare for execution a young man who had committed murder and robbery. But he candidly exclaimed, "Call some one else, I have nothing to say to him." This incompetent criticism did not know of any consolation for the sin-burdened soul; therefore an orthodox clergyman was obtained, and the wretched man, murderer though he was, died reconciled to God through the blood of Christ.

But suppose that all the teachings of this criticism were true, what would it avail us? It would put us in a sad condition indeed. For then, sitting beside ruined temples and broken-down altars, with no joy as respects the hereafter, no hope of everlasting life, no God to help us, no forgiveness of sins, feeling miserable, all desolate in our hearts and chaotic in our minds, we should be utterly unable either to know or believe

anything more. Can such a view of the world, such a religion, which, as was said of Professor Harnack's lectures in America, only destroys, removes and tears down, be true? No! If this modern criticism is true, then away with all so-called Christianity, which only deceives us with idle tales! Away with a religion which has nothing to offer us but the commonplace teachings of morality! Away with faith! Away with hope! Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die!

*These Teachings in the
Light of Scripture.*

But let us hear what God's word has to say regarding this topic:

2 Pet. 1:21.—“For no prophecy ever came by the will of man; but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.”

2 Tim. 3:16, 17.—“All scripture given by inspiration of God is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.”

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Gal. 1:11, 12.—“I certify you, brethren, that the Gospel which was preached by me is not after man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.”

Rom. 1:16.—“I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth.”

Acts 20:30.—But “of our own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.”

2 Pet. 2:1.—“There were false prophets also among the people, * * * who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them.”

1 Cor. 1:20, 21.—“Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.”

Col. 2:4-8.—“This I say, lest any man should beguile you with enticing words,” or “spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.”

1 Cor. 3:19 —“For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God.”

1 Cor. 2:5.—“That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.”

1 Cor. 2:4.—“And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man’s wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power ”

1 Cor. 2:12, 13.—“Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God, that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man’s wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual.”

Col. 1:21 and 2 Cor. 10:5.—Therefore “you that were sometime alienated and enemies in your minds by wicked works,” now “bring into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.”

Gal. 1:9.—“As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.”

1 Cor. 15:17.—“Whosoever says that Christ is not risen, his faith is vain, he is yet in his sins.”

2 John, vs. 7, 9, 10, 11.—“For many deceivers are entered into the world, who

confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist. * * * Whosoever transgresseth and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed, for he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds."

Luke 11:52.—“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.”

Conclusion.

Let us then, by repudiating this modern criticism, show our condemnation of it. What does it offer us? Nothing. What does it take away? Everything. Do we have any use of it? No! It neither helps us in life nor comforts us in death; it will not judge us in the world to come. For our Biblical faith we do not need either the encomiums of men, nor the approbation of a few poor sinners. We will not attempt to improve the Scriptures and adapt them

to our liking, but we will believe them. We will not criticize them, but we will ourselves be directed by them. We will not exercise authority over them, but we will obey them. We will trust Him who is the way, the truth, and the life. His word shall make us free.

Respice finem, "consider the end"—that is what even the old Romans said. True rationalism adjudges all things from the standpoint of eternity; and it asks of every religion, What can you do for me in regard to the great beyond? What does this Biblical criticism offer us here? Only fog and mist, or, at best, an endless state of indecision, something impersonal and inactive, just like its god, whose very nature is inconceivable. "Eternal life," writes one of these modernists, "is only the infinitely weak vestige of the present life." (!) Here also the maxim proves itself true, "By their fruits ye shall know them." Just as for our present life this criticism offers us no consolation, no forgiveness of sins, no deliverance from "the fear of death, through which we are all our lifetime subject to bondage," so also it knows nothing respecting the great beyond—nothing with regard to that new heaven and new earth wherein

righteousness shall dwell, nothing with regard to that golden city which shines with eternal light, nothing with regard to a God who wipes away all tears from our eyes. It is utterly ignorant of the glory of God, and on that account it stands condemned.

“Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that Thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God.” (John 6:68, 69.) And He answered, “Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast; that no man take thy crown.” (Rev. 3:11.)



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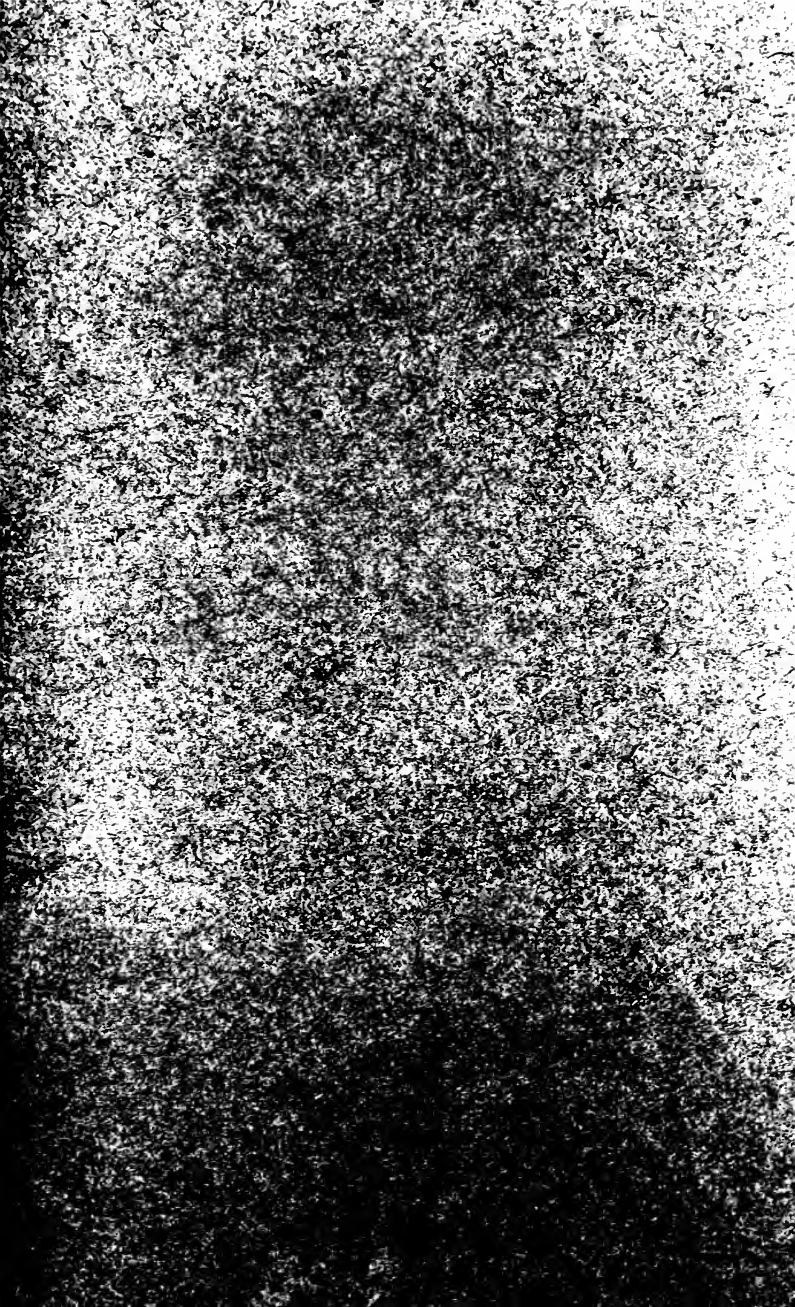
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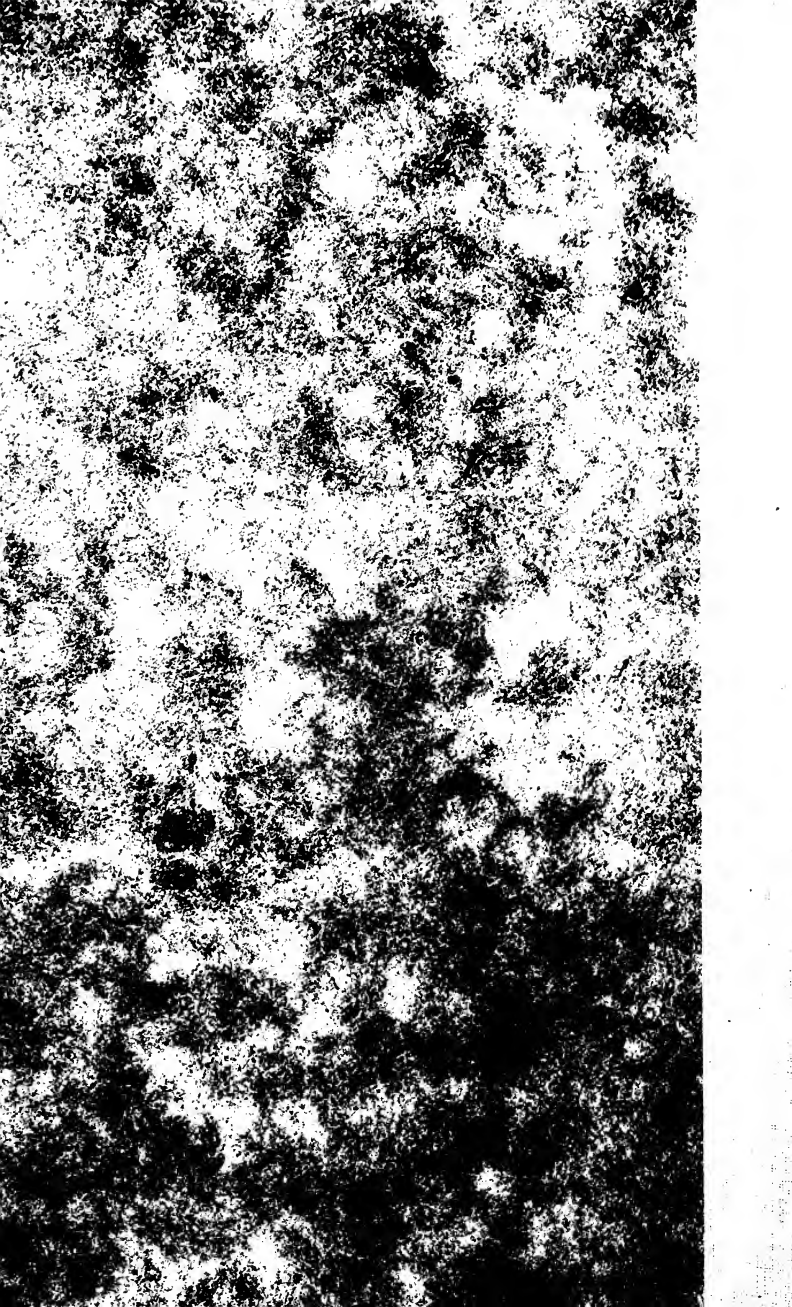
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