

# THE BIBLE THE WORD OF GOD

By F. BETTEX

*“Das Wort sie sollen lassen stahn,  
Und kein'n Dank dazu haben.”*

—LUTHER

TRANSLATED FROM THE THIRD ENLARGED GERMAN EDITION



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# Contents



## CHAPTER I

	PAGE
KNOWLEDGE AND FAITH, - - - - -	5

## CHAPTER II

THE BIBLE, - - - - -	52
----------------------	----

## CHAPTER III

OBJECTIONS, - - - - -	170
-----------------------	-----

## CHAPTER IV

BIBLICAL CRITICISM, - - - - -	215
-------------------------------	-----

## CHAPTER V

BIBLICAL FAITH, - - - - -	302
---------------------------	-----



# The Bible the Word of God.



## I.

### KNOWLEDGE AND FAITH.

*“Das ist das Ende der Philosophie;  
zu wissen, dass wir glauben muessen.”*

—GEIBEL.

#### WHAT DO WE KNOW?

CAST into this mysterious world without our knowledge or our choice; a prey of the forces of nature; the sport of circumstances and of our fellow-men; doomed to die, and yet uncertain as to when, where, and how the sentence of death is to be executed,—we are, after all, unspeakably miserable and “through fear of death subject to bondage.”

And yet we find within us an inexterminable longing, not only for joy and peace, life and power, but also for knowledge. Even the soul of the child, beholding the world surrounding it, is filled with awe and wonder, and, seized with a desire for knowledge, asks incessantly, What is this? What is that? For it feels unconsciously that it grows through knowledge; it appropriates to itself things foreign to it, assimilates its surroundings, makes them subservient to itself, and rules over them. Satan

well knew this mighty primal impulse of the human soul, and enticed it by the promise, "Ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil."

What do we know? Much. What an immeasurable wealth of knowledge millions of men have accumulated during six thousand years, of which only a very small part has ever, for a time at least, been perpetuated in writing! For even if we knew all books and all manuscripts of all times, we should yet not know the history of hundreds of peoples and tribes, with their language, their customs, their laws, their views of the world and of nature, their civilization and their art. For even in the days of Cortez and Pizarro neither the Peruvians nor the more advanced Mexicans had any knowledge of an alphabet; the former contenting themselves with *quipu* language, the latter with hieroglyphics. And when we bear in mind to what an astonishing degree even wild tribes of fishermen and huntsmen are cognizant of nature; when we bear in mind the millions of observations made by Indians and Samoyedes, by Bushmen and Tartars, concerning plant life and animal life, on which they are dependent for their livelihood, we are amazed at the mass of man's knowledge.

Observing more closely, we are at once aware, of course, that there is a difference between knowledge and wisdom; between the mere knowledge of facts and phenomena, and the cognizance of their connection, their causes, their import, and their value. Even here opinions as to the much or little of man's knowledge differ.

Thus Socrates ironically summed up his knowledge in the sentence, "I know that I know nothing," and the wise Solomon, well versed in natural science, said: "I gave

my heart to seek and search out by wisdom concerning all things that are done under heaven: this sore travail hath God given to the sons of man to be exercised therewith." "I said, I will be wise; but it [wisdom] was far from me. That which is, is far off, and exceeding deep, who can find it out?" (Eccles. i, 13; vii, 23, 24.) And Goethe sighs: "Ich sehe, dass wir nichts wissen koennen; das will mir schier das Herz verbrennen."

But those were ancient people in ancient days, almost simple in their modesty, who were ever ready to confess, "I do not know." Such words are no longer proper among us modern people, in an age that drops knowledge and wisdom. "Thirty years ago the nature of disease was not known." "There is nothing that science can not search out." Such boasts are heard daily. Or, as a French savant recently exclaimed, "Il n'y a plus de mystere!" (There is no longer any mystery!) Such boasts of the daily press, and the hymns of praise to human knowledge and ability, please the masses, and to them are lucid truths, denied only by reactionaries and pessimists for the purpose of keeping the masses ignorant. But those having true knowledge do not speak thus. They repeat the words of one of the chief among them: "There is little that we know; there is very much that we do not know."

Whence have we our knowledge? How do we acquire it?

When we enter this world, we unconsciously establish ourselves as a unit, an ego, that exists, has a right to exist, and exists as that which it is. For me the world is founded on this faith, this principle of identity:  $a=a$ ,  $I=I$ , ego=ego (*Ich bin, der ich bin*). Here faith and

sight are one. But this is merely a matter of consciousness, an intuition. That I am, is undemonstrable. The world's philosophers have never yet fathomed, and all our learning has not yet told us the real meaning of the little words "I" and "to be." Even the well-known fundamental tenet of the Cartesian philosophy, "I think, therefore I am," is equal in its content to "I am, for I am." "I am, and I am he, who I am," is the axiom, the firm assumption and conviction essential to all thinking. It were madness to doubt it, and an impossibility to prove it to him who no longer believes it, and is mentally deranged.

Man proceeds from himself as an entity, and as subject lays hold upon the world as object. Without this fundamental *believing* there is no possibility of man's *knowing*. Yea, life, the joy of life, consists in being strong enough as subject to control the non-ego as object, imitating God, the highest and absolute ego, for whom the universe is mere object; suffering, on the other hand, consists in feeling one's self treated as object by this world, the non-ego.

If we ask on what man's further cognition and knowledge are based, the simple answer is: On the senses, and on faith in what they tell us. Even the ancients knew there is nothing in the mind of man that does not enter through the senses. What could a man without senses know of himself and the universe? When a child enters this world, it opens its eyes, hears with its ears, grasps with its hands, and believes what its senses tell it of the world of light, sound, and matter. It believes that the tree is green, that the sky is blue, that the stone is hard, that the quadrilateral has four corners, that the triangle has three, and that  $1+1=2$ . Man believes these things,

for he can never comprehend, and his eye can not tell him, why and how it sees; his ear can not tell him how it hears, nor his hand how it feels. Upon this faith in what he sees, hears, and feels, man gradually constructs his view of the world. Knowledge begins and ends with seeing. "They shall see God." And it argues nothing to the contrary that we strive to perfect our knowledge of the world by means of all sorts of ingenious apparatus; for we can use such apparatus only by means of the senses. What would a telephone profit the deaf, or a spectroscope the blind?

But do I know that things really are as I perceive them? Is not the world of my perceptions an illusionary juggle of my senses that has little or nothing in common with the real world? That our senses are limited, need not be proven. That they tell us something, but not the whole, of heat, electricity, gravitation, and other forces, every learned person well knows. But limitation is not negation. The dimmest light is still light, and the fact that our love and hope are weak does not argue that there is no love and hope. To assume that the world as it appears, and consequently our language and all our thinking relative thereto (as when we speak of ardent love, clear knowledge, great or small power), is an entirely erroneous picture of the world as it really is, is to assume that the Creator has intentionally deceived and continually deceives His creatures, that He is not a God of truth, but of falsehood, or that there is no God, and that the world is merely a disconnected work of chance, in which logical conclusions are impossible. Neither assumption is entertained by the Christian. It is written: "The invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are

clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse." How could this be possible, how could they seek Him in His creation, that "they haply might feel after Him and find Him," if it were only semblance and deception? To the Christian the visible Cosmos is a reflection and an effect of the invisible Cosmos, although he knows that knowledge through sense-perception has been alarmingly darkened by the fall of man. No scholar or investigator has ever been able to show that we do not perceive at least a phase of things, or that "the thing-in-itself" has nothing in common with its phenomena,—an unphilosophic assumption, utterly contradictory to reason, the more since this "thing-in-itself" is the cause of all visible things.

Thus the sum total of our knowledge is based on faith in our senses. I can never have any knowledge of fire, except I burn myself, nor of getting wet, save through contact with water; and if it is not in reality true that fire burns and water wets, all our knowing and thinking is at an end.

Concerning what does sense-perception give information? Evidently only concerning that which is perceivable by means of the senses. My eyes tell me the tree is green. Why it is green and not blue, neither my senses nor all my apparatus tell me. And they are utterly silent as to the main question, viz., what end this particular color may serve for the tree, and of what consequence this individual fact is for the universe. Our senses, themselves phenomena of unknown psychic forces, can inform us only concerning the phenomena of the universe, but they can not enter the realm of principles and causes;



*i. e.*, they can not enlighten us in regard to the real essence, the how and why of things, nor in regard to ourselves. And they are limited even in the realm of the visible.

The study of nature has revealed much that is beautiful and magnificent. With their two eyes, the microscope and the telescope, investigators are diligently and untiringly pressing deeper and deeper into things small and great. The order of diatomaceæ, those crystal shells of microscopic creatures, unnumbered billions of which inhabit the waters and seas of the earth, reveal thousands of neat, elegant, and fascinating forms. With his giant telescope the astronomer reverently beholds white, blue, purple, and green suns revolving about one another, apparently slowly, but in reality with terrible rapidity, and together hastening through the depths of space. And from out the depths of the ocean, from out the mysterious, eternally cold, lightless, silent abysmal region we take uncanny creatures, gleaming in their own colored light, some black, with hideous teeth and stupidly staring eyes, like demons from hell. But even here man finds himself surrounded by adamant walls, forbidding his entering farther. Our eyes, themselves composed of atoms, will never behold the world of atoms, nor will our instruments ever lay hold on it. Matter can not see nor seize itself. Concerning astronomy, Kant exclaimed, "The most important feature of it is, that it discloses to us the abyss of our ignorance." How true this is in our day! What do we know about the five hundred millions, yea, thousand millions of suns they hope to be able to place by photographing the heavens, and which no human eye will ever see, not even through the most powerful

telescope? What possibilities of being and development, of existence, of life, of matter, and of mind! The part of the universe that we survey is small, exceedingly small, a spot invisible from yonder worlds, its ratio to the whole inconceivably less than the ratio of an atom to the earth. Despite all knowledge and ability, mankind, separated from the source of light and knowledge, is like a shipwrecked crew carried about on a raft of their own construction, and without a compass, by a shoreless, unfathomable ocean. And if a storm arise we are lost.

With the facts and phenomena of the universe the Creator, therefore, acts like a wise father, who does not give his son a completed structure, leaving nothing more to be done, but gives him single stones, with which, in a style suited to his individuality, he may himself construct a building. Thus from the ever-accumulating facts, perceived either by his own senses or the senses of others, man consciously or unconsciously deduces a conception of the universe that constitutes his knowledge, his science. This conception he will invariably connect with his idea of the causes and the moral law of the universe; *i. e.*, with his conception of good and evil. He can not do otherwise, his explanation of mere facts and bare phenomena must have an intellectual background.

Man's explanation of facts and phenomena will always accommodate itself to his innermost life, to the great affirmations or negations, the light or the darkness, the love or the hatred of his soul. Those who, like A. Comte and his followers, the French positivists and the English agnostics, pretended to be content with a knowledge of mere facts, and who would have denied to men the right of taking the moral value of phenomena

into account, have ever, like Comte himself, become bankrupts in a very short time. "It is useless," says Kant, "to feign *unconcern* in view of investigations whose subject matter *must concern* human nature. And the would-be indifferentists, if they think at all, inevitably relapse into the very metaphysical assertions of which they had feigned contempt." (Foreword to Critique of Pure Reason.)

Modern science, of course, frequently demands that I look away from my individuality, and measure heat and cold by the thermometer, and not by my feelings; that my system receive a certain per cent of albumen and phosphate daily, whether the food eaten strengthens me and I relish it, or not. Just so in the realm of the spiritual. Since God can not be proved experimentally, this "hypothesis," as Laplace called the idea of God, must be stricken from science. Others say neither religion nor morality should have a place in science, since good and evil can be distinguished neither chemically nor physically. We operate exclusively with and on the basis of facts and numbers; with and on the basis of that alone which is absolutely certain. All else is a matter of individual concern, and has no scientific value. That seems evident to many. But, in the first place, neither facts nor figures, *i. e.*, our conception, our valuation, our verdict relative thereto—are absolutely correct; for it must be clear to every one, *e. g.*, that we can not measure or weigh a piece of metal absolutely. Even in this respect, then, our knowledge is only relatively, not absolutely, true. In the second place, a science dealing exclusively with facts and figures, if such a science were at all possible, would have no intellectual value, and scientific re-

search that did not appeal to the intellect, and excluded all faith, would be like the mechanical clatter of a mill. Facts and figures in themselves are no more science than a dictionary is language. The intellectual background, the explanation of facts, the ideas underlying them—and the greatest investigators have considered these of more importance than the observance of facts—and their combination to an orderly structure, these alone constitute science. Natural science and cosmophysics have no intellectual value without metaphysics (which lives on faith) as a background; and, fortunately, man is so highly organized that knowledge without faith can not satisfy him. The investigator is constantly inquiring, Why did it come to be thus? The question itself presupposes causality. He is ever inquiring for what purpose plants, polyps, infusoria, have such or such organs, and takes for granted a teleological arrangement of the universe, and a wise primal cause. He is constantly striving to ascertain a higher cause for material phenomena, and what relation the individual phenomenon sustains to the whole, thus entering the realm of individual faith, which faith is associated with the fundamental formula of his soul and his ego. Even the most godless scientist weaves a great deal of faith into his view of the world. Thus Haeckel, in order to explain heredity, sets up the dogma of the unconscious memory of the molecule, and expects us, merely on his authority, to “believe” a thing so inconceivable. And upon examination there is found in many scientific works a residuum of stronger faith than “is found in Israel.” Thus many believe that the world originated spontaneously, that *something* suddenly arose out of *nothing*; how, for what purpose, and why, no man

knows! And those believing these things, praise the exact and positive sciences over against religious myths and dogmas.

Here, also, mankind is ever wavering and swinging like a pendulum between two extreme poles. After the natural philosophy of Schelling and Oncken, which, it is true, was oftentimes rather bold, superficial minds thought they could dispense with the spirit in natural research, and exclaimed: "No more metaphysics! Nothing but exact natural science!" A little reflection will show upon what an uncertain basis this exact natural research rests. In his important work "Das Weltgesetz des kleinsten Kraftaufwandes," Dr. G. Portig says: "A deeper study shows that natural science is full of hypotheses. The truly important leaders acknowledge it; only those ranking second and third deceive themselves and others by hastily passing off as scientifically true what is merely conjecture." Concerning these hypotheses Professor Dr. Dreher writes: "All hypotheses of exact natural science are rooted in presuppositions which to our thought seem inadmissible." (*Die Grundlage der exakten Naturwissenschaft in Lichte der Kritik.*) This is true of the atom, of gravitation (since a body is said to operate, where it does not exist, which, as is well known, Newton also found inexplicable), of the light-wave theory, etc. Arthur Wilke (*Centralzeitung fuer Optik und Mechanik*) asserts that we can never expect an answer to the question, What is electricity? That electricity, like other conceptions of forces, is merely an auxiliary conception by which many natural processes are united; and that it is an error to suppose that out in nature there is a distinct something that answers to our

conception of electricity; that, on the whole, the question, "What exists?" can not be answered, no matter to what it may pertain.

But even a so-called "exact" science becomes insipid and unsatisfactory to man. All knowledge is to man what the rigging is to a ship. Masts, yards, and sails are intended to help her along, and without them she is lifeless; but what do they all profit her, if the wind fail her? Even Socrates complains in "Phædo," that the scientists of his day constructed systems out of many facts, but could not say why just such a condition of things is good for the individual, and to what extent the good of the individual is also the good of the whole. That knowledge alone has value which can be turned into good, or, as we Christians say, which serves as the rounds of a ladder in order to mount to God. Of what great importance is the struggle for or against Darwinism? The origin of species in itself, as well as the whole world of phenomena, needs be of no importance to me at all, if I am not shown what eternal values the soul gains or loses by its truth or fallacy. This even his heart feels, whose mind has not clearly grasped it. As in art and literature bare naturalism rapidly made way for idealism (even though oftentimes morbid), so natural research is turning back to natural philosophy. Hear on this point, R. Francé, Professor Otto Lyon, G. Portig, Brunetière, Pasteur, or keen-eyed Ed. v. Hartmann. The latter writes (Foreword to Schelling's System of Philosophy): "The age of exact natural science is nearing its end." "The study of the theory of knowledge, of psychology, and ethics, pursued during the past generation, has convulsively closed its eyes against metaphysics,

and has therefore led to a dead point." "A natural philosophy or scientific metaphysic must be regained that shall bridge over the existing chasm between natural science on the one hand, and modern mental culture on the other."

But only the Word of God and faith in the Word of God are able to construct such a bridge that shall endure eternally; and this fact is overlooked by modern scholars.

We all, mankind as a whole, the educated and the uneducated, art and science, idealists and realists, *believe*—believe in things we have never seen. Mathematics believes in axioms, chemistry believes in atoms and molecules, physics in cosmic ether and contradictory attributes in bodies, astronomy in the incomprehensible infinity of space, all natural science in invisible natural forces and natural laws. We know, the latter exclaims, that these laws and forces are eternal. Nay, we only believe it. We can not even prove that bodies have eternally attracted one another, and that they will eternally do so. But since we can not imagine what the condition of things would be if they did not attract one another, we lay down for our own comfort the article of faith, the dogma of their eternal mutual attraction. And this is true of many other things. Thus the structure of our knowledge, apparently firmly joined, rests, like the palaces of Venice and Amsterdam, on subterranean waters of "faith."

Even where we think we have examined a thing to the very bottom, we are deceived. This is true of Darwinism. It is indeed disappearing, as it came; for the evidence of geology, of the fauna of the deep seas, of the study of the plancton, is too strong against it, and

the number of scientists deserting it is increasing daily. Other theories are taking its place. In the convention of German scientists in Hamburg, 1901, Dr. H. de Bries and men like Koelliker emphasized "the stability of species," as well as "their saltatorial development," and, approximating to Bible and geology, advocated "mutations," sudden, "explosion-like modifications of species," veritable "shatterings of species." But even supposing Darwinism, with all its consequences, to be true, what would be gained? Would we know what life is, or how it originated on the earth? Would we know what consciousness is, and how it comes about, or what matter and spirit are? Would we at last have found the bridge between the body and the soul, or know how, why, and to what end the universe exists, and whence good and evil are? No. In his ingenious work, "Der Wert der Wissenschaft," Raoul Francé properly expresses surprise at the fact that such great importance is attached to so secondary a question as the origin of species; and we add, many scholars imagine that, by a highly problematic answer to this question, they have solved the mysteries of creation. But we commonly confound the observation and description of cosmic phenomena with the explanation of the same. If to explain means to find and show the essence proper of things, their real how and why, we must admit that science has never yet explained anything.

After all, then, we know practically nothing. For we know only that which is external and superficial, but not that which is within and enduring; we know phenomena, but not the underlying principle; the relative, but not the absolute; the temporal but not the eternal. We can write innumerable books on man's behavior, on what he



has done during past centuries, and what he is doing to-day. But what man really is, what *I am*, I can not find out; I do not know what my soul and my body are, and how one reacts on the other. I have senses, but I do not know how they operate, how they give me knowledge of things; in short, I am hidden from myself, which is shown by the simple fact that I can not look into myself, do not know what organs I have in me; and if the machinery does not perform its normal functions, physicians advise and consult and can not find out where there is a screw loose. And if I turn to the world, my ignorance is just as great. We do not know, and shall never know here below, what matter is; consequently, we can not fathom the material world. We do not know, and shall never know here below, what spirit is; consequently, we can not comprehend the spiritual world. Therefore in six thousand years we have made no progress toward answering the questions: How and why have I come to be? For what purpose do I exist? Why am I placed under obligation? Whither am I hastening? Those who call themselves the learned and enlightened answer, No man knows. Thus A. v. Humboldt, the man whose "Cosmos" was so enthusiastically welcomed as a lucid presentation and survey of the entire field of human knowledge, wrote shortly before his death: "Life is the greatest folly. After striving and investigating for eighty years, one must at last admit that he has gained and found out nothing. Would that we at least knew to what end we are in this world." Behind us, nothing; in front of us, eternal night; round about us dense fog! And yet we desire to know. "*Ich sehe, dass wir nichts wissen koennen, das will mir schier das Herz verbrennen.*"

Science and reason! The two ideas that in our day control the notions of civilized mankind, as once the idea of eternity controlled the Egyptians, the idea of beauty of body and soul controlled the Greeks, the idea of power and of the state controlled the Romans; but with this difference between us and the ancients, that their ideas to them were symbols of eternal things, gifts of the gods coming from on high. To them beauty was divine. The blessed gods granted strength and power and prosperity. We no longer believe in gods, and in science we reverence our knowledge, in reason our wisdom. Examined closely, our worship of science and reason is a naïve adoration of our own ability, a worship of our own ego. Here, too, man leans on a broken reed. We have seen how and why his knowledge is incomplete and impotent. But his reason! True, God has granted reason to the soul, a capacity to view this world intelligently, to utilize it properly, to arrange his affairs in it practically. It is well known that reason has kept millions from leading an irrational, and thousands from leading an over-rational, life. In every-day life it is eminently useful; in the higher and intellectual life it profits little or nothing, for it is not the spirit. Indeed, these two, as may be seen in the gifted artist, seldom dwell together peaceably, and are inclined to despise each other. Reason is not only individual, but also national. Just as it points out different things to the sanguine person and to the phlegmatic, so it tells the Chinese mandarin one thing, the English lord another. It is also a product of its time. The doctors of Salamanca rationally proved to Columbus that, even if the earth were round, he might descend on the one side, but could not possibly ascend again on the

other; and fifty years ago many of the present "attainments of science" were rejected with disdain by rational persons as wild fancies and irrational imaginings of lunatics. For reason always operates with, and its conclusions depend upon, the knowledge of its day. It produces nothing, but only utilizes what it receives. It can—simple as it may sound—predicate nothing of what it does not know. If there were no tree in all the earth, the reasoning power of all mankind combined could not tell whether there are trees at all in the universe, nor how a tree is and must be. If God had created the earth's atmosphere somewhat less transparent, human reason, be it ever so acute, would know nothing of sun, moon, and stars; would not anticipate that millions of cosmic bodies revolve about us. Therefore the assertion that it is irrational to believe in a superterrestrial world of angels and spirits, belongs to the most irrational, therefore to the most stupid thinkable, that a man can make.

What we call reason is therefore something composite, a product, on the one hand, of a psychic faculty; on the other hand, of prevailing ideas and circumstances, of the degree of knowledge attained to, and even of individuality and temperament. Therefore it is a variable quantity, differing in each individual. For whence comes contention in art and science, in public and private life; whence the struggle in national and international politics and statecraft, tariff, and commercial treaties, elective franchise and taxes, and many other things in the Reichstag, at the beer table, and in the press, if it does not arise from difference of "the reasons" ("*Vernuenfte*"), of which, according to the latest calculations, there are sixteen hundred millions on earth? Which of these shall I

trust? "My own, of course," is the modest answer of every rational man; and it is correct, inasmuch as every man, simply because he is not like his neighbor, must house with his own reason and taste. But if there be a clash between his reason and mine, or, as we see it daily, between the ruler's and his subject's, between the employer's and the employee's, between the husband's and the wife's, between the father's and the son's—and all claim to be rational beings—then the delicate question always arises: Who is to decide whose reason is the more rational? Where is the arbiter of all these reasons (*Vernunft*)? The question is not answered, and for the time being each one contents himself with the fundamental thought, and strives, more or less energetically or pleasingly, to impress it on his fellow-men: I am rational, and those are also rational who are of my opinion; he who can not see that, is irrational, a blockhead.

To many the words of Fr. Paulsen, "I am inwardly bound only by my reason and my conscience, not by any human court exterior to me; this is the Magna Charta of Protestantism" (*Philosophia Militans*), seem to be a great declaration of liberty. But even the heathen had reason and conscience; these are not a product of Protestantism. To imagine ourselves free, because we believe our reason alone, is a widespread but very great self-delusion; for to consider ourselves bound by our reason alone, and by no other human court exterior to us, is to believe in our own infallibility, and in ours alone. Then the Catholic believing in the infallibility of the Church and the pope, is more modest.

Worshippers of reason must admit that reason is not even able to comprehend the material world surrounding

us. This is true of the simple question, Is this world finite or infinite? If it is infinite, it is too large for me, utterly incomprehensible and inconceivable; reason halts and leaves me in the lurch. If it is finite, it is too small for reason, leaving it unsatisfied and incredulous and asking, What is there beyond the limits of the world? Thus in the concepts of time and space reason wavers between the finite, which is too small, and the infinite, which is too large for it. It can not even master matter; and the atom, this postulate of chemistry, without which it can not reason farther, is an unreasonable and absurd idea. An indivisible quantity! An absolute unity, and yet different from another unity by virtue of all kinds of attributes! And these two absolutely unchangeable unities are said to "unite;" or by mere mutual approach and by revolving around one another, they are said to produce the infinite variety of forms in this world. But is all differentiation in matter due merely to motion? And how about ether, that more and more indispensable hypothesis of physics, the "eternal receiver and transmitter of force?" Now it is said to act "as an entirely unelastic body," then again "as a gaseous fluid" (Helmholtz), and according to W. Thompson, now Lord Kelvin, "it consists of infinitely small eddies of a frictionless fluid." Riddle upon riddle! Matter and force, mysterious unities; inseparable, and yet not mutually transmutable; the most indispensable of all the soul needs for revelation; commonplace things with which the babe plays, abysses of thought, mysteries that giddy the mightiest minds.

Thus reason in its relation even to this world is like a small child that tries in vain to grasp and lift with its

little hands a hundred-pound cannon-ball. And the soul of man is inconsolable, and hopes and believes and doubts and despairs of his own ability, and sighs, Why have wings, if, like a captive eagle, I must strike against the bars of my prison and be hurled back bleeding, whenever I attempt to mount on high? Indeed this is the irrational and absurd in life, this the unintelligible and astonishing and the torture of existence, that we will and can not accomplish, that we desire and do not possess, that we strive and do not gain. Whence this unnatural contradiction in man, since every other creature in this world wills only what it can accomplish? The Bible alone knows, and relates the fall of man. Whoever denies the fall of man, gives himself and mankind a clear testimonial of original indigence and impotence.

The soul has indeed something in it that is capable of the divine, wherefore Tertullian could say, "The human soul, according to its innermost nature, is a Christian." But this ability to know, or, at least, to feel the divine is not reason; it is the spirit, whose voice is conscience. A mother loves her child, perhaps her crippled, helpless, and useless child, not with her reason, but with her spirit. With his spirit man prefers struggles and difficulties and dangers to an easy life of mere pleasure, in order that he may attain to high ideals. Reason knows only selfishness; therefore the Bible can speak of "enmity in the *mind* by evil works" ("*boese Werke der Vernunft*").

Thus intellect, reason, intelligence do indeed aid us in utilizing the visible and corruptible for the practical purposes of our earthly existence, but they do not enter into the knowledge of the true and incorruptible content

of things. How can they help us to know the invisible and eternal things of the Godhead? Reason can not solve for me the mysteries of eternity. Even the spirit of man can not get beyond anticipations and longings. All our knowledge is relative; but only absolute knowledge can satisfy the soul.

Even the knowledge of infidelity is faith, resting on dogmas concerning existence, the forces of nature, matter, atoms, mechanics. It gathers, accumulates, and arranges facts, endeavors by means of ingenious hypotheses and speculations to give its view of the world a certain value; but the latter always remains a question without an answer, a circle without a center; for *God* is wanting, the great undemonstrable primitive Ego and the Cause of all causes, the Source of all personality, undemonstrable and indispensable, invisible, omnipresent, whom man incessantly and vainly endeavors to comprehend or to deny—proof positive, that He exists.

Every one, whether he be Christian or not, lives in faith and by faith. Every one consciously or unconsciously finds his intellectual life-task in gathering evidence for his faith or his unbelief.

But the faith of the unbelieving, which he proudly calls his knowledge, is impotent and unfruitful, never yet having produced anything great or beautiful or lively. It tears down, and does not build up; it negates, and does not affirm; it takes, and does not give. It has no creative power. This is shown by the world's entire history.

Unbelief has no answer to the great questions of mankind. It is not able to quench our thirst for knowledge. It can tell us nothing concerning the final causes of things. Its science makes man more learned, but no wiser; more

ingenious and refined, but no better and wiser. Man laments his great need and his fear of death, his doubts and his despair, and inquires how he may escape hell; unbelieving science answers with a new molecular theory, or with a recipe for the breeding of bacilli.

Despite its pride, this unbelief in the garb of science is, more closely examined, a poor wretch that moves to pity rather than to fear. Instead of standing in its presence with downcast eyes, look it sharp in the eye, and you will presently be aware of its uncertainty. Instead of being afraid of its cheap wit and mockery, or being confounded by such pet terms as progress, enlightenment, light of free research, turn the tables on it, and ask it what it knows, what it believes, what it hopes, what its view of the world is; and you will soon observe, probably with surprise, that even scientific unbelief knows nothing.

Itself and the world remain unsolvable riddles, things the purpose of which it does not know. Even Schleiden, otherwise idealistic, writes: "The entire universe is a machine, a wheelwork of atoms. Our knowledge fails us, whenever the attempt is made to explain the real essence of force and matter mechanically, and to trace them back to a necessity." (*Das Meer.*) Is that not a confession of ignorance as to whence this machine comes, why, how, and to what end it works? Dudley says, "Our life consists, for the most part, of things we do not possess;" even so science consists, for the most part, of things we do not know.

Thus unbelief does not weary in lauding progress, whilst it teaches that the universe and all it contains will some day be wrapped in eternal night. He who shrugs his shoulder at Christian dogmas, posits undemonstrable



dogmas concerning the non-existence of God, concerning eternal matter and force; or maintains with L. Buechner that the eternity of matter has been proven by experiment. He derides miracles, and believes in the autogenesis of the world. He mocks at divine creation, and speaks of unconscious matter which produced consciousness, of a primal cell that created itself. He denies the soul of man, and believes in the soul of the atom, or in the unconscious memory of the molecule. He teaches that matter is eternal, and denies the existence of time in itself; accepts the doctrine of the eternity of the universe, and also the contradictory doctrine of an evolution, but just begun. He maintains a former autogenesis of life, and denies the possibility of primal generation. He demands highest reverence for science, and contends that there is no such thing as absolute truth. He proclaims the logical necessity and teleology of all being, and at the same time the insipidness of religions. He believes in the all-righteousness of eternal matter, and yet denies future retribution. He teaches—as do also would-be tragedians, Ibsen, Sudermann, Hauptmann—a moral order of the world without an eternal and just Orderer of the world, guilt without God, and atonement without immortality. His view of the world is a jumble of suppositions and contradictions. No wonder, since his gods are deaf-mute, unconscious matter, and blind, foolish chance. And finally he asks with Schopenhauer, Hartmann, and others, whether time and space, matter and force, are not mere concepts of his own brain. Doubting all, and despairing, he seizes his own head, asking, "Am I indeed who I am?" and feels the foundations tottering under him.

No less worthless is the entire modern view the

masses have of the world. Without proving, they drift with the tide; are the toy of the spirit of the age; a feather incessantly wafted hither and thither by militant "spirits in heavenly places," and their master "the prince of darkness." They adopt convenient formulas of thoughtlessness, and think they have proved their point, if they repeatedly assert, "Science has long since done away with such superstition!" "No one believes that now!" "Every one knows now!"

But as a rule every one knows nothing. "Every one" at one time attended a school, and there, willingly or unwillingly, had a smattering of all kinds of knowledge imparted to him; he then served as apprentice, or went out into the world; now he is a more or less successful business man, a good citizen, and a solicitous father, who meditates day and night how he may be able to provide for himself and his family. Moreover he discusses politics at the beer-table, is liberal or conservative, a democrat or a socialist, and takes his knowledge of God and the world from the daily papers, his higher education from romances, theatrical plays, and illustrated periodicals. At the same time "every one" believes practically nothing, and knows practically nothing, but parrots certain phrases in keeping with the times, as, "We are living in the twentieth century!" "Enlightenment has done away with belief in miracles and other nonsense taught by the parsons!" "We are in the sign Progress!" But if we lay hold on him intellectually, and demand that he give an account of his view of God and the world, he is presently in great straits, becomes incensed, or excuses himself, saying, "I am not well versed in the matter; my calling, my vocation demands all my time!" In plain

English: "I have never, not even for an hour, meditated on God and the world, nor on whence I came, whither I go, and what I am." His bold appearance, notwithstanding, "every one" is usually a coward. And the more enlightened, the greater coward! With fear of bacilli-contagion or blood-poisoning, he can be chased through the eye of a needle. For though he does not fear God, he fears everything else. And in opposition to the word of Christ, "Take no thought for your life," he, in his prudence, teaches that it is the duty of man to live in constant anxiety and care concerning his existence and that of his family. And if misfortune overtakes him, if his life is imperiled by land or by sea, if fire or pestilence or earthquake menace him, he is beside himself with fear; and if he loses his loved ones, his money or his home, his honor or his health, there is an end of his enlightenment; he is a broken man, takes to strong drink as a comforter, becomes nervously and mentally deranged, or shoots himself, according to well-known examples of the modern stage. His life is a chain of inconsistencies. He halts between modern enlightenment and ecclesiastic forms that have been handed down, and that he has not the courage to throw overboard; he believes neither in Christ nor in the Gospels, but in case of official information calls himself a Christian "of evangelical faith," and has his children baptized and make confirmation vows upon a confession of faith in which he does not believe. At the grave of a fellow club-member he can speak eloquently of a "better beyond" and of "meeting again," and yet he is terribly afraid of death. He extols free thought, and bows anxiously to every pet phrase, every new intellectual style, to the customs of society, and to public opinion.

He lauds simplicity, and loves pomp; praises contentedness, and can not treasure up money enough; estimates humility highly in others, and ever desires to be praised. He is constantly talking of character and culture, and chases after any news or reading matter, be it never so insipid, and after any pastime, be it never so silly, in order to fill up the void in his enlightened soul. His life is an everlasting contradiction; in fact, a continuous lie. And deep down his poor soul sighs, ever and ever feels its poverty and nakedness, and yet wishes to die happy when the end comes.

To appease such wavering people, and the many who in our day want to break neither with God nor with the world, an equally undecided tendency holds that faith and knowledge are to be separated entirely. Thus a Genevan professor said before young men's associations: "Faith is not a matter of intelligence. It pertains only to the absolute and not to phenomena, and in itself conditions no assertion concerning the universe"—a statement contradicted by the first verse of the Bible: "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth."

Since the soul is a unity, it is folly to assert that two manifestations, two forces of the soul have nothing in common. It might just as well be claimed that man's volition has nothing to do with his love. Just as man loves what he wills, and wills what he loves, he knows what he believes, and believes what he knows. We saw that man must, above all things, believe that he exists, and that he exists as he, who he is. And to demand that a Christian's faith have nothing in common with his knowledge, that his conception of creation have nothing in common with his conception of the Creator, is to demand

that he divide his soul into two mutually independent halves; that he live in two mutually contradictory worlds at the same time, and have a distinct God for each of them—the God of nature, and the God of the Christian. How absurd! How now? shall I—as many, alas, do, but pay the price of confusedness or unclearness and impotency of their entire soul-life—on Sundays believe in and pray to God who, as a pitying Father, hears and answers every sigh of my soul and knows its every need, and during the week believe only in a God of reason, the Originator of the eternal laws of nature, who, bound by these, can make no alterations concerning them, and must let the world run its course? Or shall I, standing by the grave of my loved ones, allow myself to be comforted by the pastor with the hope of a blessed eternity, in which, together with my departed loved ones, I shall praise God in eternal light, and He shall wipe away all tears from my eyes, and, having returned home, be instructed by my “Gartenlaube,” or similar periodicals, that science, that astronomy, had done away with the heaven of the Bible? To demand two distinct views of the world in one and the same soul, is to offend sound common sense.

True, Christian belief really has to do with the unconditioned and the eternal. And because this, revealed to man by God’s Word and Spirit, is infinitely higher than the conditioned and transitory, faith can dispense with the study of phenomena. Thousands of Christians have never studied sciences; and the thief on the cross had no need of them to enter Paradise. But if the educated Christian of to-day studies sciences in order to broaden his conception of the world, it is sound and correct philosophy to deduce his explanation of facts, which always

remains personal, from his ideas of the unconditioned, and to view this world in the light of eternity. Indeed, all phenomena and ideas will have value for him only inasmuch as their content is divine; and science without faith will to him be a mere nomenclature, a dictionary, wanting the spirit of language.

The demand to keep faith and knowledge entirely separate is infeasible, because it is impossible to determine where faith begins and knowledge ends. We have seen that all science exercises faith. True, science has ever claimed to "know." Thus in the days of Ptolemy it "knew" that planets move in epicycles; in the Middle Ages it "knew" that there is a "phlogiston," a fiery element; a century ago it "knew" that, according to physical laws, submarine life is impossible at a depth of three hundred meters. On the other hand, science scoffed at many things that now are reckoned among its proud "triumphs;" and even in the past century it would have treated with contempt the poor fellow who would have dared to assert the possibility of seeing through metal plates a centimeter thick, or of moving heavy wagons up hill by mere contact with a copper wire, or of conversing across the ocean without a material conductor. How clearly it would have proved that, according to the forces and laws of nature, such things were absurd and impossible! For our ideas of force, matter, and natural laws are constantly changing, and will continue to change. Not by chance, but ordained thus of God in the play of His wisdom with men, we, believing that we have thoroughly demonstrated a certain theory, "accidentally" discover (as in the case of the Roentgen rays) new facts which are not covered by this theory, or which contradict it, and which

lay before us ten new questions for every one we believe to have solved, and cry aloud, You will never fully fathom even a single phenomenon of divine creation! Thus we had discarded the theory of emanation of light, and had accepted the wave theory. Now we have Roentgen rays, an invisible light that photographs through opaque bodies; cathode rays, of which Dr. P. Koethner writes: "It is indeed *Newton's theory of emanation, long ago discarded, that at once solves the problem of cathode rays.*" We now have Becquerel rays, which, proceeding from harmless materials, cause burns, even through clothes and without harming them, that are hard to heal; and we know matter to be "radio-active." We know, or believe, that atoms incessantly and with the velocity of light throw off millions of "electrons." (Of the size of these electrons W. Kaufmann says in "*Naturwissenschaftliche Rundschau*," that they are to bacilli as a bacillus is to the earth!) We are amazed to see one "chemical element generate another new element out of itself." The atom is no longer the smallest, unalterable, immutable particle of matter. In a million years we would have a different chemistry, new elements, a new world! (*Zeitschrift fuer angewandte Chemie*, November 1902.) The law of the conservation of energy is wavering, and even now Professor Dr. Dreher is right, when he says: "The newest experiments and discoveries are shaking the very foundations of our knowledge, which we thought we had laid for eternities, and threaten to overthrow our entire system of 'immutable natural laws.'"

How soon materialism, which but fifty years ago boasted so loudly, has grown silent! When alcohol, mad-dar lake, *i. e.*, organic matter, were successfully gained

from inorganic matter, materialism exclaimed rejoicingly: Nothing but physical and chemical processes! We no longer need an antiquated "vital force." And today the foremost physiologists and scientists unanimously declare that mechanical, chemical, and physical processes are not at all sufficient to explain the phenomena of life, and vital force is again reinstated as mysterious "vitalism."

Thus present scientific faith is tottering, and we must believe something new. In the coming century science will believe that it knows other things to an absolute certainty, and will burn up what it now worships, and worship what it now burns up. Mankind is not only incessantly building at the temple of knowledge, but just as incessantly also tearing down, often a wing still new, or an addition hardly completed. And the sum total of human knowledge remains to the angels "of great power" the constant, oftentimes childish, belief and surmise of creatures who can not say of a single atom of creation, of a single letter of the great Divine Book, "I understand it, I have mastered it!"

Even the old sages, such as Pythagoras, Plato, Socrates, whose inner life was so harmonious, demanded of philosophers a thoroughly consistent union of faith, knowledge, and conduct. This, to them, was the height of human wisdom, and they would have noted with amazement and due contempt the present notion of a separation of faith and knowledge. How much more ought the Christian who believes in the "one God," earnestly endeavor to blend faith and knowledge most intimately in his view of the world. For creation and the Creator do not contradict each other. Creation is the



realization of the thoughts of a holy and righteous God. Why shall I separate the Master and His work, and sever cosmic phenomena from their cause, the spirit? Among the millions of facts that the study of nature and the knowledge of the world's history offer, there is not one that contradicts the Bible. Contradictions arise from erroneous views of Scripture entertained by unbelievers or by biased and undiscerning believers. We do not deny that Christians differ in their views concerning nature and its relation to the Scriptures. If among unbelieving scientists scarcely two can be found whose views of nature are wholly alike, why should freedom of opinion be utterly denied us? In Christianity there are also grades of knowledge, and there is individual viewing of facts, as may be seen in Newton and Leibnitz. But when in conventions of scientists, as it occurred in Munich, "the dark forces that oppose free research" are raved against with great pathos, we ask: What Christian raises objections to researches in deep seas, to new theories in chemistry, or to the discovery of new double stars or new species of plants or animals? On the contrary, he rejoices when the wonderful things in his Father's creation are more and more unveiled. With what enthusiasm Linné, Cuvier, Herschel, Maedler, Liebig, and others praised them!

Entirely in the sense of modern enlightenment, Professor Harnack considers faith and knowledge opposed to each other, when, writing against the appointment of the Catholic Dr. Spahn to succeed Professor Mommsen, as professor of history, he expressed the hope, that "the government would be strengthened in its attitude to guard the sanctuary of science against the disturbing encroach-

ments of confessionalism and related powers." Sanctuary of science,—a striking phrase for the intellectually immature! We fail to discover anything sacred either in the breeding of bacilli, or in the exploration of southern seas, or in the psychology of Lombroso or the physiology of Virchow, or in the philosophy of Schopenhauer or Ed. v. Hartmann, or in the historic hypotheses of Wellhausen, or in the materialistic-atheistic doctrines of Haeckel. Or shall we speak of a sanctuary of botany, of national economy, and of metallurgy? Only that is sacred which is true, which pertains to God; and more sensible, especially for a theologian, than the hope entertained by Professor Harnack, would be the wish, that a professedly Christian government might protect the sanctuary of our confession against the attacks of a blasphemous tendency in science.

Confessionalism is derived from *confessio* (confession, avowal, acknowledgment), and it is strange, to say the least, that a theologian should consider the confession of religious faith an enemy to be combated by science. If Professor Harnack's "Essence of Christianity" is not a confession of his belief or unbelief, it is worthless. We and others have thus far reckoned it and other productions of modern theology among the manifestations of confessionalism. That Christianity equals "confession," "confessionalism," appears from the words of Christ: "Whosoever shall confess me," . . . "whosoever shall deny me;" likewise from the words of Paul: "If thou confess" . . . "and believe." There is a religion, a cult, and a priesthood of unbelief and enlightenment, as well as of faith and Christianity; there is confession, therefore confessionalism, in negative criticism,

materialism, and atheism, and it is being proclaimed aloud in many colleges and universities, without being objected to in the name of "free science." In its true sense, confession includes every word pertaining to good and evil by which a man, consciously or unconsciously, expresses his attitude to both. This attitude controls his life and his actions. There is no more a science without confessions than a science without postulates; moreover such a science would be an insipid morsel. Only the superficial or ignorant can believe that science and scholars are above belief and unbelief. A man either believes or does not believe in God. For him who believes, God is the all-animating central idea of science, and of his entire view of the world. Likewise the unbelief of him who denies God is the motive power of his intellectual activity, as may be seen in Haeckel's "*Weltraetsel*," in Buechner's "*Kraft und Stoff*," in the works of Dodel, in Ed. v. Hartmann's "*Die Philosophie des Unbewussten*," etc. It is not scientific knowledge that begets belief or (as many Christians suppose) unbelief, else like knowledge concerning nature would of necessity produce alike either believing or unbelieving scientists. On the contrary, belief and unbelief influence knowledge and its use, as may daily be seen in those who set forth their godlessness as "unbiasedness," and then write books from which fumes of soured hatred of God issue forth. That confessionism, whether it be of belief or of unbelief, is more hidden and veiled in other scientific works, will not prevent the intelligent reader from discerning of what spirit the book savors, and whether its author avows the great *yea*, or the great *nay*.

The conflict between faith and knowledge arises from

a lack of clear thinking, which makes many incapable of distinguishing between the absolute and the relative, between the immutable and the variable, between cause and effect. The world and existence consist of the absolute and the relative; of the eternal and the temporal; of ideas and phenomena; of that which exists in and of itself, and that which exists by virtue of its relations to other things—as man consists of the immortal soul and the mortal body.

The absolute belongs to God; the relative to man. But since the soul is the imperishable breath of Deity, man lives and moves both in the absolute and the relative, and his intellectual life also comprises both. The universe is a product of the absolute and the relative most intimately intermingled. Our entire relative knowledge eventually rests on something undemonstrably absolute, as *e. g.*, the existence of good and evil; that the good must be done, evil must be shunned; and that the entire system of mathematics, after all, is founded on the equations,  $1=1$ ,  $1+1=2$ .

The absolute gives value and content to the relative; this is true of all human action, of love and hatred, of art and religion. The absolute in man constitutes his individuality. The French, "Il faut être quelqu'un," means, Man must have or contain something absolute. The more insignificant a man is, the less important in his estimation is the absolute, the more important the relative. He does not speak of things or of causes, but always of transient phenomena; not of the essence, but of the form. He has in himself no criterion of truth, but judges of the latter in keeping with the spirit of his day, with prevailing views of the world, and with the daily press, he is the toy of winds and currents.

There is no absolute content in evil; hence its emptiness and hollowness, its nullity despite its tempting outward appearance, its inability to nourish the soul. "Vice," George Sand bitterly admitted after ample experience, "is more irksome than virtue;" and in the biography of a brilliant, celebrated artist and his beautiful, talented, and admired mistress, a Frenchman who knew them well, writes, "They dragged hither and thither their indolent, wearisome existence."

The immediate knowledge of the absolute we call faith. Faith in the relative, gained by observation of the transitory, the world calls knowledge.

Is it possible to know anything concerning the absolute? Our soul, indeed, is itself a part of the absolute; therefore the relative can never satisfy it. And yet, if it attempts to rise to eternal truth, it strikes the blue canopy of heaven and falls back faint. Why? The question has ever been asked by true philosophers; the Bible alone answers it. The soul, being divine, longs for God, its source, and can not rest, unless it rests in Him. But disobedience, through which, misled by Satan, it put itself in opposition to God, has broken, yea, has torn off, its wings, and now its longing is powerless. And even though God should stoop to the soul, it would no longer understand the language of the Absolute; it would see the writing, but would not be able to read it, unless together with the writing it also receive from above the key to the same, and its darkness be illuminated by the Spirit.

*We are in need of revelation.* Without revelation there is no possibility of true, absolute knowledge. Examining more closely, I see that all things tend toward the unit, and that numerous phenomena can be traced

back to a few principles, or to a single principle,—many effects to one cause; all forces to one force; the plant world to the cell; crystals to three axes; mathematics to surfaces, lines, and points. Hence I receive the impression that there is a cause of all causes, which, since it includes all known and unknown effects, is of overwhelming power and greatness; *i. e.*, the source of all life. Recognizing this, something in me rejoices and cries, *God!* And with joy I observe, in the history of the human race, that hundreds of peoples and millions of men who knew nothing of one another, were agreed in this: *There is a God.* And even though the thoughtless masses were content with several gods or chief causes, the wise and more thoughtful (*e. g.*, in India and Egypt) always and everywhere recognized that the idea of a God excluded all plurality; that there can be but one God. To those recognizing this, we now address ourselves.

If there is a God, He is omnipotent. If He were not omnipotent, there would be something exterior to Himself that could overpower Him, and therefore would be stronger, mightier than He. This mightier would then be the true God. God must be very wise. This is shown by His creation, and by the incomprehensible intelligence, the wonderful adaptation to ends, with which even insects and infusoria are constructed, and fulfill the conditions of their existence. God must be a God of love. The great amount of sorrow and suffering in the world notwithstanding its beauty, as well as the joy of being, *la joie de vivre*, in its various phases, with the pleasures of power, of knowledge, of light and life in us and about us, but above all, our joy in the good, shows that this God, this primal cause of all being, is a God of good and

of life, therefore a God of love. This, too, the peoples of the earth have ever known or felt.

A living God of love can not leave himself without a witness among His creatures. That He apparently frequently does it; that we are not constantly able and permitted to see the shining face of this primal sun, is one of the greatest mysteries of our present existence, and leads us at once to suspect that, in the creation of which we are a part, something is not as it ought to be. If we ask mankind, ask the nations, "Have you any knowledge of this God; has He never revealed Himself to you?" they answer, "Certainly!" and point to manifold revelations in the form of inspired oracles, answers to prayer, dreams, visions, etc. If we inquire after the attestation of these revelations, we find that, just as they treated of and recommended the good and the just, they were also, without exception, addressed to good and just persons; whence we conclude that they were true revelations of a good and just God. And not only secular, but also Biblical history gives us knowledge of Melchizedek, a priest of the Most High, of a just Job, of a Prophet Balaam, of wise men from the East, to whom the one true God had revealed Himself, we know not how.

Then God gave His people the law, which was a revelation of spiritual laws contained in nature, but also of a propitiation for the sins of the whole world, of which no knowledge could have been gained by natural means; and He gave them the sacrificial cult, as the prototype of the sacrificial death of Christ. Thereupon Christ, the Word of God, came, proclaimed the divine law in its highest and most complete form, and Himself fulfilled the same.

But this revelation of the absolute, this encroachment of the eternal upon the temporal, now everywhere embarrasses man; in the family, in marriage, in the State, in politics, in literature, in art. He hates the divine element in the absolute, and his characteristic is opposition to the law. He feels himself especially affronted by the law in religion, in dogmas, in firm precepts, with their inexorable consequences. True, religion on earth can not dispense with the relative; for it needs outward forms, as precious wine needs vessels. Such forms will never be absolutely true, neither our setting of truths, since language—and modern languages less than the ancient—contains no fully adequate expression for truth. For this reason we must strive after greater clearness, precision, and simplicity in religion, and keep it as free as possible from modern adjuncts and influences. All relative, up-to-date elements in religion tend to enfeeble it; they are secondary, are clay mixed with the iron. All attempts to modernize Christianity, to make it more conformable to human wisdom, to make it more acceptable to reason, and to make its cast-iron dogmas easier for our characterless generation, are delusions and heresies; they are the product of our day, and will pass away with our day. The absolute must not accommodate itself to the relative, the eternal not to the temporal, the divine not to the human. Religion is revelation, not science; and its further development is conditioned by new revelations of God to man. Twice it made progress: when Jehovah gave the law from Sinai, and when He was manifest in the flesh, bringing good tidings that He would take away the sin of the world. The third stage of its development will be reached when He appears to judge



the world, and to reveal His own. To expect a development of religion by men is vain, seeing that they have not even been able to effect a development in philosophy, which is on a much lower plane, and largely recur to the mechanical atomic system of Democritus.

The many in Europe, who agree with Archbishop Ireland that "the knowledge of the content of the Gospel must, by earnest endeavor and investigation, be shaped anew for each new age, in accordance with the limitation of progressive development attaching to all human knowledge,"\* greatly mistake the immutable and eternal in man. In the first place, true Christianity is not human knowledge, and is not subject to its limitations; it is participation in divine knowledge through the mediation of the Holy Ghost. In the second place, the truths of the Bible are absolute truths that have no more to do with the development of mankind than mathematical axioms. The Bible says all men are sinners. Are we less sinful now than men formerly were? Or does the highly civilized sin in a manner differing from that of the former savage? To this sin the Scriptures ascribe death and all the sorrow of the world. Do we no longer die? Do our tears or our pangs of conscience differ from those of the ancients? Of this sin the Word of God says that it is the transgression of the holy law of a holy God. Is it anything else in our day? And the Word proclaims the glad tidings that God Himself pays the debt and gives us eternal life and blessedness. Are we no longer in need of such comfort in the twentieth century? Indeed! This Gospel is just as complete and absolutely true to-day as it was one thousand or two thousand years ago.

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\*Translated from the German rendering of the original.

It applies alike to the civilized German or Englishman and the Chinese or Fiji Islander, and it must be accepted and believed in the same way by all men at all times. True, every man must, "through earnest endeavor and investigation," appropriate Christian truths to himself, just as every child must for itself acquire a knowledge of the material world with its forms and colors, and also of the alphabet or the multiplication table. But each age can no more fashion anew the eternal truths of the Gospel, or appropriate them to itself in a new, thus far entirely unknown manner, than a child can invent new letters and figures, or another system of geometry than that of the point, the line, and the plane. The oldest skulls—*e. g.*, those of Cro-magnon, and the celt-skulls of Hallstedt—have as large a brain cavity as those of present-day inhabitants of Berlin or Paris, if not larger; not a single quality, not a single power, not a single need either of body or soul has changed for six thousand years; for in this respect, too, man is created in the image of God, that he is and remains the same yesterday, to-day, and forever. Just as water still boils at  $100^{\circ}$  C. ( $212^{\circ}$  F.) and freezes at  $0^{\circ}$  C. ( $32^{\circ}$  F.), so our love still kindles and our wrath still glows, or our hatred still freezes, at the same psychic temperature; our hopes and fears, our doubts and despair, and all our thoughts arise and are active through the same mysterious psychic processes, and according to the same psychic logic, as four thousand years ago. Any one can notice this in reading the proverbs of Confucius, the Icelandic Edda, Sakuntala, or one of Plato's Dialogues. What arrogance for any man to presume that he can formulate divine truths, of which he himself knows and can know nothing, better than

Christ and His divinely inspired apostles formulated them! As well presume to be able to formulate anew and more wisely the sentence, two times two is four. What! shall our success in inventing such trifles as electric railways, telephones, wireless telegraphy, kodaks, and what not, allure us into the arrogance of wanting to invent new and fitter forms for the message of salvation that God sent us, than those He Himself gave?

Whither the recommended endeavor to find "modern forms and modern phraseology for old truths" leads, we see daily, *e. g.*, when a Christian author, positive in other respects, finds "something incomplete for our age" and "inadequate to the present German sensibilities" in the Father-name of God; when the words "prayer" and "to pray" "have come to have an unpleasant formal meaning," and "to repent" has become "utterly unintelligible" to him. Others look at faith as "fidelity to one's guiding ideal," and at revelation as "inward, comparative experience." Christ is no longer, as the Word of the Spirit sublimely calls Him, "the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world," "the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth," but "the holy energy of love," and "a religious giant of the first rank." John's powerful "The Word was made flesh" is rendered in a free translation, "The Idea was made Nature." "The Logos" is "the world-thought, which in intuitive and philosophic knowledge is united with our spirit,"—and many more equally far-fetched, confused phrases and paltry, dishonest attempts to disguise and conceal divine truth, in order to make the foolishness of the cross acceptable to the world and its wisdom. If the gentlemen have nothing better, we prefer to abide by "old things." Equally un-

satisfactory are the modern theories of those who accept no legal ideas in the atonement between God and man, but only moral ideas, and hold an "ethical doctrine of atonement, instead of the juridical." "Christ," they say, "guarantees to man God's pardoning love, and to God the repentance of estranged mankind." How does He do this, and in what respect is guilt thereby blotted out? How do I know that He guarantees God's pardoning love? And why is repentance, guaranteed by Christ, never realized among by far the greater part of humanity? And still the great question is not answered: Why must this surety and mediator between God and man die innocently on the cross?

Amazed, and not without pity, a Christian hears even godly men say, "Naturally the faith of to-day can not be the childlike faith of our ancestors." Why not? The world and mankind do not seem to me to be different from what they were of old. In front of my window tall birches are growing, as they grew four thousand years ago; a chaffinch is sitting there and singing his song, as chaffinches have always sung; little white clouds are passing across the blue sky, as they have done since creation; and my little boy is gleefully smiling at his mother, as children have always done, obeys me unconditionally, and believes what I say. And we should no longer be able to exercise childlike trust and faith toward Him, "of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named?" Why not? Because we have looked about us a bit in His creation, and our scholars confess that atoms and suns and life are constantly growing more mysterious, more inexplicable and incomprehensible to them, surpassing all their power of conception? If we can no longer exercise

childlike faith in our Father, we are misbehaved children, and, besides, are proud and narrow-minded; for a modest and intelligent mind otherwise comprehends that the father knows more than the child, the Creator more than the creature, God more than man.

A certain periodical, nominally contending for true religion, exclaims: "That 'naïve faith' is unredeemably destroyed, we all know; there are no 'believers' any more, in that sense of the term." What great things unbelief can naïvely imagine! It is full of boastings, takes itself and a few thousand associates, ready with tongue and pen, to be the whole of mankind, and never dreams that there are seventy times seven thousand, and more, in the Fatherland, who still exercise naïve and childlike faith, to say nothing of the millions from pole to pole, who do not know, and do not care to know, anything of its wisdom.

"True genius," says Schiller, "must be naïve, or it is not true genius." — Just so true faith must be naïve, or it is not true faith. But, thanks be to God, there are still many believers in this sense of the term! Daily, not only many dear little children and poor widows, pious young men and women, many bodily and intellectually poor people, many people hungering and thirsting after righteousness, whom the world does not know, but also educated and experienced men who, having remained steadfast in trials and tribulations, "have received the spirit of adoption," die holding fast in naïve faith to the saving Word which the wise by reason do not grasp. For high and firm, a rock amid the surging tides of an ignorant spirit of the world and the age (*Welt und Zeitgeist*), stands the sublime word of Him who is the truth:

“Verily I say unto you, whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein.” (Mark x, 15.)

But the modern whirl of industry and commerce, discoveries in the physical world and the world of machinery, have so turned the heads of many that they are no longer able to think calmly, clearly, and consistently; that they no longer distinguish between that which is eternal and immutable, and that which is continually changing and passing away; that they have no firm fulcrum, from which they can move the world. They believe everything and nothing, vacillate between truth and falsehood, and eagerly snatch at new and “modern forms.” Whither these attempts lead, the various modern caricatures of the essence of Christianity show.

Those who in our day maintain that Christianity must adopt new methods, “in order to remain in touch with the masses,” show that they may understand something of the world, but nothing of Christianity. There is only one “touch” possible between Christianity and the world, this child of falsehood whose God is Satan (2 Cor. iv, 4), namely, that Christianity condemn this world with its lust, its glory, and its conduct. Concerning this world Christ says to his own: “Because ye are not of the world, therefore the world hateth you.” “They shall put you out of the synagogues.” “In the world ye shall have tribulation”—not success through touch with the up-to-date—“but be of good cheer; *I have overcome the world.*”

If it is true that our knowledge, after all, is faith, it is also true that our faith is knowledge. I not only believe that prayer is followed by peace and comfort,

and that God will answer, if the prayer be in accord with his love; I know and experience it as surely as I know and experience that bread nourishes me, and water quenches my thirst. I not only believe that the infidel is unhappy and without peace, even amid riches and pleasures; I see it in his actions, and hear it in his conversation. We have not read in vain the confession of Rothschild and that of Vanderbilt, the poor, unhappy two hundred fold millionaire, and many others like them. Neither do I need to believe that sin is a reproach to any people; that pride goeth before destruction; that treasures of wickedness profit nothing; that hatred and envy are detrimental to health, love and kindness healthful; that the blessing of God is all-important; in short, that the entire Biblical order of the world is true. These are historic facts, occurring according to divine laws as eternal as the laws of light and heat. Faith, hope, and love are forces as demonstrable as the force of gravitation or of electricity; and they follow certain laws, and produce certain effects. This is shown by the martyrs and by the entire history of the world. Can nothing effect anything?

That, as Schopenhauer himself admits, "the world's great guilt is the cause of its great sorrow;" that man can not find peace unless he find pardon; that conversion creates a new man, changing the heart, making the proud humble, the miser liberal, the drunkard sober, the thief honest, the liar truthful; that true Christianity alone comforts man in life and in death, and grants the joy of eternity—that is not faith, that is *knowledge*; that is is anthropological, physiological, and psychological science. Indeed, this knowledge, as Culmann fittingly re-

marks, is more certain than any knowledge of nature about me, since it takes place in me; these facts of repentance, prayer, faith, and its effects, I can at all times empirically experience in my own inner life. I do not simply observe these processes, as I observe chemical and physical processes, of which I can know only the exterior; here I myself am the atom and the force, the active and the passive factor; in short, I *experience* them and *pass through* them, and therefore I deduce from these the truth of the Bible and of the Christian view of the world with sounder logic than chemistry deduces its belief in the invisible atom from chemical combinations; deduce "the powers of the world to come" with greater certainty than physics deduces from its experiments the conviction that the forces of nature are unchangeable.

Is it necessary for us to speak of the power of this true knowledge that is born of faith? The world's entire history reveals it. Wherever anything great and noble, anything true and beautiful, has been accomplished, it was accomplished through faith in a God, however imperfectly he may have been known; through faith in eternal and unconditioned principles; in future retribution, and in eternal life. This faith has founded cities and States, and given them just laws; likewise it has produced dramas and epic poems, as well as the fine arts based on forms and colors and tones and words. Unlike present-day art and enlightenment, no masterpiece of any kind has ever been produced that pertains to the earth alone. Its roots always extend into the nether world, and its crown is lifted into the world above.

The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews has, in the eleventh chapter, written grandly of the power of Chris-



tian faith. It is proper that he call attention to the steadfast suffering and death of so many martyrs as to the victory that overcometh the world. For "all that a man hath will he give for his life." Permit me to examine you more closely, enlightened scoffer! Fancy candidly, that sentence had been passed on you, as it once was passed on the Camisard Ravel and many others, that throughout the night you were to be subjected to the usual and unusual tortures. To-morrow your limbs were to be broken on the wheel, and you, still alive, to be thrown on a glowing pyre. Do you believe that, like those men, you could listen to the sentence with shining countenance, and even on the flaming pyre sing praises? Could you in exulting submission to the forces of nature die, joyfully praising your God, eternal matter? If not, then confess modestly: I do not know this faith, and have not experienced its power in me. But I see that it works great things—things impossible to my knowledge and my faith. —

But the Christian faith has the promise, not only of the life that now is, but also of that which is to come. That the Christian helps himself and others through this short life is a small matter to him. By faith he lays hold on eternal life. A blessed eternity in its full and true sense, with a "weight of glory," and an indescribably high royal priesthood on the new earth,—that is the fulfillment and the reward of his faith. When he has finished the fight, his Lord and Master will stand at the threshold of the heavenly world and say, "As thou hast believed, so be it done unto thee!" "Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord!"

Then knowledge and faith shall be done away, and eternal sight shall take their place.

## II.

# THE BIBLE.

*“The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: but the word of the Lord endureth forever.” —1 PETER I, 24, 25.*

THE Bible! Indeed, not an ordinary Book! Hated and hounded as no other book has ever been, and yet indestructible; despised, and yet honored; derided, and yet highly esteemed; declared dead, and yet alive. Mighty emperors and kings and priests have shunned no toil and no guilt in order to exterminate it; wise and scholarly men have, in the sweat of their brow, thoroughly refuted it; and now, that higher criticism lords over it and science has done away with it, it is spreading over the whole earth with astonishing rapidity in millions of copies and hundreds of languages, and is being read and preached from pole to pole; and, in the faith and power of the Word, Negroes submit to being burned alive, and Armenians and Chinese to being tortured to death. Ho, all ye scholars and critics! do but write such a book, and we will believe you!

Complete in itself—“accursed any man that shall add unto or take away”—unchanged and unchangeable, this Bible stands for centuries, unconcerned about the praise and the reproach of men; it does not accommodate itself to progress, does not recant a single word, remains grandly simple and divinely overpowering, and in its sight all men are equal and feel their impotency.

With sublime freedom it strides through the history of mankind, dismisses entire nations with a glance, with a word, in order to tarry a long time with the deeds of a shepherd; complacently it seven times repeats a list of gifts; records seemingly unimportant genealogies; suddenly powers of the world to come flash from some word apparently casually dropped; or thunders roll in the background of the cool narration of some great crime. Now it speaks of God as playing with His creatures and delighting in the daring chamois, the snorting horse, and the beautiful lily; now it rises like an eagle to heights that make peoples, passing hither and thither, appear like swarms of grasshoppers, yea, all nations like a drop in a bucket. This word tells of a coat of many colors that a father made for his favorite son; and is silent concerning the life and efforts of Isaiah or John, and the martyrdom of Paul. It raises deepest questions, as if they were but trifles: "Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth?" It condenses into a single word a sweeping view of the world: "The things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal." It reveals vast counsels of the Lord, that he will make a new heaven and a new earth, where old things shall no longer rise in the hearts of men. What book is there written by man that does not grow trite from repeated readings? But of this Book thousands of the best and most talented among men have testified, not only that they never tired of reading and studying it, but also that it constantly grew grander, richer, more unfathomable. How often some unseemingly word, that you have read a hundred times, suddenly opens up, revealing its deep, hidden meaning! If every sentence,

yea, every word in the Bible that has been important or beneficial to this soul or that were underscored, would a single one be found, that had been written uselessly and without purpose; or that had borne no fruit? I think not.

The Bible, the Word of God, reveals to us this invisible God, whom mankind feels in, about, and above itself; in whom the child exultingly believes; whom the adult seeks and finds, loves, hates, worships, denies, to whom he prays and whom he curses; whom the dying aged hope to see, or concerning whom they try with quaking hearts to ease their minds, saying, There is no God! "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." The Bible does not deal with fools, whose heart's desire is, There is no God. It is not necessary to demonstrate God. Whoever is foolish enough to close his eyes and deny Him, may do so at his own risk; he will not harm Him, but himself. In the beginning of His Word, God steps forth out of His eternity, grand and resplendent, the ground, principle, and cause of the universe, the Creator of creation, He, who, in incomprehensible omnipotence, creates, and there is no one who could say, Why doest thou thus? At the close of His Word, where a new eternal creation begins, heavenly creatures and powers cast their crowns at His feet, crying: "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: for Thou hast created all things, and for Thy pleasure they are and were created." "Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth!"

This God is called Jehovah (according to masoretic vocalization, e, o, a, which are also, according to Fr. v. Meyer, the vowels in "adonai" and "eloah"). He is called Eloah (the unlimited, the one to be feared) in his

unity, and "Elohim" in His trinity. His trinity is expressed in the third word, Gen. i, 1: "Bereshith bara Elohim." "In the beginning *the Elohim created.*" He is called "Ejeh asher ejeh," "I am that I am; the one existing from eternity, besides whom there is only a coming into existence through creation." He is called El-Shaddai, the Almighty; also, as old Jewish wisdom teaches, the All-sufficient, who creates all things according to measure and weight, and says, "It is enough." He is called El-Gibbor, mighty God; and the expanse of the universe is "the expanse of His power." He is called Jehovah Zeboath, the Lord of hosts; and all the heavenly hosts worship Him. He is called Jehovah Elohim, when he rambles visibly in the garden, or descends upon Sinai. His name is Abba, dear Father, to those whom the Son has reconciled to Him.

In mankind's conceptions of God, two tendencies have always opposed each other. The one held, and still holds, God to be an undefinable something, pure being without attributes, without diversity or differentiation. Looking at man in his poverty and wretchedness, they cry: "What manner of God would He be, who, like us, would be wafted hither and thither by hatred and love, wrath and mercy, by every gust of passions? What would become of the tranquillity of the Godhead?" But whenever they attempt to think their God of pure being and without attributes, he dwindles down to pure nothing; and it is of no importance whatever for them, or for us, whether such a God exists or not, for he can avail us nothing.

Others, feeling within themselves the grand, the sub-

lime, and the divine, enthused by the idea of the beautiful, the true, and the good, and recognizing that there can be no concept without a medium, cast about for a God or for gods, plastic, living, ideals of human beauty, intelligence, power, and wisdom. Such were the Greeks and the Romans and poets everywhere, and even Schiller and Goethe felt themselves sympathetically drawn to these beautiful gods of Greece. The Bible combines the truth in these two views. Its God is the Incomprehensible, the Eternal, "who dwelleth in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see." Utterly unsearchable to the creature, He has nothing human in Him; sufficient in Himself, He is not in need of creation. But out of Himself He begets the Logos, and thereby the Word; He thinks the great created *One*, and in it the infinite series of numbers, the mathematics of the universe; and in this language, the revelation of His infinite names, and of all the possibilities of being. Now this Word, which is in God and is God in glory before the foundation of the world, speaks and commands; and it stands fast. It speaks, and divine ideas become entities exterior to God, and still existing in and through Him alone. He creates man "in His image." Not in the sense that God has human attributes; but that man, even fallen man, is an infinitely small copy of the divine attributes; that his love is a small drop, now impure, of the shoreless and bottomless love of God; that his wrath is an image, now depraved, of holy justice, which Satan through his fall turned into divine wrath. Majestically this God Jehovah reveals Himself to man. He calls the stars by their names, and not one is wanting; He binds together Pleiades, leads the Bear and his chil-

dren in the heavens, and looses the bands of Orion; and the heavenly hosts worship Him. He makes clouds to be His mantle and a garment for the deep. He speaks, and there is light. He rides on the wings of the storm; He touches the mountains, and they smoke; He threatens the seas, and their waters retreat; He reveals to His own among men a glimmer of His glory, and they fall to the ground. He is God, before whose lightening countenance the gods of the nations, Zeus, Osiris, and Odin, Baal, Astarte, and Moloch, affrighted, leave their thrones, and fade to misty phantoms, or shrivel up to hideous hobgoblins and gnashing, Satanic caricatures.

But this terrible God, whose wrath is consuming fire, and before whose countenance, when He shall sit on His great white throne, the earth and the heavens shall flee away, is love. "The Lord is good to all, and His tender mercies are over all His works." "The eyes of all wait upon Thee, and Thou givest them their meat in due season. Thou openest Thine hand and satisfiest the desire of every living thing." "O Thou that hearest prayer, unto Thee shall all flesh come." In infinite mercy He stoops to the miserable, to those who have a contrite spirit and tremble at His word, and says in tender love: "As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you." "Can a woman forget her sucking child? Yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee." "Fear not, thou worm Jacob, and ye men of Israel; I will help thee, saith the Lord." And as a bright morning star to the seaman in anxious night on stormy seas, so to poor mankind in the nights and sufferings of human life is the bright word of promise: "There shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any

more pain; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes. Behold, I make all things new!"

Where among the gods of the nations is there a god like our God? What have ye against Him, ye modern polytheists and idol worshipers, who consider yourselves far above the polytheism of the Babylonians, and yet yourselves worship various idols—science, reason, mammon, fame, honor, eternal matter, eternal nature—and serve with fear and trembling the blind forces of nature, ever uncertain whether they will not tear you to pieces, or devour you body and soul, as you yourselves say, by means of fire and water, storm and typhoon, volcanic eruptions, and earthquakes? And above these nether gods, ye daily worship also the highest and most stupid idol, *chance*, or else "good fortune!" Where does the old fellow sit? You claim our God has never yet helped us. We know better! But when have your gods ever heard and answered you? Call upon them, when even in life, but surely in death, all else fails you. The end of it all will be—and you yourselves say it, and anticipate the "outer darkness"—that they leave you, their mankind, their creation, to perish helplessly in the icy coldness of eternal night. With your gods, your idolized reason, progress, and enlightenment, you will go to eternal ruin; this you yourselves preach, and it is Biblical truth.

Thus the Bible shows us a Deity transcending all human thought, and a revelation of this Deity that combines in itself all the beautiful, the lofty, the sublime, that can enter the mind of man. And the Son says, "I and My Father are one."

True, when according to the eternal divine counsel



this Son-God was made flesh, in order to save His fallen world, there was in His outward appearance "no form nor comeliness; He was despised, and we esteemed Him not; and we hid as it were our faces from Him;" and even to-day this Man of sorrows and reproach is despised by those whose eyes are held, that they do not know Him. But Him also the Word of God shows us in His true form (Rev. i), shining as the sun, His eyes like flames of fire, the sight of whom the beloved disciple John, yet living in the flesh, could not endure.

This God of the Bible is not only He by whom and for whom all things are created; but also He by whom and for whom all things consist. "In Him we live and move and have our being." What keeps the universe from crumbling into dust and atoms? for they tell us that it once originated from atoms. What urges onward in its circuitous course the universe, "the one thing, that turns?" What chases millions of suns through endless ether in giddy flight? Whence come the floods of incomprehensible forces which they are incessantly pouring into space, and which call forth unnumbered forms of life on their planets? Scientists claim to have found out that these are all one single indestructible force, which is eternally changing into various forces. This the Bible knew long ago. It is the one force of the one mighty God, El Gibbor. It is this force that causes universes, as well as the atoms in the drop of water, to revolve about one another; that animates the gnat and the whale (Psa. civ, 26-30); that causes the earth to tremble, and volcanoes to belch forth fire. "God quickeneth all things," not only animated nature (1 Tim. vi, 13). The Bible knows nothing of natural forces, which, as some

admit, were once created by God, but now exist somewhat independently, and drive the machinery of the universe, just as steam and a fireman drive the locomotive, and could drive it awhile, even if the engineer stepped down. It knows no nature exterior to, and apart from, God, in which God is not. This view—entertained, alas! by some Christians also—is wretched semi-materialism. The Bible teaches Christian pantheism, and not only says, “God shall be all in all,” but also, “In Him we live and move and have our being.” One life alone—His life, animates all creatures, the lowest and the highest—men, angels, devils, crystals, plants, and animals. “If I make my bed in hell, behold, Thou art there.” (Psa. cxxxix, 8.)

The world is a continual effect of God. God is not a man, whose work stands beside him as a dead thing. His work is quick, and its existence a continual originating in the same power, in which it was created. As God daily creates many thousands of human souls, and every hour millions upon millions of life germs (for without Him even infusoria can not exist or multiply), so he effects in Christians the new birth and the inner life from God. “Without Me, ye can do nothing.” “Out of the throne of God proceeds a pure river of water of life,” and empties itself in the universe; and if this source should fail, the worlds would wither and dry up. But the Bible just as decidedly condemns heathen pantheism, which says, “The universe is God.” Nay, in God and by His will every atom of creation exists; but if He to-day should cease to will, and if the universe should vanish again into the nothing from which God called it forth, God Himself would thereby have lost nothing. If the

nations, these millions of spirits on earth, "are as nothing, and less than nothing, before Him," how insignificant must be this material world, as we call it! The Father and the Son, light of light, God of God, of one substance with the Father, with the Father in glory before the foundation of the world,—they have no need of creation.

The Bible further says that for such activity, for the administration of the affairs of His creation, and for the purpose of blessing them and Himself, this God of love created mighty angels, obedient servants, and makes them winds and flaming fire, in order to do his bidding. Here unbelief smiles, and thinks nothing really exists save what it can with difficulty discover with its dim-sighted eye, or by means of ground lenses. But all nations of the world have ever had an irresistible impression that beneath us, about us, and above us there are many and mighty spirits of good and evil; and we ask, Why should a Creator's omnipotence have stopped with man? Should he in his immeasurable creation not have known other and higher beings to create? We see that, even on this little earth, the God of life has scattered, like sands of the seas, innumerable plants and animals and minutest organisms, but recently discovered; and should He have left between Himself and man, and on millions of other greater worlds, a deep gulf and abyss of nothing? No, in His inexhaustible creative power He has undoubtedly throughout the universe created millions of beings that we presurmise without knowing them, and innumerable angels, the hired servants in our Father's house (Luke xv, 17), distinct from the sons of God, who shouted for joy, when the foundations of the earth were laid, and

who, ever and ever, present themselves before the Lord (Job i, 6; ii, 1); then thrones, and principalities, and powers in heavenly places; likewise "the hosts of heaven, that worship him," whom the Prophet Micah saw standing at the right and the left of the throne (1 Kings xxii, 19), and of whom some, given charge of invisible worlds, were not faithful, and are being judged. "And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall punish the host of the high ones that are on high, and the kings of the earth upon the earth." (Isa. xxiv, 21.) But Christ has "reconciled all things unto himself, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven." (Col. i, 20.) That is the great kingdom, unknown to us, that he went to receive for Himself (Luke xix, 12, 15), and to return again. And higher than all these are the seraphim and cherubim, these pillars of the throne of Jehovah, partaking of His glory, their rings full of eyes, dreadful to behold, and incessantly flashing life into the universe. How many other creatures of God and revelations of His creative power we shall some day learn to know in the heavens of heavens!

Revelation shows that such angels of great power also control certain elements in the earth, and speaks of an angel of waters, of angels of the wind, of an angel who has dominion over fire. Of these nether gods, for the Bible calls them Elohim—"Worship Him, all ye gods" (Psa. xcvii, 7; cf. Heb. i, 6)—the ancients had some idea, when they made Pluto the god of fire, Neptune the god of water, and Zeus the god of the air (cf. Eph. ii, 2.) But as we, on account of our progress in commerce and inventions, despise powerful civilizations that have passed away, so we are prone to undervalue also the

great notions of divine truth at all times granted earnestly-inquiring persons among all peoples, even though the god of this world understood well how to convert them into falsehood for the thoughtless masses.

Besides the great truth that everything lives, moves, and has its being in God, the Bible also clearly teaches that there is a god of evil. With this teaching it flashes light upon the entire unreasonableness of this world, a riddle otherwise unsolvable. A well-known philosopher exclaimed: "This world is the best possible, and the sum total of evil in this world is the least possible, and an absolute necessity." But in his heart of hearts no one believes it, and no doubt he himself did not. Every one wishes that things change for the better; therefore this world is not the best possible. In our day many say: "No, this world is evil, the arena of a cruel, merciless struggle for existence, in which rude force gets the upper hand." This, too, is not true. Despite all falsehood, despite all evil and all injustice, mankind is being ruled by laws of morality and a categorical imperative of right action, even though such laws be obnoxious to it; and no nation has ever chosen a ruler, a judge, or a priest, and said to him, Oppress us, deal unjustly with us, proclaim falsehood unto us. Still others say with a cold smile: "Why all this strife? Everything is pure mechanism of atoms—a play of blind forces of nature! The world arose out of nothing; it will sink back into nothing; and what does it matter? There is neither sense nor purpose in the universe." But the heart within them gives them the lie, and something within man rebels, and cries out, It is not true! It can not be true!

The Bible alone knows. It is not necessary here to speak more minutely of the revelation concerning the fall of Satan, the great struggle of the two principles, and God's final victory. This Satan you flowery speakers must take into account, who smilingly deny him, and thereby serve him. You can not tell us, whence the tortures of existence; why doubt and care and grief devour you, and why pain rages in your bones; why man comes into, lives in, and leaves this world with sweating brow and tear-dimmed eye. With seeing eyes you could not help seeing, that we are slaves—whose?—in a bound and fettered world. Bondage, rigidity, apparent death,—that is the characteristic of creation at present; and life can struggle out of this deep lethargy only with unspeakable difficulty. What is all our chemistry, but an attempt through vital warmth to liberate matter from its bondage, its rigid combinations, for better use; and what are its angry explosions but a rending asunder of its own fetters? What are our physics, our mechanics, but attempts to liberate the hidden, slumbering, latent forces in matter, in order that they may serve us? What is our entire medical science? An endeavor to free the healthy forces of the body from the paralyzing ban of disease. Who laid this world in fetters, and who keeps it in chains, so that light can not stream through the rock, making it sparkle and flash; so that plants and trees are ever at straits to bring forth good fruit, when frost and heat and drought and the "destroyer" ruin it? Who binds the members of the halt and crippled, the tongues of the dumb, the ears of the deaf, the eyes of the blind, and the souls of us all with cords of avarice and selfishness, of hatred and of lust? "Ought not this woman," said

Christ, "being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan hath bound, lo, these eighteen years, be loosed from this bond?" Until you have grasped this, you wise and prudent of this world, your view of the world and the cosmos will remain inadequate.

Many of the ancients and many Christians have believed that this power of evil is limited to the earth, and that the stars are made of purer, heavenly substance, or even that they are the dwelling-place of the blessed. But in full accord with recent discoveries in astronomy which reveal even among the suns and cosmic bodies in the heavens an arising, dying off, and passing away, the Bible says that "*the whole creation,*" not only the earth, "groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now." What spectral analysis has taught us,—viz., that the entire world of fixed stars consists of the same substances and elements of which the sun, the planets, and our earth consist—the Bible expressed long ago, saying, "The things which are seen are temporal," therefore transitory, "but the things which are not seen are eternal." And it repeatedly proclaims, "The heavens and the earth shall pass away." Whatever passes away is not pure, is not holy. "*All the host of heaven shall be dissolved,* and the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll; and all their host shall fall down, as the leaf falleth off from the vine, and as a falling fig from the fig-tree." (Isa. xxxiv, 4.) Whatever perishes and fades is sinful; that is Bible doctrine also. "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away." Whatever God must create anew, has not fulfilled its purpose, has fallen away from Him. All these worlds belong to the former kingdom of Satan, and through his

falling away from God this bit of matter, the visible universe, became rigid, half dead, and corruptible.

What, then, is the purpose of the corruptible? It is a likeness of the incorruptible. The temporal is the shadow of the eternal; fleeting phenomena are to help to educate our souls to an idea of the true, the real, the heavenly, the flaming sight of which our earthly organs of sense, built of clay, could not endure; this is possible only to the resurrection body in a heavenly corporeality. This, too, God, with whom in every nation he that feareth Him is accepted, put into the heart of man: This is not the world of developed existence and of truth, but of developing existence and of semblance; and in all ages noble minds, like Plato, recognized that this earthly life is the dream of a soul walking among images. God has breathed it into the human soul: There is a world, where that which we see on earth as likeness exists in its essence; a world of absolute truth, of indestructible reality, therefore of incorruptible glory. For this world even heathen tribes, savage, and merciless in battle, have hoped, and have anticipated it with joy. In this upper world of light have believed, of it have told and sung, mused, and dreamed (often grandly and beautifully), the Arab in the desert and the Hindoo in his rocky temples; the ancient German in his dark forests, and the Celt in his sacred oak-groves; the viking, who, during a calm, and having no ship in sight, rested on his shield, and the shepherd in cold fogs on moor and heath; the Indian by the fire of his wigwam, and the Tunguse in icy polar nights, when the northern lights flashed across the heavens. We trust these simple, plain, true-hearted, taciturn, hard, robust men of nature, who heard voices from on



high in deserts, on mountains, on seas, where the din of cities and factories and machinery and competition did not drown them, far more than the paper wisdom of the feverishly prating, who, with endless bombast, antagonize our faith in yonder world, because in them this faith has died out.

Man has at all times viewed this world according to the measure of his personality; and he has a right to view it thus. So realistic Aristotle, who thought little of Plato's ideas, was nevertheless under the necessity of positing back of the world of matter and its phenomena (which he surveyed in such a masterly manner) a fifth element (hence the expression *quintessence*), ether, which was not subject to the imperfections of matter that adhere to the other four elements; without weight or lightness; in which there is no arising and no passing away, no suffering, and no transformation; and out of which all heavenly bodies are formed. He, too, anticipated the heavenly substance which the Bible portrays so beautifully.

The Word of God tells us that the created world surrounding us is not only the likeness, but also the fruit, an effect of the true and eternal world, just as all organic life on earth is the product and effect of the forces of the sun. As heavenly forces animate nature, so heavenly laws control it. The laws of good preserve, the laws of evil corrupt it daily. There are no laws of matter different from the laws of the spirit, as the shortsighted assume; else how could matter and spirit, body and soul, react on each other? Our mathematics is the likeness, rather the effect of heavenly mathematics, in which the heavenly number conceived by God is the law of the

universe; our chemistry is the likeness of a heavenly chemistry of eternal laws, according to which combinations of spirit and spirits are formed, act, and separate again; our physics the likeness of an eternal *physica sacra*, which regulates the true attributes, and the mutual relation of heavenly substances and spirits. There are not two Gods, a God of matter and nature, and a God of the spirit and of Christianity; the God who created the world is the Word that was made flesh, and that redeemed the world. He redeemed it, as he had created it, according to the same eternal, immutable, divine laws. This God says: *I am one God*. Unfortunately, many of His children do not understand Him in this point.

The coadaptation of matter and spirit, which, of course, is not complete this side of heaven, appears in language, this highest and deepest and most discerning power and manifestation of the soul. And God said . . . and Adam said. Language is founded on spiritual laws in nature, on the spirit in matter, and on the indissolubility of the two, as is shown by the great far-reaching significance of light and darkness in the spiritual and material creation, as well as in heaven and hell. As in art man expresses his thought, therefore his spirit, by means of space, time, number, sound, form, content, points and lines, vertical and horizontal lines, straight lines and curves, angles, and planes, because they all have mental import; so for the spirit, as well as for matter, language—and the Bible—properly and fittingly uses such expressions as above and below, large and small, light and heavy, high and low, far and near, pure and impure, hard, sweet, bitter, sour, poor, rich, food, gift, warmth, coldness, lukewarmness, day and night, height,

depth, breadth, length, etc. Language recognizes, and the Bible confirms, that to grow and to eat and to build up, to sleep and to wake, to see, to hear, to grasp, to look at, to be evident, to give and to take, to arise and to pass away; that disease and health, life and death, have the same root in the material world, as in the intellectual world. This is not merely likeness and comparison, but the expression of a deep relationship, yea, the relation of cause and effect. Some day, the Word of God says, this schism and antithesis will cease, and glorious, eternal matter will be the visibility of the spirit, and the heavenly corporeality of all beings will be the concrete, plastic expression of their soul. Even on earth every form is a product of the spirit, and appeals as such to man; wherever he sees form, he asks at once, Why? For what purpose? What does it mean? What is it intended to say?

But the Bible, the Word of a God who knows all things, also knows that a dense veil is hung over this entire creation. It, too, knows man to be "a weary guest in a dark world." It, too, knows "the torment of this narrow earthly life," and knows its source. We have turned away from God; His face no longer shines upon us; we go our way, each holding converse with his own heart; for the sake of our sin the ground is cursed, and all creation groans and pines and languishes. "The earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of Him who hath subjected the same in hope, because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.

For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to-wit, the redemption of our body." (Rom. viii, 19-23.)

This groaning of the whole creation even enemies and haters of the Bible admit; and they themselves are a fair example of it. But they reject redemption and the glorious liberty of the children of God offered them. Well, then, they may have what they choose. God gives without price, but he compels no one to accept.

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What does the Bible relate? The beginning of the Book is grand and simple. No foreword; no preparation; no appeal to conscience or to the religious sense; no appeal to authority, to facts of natural history, or to the legends of the nations. "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." An eternal rock, from which men can not chip off anything.

"God created." And the grandest, the most incredible, the most incomprehensible thing occurred. Eternity gave birth to time; spirit gave birth to matter. What does it mean to create? To make divine ideas visible; to shape eternal principles into ever-changing phenomena; for God to reveal Himself in His creation—abysses of thought, the depth of which no created mind can fathom. How can so many Christians, believing this miracle of miracles, and reverently saying, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth," stumble at every little miracle recorded in the Scriptures? They believe in the

rock, but not in the grain of sand; in the ocean, but not in the drop of water. In great days of God, the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning, created not the earth (which had previously been created), but the surface of the earth, and the organisms on it; and these days were interrupted by nights of Satan, in which God's work stood still; yea, in which the outbursts of the hostile nether world and "the powers of darkness" apparently destroyed it, as the leaves of the earth's crust show.

"And God said." "He spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast." Wonderful, unsearchable depth! The Son, the Word, the Logos spoke, and every word was a creation, a making visible and tangible of that which he alone from eternity had seen and heard in the glory of His Father. We, whose word is so dead and impotent, can not comprehend how these divine words of the Creator became visible; how they assumed being and form, yea, life, and were crystallized to plants and fishes and birds, to mysterious things that have in themselves the unknown law of their existence, and power to reproduce themselves indefinitely.

"God created man in His own image, in the image of God created he him." The Elohim purposed to make a being out of the dust of the earth, and they breathed eternal life into it. "In their image!" The human form is not the original, as a copy of which Jehovah appeared unto Moses, Isaiah, Ezekiel, John; but it is a likeness of the primal form of the "firstborn of every creature," in which form this Logos, who certainly was not without form and appearance in the glory of the Father, created angels prior to man (Ezek. i, 26; Rev. x, 1-3), and then

Adam "in His image." Did not the soul of Adam, this breath of God, contain all powers, as Boehme says, all beginnings of Deity? Indeed! They are all in you, son of the dust, animated clod of clay, hidden though they be, weakened by sin, unknown to you; and it is well that you do not know how great you are. Some day, in the resurrection, they will break forth with might in eternal glory. "I have said, Ye are Elohim." (Psa. lxxxii, 6; John x, 34.)

"And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed." (For the earth was not paradise.) A gracious God! And thus he still clothes the earth annually, and commands plants to produce out of stone and water millions of tons of food, corn, and oil and wine, besides innumerable useful materials. But the blinded, hardened heart of man says, That comes to pass naturally; the eternal forces of nature accomplish it! We can not imagine the magnificence and real beauty of a garden planted by God, and the delight of living by the four rivers of paradise; nor can we grasp the unfathomable story of the tree of life, the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and the fall of Adam. Man fell. Even to-day the echo of the curse, sweat and toil, guilt and death, are too evident all about us to be denied; and those who attempted it have never yet answered the question, Why do we die?

In a few words the Bible discloses the violent life (fifteen hundred years) of antediluvian mankind, among them giants many centuries old, strong and defiant and arrogant; Titans, whose memory lives in the legends of the nations. They wandered hither and thither, each one the father, the king, and the ruler of a people; they had

their laws, their art; they planted and builded, they married and were given in marriage; we are dwarfs compared with them. But of each of these it is said, "And he died." Have you ever paused to consider that you will some day learn to know all these mighty men personally (and either Abel or Cain); that you will behold all their deeds, and, in the day of judgment, will hear "all the hard words that these wicked sinners have spoken against God?" For the people and nations who once walked the earth as we do, laughed and wept and thought the world belonged to them, are not fleeting shadows on the wall, now vanished forever. No; the Bible says humanity is a whole; the dead are immortal, creatures of the same God, children of the same Father. And as brothers and sisters, who left home young and before they had learned to know one another, meet later on, so we shall meet one another in the many mansions of our Father's house. Man laments and hopes that everything is corruptible. "No, everything is eternal," answers the eternal Word; your words and deeds, your unpardoned sin and its punishment, and also pardon and grace and life.

A great judgment destroyed these great nations, and the terror of the flood that buried them still lives in the legends of all nations. The first chapter of the history of the world is ended. A new human race arises, weaker and more corruptible, and is scattered over the face of the earth. Then the Bible reports how God chose a nation, in the first place a man; and henceforth it adheres to the story of this man, and follows the development of this nation, the aim of which is the incarnation of the Word. And what more than this ought the Bible to

relate? Perchance give us a record of all nations, their wars and their sins, their lusts and their murderous deeds; how everywhere the strong oppressed the weak, and how these rebelled and wreaked bloody vengeance; how individuals became great and mighty and opulent by work and fear of God, and then were ruined by pleasure and luxury? For the history of mankind is very simple, turning about the lust of the eyes, the lust of the flesh, and the pride of life, and it drops injustice and falsehood, blood and tears.

No, this continuous repetition of the same sins could not teach us much. Therefore the Bible remains individual; it shows all men in the life-history of one man, all nations in the history of one nation. "Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee!" A short, simple, startling request. As the history of the human race begins with the disobedience of an I-know-better, so the history of God's people begins with the obedience of a faith without sight. What all is contained in this command; what a task, far greater in an age and a country in which the stranger was without rights and without protection, despised and hated! But Abraham believed God, the only thing that could have pleased Him—for what need has He of our works?—and it was imputed unto Him for righteousness. And as every word of the Bible is addressed to every man, so throughout the Bible this command comes to every one who reads it: "Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, unto a land that I will show thee."

Everywhere in this book we meet with persons of strong character, of whom it makes mention in a few



pithy words. What unsurpassable portrayal in the excellent drama "Joseph!" the somewhat precocious Joseph; later on the aging father, with his unfounded reproaches and fears, and with his overflowing joy when he was freed from the sorrow that had so long lain heavy on his heart. Grand also these shepherds, his brothers; hard, gruff, merciless, but also grand in their repentance and their fidelity. "How shall I go up to my father," Judah exclaims, "lest peradventure I see the evil that shall come on him? Let thy servant abide instead of the lad, a bondman to my Lord." Grand is the scene in which Joseph makes himself known to his brothers. In the immense pillared hall, the walls of which are covered with mysterious hieroglyphics, there sits on a golden throne the second to Pharaoh, his tall, beardless, statue-like figure clothed in white byssus, his bare arms ornamented with golden bracelets, on his forehead the sacred golden serpent, and, through an interpreter, is speaking cold, threatening words to frightened, weatherbeaten shepherd strangers. These are conscience-smitten, and, growing pale, whisper one to the other, "We are verily guilty concerning our brother." Then the prince arises, descends from his throne, stretches his arms out toward them, and exclaims in well-known Hebrew accents, "I am Joseph, your brother." How beautiful, and how human withal the doubts and the joy of the old father when he heard the incredible report!

But the grandest character of the Old Testament is Moses, the man with the thunders of Sinai, who beheld what no other earthborn man was ever permitted to behold. Forty years a prince in the palaces of Egypt; forty years a shepherd in the wild wastes of Midian; forty

years in the power of God, he bears his people through the wilderness, as a mother carries her babe, and then dies on Mount Nebo, "according to the Word of the Lord;" literally, "at the mouth of the Lord," which the rabbins interpret, "by a kiss of the Lord." (Deut. xxxiv, 5.) What inexpressible words this man may have heard, what heavenly mysteries and divine visions he may have seen, when, oblivious of the world, he was with Jehovah forty days and forty nights, and ate no bread and drank no water! His countenance is radiant with it; his thundering words flash it; the song of Moses, which John hears the redeemed sing in heaven, echoes it. And the Christian is permitted to ascend Sinai with him; to come into the presence of his God; to hear unspeakable things out of His law, and to forget the world below, which is dancing around its golden calf.

Great is the law that he brought down. Precious are the suggestions it contains, concerning how, in the new earth, glorified matter, minerals, plants, and animals, shall serve toward the true worship of God. Deeply symbolical, mysteriously typical is the likeness of the heavenly temple. Out of the desert of this world the child of God steps into the court, and through the purifying water and devouring Ariel, the lion of God, it enters the sanctuary, where with twelve loaves the all-nourishing Father daily feeds the twelve tribes of Israel, where the Son's intercession unceasingly rises from the altar of incense, and where the seven lamps of the candlestick, which are the seven spirits of God, always burn—a proclamation of the Trinity which the wise among the Jewish people well understood. But in the holy of holies, in an unapproachable light which to the creature seems

dense darkness, there is enthroned above cherubim the God whom no man ever has seen, and unto whom only the high priest (Christ), and he not without blood, can draw nigh.

Not less beautiful, prophetic, and significant in all their deeds are David, this hero of a hundred battles, poet, singer, and prophet; Solomon, the great king, who, weary of power and riches and pleasures and of his own wisdom, exclaims at the close of his life, "Vanity of vanities; all is vanity!"

The idyl "Ruth" shows us the peaceful, happy life of the people of Israel; and the kindly disposition and patriarchal relation existing mutually between Boaz and his employees is beautifully illustrated in his greeting to them, "The Lord be with you," and their answer, "The Lord bless thee!" 1 Kings xxii is a beautiful, well-rounded narration, with exact, perfect psychological depiction of the characters entering into it. Amid a weak, lying vacillating people the prophet of Jehovah stands like a rock.

The Book of Esther is a grand painting, a mighty drama taken from the history of the holy people; and if it had been found anywhere else, it would count for one of the most valuable monuments of ancient literature and history. Persian magnificence, the dignity of a ruler, the pride of a queen, the insolent haughtiness of a favorite; and at the door of the palace lonely, silent, inflexible, gloomy Mordecai, a type of the Jewish nation in its bondage and its unbroken power; and in the palace lovely, timid Esther. Haughty Haman's star rises higher and higher, until suddenly and with terrible tragedy it is extinguished on the despised and hated nation. And here,

as so often, the Bible describes an entire scene in a single word: "And the king and Haman sat down to drink; but the city Shushan was perplexed." Thus after a chase and before a drinking-bout Louis XIV revoked the edict of Nantes, which had been refuted by his favorite Louvois, and thus brought unspeakable sorrow to over two millions of his most faithful subjects.

Then there are various types of powerful individuality, such as Joab, the son of Zeruah, a grim hero, like unto Hagen in the "Niebelungenlied." He knows nothing but fidelity toward the king; gladly and treacherously he murders whoever opposes him or the king; in time of peace he kills his gallant opponent Abner, Amasa, and rebellious Absalom; is furious on account of the father's (to him effeminate) grief at the revolter's death; defiant, as he had lived, the old hero dies at the altar by the sword.

Resembling him, and yet differing from him, Jehu later appears,—this captain from a distant garrison, anointed by the prophet with oil and fire to be the destroyer of the cursed house of Ahab. Like a storm, like the wrath of God, he rages; "furiously" he drives his steeds to Jezreel; from his chariot he pierces the fleeing kings with arrows; he commands the painted queen, appearing at an upper window, to be thrown down to the dogs; defiant as a knight, he exhorts the cowardly inhabitants of Samaria to fight valiantly for the house of their king. But they tremble before him, and he has the bloody heads of the sons of the king laid in two heaps at the entering in of the gate, whereupon he scornfully proclaims an assembly of the priests of Baal, and has them slaughtered,—a driving hailstorm, that left neither branch nor

leaf on the genealogical tree of Ahab; for the Lord had spoken.

Thereupon prophets arise. Elijah, the man of mighty deeds, who suddenly appears, without recorded tribe or family, baptized with the Spirit and with fire; who preaches with, destroys his enemies with, and is carried home in, fire from heaven. We know little of him, but how powerful he stands before us, a man of iron, whether, standing alone, he laughs to scorn his whole nation and the four hundred prophets of Baal, or whether, his heart full of holy wrath, he walks forty days and forty nights through the solitary desert to the place, where Jehovah had given the law, in order there to complain to God that His law is despised, and that he alone is left!

Different personality still we find in Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel. Isaiah beholds the coming of the Messiah, seeing, far beyond His rejection and the rejection of Israel, how God eventually turns unto His people, and he exclaims in words more than human: "Rejoice, Zion, put on thy beautiful garments! The days of thy mourning shall be ended." Not so Jeremiah, the man of reproach, of bonds, and of sorrow, who with burning tears bewails the falling away of his people, and mourns for Jerusalem.

Then Ezekiel, the mouthpiece of Jehovah—of Jehovah full of wrath, riding on cherubim, whose long suffering with wayward Israel is ended, and whose glory departs from the temple.

Differing from these, Daniel, the great wise statesman, the noble, grieving stranger of royal descent on the shores of the Euphrates, the counselor of three generations of kings, the intrepid seer, who sees kingdoms rise

and fall, until the ever-changing whirl of the world's history is terminated by God in the kingdom that endures eternally.

These are great men, whose grandeur only they can in some measure appreciate who are born of the same spirit. Compared with these, the conquest-loving, vain-glorious celebrities of secular history are quite small. The human race is in need of great men. It needs superior men (*Uebermenschen*), not only in order that they direct its affairs according to divine counsels, but also in order that, in looking upon them it may ever anew gain faith in itself, for, looking upon its own indigence and miserableness, the human race is ever in danger of losing faith in itself. We meet with greater men of this type in the Word of God than in secular history. Moses is more than Alexander or Cæsar or Charles the Great; Elijah towers high above Mohammed; Paul and John teach higher philosophy and theosophy than Plato. In this respect, too, the Bible surpasses books written by men.

But in the center, among all these men of God, there is the radiant form of Him who is more than man, without fear or sin, no deceit in His mouth, His words nothing but truth, all His deeds light and blessing, His life and death love and obedience toward the Father. And if we would see the complete likeness of man, as he ought to be, and as God would have him in His likeness, and as he will be eternally, we find in the first chapter of Revelation the second Adam, whom we shall be like, even as we have borne the likeness of the first Adam. He stands there a true lord of the new creation, full of power, no longer dark or merely shone through, but self-luminous,

a sun and center of light; and so we, too, shall stand in the new paradise by crystal rivers, under trees of life; but without prohibition, therefore without transgression. For God never gives up what He purposes. The malignity and enmity of Satan and of men can but make the fulfillment of His word more glorious; and the last chapter of the Bible is a repetition of the first in much higher potency. The natural law of creation for the nations, the law of Sinai for Israel, the law of Christ for His own, —these three revelations of God, incomprehensibly spiritualized and magnified, and their blessed results for entire redeemed humanity, the Bible promises us.

In all these reports of, and concerning, the history of the earth the incorruptible shines through the corruptible. God's Word writes from a heavenly perspective, from the standpoint of eternity, and places everything and every person, together with all his deeds, in the presence of God. It does not stop half-way, but unswervingly carries all principles through to their extreme consequences, to the point where the wisdom of God comes to be foolishness, comes to be absurdity in the sight of human reason. It relates the temporal; it does not stop with the shrubbery of the temporal, however, but continues till it reaches the rock; and this refreshes him who has tired of the temporal. We find it so in the story of Job. In his circumstances a modern man would complain of being ruined by fatal circumstances and elemental occurrences, of being derided by his wife, of being visited with severe sickness. But Job's cry is the eternal cry of mankind, the cry of the creature to the Creator: My Maker! Why? O why? How shall I harmonize your justice and your mercy? Thus it is written,

"The thing that David had done displeased the Lord," not, this mean sensuality, this shocking treachery toward a faithful servant, etc. ; no, his deed (fact, *factum*), man's deeds, the "*facts*" of his life displease God—an absolute fact.

Moreover, the Bible is a living word, therefore an organism, every part of which lives and is effective. As the body of man can not live on inorganic matter, but only on organic and living, or on matter that was living, so the soul of man can not live on mere stones, on facts and data, be they never so many. No encyclopedia, however complete, can satisfy it; it can feed on living things only. Such the Bible offers the soul; and in this respect, also, it surpasses all other books. What effects it has produced in millions of souls, and yet not wholly the same in any two! Eternally the same Word, it is yet different for each individual. God repeats Himself ever and never; He is the living one, we are the dead.

This Bible is a tree of life, through the immense ever-green crowns of which heavenly spirit-winds now rustle softly, now roar mightily; bearing fruit that brings healing and strength and health and eternal life to those poisoned by sin. It is a dreadful and delightful book; full of heavenly peace that transcends all thought; full of the thunders and lightnings of the mighty God who shatters nations like a potter's vessels, and before whom nations are as a drop in a bucket; full of the most tender and loving comfortings and promises of a God who feeds the birds, numbers the hair upon our head, and in answer to the supplications of a poor mother heals her sick child; a book which in simple words answers the deepest questions that have ever busied the thought of mankind; that



answers a child and toys with the wisdom of the wise; a poem and an epos so powerful, so all-embracing, so deep and high, that no man has ever written its equal; its theme *the incarnation of a Creator for the purpose of redeeming his creation.*

In all ages the greatest minds understood that the life and the deeds of men are rooted in the world below and the world above; and this alone gives them import and value. Homer and the old tragedians, the Edda and the Bhagavat Gita, Dante and Milton, Byron, Klopstock, Shakespeare, Goethe, have all written trilogies; and it is the ban and impotence of so many modern men that they believe great things can be wrought on earth and with earthly things alone. Where is there a poem like the Bible, full of the breath of the living God; in which beings of light and of darkness, heavenly and hellish forces, devils and angels, struggle in the heavens of heavens to accomplish great purposes that embrace the universe? Where is there a production of the human mind which in such an incomprehensibly deep manner combines fates, eternal unsearchable decrees, with the freedom of man, and ascribes to his little soul the power to co-operate with God for God, with Satan for Satan, and to gladden or to grieve God and Satan and angels and devils?

The Bible addresses itself to the entire human race. Other sacred books are addressed to the wise and prudent, or to the courageous and energetic. Thus the Koran calls upon its devotees to fight courageously and to conquer the world; those falling in battle against the unbelieving shall enter paradise. But what of those who lack strength and courage to wield the sword? What of the

unnumbered who are bodily and intellectually weak, impotent, diseased? Thus slaves and serfs, soldiers, public officials (in India perhaps tax-gatherers and toll-gatherers), criminals, children under twelve years of age—just those who are weak and in need of comfort—are excluded from the Sangha, or holy communion of Buddha. Compare with these Christ's conduct toward just such. The Bhagavat Gita and the Rigveda, the teachings of Confucius, the Greek philosophers, preach eloquently the culture of virtue, a contemplative life, contempt of earthly possessions and suffering. But millions find no virtue in themselves, have no time for a contemplative life; bowed to the earth they must earn their bread in the sweat of their brow, must groan and die. And as to contempt of suffering, it has properly been said that this philosophy is quite good in view of past suffering, fairly good in view of future suffering, but utterly worthless in view of present suffering. The human race is not in need of wisdom and philosophy, but of help against its distress, its sin and death. This the Bible alone gives. "Come unto Me," Christ says, "all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." And He has kept His promise. His Gospel has comforted the poor sick mother, as well as Newton, the clearest mind among scientists; the blind beggar to whom it was read, as well as King Charles I, before his execution; the Negro in Africa, as well as the cultured European. And since this Word of God is addressed to *all* His creatures, it contains no esoterics. In Egypt and India, in Persia, Babylon, and Greece, the priests guarded the mysteries of their highest religious services most carefully against those not initiated, against the common masses; and many cleansings, and frequently

long and dreadful trials were necessary (as *e. g.*, in the Eleusinian mysteries), in order to arrive step by step in the innermost sanctuary of knowledge. But what error, what injustice to my fellow-men, if, having found aught of truth, I withhold it from them, or share it with a few of like mind with myself, and hide the light from others! Not so the Bible. It, like the sun, shines for rich and poor, worthy and unworthy; it knows no caste, no secret union, no truth hidden by hieroglyphics or dark symbols, meet only for the scholar. Shall truth hide, or is God ashamed of His Word? No! Christ says: "What I tell you in darkness, that speak ye in light; and what ye hear in the ear, that preach ye upon the housetops." "Go ye, and teach all nations." "Let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely!" (Rev. xxii, 17.) He who knows the Bible, knows that there is no great, deep, lofty, fruitful thought in the world, that can not be found in this Book.

To all questions the Bible has brief, striking answers, and a thousand years ago it knew all that to-day moves the hearts of men. All science must exclaim with Swammerdam, "I really do not know why we die;" for death, notwithstanding it has come to be such an every-day affair among us, remains a riddle to science. The Bible answers, "The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." What all man promulgates concerning the causes of social evils, and how he believes to have found the causes for the same in this and that! The Bible answers briefly, "Sin is a reproach [*Verderben*] to any people," an every-day evident, absolute fact. What all we have written concerning the duties of men! The Bible says: "What doth

the Lord, thy God, require of thee, but to fear the Lord thy God, to walk in all His ways, and to love Him, and to serve the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul?" "There be many that say, Who will show us any good? Lord, lift Thou up the light of Thy countenance upon us!" Two views of life in two sentences. How full of care we are, and how we excuse and color our being so! The Word says tersely, "Be careful for nothing!" But we can not make up our minds to live like the fowls of the air, and to grow and blossom like the lilies of the field. Or others try to place us under the law again, saying that eating meat or drinking wine is the ruination of men, or contending that we must again observe the Sabbath. But the Word of the new Covenant says, "Let no man therefore judge you in meat or in drink or in respect of the Sabbath days." Under the new name of Spiritualism others interrogate the dead, a practice common among ancient nations, and still common among the uncivilized; *e. g.*, the Samoyedes, the Laplanders, and the Indians; allow themselves to be deceived by sly mediums, or occasionally by wretched shades from Hades, who, robbed of the light of the sun, and, having received no other, are more vain, stupid, and ignorant in this their darkness than they were on earth. Of such dead, not of those whom angels carry into Abraham's bosom, Solomon said, "The dead know not anything." "In the grave there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom." On those who interrogate them, the Bible passes sentence contemptuously: "When they shall say unto you, Seek unto them that have familiar spirits, and unto wizards that peep and that mutter: should not a people seek unto their God? for the living

to the dead? To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." The much debated question, whether miracles or no, it answers with the only and eternally valid counter question, "Is there anything too hard for God?" How much superfluous matter has been spoken and written on the so-called restitution of all things, instead of quietly leaving all such decrees to God, whose alone it is to judge! One said unto him, "Lord, are there few that be saved? and He said unto them, Strive to enter in at the strait gate." (Luke xiii, 23, 24.) Others teach that the Christian must attain to sinless holiness in this world. But the Word says, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." A sinless man would be a man who loves God with all his heart, with all his soul, and with all his thought. This earthly tabernacle could not endure such love; the soul would rend asunder the body, and soar to God.

And of the words of man, this greatest and mightiest revelation of his soul, according to which we shall be justified or damned, the Word of God says, "Let your communication be, Yea, yea; nay, nay;" a great word, reaching up to heaven and down to hell. Yea and nay is an affirmative or negative answer to something said; for man can not posit anything, but can only affirm or negate, what God or Satan posits. There is a God of the good, whose entire creation is yea and Amen; there is a God of evil, the God of this world, "the liar, and the father of it," who ever and eternally says "No!" to whatever the former says and does. Man hovers between these two great principles of all existence; and it is true knowledge

and divine life reverently to say "Yea!" to all God says, does, wills, and demands of us, and to say "No!" to all that the devil, the world, and the flesh whisper to us. In heaven there is eternal Yea, in hell eternal Nay. Of this clear knowledge of absolute, not conditioned and relative truth, the Bible says, "The truth shall make you free." Therefore whatever does not make free, is not truth. You enlightened and unbiased fancy yourselves free because you have rid yourselves of God; have rid your life and your education of His Word; have rid your literature of the laws of the true and the good; have rid your art of the laws of the beautiful. But your entire enlightenment, your culture, and your art do not rid you of your pride and your egotism; of your burning desire for money, possessions, and pleasures; of your thirst for other and new things; of the cares of poverty, and the deceit of riches; of the anxiety, of life, and the fear of death. Your enlightenment is not truth, and you are not free.

The Bible is true; in fact, the only true thing amid the great lie of this world. It says, "The whole world lieth in wickedness," and the world itself knows it. "Do not allow yourself to be deceived!" the children of this world earnestly or smilingly call to one another as the substance of their worldly wisdom—and go on deceiving. They speak loudly and boldly, laugh and dance, go to the beer-table and to the variety theater, seem to be merry and happy; and, if they would but admit it, there is not one among them all who has not in his heart entertained the thought of suicide. Their happiness is falsehood. Or they intoxicate themselves with the doctrine of Zarathustra, and dream of superior men (*Ueber-*

*menschen*), fair beasts, laughing lions; and upon awaking they are again the beast of burden, which, driven by the heartless whip of need, treads wearily on down the path of life, hoping to find a few thistles along the way; and the *Uebermenschen* die in insane asylums. Falsehood, falsehood! The leaders in literature proclaim the intellectual emancipation of man, and offer, as the substance of liberty, free love, and suicide! And emancipated women cry, "More culture!" speak much and proudly of nobility of soul and character, and then run away from husband and children, and write fiction full of adultery and filth of soul. Falsehood! All these call themselves the enlightened, and do not know whence they are, why they exist, and whither they go; call themselves the friends of light, and teach that we and the universe will some day vanish into eternal night. But us, who believe that we come from the eternal light, and that this light will eternally shine upon us, they call pessimists and opponents of enlightenment. And then the world compassionately calls us "broken men." Falsehood also! Who was the broken man—Paul, who, bound by cruel Nero, could exclaim, "Rejoice in the Lord alway; and again I say, rejoice;" "I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ our Lord;" or Nero, who, pale and trembling, looks about in vain for a hiding-place where he might save his wretched life? Was Luther in Worms the broken man, or his opponent, Emperor Charles V, in the cloister at St. Just, tired of life and of the world? What "broken" person, threatened

by the disfavor of princes and by severe, probably life-long, imprisonment, exclaimed:

“Without fear and without trembling  
Christians dare anywhere  
To appear without dissembling.  
And, though death destructive reigneth,  
Still anew courage true,  
Calm, and undismayed remaineth?”

Which one wrote the joyful hymn, “Go forth, my heart, and seek delight?” or the one felt and sung by thousands of Christians:

“My heart with joy is bounding,  
And can not mournful be;  
With gladsome songs resounding,  
It does but sunshine see?”

Where are broken men? Who fills our prisons with bankrupt bank directors, absconding cashiers, founders of bogus stock companies, swindlers of all kinds? Who fills the asylums for nervously and mentally deranged with overworked business men, ambitious scholars, disappointed artists and actors, philosophers and poets, crazed by their own ideas? Who supplies the dissecting-table of the amphitheater with corpses of criminals and suicides, of ravished maidens and poor starved wenches, of those ruined by drink and vice, of those who through their own fault or the fault of others, have lost faith in God and in themselves—Christianity or the world?

With uncolored truthfulness and cold impartiality the Bible portrays this falsehood and guilt of the world, as well as of the pious, and the penalty therefor. What



is it that holds together the world, the intellectual and the material? Not the wisdom nor the art nor the ability nor the works of men, but the justice of God, the iron law of psychic development, according to which we, in every moment, are the product of our works, words, and thoughts; are to-day the fruit of yesterday and the day before yesterday. It is the divine law of nature, according to which guilt and punishment are equated with mathematical precision. And all this the Bible traces back consistently and unrelentingly to the great primal law that radiates from God and rules the universe. Light and warmth, knowledge and love, life and joy, strength and understanding, decrease as the square of the distance from God, the sole source of light and life.

A well-known critic ridicules the fact that the history of the people of Israel consists of the monotonous repetition of falling away, being punished, and returning again unto Jehovah. Yea, and the history of all mankind is none other. Through fear of the Lord, in whatever form, nations and kingdoms are blessed, become great and powerful. Through falling away from God and through idolatry they are ruined, whether the idols are called Baal, Astarte, Minerva, Venus, Apollo, or science, reason, progress, pleasure, dollar. This is shown by the history of the world; this the German nation, too, will experience. But here, as everywhere, the Bible alone goes back to the root of things. In it the justice of God marches through the centuries, grand, lofty, and unmerciful. More tragic than Macbeth, psychologically truer and deeper than any drama of Shakespeare or Schiller, Racine or Sophocles, is the Biblical biography of Saul. Elsewhere we are shown in a single verse the logical,

inevitable close of a self-seeking life. "And when Ahithophel saw that his counsel was not followed, he saddled his ass, and arose, and gat him home to his house, to his city, and put his household in order, and hanged himself, and died, and was buried in the sepulcher of his father." (2 Sam. xvii, 23.) The touching drama of a soul in its grim and silent determination! Was that the rash, unpremeditated deed of one not wholly responsible, as we are wont to say by way of apology? No, it is the mathematical product and the quotient of a life of that kind. And that is true still. Non-imputable despair and insanity are not casual phenomena, unconnected and without cause.

But for those who love him, God changes everything, even guilt and punishment, for the better. David had sinned greatly through lust of the flesh and murder; great was the retribution so minutely visited upon him for years in the sensuous life of Amnon and his murder at the hands of Absalom. (2 Sam. xii, 11, 12-16, 21, 22.) God's mill grinds slowly, but fine. But the salutary fruits thereof can be seen in the fifty-first Psalm, and in his entire subsequent life. Jacob wanted to get rich at Laban's, and he reached the goal, energetically pursued for years. But God showed him the vanity of possessions, in the night in which he feared the sword of Esau; on the day in which he lost his beloved Joseph; or when in the famine he suffered want.

The Bible is an inexhaustible source of genuine philosophy and true psychology. For it knows, as no other book does, all the longing and waiting of the human heart. Yea, waiting! Our life is a waiting for something that does not want to come.

“We wait, whether laughing or weeping;  
We wait, whether waking or sleeping;  
We wait, though of vanity weary;  
We wait, though in feverish hurry;  
We wait, if the goal promise gladness,  
Or fill us with dread and with sadness.”

And when we have waited a lifetime for many things that do not come, we finally wait, uneasy and disappointed, for that which surely will come, death, and then—the great *nothing!* This waiting of the godly and the ungodly; this expectant tarrying of our souls; this our living not in the present, but in the future, proves that this life's purpose is not life itself, but the preparation for something future. The world does not know for what it waits, or what awaits it; it freely admits that its eternal future is hidden from it. The Bible knows what awaits every man, the godly and the ungodly; and this, too, is a proof of its divinity. They will both reap what they have sown, and eat the fruits of their works. Absolute logic of all existence, evident truth. “The hope of the righteous shall be gladness.” “We wait for the redemption of our body.” “We look for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ.” “We look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.”

The Bible alone meets the requirements of the soul. For the soul of man was planned for great things, and feels that it was created to rule and to possess; created for joy and pleasure, for power and liberty. The world also mistakes, when it fancies that Christians are people who have no taste for art and poetry, for all that is great and lofty and beautiful. Because a spark of eternity has fallen into their soul, and has kindled a thirst that no

water on earth can quench; because they are filled with a burning desire for the good, the true, and the beautiful, they make greater demands than the children of this world. They can not be content with the sight of the most beautiful temples and palaces, nor of the Sistine Madonna, nor with the possession of a collection of paintings, be they ever so valuable. They can not be content with such possessions as safely invested capital; business enterprises, or factories, however profitable; villas, with all possible modern conveniences, with large parks and private hunting-grounds. For we see that all these things do not satisfy the souls of their owners, and daily we hear that they have been "left behind." We want something absolutely safe, incorruptible, and indestructible; something that no being in the universe, neither death nor devil, can rob us of; and we want it complete in its beauty, entire in its verity, perfect in its goodness, incomprehensible in its grandeur, its height, and its depth. We can not be content with less.

The Bible offers ideals and aims grander and loftier than any ever offered in any book written by man. God created man dust of dust, and therefore he cleaves to the dust, and in it arduously gains his sustenance. But God breathed into him the breath of life, and he became a living soul. This living soul can never be content with the dust of the earth. Longingly it remembers its origin, and feels within itself something divine, that no earthly thing can satisfy. It dreams of superterrestrial beauty, of heavenly purity, of incorruptible possessions, of unfading glory, of true knowledge, of great struggles, of heroic deeds, and of victory. This thirst is the source of all poetry, all art, all imaginations and endeavors of man.

And because this thirst is divine, God will satisfy it; but not with mean and corruptible things that must be left behind in death. Did not Roman emperors have everything that the earth can offer of riches, glory, possessions, pleasures? And despite all these, they were often fools, like Nero, Caligula, Heliogabalus. Before his death Septimius Severus said, "I was everything, and it has profited me nothing!" And even Hadrian, one of the best among them, dying sighed, "Poor little soul of mine! Whither wilt thou flutter now?" But if you will believe God, and in this faith will despise the world, He is minded to reward you with eternal values. Would you have possessions, "he that overcometh shall inherit all things, and I will be His God, and he shall be My son." Of the new earth you shall have all you desire and can use for blessedness, together with a beautiful dwelling-place "not made with hands," one of the many mansions in our great Father's house; for to us the whole creation is the house of our Father. Would you have honor? He has unfading crowns and palms of victory. Would you have knowledge? You shall be permitted to see God, and in Him the eternities, their creations, all universes from the star to the atom, their rise, their duration, and their passing away. What incomprehensible, dazzling knowledge, to behold clearly in this primal source all the causes of being, and the how, why, and wherefore of all creations! Would you have art? Its home is in heaven, where it is eternally born anew, eternally more beautiful, by the divine *sophia*; and what the earth offers in art is but a faint recollection of paradise, as when the ragged kidnaped child of a king tries to build with the clay and mud of the streets a copy of

the palace of which it faintly recollects that it was once its home. Would you have beauty? Why should heaven not be beautiful? The beautiful is the reflection of the true; and there is no untruth in heaven. Would you have power? As conqueror you shall be permitted to sit with Christ in His throne, even as He also overcame and is set down with His Father in His throne. Then you shall be permitted to rule the nations with a rod of iron, and break them to shivers as the vessels of a potter.

But that for which we all sigh here below is, that we might be sound, potent egos, no longer crippled in the veil of clay; egos with true senses, grasping the forces of the universe; yea, containing them in ourselves, centers and suns of light and of power. We would be kings of the elements and their forces, no longer their timid slaves; toward this our endeavors tend more than ever, and we boast of having subjugated time and space, force and matter. But we deceive ourselves; and terrible railroad disasters, the sinking of the largest and best equipped steamers, devastating storms, earthquakes, and volcanic eruptions, teach us very plainly how impotent we are over against these forces of nature. Here, too, the Bible promises us the full gratification of this hunger. Behold our firstborn brother, of whom it is said, "We shall be like him;" "who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body." Thus we shall stand and walk upon the new earth, clothed with a white garment, girt with a golden girdle; our head and our hairs white like wool, as white as snow; our eyes as a flame of fire; our feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; our voice as the sound of many waters, and our countenance as the sun shineth in his

strength. (Rev. i, 13-16.) From this glorious being to which we shall be resurrected follows the glory of the entire creation surrounding us there, and of our entire existence.

A well-known rationalist, whom friends would have comforted on his death-bed with prospects of heaven, answered, "The conditions for existence here I know; the conditions for existence yonder I do not know." All his science had not taught the poor man that the conditions for our existence are in ourselves. God created man in His own image, and animated him with His own breath, in order that the law of creation might continually radiate from him; and as the soul is eternally the same, so the conditions for its existence remain the same, like God, who is the same yesterday, to-day, and forever. This is our sorrow and the result of sin, that the conditions for our existence are not fully met here. This is heaven, that they will be fully and completely met in the new earth. Why eyes like flames of fire, if they are not to behold the light, glorious forms and gorgeous colors? Why a voice like the sound of mighty rushing waters, if not in order to speak, to command (for we shall be kings), to sing, and to praise? Why a powerful arm, if there is nothing in yonder world that can be grasped? Why feet, if not for walking? But how void of logic, of connection, of reality, are the heavenly conceptions of so many Christians! For the devil whispers to them that the divine is only spiritual; that these are psychic conditions and sensibilities; one must guard against conceiving them grossly sensuous. Thus he successfully smothers the glimmering fire of our longings for eternal joy. But he is a liar from the beginning.

*The more divine, the more true and real.* God's Word does not deceive us with mere likenesses of inconceivable things. And as Job exclaims with confiding faith, "Mine eyes shall behold Him," so the Christian says: With these my hands I shall pluck luscious, strengthening, nourishing fruit, and shall eat them with this my mouth. (Rev. xxii, 2.) Did Christ not promise His disciples that they should "eat and drink at His table in His kingdom?" Did He not say, in taking leave of them, "I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in My Father's kingdom?" And in His glorified body He partook of earthly food before His disciples and with them, in order to prove to them in fact the reality of the heavenly life. Does he not promise us, "In My Father's house are many mansions?" How does it occur to some Christians to teach that the heavenly life is something inconceivable, in which we shall float about like mere thoughts, having no relation to space and time, therefore invisible and without form or fashion—for form and visibility are phenomena of space! If this is true, then why rise again from the dead? We shall some day marvel at how natural, how simple, how human heaven is, and yet how unspeakably glorious and blissful is this sinless, heavenly nature and new earth, upon which we shall walk as kings and priests throughout eternities.

Still more intense, but fully answering the outward conditions of existence above, is the immutable longing, hungering, and thirsting of the soul after righteousness, peace, joy, and love. That these higher conditions of our existence are not fulfilled here below, is also our fault, and a source of sorrow to us. That they are ful-



filled on the new earth, is heaven also. There for the first time they will be fulfilled in us and by us, and enraptured we shall find, in looking upon ourselves, that we stand washed clean from every spot and blemish. The blessed will practice righteousness in the measure in which God gives them righteousness. They will give peace in the measure in which they have peace in themselves; they will be loved in the measure in which they love. The conditions of your heavenly life lie within you. Thus the heavenly existence, simple, real, and unspeakably glorious, arises quite naturally and yet grandly from the fundamental laws and through the fundamental forces which the Divine Lord in the beginning spake into the divine creation.

He who with firm faith lays hold on these Biblical ideals, which have been anticipated, even though shadowy, by all poets, will be kept from striving after false ideals. Because we believe so little in the absolute reality, tangibility, and naturalness of heavenly possessions, we cling so much to earthly possessions, and are so deeply grieved if we lose them; and that these beautiful truths are not laid hold upon, is the cause of the undecided spiritual life of so many Christians, and hinders them from beautifying materially and intellectually the world about them. A prosaic, tedious Christian, to whom questions of earthly existence, of habitation and remuneration, of social convention and customs, are tragic; in whom nothing can be noticed of that divine humor, that divine light-mindedness, the anticipation and reflection of the joys of eternity, which pleases so much in Luther, Cœtinger, Oberlin, Dr. Barth, or Father Stilling, is not yet a free Christian. All truly wise and great minds have ever felt

how little earthly knowledge and earthly riches, industry or commerce, social progress, or other idols worshiped by the masses, can truly satisfy man; and this fact also appears from the insanity and suicide of many who are favored by fortune, but worship these idols. Man must have ideals; the only question is, Where does he seek them? We Christians seek our ideals, not in the dust, but in the sky; not temporal, but eternal. For even the worldly man admits that ideals are things never to be reached in this world. But every man's heart tells him that there are eternal and heavenly ideals. We believe in a God who will some day take away all sorrow; in a world wherein righteousness shall dwell; in a fulfillment of all our desires; in a satiation of all our hungering and thirsting. We can wait; the world can not.

The sons of Belial ridicule the first book of the Bible as childish legends; the last book they call phantasies of an ecstatic fanatic, and the shining figure between they do not see at all. "For their eyes are holden that they do not know Him." But we, whose eyes have been opened, look amazed upon the grand unity and the magnificent harmony of this wonderful book. It contains all kinds of episodes and digressions; it lingers and follows winding paths; and yet the way is straight, does not turn aside to the right or to the left, and with divine precision leads directly to the goal. And the end finds again the beginning. Eternally the same trees of life grow, under which Adam and Eve walked; trees of life never wither and dry up; and crystal rivers flow. No longer, however, man, naked and in childlike innocence, tills the garden, but kings and priests in shining robes pass in and out at the pearly gates and the gigantic

golden palaces of the City of God. That is the gain, the reward of the labors and burdens of the week of earthly life; and now their guilt is a vanished dream of Lucifer, a brief episode between two eternities, forgotten in eternal bliss.

Thus the Scriptures are a gigantic structure, so simple that the poorest in intellect is gladdened by its sight, and so wonderfully executed that the greatest human mind can not cease admiring it. And all this is presented so unaffectedly, so naturally, and with such freedom, that at first one does not notice its immense grandeur, and yet with a destructive, unmerciful logic and inflexible consistency not equaled in any book ever written by man. Like a rock it stands, and will stand as long as the earth lasts.

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But here unbelief asks: What proof have you that the Bible is the Word of God? Proof? Does the Bible need such? No. Does it attempt to prove? No. Proofs, especially rhetorical and rational proofs, are crutches; point to something that was assumed to be proved, but examined more closely is in need of proof itself. The Bible is not in need of proof; for it does not treat of that which is relative, but establishes that which is absolute. The relative must be proved, the absolute not. "In the beginning God created." Believe it, or do not believe it. "Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin." If this must still be proved to you, you are a hopeless case. You have no eyes for immediate truth; you are not fit for heaven, where proofs are no longer given. The Bible does not operate by means of critical,

scientific, philosophical, or theological proofs. Of the thousands among the poor, the uneducated, and the ignorant, who believed the Bible and were saved by it, scarcely one in a hundred had ever heard of such proofs, or of proofs for or against the Bible at all. The Word of God influenced their hearts directly, and the Spirit of God witnessed with their spirit that they were children of God; that was enough for them.

It is a spiritually indigent generation that is ever crying for proofs. Have you proofs that the sun shines and the stars twinkle, that the rose is fragrant and bread nourishes you, that love refreshes your soul and hatred grieves it? Can that which is grandest and loftiest, best and most beautiful in the world be proved? Believers, too, attach too much weight to critical proofs; *e. g.*, when the genuineness of the Gospel of John is to be proved by quoting Clement of Alexandria or Irenæus of Lyons. For who will prove to me from other "sources" the genuineness and authenticity of these quotations, and who will prove the genuineness of these "sources," etc.? How little is gained from such proofs appears from the fact that scholarly theologians, like Professor Harnack, do not believe them. Thus another critic of Irenæus writes: The testimony of this man, "who claims to have stood in immediate contact with the Apostle John," that John wrote the Book of Revelation, "is worthless, because he also ascribes the fourth Gospel to the same apostle." Thus even venerable but displeasing sources can be questioned and rejected. He whose faith rests upon such arguments will constantly be wavering between arguments and counter-arguments. Therefore we prefer to open the Book, and taste spiritually; then we

are convinced, not only of its genuineness, but also of its divinity. At the teachings of Jesus our soul rejoicingly exclaims, "Never man spake like this man! These are the words of eternal life!" Then we know that the testimony of this disciple is true (John xxi, 24); for God does not give such words to a falsifier or a defrauder.

That which is true is constantly proved by its mere existence,—fire by its burning, water by its flowing, the sun by its lighting and warming. So the Bible, this divine light, this water of life, this spiritual sun, the rays of which bring healing. It has ever proved to friend and foe to be the power of God that saves and condemns; a rock, to which one can flee and be sheltered from the storms and the raging waters, and on which whosoever shall fall shall be broken.

The divinity of God's Word can be demonstrated as little as God Himself. But as the Christian nevertheless is justified in pointing out his God in creation; in admiring and showing to others His greatness, His wisdom, and His power; so he is also justified in recognizing and praising the glory and power of the Bible in the history of the human race, without attempting to demonstrate them. There its truth shines forth in the destinies both of nations and of individuals.

The Bible further distinguishes itself from all so-called "sacred books" of all nations in that it knows and shows things that are to come. Where is there a book written by man that has dared to predict positively the destinies of its own people for the space of a century to come, to say nothing of predicting the destinies of other peoples and kingdoms, their rise and fall during thousands of years? "Who, as I," says Jehovah, "shall call,

and shall declare it, and set it in order for Me, since I appointed the ancient people? And the things that are coming, and shall come, let them show unto them." (Isa. xlv, 7.) "I declare the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." (Isa. xlvi, 10.)

As in the Old Testament the Israelitish nation, and in the New Testament its scion Christ, are the central points in the respective views of the world, so these prophecies pertain to all nations whose history is bound up with the history of Israel. Thus Moab and Ammon shall be visited with retribution for their years of enmity. Where are they now? And of Idumea it was repeatedly spoken: "Thou shalt be desolate, O mount Seir, and all Idumea, even all of it." (Ezek. xxxv, 3, 4, 15.) The atheist Volney was the first to report that during a journey of eight days he had there found thirty ruined, utterly abandoned cities. "There shall not be any remaining of the house of Esau." (Obad. 18.) Where is the people of Edom to-day? "O thou that dwellest in the clefts of the rock, that holdest the height of the hill: though thou shouldest make thy nest as high as the eagle, I will bring thee down from thence, saith the Lord." (Jer. xlix, 16.) God has snatched the proud inhabitants of the now desolate rocky palaces of Petra out of their nest, and has cast them down.

Concerning Canaanitish Sidon and Tyre, from which under Jezebel the abomination of Baal had in great measure been transplanted to Israel, the prophet announces: "I will make thee like the top of a rock; thou shalt be a place to spread nets upon; thou shall be built

no more." Lamartine (*Voyage en Orient*), among others, wonders at how literally this prophecy has been fulfilled. Continental Tyre has not been built again. It was threatened: The Lord "will scrape her dust from her, and make her like the top of a rock." (Ezek. xxvi, 4.) "They [thine enemies] shall lay thy stones and thy timber and thy dust in the midst of the water." (Ezek. xxvi, 12.) Two and a half centuries later Alexander the Great besieged Tyre, and decided to build a dam a half mile long between the main land and the island; for this purpose the walls and doors, the palaces and temples of the old city were torn down, and the stones and timbers, yea, even the dust, were thrown from their places into the sea.

Equally definite are the prophecies again Egypt, "the iron furnace," in which the children of Israel groaned so many years. Likewise against No, or Thebes. "No shall be torn asunder," Ezekiel said five hundred years before Ptolemy Saltyrus, the grandfather of Cleopatra, after a siege of three years, razed to the ground the city, which had previously been half ruined by Cambyses. Even Strabo (25 B. C.) found the once magnificent city divided into many separate villages. To-day there are nine of these. How often it is predicted that the rivers and canals of Egypt shall dry up, that their fishermen shall grow poor, and that the land shall be desolate; and how has this been fulfilled! Where are the fisheries of Lake Moeris, which are said to have yielded the Pharaohs an annual income of 1,800,000 marks? Indeed, Egypt has come to be "the land of ruins," and "its cities are in the midst of cities that are wasted." (Ezek. xxx, 7.) Truly, God has "made waste" the land "by the hand of

strangers" (Ezek. xxx, 12), from Cambyses and Amroo and Ochus down to the Turk of to-day. "There shall be no more a prince of the land of Egypt." (Ezek. xxx, 13.) But the Egyptians shall not be wholly exterminated, like the Babylonians and Ninevites. "It shall be (in its own land) the basest of the kingdoms; neither shall it exalt itself any more above the nations." How true this also is of the once so proud and powerful nation; now an insignificant kingdom, ruled by strangers!

But the chief enemies of Israel were Assyria and Babylonia. The downfall of these two proud powers is prophesied; and never has the downfall of an empire been more complete. Their land was a granary, a blooming garden carefully watered by canals, so fruitful, that Herodotus feared he would be accused of lying if he related what he had seen: that a grain of wheat bore two hundred to three hundred fold, and that many ears were of the width of four fingers. How incredible that such a land, swarming with highly civilized inhabitants, should be converted into a desolate, seared, wholly unproductive and uninhabited desert! How could it come about? For such a thing has never taken place in Europe, China, or India. But the Lord said through the prophet, "Her cities shall be a desolation, a dry land, and a wilderness, a land wherein no man dwelleth, neither doth any son of man pass thereby." And it is a desert. Of this land the traveler Fraser says, "The entire plain is densely covered with traces of former habitations, but now offers the eye nothing but an immense barren desert, a melancholy waste." And Ker Porter says, "Every bit of ground, as far as the eye could reach, was wholly unproductive." Investigators, who travel in these countries,



marvel at the disappearance of such powerful civilizations. Even the infidel Volney describes these ruins and deserts in words that often seem to be taken from the prophets, so minutely does fulfillment agree with prophecy.

How utterly improbable it must have sounded, to the contemporaries of Isaiah and Jeremiah, that the great Babylon, this oldest metropolis of the world, founded by Nimrod, planned to be a city on the Euphrates much larger than Paris of to-day (J. Menant), surrounded by walls four hundred feet high, on the top of which four chariots, each drawn by four horses, could be driven side by side; in the center a large, magnificent park an hour's walk in circumference, watered by machinery; in it the king's twelve palaces, surrounding the great temple of the sun-god with its six hundred-foot tower and its gigantic golden statue,—should be converted into a heap of ruins in the midst of a desert! Who to-day would have any faith in a similar prophecy against Berlin or London or Paris or New York? But thus saith the prophet concerning Babylon: "It shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation; neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there; neither shall the shepherds make their folds there. But wild beasts of the desert shall lie there; and their houses shall be full of doleful creatures; and owls shall dwell there, and satyrs shall dance there. And the wild beasts of the islands shall cry in their desolate houses, and dragons in their pleasant palaces." (Isa. xiii, 20-22.) "I will make thee a burnt mountain" (Jer. li, 25); "Babylon shall become heaps." (ver. 37.) It has been done. In the desert plain on the Euphrates there rises, stretching afar, a

mountain of brick, partly burnt and half vitrified; the Arabs call it Birs Nimrud, the tower of Nimrod. Of this Porter reports, "Its hiding-places are inhabited by lions, three of which were quietly sunning themselves, when I drew near." Keppel says, "Owls fly out of the sparse thickets, and the loathsome jackal creeps in its furrows." On the ruins of Babylon the Arab neither pitches his tent, nor herds his flocks; for the entire place is reported to be the habitation of evil spirits; and Arabs could not be hired to spend the night there.

Great Babylon, the city of Baal, fought against Jerusalem, the city of Jehovah, a giant against a dwarf. But Babylon and its people have disappeared like a dream in the morning, and Jerusalem and its inexterminable people still stand; for thus hath Jehovah spoken. And some day, when all the Babylons of the world, in which lust of the eyes, lust of the flesh, and the pride of life reign, pass away with the old earth, a gigantic golden city of peace, the new and true Jerusalem shall descend upon the new earth in fullness of blinding light.

It would require whole chapters to quote the prophecies concerning Israel. Every Bible reader knows them, and knows how, fifteen hundred years before, the powerful prophet, who spoke face to face with God, set a blessing and a curse before this people. (Deut. xxviii.) It chose the curse. Will any one deny that this nation, torn from its hereditary land, has been and still is cast among all nations? In accordance with prophecy, hated, persecuted, despised as no other nation, and yet inexterminable, it nurtures in its heart the hope of returning some day to Jerusalem. How strikingly, in the long, oft-times terrible persecutions of the Jews, the threat has

been fulfilled: "The Lord shall scatter thee among all people. And among these nations shalt thou find no ease, neither shall the sole of thy foot have rest; but the Lord shall give thee there a trembling heart, and failing of eyes, and sorrow of mind. And thy life shall hang in doubt before thee." (Deut. xxviii, 64-66.)

Very minutely Moses announces to the Jews their downfall at the hands of the Roman nation: "The Lord shall bring a nation against thee from far, from the end of the earth, as swift as the eagle flieth"—as is well known, the eagle was the standard of the Roman legions—"a nation whose tongue thou shalt not understand"—the Jews knew and understood many Oriental languages, but not the Latin—"a nation of fierce countenance"—how striking!—"which shall not regard the person of the old, nor show favor to the young." (Deut. xxviii, 49, 50.) It is reported that when the Romans took the Jewish cities, although they had promised to spare the lives of the inhabitants, they killed the aged and the children, because they were unfit to serve as slaves. Again the seer says: "And he shall besiege thee in all thy gates, until thy high and fenced walls come down, wherein thou trustedst, throughout all thy land." (Deut. xxviii, 52.) The high and fenced walls of Jerusalem, says an eye-witness, were joined so exactly of huge blocks of stone that they seemed to be a single rock. But Josephus describes how the Romans beat against these walls and towers with immense battering rams, the iron heads of which weighed many hundredweight, until they fell in ruins. High above the Dead Sea towered the rocky fortress of Herod, filled with stores of all kinds, and considered impregnable. But month after month the Romans

dug paths into the rock, carried up stone after stone, in spite of all opposition built a tower higher than the fortress, took the fortress, and killed the garrison. It had been prophesied, that during this siege the Jews should suffer a most terrible famine. Both the tender man and "the tender and delicate woman among you, which would not adventure to set the sole of her foot upon the ground for delicateness and tenderness, shall eat their children, and will not give to any of their own of the flesh of their children, for want of all things in the siege and straitness, wherewith thine enemy shall distress thee in thy gates." (Deut. xxviii, 54-57.) This terrible prophecy also was literally fulfilled during the siege of Jerusalem, and later during the Middle Ages. Finally the prophet threatens, "The Lord shall bring thee *into Egypt again with ships*; and there ye shall be sold unto your enemies for bondmen and bondwomen, *and no man shall buy you.*" (Deut. xxviii, 68.) Josephus reports that, after the destruction of Jerusalem and the invasion of Palestine, all Jews over seventeen years of age, many thousands, were *brought to Egypt in ships*, in order to be sold there as slaves. The market was so glutted that finally a Jew was bartered for a pair of slippers. *At last no one would buy*, and three thousand Jewish slaves were left to starve to death.

Later various prophets repeatedly announced to the rebellious, muttering nation why it was chastised by God, and what the king of Babylon would do with it and its kings; that for seventy years they would be held captive in Babylon, and Jerusalem be deserted; how, after that, a king not yet born, of the name of Cyrus, should receive command to rebuild the temple; how later they

should be scattered throughout the world, a mockery to all nations, and yet should not be destroyed. Is not "the land of beauty" now a land of ruins, and do not "its cities lie desolate?" And it is also a land of pilgrimages. "The stranger that shall come from a far land, and all nations shall say, Wherefore hath the Lord done thus unto this land?" (Deut. xxix, 22, 24.) The faithful pilgrim, too, and the stupidly gaping crowds of modern heathen from far away lands, who annually pour into Palestine and trample upon the holy city, and, void of understanding, look upon the Jews who weep at the walls of their temple, ask astonished: How has the land come to be thus destroyed, and how have its cities become so desolate?

But because God is faithful and merciful, the prophecies close with words of peace and comfort, with great promises of how the God who scattered Israel will gather it again, and will keep what he promised Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. "Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that it shall no more be said, 'The Lord liveth, that brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt; but, 'The Lord liveth, that brought up the children of Israel from the land of the north, and from all the lands whither he had driven them; and I will bring them again into their land that I gave unto their fathers.'" (Jer. xvi, 14, 15. See also Ezek. xi, 16-20.) It was an easy thing for God to convert the flourishing country on the Euphrates into a desert, and to destroy its people. Why should it be a more difficult thing for him to convert the present desert of Palestine into a flourishing garden full of springs of water, and give it back again to his people? No; the arm of the Lord is not shortened, even

though many unbelievers and many who are weak in the faith still exclaim mockingly or doubtingly, "How shall this be?"

For the time of the present casting away of Israel, during which Christ is gathering an invisible Church out of all nations and tongues, prophecy is silent concerning this people, from which God has for the time being turned away his face; but this break in the world's history is filled out by the Prophet Daniel, living in exile on the Euphrates.

In great visions of God the four empires that fill out the time of the nations are shown simultaneously to mighty Nebuchadnezzar and to mourning Daniel. (Dan. ii and vii.) In magnificent symbolism the great ruler sees them, like unto a statue, terrible to behold; but the prophet sees them, like unto wild beasts, rising out of the sea of nations. Every one versed in history knows how strikingly the Babylonian lion and the golden head (Dan. iii, 1), the bear from the mountains of Media, and the silver, and the winged, four-headed leopard correspond to the swift conqueror Alexander, his mailed phalanxes, and his four successors; and how the fourth, strong as iron, like a terrible, all-devouring beast, corresponds to Rome.

Only a mean, superficial conception of the world's history and of prophecy can take the fourth kingdom to be that of Antiochus Epiphanes, which was utterly insignificant in strength, greatness, duration, and influence; and this little tyrant, mockingly surnamed Epimanes ("the mad"), ill suits to the towering forms of Nebuchadnezzar, Cyrus, Alexander, and Cæsar. He was no world-power; he did not break in pieces and stamp with

his feet the nations; he did not devour the whole earth; from him there did not arise ten kingdoms (Dan. vii, 23); in his day God did not establish an eternal kingdom. (Dan. ii, 44; vii, 22, 27.)

But that Rome was "iron" and "broke in pieces" everything, is recognized by historians like Niebuhr, Mommsen, Guizot, and others, and is often expressed by them in the very same terms. Now, as it is prophesied, clay has been mixed with the iron—*i. e.*, a spiritual empire—which for Nebuchadnezzar, who beholds the great image, is clay, and no longer metal. "But there shall be in it of the strength of the iron." (Dan. ii, 41.) With a residue of worldly power, in constant strife with its anointed so-called Roman emperors from Charles the Great to Napoleon I, Rome in the Middle Ages ruled over kings and nations with an iron rod, and persecuted the Christians; Rome still speaks the Latin language, and with legions of well-disciplined priests controls various nations and more than three million subjects, and in the Eternal City its head still wears the threefold crown. Europe's administration of justice is still based on Roman law, and its culture on the Roman language. In the near future the fourth kingdom, apparently mortally wounded, and separated into ten kingdoms, corresponding to the ten horns and the ten toes, will rise again under the reign of the Anti-Christ. (Rev. xiii, 3; xvii, 8.) Then Christ, the stone cut out without hands, will shatter this kingdom and all the kingdoms of earth, and will establish His own kingdom, which shall endure forever.

But the center of prophecy, as well as of the Scriptures, is Christ, announced at the beginning of the world's

history as He who shall bruise the serpent's head; at the close of the world's history, as He who shall come again. Here, too, we can not cite all prophecies pertaining to Him. For him, whose "understanding He opens, that he might understand the Scriptures" (Luke xxiv, 45), the Bible is full of them, and Christ Himself repeatedly witnesses, "Moses and the Psalms and the prophets have spoken of Me." And His servants have represented Him as prevenient types. Such were Melchizedek, the priest of the Most High; Isaac, selected by God to be a guiltless sacrifice at the hands of his father; Joseph, who, being innocent, is sold by his brothers for twenty pieces of silver, and to whom God subsequently gives dominion; Moses, who leads his people through the Red Sea, and gives them the law; Joshua, who leads them into the promised land; David, chosen by God to be anointed king of Israel; Solomon's reign and his kingdom of peace, with the building of the temple, a type of Christ's millennium on earth. Nor is there any lack of more definite prophecy, beginning with the great promise given to Abraham, that in him all nations of the earth should be blest. "Abraham rejoiced to see His day." Isaiah sees His glory, and rejoices, "Unto us a Child is born, and His name shall be called Wonderful, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace;" he sees His humility, and says: "Surely He hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows. The chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and with His stripes we are healed."

Shall we cite further prophecies? This Messiah was to be a Jew, a son of David. He was to be born in Bethlehem; to come in lowliness and poverty; to be rejected by Israel; to enter Jerusalem riding on an ass; to be be-



trayed by one who ate bread with Him; to be sold for thirty pieces of silver, and the money to be given to the potter; to die a violent death, the manner and the circumstances of which were predicted. "I hid not My face from shame and spitting." "They pierced My hands and My feet." "In My thirst they gave Me vinegar to drink." "They part My garments among them, and cast lots upon My vesture." "All they that see Me laugh Me to scorn; they shake the head, saying: He trusted on the Lord that He would deliver Him; let Him deliver Him, seeing He delighteth in Him." He was to make His grave with the rich in His death. These are prophecies written centuries before Christ came. Have they not been fulfilled literally? "O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken!" (Luke xxiv, 25.) These words might to-day be addressed to such as, blind to such testimony, see nothing more in Jesus than a superior Jewish teacher.

Finally the Bible closes with prophecies pertaining to the last things. Concluding the seven consecutive Churches, Laodicea, "the judgment of the nations," appears, and the judgments of the end begin.

He whose eyes and ears have been opened by the Spirit of God can not escape the impression, shared even by godless persons, that we are drifting toward the end. The principles are manifest. Despite all pride and boastings, the human race is quite tired of its works and ways on earth, and no longer knows what to love, what to believe, and what to hope. It has emptied the cup, and the dregs taste bitter. God can again say, as He said previous to the flood: "My Spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh." (*Die Menschen*

wollen sich nicht mehr von meinem Geist strafen lassen, denn sie sind Fleisch.") No other kingdom arises after the fourth. God will then establish His eternal kingdom.

Thus the Bible is the Book of Prophecy, given by inspiration of Him who alone knows the things that are future, and will accomplish them according to His eternal counsel.

And this, too, is an anticipation and a beginning of the end, that long-forgotten peoples are being resurrected from their graves. The stone age and the lake-dwellings (*Pfahlbauten*), the graves of the Huns and the Troys and Mycenæ, the palaces of Khorsabad and Nineveh, the hieroglyphics of Egypt and the cuneiform writings of Babylon, give up their dead. Christ's words are being fulfilled: "If these [the children of the kingdom] should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out." (Luke xix, 40.) These ruins and writings of very ancient times proclaim aloud that the Bible tells the truth. Thus the well-known Assyriologist, Professor Sayce, of Oxford, writes, "I do not for a moment hesitate to assert that, according to my knowledge, the investigations in Assyria and Egypt thoroughly corroborate the statements of the Old Testament."\*

It was to be expected that a science hostile to the Bible would attempt to use these discoveries against it. If from the beginning the traditions of those nations were different from the Bible traditions, science would have said, "The Bible contains only specifically Jewish legends, which are fabrications of Israelitish priests." And now, that the grand harmony between the Biblical reports and the beliefs of all nations concerning creation, paradise,

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\*From the German rendering of the original.

the fall of man, and the flood is more and more apparent, shall we believe the distorted traditions of Babel, the city of confounded human language, rather than the Biblical reports? And shall we consider these legends of wretched, contentious, unclean deities, who, "fat and drunken with feasting," "fall like flies upon him who is offering sacrifice," thus causing strife between gods and goddesses, to be the "much purer and more original source" from which the monumental report of the doings of a holy and righteous God has originated? Nevermore! "What agreement hath the temple of God with idols?" (2 Cor. vi, 16.) Where, in all this seemingly sublime idol-worship, is there even an approach to the first, greatest, all-illuminating command of the Bible, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind?" And where in its much lauded code of morals the second, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself?" Here is a gulf, as wide as between the former and the present character of Babel and its children, and the character of the Bible and its believers.

The well-known Berlin lecture of Professor Delitzsch on "Babel and Bible" is a melancholy picture. On the one hand, bold, in part contradictory assertions, refuted in the Congress of Orientalists, in Hamburg, by Hilprecht, Sayce, Hommel; premature conclusions and designing inferences, presented in a declamatory manner, with utter lack of an understanding of the Bible; on the other hand, a credulous admiring and accepting of things, of which what is new is for the greater part not true, and what is true is not new; finally, faint-hearted refutations, which did not touch the real essence of the matter. The

Bible teaches that all peoples are descended from Noah and his sons; therefore they were originally monotheists, and many remained so, even though gradually all kinds of nether gods were introduced. Such monotheistic peoples were the Egyptians and Celts, the Polynesians, and the North American Indians; also the Slavs, of whom the historian Prokop reports, "They do indeed pray to rivers, nymphs, and a number of other deities; nevertheless they believe in one God of gods, sole Lord of all, who intrusts the administration of the affairs of this world to these nether gods, whom He created, and occupies Himself exclusively with heavenly affairs." (It is frequently true, even among some European nations, that single cities, or even individual persons, have their particular nether god or saint.) Whether the Babylonians at a certain time were chiefly monotheists or polytheists, and how they named their deities, what bearing have these things on the question whether the Bible is a revelation or not? The battle of Marduk with the dragon, the worship of the moon tablets of clay with problematic representations of the fall of man, or the report of the Gilgameshepos concerning the flood,—these distorted remains of a primal revelation, which are found among so many Asiatic and American peoples,—what have these to do with the truth of the Bible? What has the now translated Codex of Hammurabi or Amraphel (Gen. xiv, 1)—in which Dr. Jeremias, contrary to the assertions of Delitzsch, says "not a single religious thought can be discovered"—in common with the law of Sinai? What have Assyriological corroborations of the history of Abraham, the truth of which it never occurred to us to doubt, to do with his call and the command, "Get thee out of thy

country, and from thy kindred," and with the promise, "In thee shall all families of the earth be blessed," or with his faith in this promise, which was counted unto him for righteousness? What to us who believe the Bible, and to whom the Word of God is immeasurably higher than the word of men, is this groping about in historic surmises and secondary matters?

Evil spirits are said to be originally a Babylonian idea, and the conception of "angels" and "cherubim" to have originated from the couriers and the body-guard of the Assyrian kings. A well-known periodical rejoices that "new and surprising light is thrown upon the origin of the Jewish conceptions of hell and paradise" by a clay cylinder, bearing the inscription, "Whoever leaves this coffin at his threshold, may his name be blessed above, and his soul drink clear water below!" After all, nothing can surpass critical science and the faith of its disciples. At last we know why for six thousand years the whole human race from pole to pole, four hundred million Chinese and one hundred and eighty million Hindoos, the Japanese and the Mexicans, the Esquimos and the Hottentots, the Negroes and the Mongolians, and we Europeans, too, have believed in good and evil spirits, in angels and demons, in heaven and hell. These are all Assyrian notions!

Not less surprising, though no longer new, is the report, that the legend of a flood and the rescue of two persons in a great ship, contained in the traditions of all peoples of the earth, of the Inkas of Peru, and the inhabitants of the Sandwich Islands, originated from a cyclone in the Persian Gulf! Why did not an earthquake in Asia Minor give rise among all nations of the earth to the

legend of a universal earthquake that destroyed all mankind? Such unproved and unprovable things a highly educated public accepts at once as sober science—a public, proud of living in the age of rigidly-examining criticism. There are persons who seem to feel a constant need of minimizing that which is great, of degrading that which is sublime, of vulgarizing that which is holy. For such I would here add, that I remember having read that a tribe of Negroes in Africa relates how their wives at one time, wishing to emancipate themselves, had resolved to build a tower as high as the heavens, and to this end had piled up their millet baskets, but that a storm had blown the structure down. Ought we not to consider this the purer primal legend, from which subsequently the story of the building of the tower of Babel originated?

Proofs taken from archæology, however agreeable they may be to him whose faith wavers, have only secondary value for the Christian who has faith in the Bible; nor do we read that many learned Assyriologists and Egyptologists, or many scholars in general, have turned to God in consequence of these discoveries that agree with the Bible. Here, too, modern man is too forcibly impressed with the new and the sensational. Without Assyriology the Bible has for thousands of years been the Word of God to millions, and it will remain so in the future, with or in spite of Assyriology. Whoever, as Professor Delitzsch does, expects “from the results of Assyriology an essential contribution for a necessary development of religion,” shows that he does not know what religion, much less what Christianity is; and whoever must dig in Assyriology for proofs and supports of his faith in the Bible is to be pitied. His faith, not being

grounded or not resting on "the power of God," but upon the "wisdom of men," will be moved right or left according to every new discovery, or the spirit of every new book, report, or lecture, as a reed is moved by the wind.

More important, more authoritative, and more decisive for us than Assyriological science is the great, shining self-testimony of the Scriptures: I make known what is future, and reveal God's plan of the world from the beginning of things to their completion.

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The power over the individual human heart, which the Bible constantly manifests, is amazing. The fulfillment of prophecy, however striking it may be, remains a historic and general fact, from which I personally receive little help in my earthly need. I inquire whether there are cases in which this Word of God justified and liberated men like me, bowed down by guilt and by earthly sorrow, "through fear of death subject to bondage;" whether it gave them power to despise and joyously to overcome the distress of life and the bitterness of death, and whether they remained firm even unto death; for "all that a man hath will he give for his life." (Job ii, 4.) And with millions of facts history answers: Yes, the Bible has done this.

That the Bible is divine is shown by the fierce and raging hatred it has at all times kindled in the children of the devil. True, men have at all times been persecuted and killed for all kinds of views and heresies; but where is there another book, which has been hated with such deadly hatred, of which thousands of copies have been burned and destroyed, and yet is so widely distributed—

a book, the mere possession of which was often equal to a death-sentence? Many martyrs were burned on pyres of Bibles and New Testaments, or with Bibles hung about their necks. Of what importance is the Bible? Is it natural that the knowledge of God's having so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life, should kindle such wrath, or that it should be a crime to read, or make known to others, the words of Christ, "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you?" And yet we know from thousands of authentic reports, that the enemies foamed with rage and gnashed their teeth when martyrs composedly quoted the Scriptures to them.

In fact, the mere and most speedy extermination of Christians—*e. g.*, by the sword or by banishment, as the Moors were banished from Spain—would have sufficed at all times. But the impulse to afflict and torture them as long and as cruelly as possible, in order to force them to desert or to recant, is characteristic of the personal hatred of the persecutors. Besides, it was feared that they might promulgate the hated Word, wherefore in Rome their tongues were torn out, during the inquisition they were silenced, even on the pyres, with iron gags; and in the Netherlands, under Alba, their tongues were burned out with red-hot rings, before their execution.

Many historians, to whom Christ and the witness for Him is obnoxious, delight in representing these martyrs as stubborn fanatics, who challenged persecution by deriding the gods and their cult; indeed, one historian would have us believe that even dear Nero had only through force of circumstances and from political necessity,



burned a few Christians. True, in those days many martyrs even in their witnessing manifested Roman defiance and inflexibility—a trait which we, alas! are too much in want of; but in the history of martyrdom, covering centuries, the feature that fills us with astonishment is rather the superhuman meekness and humility with which they endured and suffered all things, and with which, even on flaming pyres, they forgave their persecutors.

True, politics played a part in the persecution of Christians; for the devil has ever understood exceedingly well how to use our statecraft for his purposes, and to deceive us in regard thereto. But politics were not the chief cause. It was entirely unpolitic of Philip II, by the cruelty of Alba, to excite the Netherlands against himself on account of their evangelic faith; and also unpolitic of Louis XIV to devastate beautiful Languedoc by his dragoons, and to drive half a million of his most diligent and faithful subjects into exile. But his father-confessor and Letellier had told him that he could merit heaven only by exterminating the heretics; this Philip II believed, and wrote to the governess of the Netherlands, Margaret of Parma, "I would a thousand times rather not reign than rule over heretics!" Thus also bloody Mary and other persecutors. Christians were not dangerous to the State, for they preached, "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers;" "honor the king;" "resist not evil." Neither is the testimony for which thousands suffered death dangerous to the State: "In Jesus alone we have forgiveness of sin, and in His Word we have all we need in order to be saved." The little children were not dangerous to the State, who without sentence, were thrown into the fire with their parents; neither

those weak of old age, who had to be carried to the pyre; neither Mrs. Smith, who was burned in 1519 because she had taught her children the Lord's Prayer and the Ten Commandments in English; neither the martyr Lambert (1538), who, when his legs were already burned to a crisp, raised his hands to bless the people, and exclaimed, "Jesus only! Jesus only!" neither the cripple Milon, who was slowly roasted to death in Paris, because on his bed of pain he had read to the poor from the New Testament; neither young Johanna Waste, blind from her birth, who (1556 in England), after pathetic answers before her judges, permitted herself to be led by the hand to the pyre, where she was cruelly burned to death. But "the world hated them; for they were not of the world." (John xvii, 14.) Behind these persecutors he who has eyes to see, sees the dark, gnashing form of the prince of hell, who knows that the Word believed in and proclaimed by these people will one day judge him.

Such terrible persecutions did not take place in the name of the Bible, as the opponents of the Bible like to maintain; the inquisitors ferreted out and burned even this Bible, and such with it as they found possessing or distributing it. If misled Christians have ever persecuted those of different faith, if others like Zwingli and Gustavus Adolphus, the Hussites, the Camisards, the Puritans, used the sword for the dissemination or maintenance of Biblical truth, they did it contrary to the command and the clear example of Christ, therefore not with, but against, the Bible; and they perished by the sword, because they took the sword.

These martyrs do not number only a few hundred. By thousands and millions they will some day rise again,

“a great multitude, which no man can number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; they came out of great tribulation, and made their robes white in the blood of the Lamb.” Paul, even in his day, could say of the martyrs, “Seeing we are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses;” and in several subsequent great persecutions the people and the Roman emperors shed the blood of Christians like water. (Concerning this and concerning persecutions in general, see Kalb, *Die Maertryrer der alten Kirche*; Fliedner, *Geschichte der Maertryrer*; Merle d’Aubigné, *Historie de la Réformation*; Crespin, *Actes des Martyrs*, and other works.) Thus the Christian Legion, the six thousand six hundred men of which allowed themselves, without offering resistance, to be cut down under Maximus, rather than offer sacrifice to the gods. Thus, under Diocletian, a Phrygian city, inhabited exclusively by Christians, was surrounded and burned with all its inhabitants. Under this emperor the butchery lasted seven years. Eusebius says, “The hangmen grew tired, the swords and instruments of torture grew dull or were broken;” hundreds of thousands had fallen, but constantly others turned to Christianity.

Then the barbarians invaded the country, and the Roman empire perished in blood. We know that multitudes of Christians also died during this invasion; that, *e. g.*, in Gaul and North Africa, entire Christian cities were destroyed by Attila and his Huns, by Vandals, Avars, and Ostrogoths. Among the Angles and Picts; among the wild Germanic tribes (*e. g.*, the Frisians, who slew Boniface and his escort); among the Britons, Bulgarians, and the Hungarians, there were also many mar-

tyrs, when courageous apostles proclaimed the truth to them. Under the cruel Shapur, or Sapor, of Persia, thousands of Christians are said to have been killed. Denmark, Sweden, and Russia have also had their martyrs. There, too, their blood was the seed of the Church.

Later, in the thirteenth century, before Luther and Calvin, there died for the faith thousands of Waldenses and Albigenses (seventy-five thousand of the latter in the crusade preached against them), many Hussites, Bohemians, and Moravians, Wiclifites, and Lollards, in England and the Netherlands. And although not all who perished (*e. g.*, among the Albigenses and Hussites) were true Christians, it must be remembered that they were granted freedom and were frequently offered the opportunity of saving their lives by recanting, and that they refused to do so.

Under Francis I many believers were executed in France with unprecedented cruelty, and after him, under Francis II and Henry II, about fifty thousand Huguenots. During Bartholomew's night forty thousand, according to others seventy thousand, are said to have perished. In the Cevennes, Baviile sent twelve thousand Protestants to be burned to death, to be stretched on the wheel, or to be hung, and many died in the galleys, and during the dragonnades. How many aged, children, women, and babes died, here and elsewhere, of privations, cold, hunger, during flight, in prison, and in consequence of abuses and tortures, no one knows. Similar conditions prevailed in England. After under Henry VIII, the number of Christians killed, according to the historian Fox's somewhat exaggerated statement, was as the sand of the sea, the pyres everywhere flamed anew

under bloody Mary, his worthy daughter. In Ireland about twenty thousand to thirty thousand Protestants were killed during the "Irish carnage" in 1641.

And how the Inquisition of the Middle Ages raged, during which several million heretics are said to have been burned or otherwise punished in the Netherlands, where, under Charles V, about fifty thousand people had been executed, and, after him, Philip II had to fear lest the country should be entirely depopulated; how it raged in Spain, where Torquemada invented new, ingenious, and terrible ways of putting heretics to death, and boasted that he himself had burned alive more than eight thousand (imagine the sum total of tortures contained in this number!); how they butchered in Portugal, whence the Inquisition was introduced in East India, and raged against the so-called "Syrian" Church there! In Spain it lasted till Napoleon I, and in Goa till 1821. After the Waldenses had been persecuted for a hundred years, and after the terrible carnages of 1545 and 1655, fourteen thousand of them were imprisoned under Victor Amadeus II, Duke of Savoy, of whom five thousand lost their lives in a single year. During the years 1614-38 forty thousand Christians are said to have been killed in distant Japan. During the persecution of 1849 in Madagascar, eighteen hundred people were killed or severely punished in other ways on account of their Christian faith. In Spain, Matamoros and his companions, and in Tuscany the venerable Madias, husband and wife, were sent to the galleys for life, as recently as fifty years ago, because they had read and distributed the Bible. And it is well known that even now Christians must die for the faith in Africa, China, Armenia, and other countries.

Indeed, the Church of Christ has, down through the centuries, left behind a long trail of blood. For as winds drive a sailing vessel, so persecutions drive the Church toward its lofty goal, until in the last days of the Antichrist there be added to the martyrs of the past "their fellow-servants and brethren, that should be killed as they were." (Rev. vi, 11.)

That these things would come to pass, the Bible told beforehand. Here, too, we have a literal fulfillment of prophecy. "Ye shall be hated of all men for My name's sake. But there shall not an hair of your head perish. In your patience possess ye your souls." (Luke xxi, 17-19.) "Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you. They shall lay their hands on you, and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues, and into prisons, being brought before kings and rulers, for My name's sake." "Ye shall be hated of all nations for My name's sake." "The time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service." (Matt. xxiv; Luke xxi; John xvi.) And thus it came to pass. Even the Apostle Paul in his day could write: "They were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection. Others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment; they were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword; they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented (of whom the world was not worthy); they wandered in deserts and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth." (Heb. xi, 35-38.) But in all this there was a promise given them: "Settle it therefore in your hearts, not to meditate before what ye shall

answer; for I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay nor resist." (Luke xxi, 14, 15.) "And when they bring you unto the synagogues and unto magistrates and powers, take ye no thought how or what thing ye shall answer, or what ye shall say; for the Holy Ghost shall teach you in the same hour what ye ought to say." (Luke xii, 11, 12.) This also came to pass, literally, thousand-fold. Repeatedly the instructions given to "masters of heretics" are: "Do not enter into any discussion with heretics concerning the Bible; for they are so well versed in it, that you will not be able to stand against them. Contend solely on the ground of the Church authorities; on the whole, have done quickly with these stiffnecked people!" Over and over again we read in the acts of the martyrs: But when he meekly and joyfully gave answer concerning his faith, and from the Scriptures gave reason for the same, they interrupted him, raving, "Silence, heretic! thou dog!" or, like Cardinal Borromeo to George of Ghese (1559), they cried angrily, "Fool, do you think you are wiser than all of us?" And in the end their only argument was, "Burn him to death!" It was fear of this wisdom, which they could not resist, that, as mentioned above, tore out the tongues of these poor people, and even on the pyre silenced them with iron gags. And the prophecy of Christ, too, was often seen fulfilled: "The brother shall deliver up the brother to death, and the father the child, and the children shall rise up against their parents, and cause them to be put to death." (Matt. x, 21.)

But Christ had promised them also, "In the world ye shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have over-

come the world." "Fear none of these things which thou shalt suffer. Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." And they were of good cheer, and remained so unto death. At all times their enemies had to wonder at the equanimity, the courage, the joy, yea, in many instances, the bliss, with which these martyrs of both sexes, young and old, among the high and the aristocratic, the rich and the educated, as well as among the poor and lowly, bore months of abuse, repeated torture, and the most cruel forms of death. "*Victi sumus!*" "We are conquered;"—a Roman proconsul exclaimed, when he saw how a young man suffered tortures and torments without groaning. "Victory! Victory and triumph!" B. Bartoccio in Rome (1569) cried from out the flames, and Antonius Oldevin in Cremona, "O sweet fire! O lovely flame!" "I know the Hueguenots," the sullen superintendent Baville said to a hangman; "you will not be able, by any torture whatever, to extort from them a recantation or a word of complaint." And the clergyman Brousson, having been condemned by him, ascended the stairs leading to the scaffold, his face radiant with heavenly joy. But the hangman afterward confessed, "I have executed many persons, but have trembled at no other execution, as I trembled at Mr. Brousson's." "Be of good cheer, brethren, be of good cheer!"—these were the last words heard from the flames in which (1533) *Martialis Alba* and four friends were burned in Lyons, on the *Place des Terreaux*.

Let us hear the unsuspected testimony of a Catholic of the time of the French Revolution, who otherwise bears these martyrs ill will: "Fires were kindled everywhere. Even though the rigor of the law restrained the



people in their duty, yet many were astonished at the persistent steadfastness of those who were led to the place of execution, and who lost their lives rather than their good courage. For when they perceived how plain women met torment, in order to witness for the faith; how on the way to death they sang psalms with a loud voice, and testified that Christ is their Redeemer; how virgins went forth to death more joyfully than to marriage; how men rejoiced when they saw the terrible preparations and instruments for torture; how on the pyres, half burned and roasted, they looked down with unvanquished courage on the wounds they had received from red-hot tongs; how, with joyful and holy countenance, they stood under the iron hooks of the hangmen, stood like rocks among the waves of the sea; in a word, how they died smiling,—these sad and ever-renewed tragedies awakened some emotion, not only in the souls of the simple, but also in those of high rank. For the majority could not persuade themselves that these people were not on the side of right, since they clung so firmly to their convictions that they were willing to offer up their lives. Others were filled with pity and sadness at seeing them persecuted thus, and at beholding in public places the charred corpses swung aloft, fastened to hideous chains, as the sad remains of the execution; they could not restrain their tears, and their hearts wept together with their eyes.” (*Buch der Maertyrer*, by Th. Fliedner, Vol. II, Part II, p. 139.)

All died courageously, even though not shouting joyfully. Thus in his “History of Papacy,” the Catholic Illeskas writes concerning a martyr who died in Valladolid, in 1559: “With incomparable intrepidity the bac-

calaureus Herezuelo allowed himself to be burned alive. I stood so near to him that I could see him distinctly, and could observe his features. He could not speak, for he was gagged; but his entire behavior proved him to be a very daring and fearless man, who would rather be burned to death than subject himself to the faith of the Church. Although I observed him closely, I could not see the slightest trace of fear, nor a manifestation of pain. But his countenance showed a deep earnestness, the like of which I had never yet seen. It was something terrible to look at him."

To be sure, the strength of these martyrs was not of themselves, but of God. Touchingly Huss complains that he fears the hatred of his enemies, and that the emperor himself is not true to his word. Other martyrs wrestled with God, that through some gentler form of death He might save them from torture and the pyre; and it is touching how pious and friendly Wishardt, seized by certain anticipation of a not distant martyr's death, gets up during the night, goes into his garden unnoticed, as he believed, and there prays with many tears, as once his Master had prayed, that this cup might pass away from him. But God strengthened these also, so that they could say, "Not my will, but Thy will be done." Fer- vently they prayed to God that he might enable them, for His name's and His Word's sake, to leave and suffer all things, and He strengthened them. In many ways the history of the martyrs also teaches us to know the severity of God toward those who fell away. Many fell away, as Christ had prophesied: "Then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another." (Matt. xxiv, 10.) Many of those who

apostatized—as *e. g.*, Archbishop Cranmer and Jerome of Prague—felt the word, “Whosoever shall be ashamed of Me and of My words, of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed” (Mark viii, 38), like a sword in their hearts; they recalled their recantation, and joyfully suffered death by burning. But terrible judgment was passed upon others—*e. g.*, on the Italian Spiera, who had to confess, “Contrary to my clear conviction I have publicly denied the truth; there is no hope for me;” and who, after much anguish of soul, despaired and voluntarily starves to death. History also makes mention of the terrible end of many persecutors, which fate was often announced to them by the martyrs. God is not mocked.

But the history of persecutions also shows that this God has power to protect His own, if He wills to do so. Of many a faithful witness he says to Satan, “That one I have delivered into your hands, but do not touch this one;” and, like Daniel in the den, the lions are not permitted to assail him. This divine protection is often manifested most clearly in the lives of great witnesses to the Gospel, who are most bitterly hated and pursued by the devil. Luther was banished from the empire, and any one was at liberty to kill him with impunity. How many enemies were thirsting for his blood; how gladly they would have burned him! But no one was permitted even to smite him on the cheek, and although bitterly persecuted, he died quietly on his bed. Thus also Calvin, Farel, Knox. This is the Lord’s doing; it is marvelous in our eyes.

Thus, in the first place, the glory of the Bible is seen in its prophetic view, when it predicts that the followers of Christ will be hated, persecuted, and killed, and then

promises them superhuman wisdom; again, in the fulfillment of this promise in the lives of hundreds of thousands, the glory of the Bible is manifested as a power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth. Here our hands, as it were, can lay hold on the truth, that the love of Christ, the love of His own for Him, His love for them, and the powers of the world to come, which are granted them by Him, easily and smilingly have overcome the world and the devil. Compared with other books, too, the Bible is seen as something different and higher, in that it of itself, without the aid of earthly means, overcomes the world. The Roman emperors thought they must protect their gods with fire and sword. Take the sword, Mahomet commanded his disciples, and kill those who refuse to believe in me. But just as it pleases God to bring to naught the wisdom of the wise, so He sends His own into the hostile world defenseless, "as sheep in the midst of wolves." And yet they have conquered without battle and without resistance. By permitting themselves to be slaughtered like sheep, they became invincible. Indeed, at the sight of this we are seized with astonishment, as was John when, in the visions of God, he beheld the woman drunken with the blood of the saints. Who ever heard of such warfare? What kind of soldiers does God send against His enemies? Old men, weary with age; weak women and maidens; babes, tender youth; men oftentimes sick or weakened by privation and abuse, without power or station or reputation, unknown, poor, isolated. What weapons does He give them against Cæsars and their mailed legions; against the murderous wrath of wild and cruel heathen and their tyrants; against the power and hatred of all

kingdoms of the earth? His Word; against fire and sword, only His Word. "How shall we fight?" they ask their Captain. Do not resist evil. Offer your hands for chains, your backs for the scourge, your members for torture. "But if, after such torture, our enemies at length determine to kill us, will You not then, our King and our God, cleave the heavens and come down, or at least send Your hosts of angels for our succor?" No; there shall be no voice nor answer nor sign from on high for your rescue; helpless, chained, gagged, flames will devour you, your enemies will laugh at your torment, your ashes will be committed to winds and waves. Go, then, and conquer the world. O foolishness of God, how great thou art!

Even this God suffers and is silent; suffers silently that His name is blasphemed, that His Word is hated, that His Church is oppressed. He is derided and scoffed at by the world, by His creatures; the wicked triumph—and He endures it. Nevertheless He is victorious daily, and quietly He brings about what pleases His counsel, until some day He will return in majesty with His own to take vengeance on His adversaries. Then they shall look on Him whom they pierced; but also on them whom, for His Word's sake, they have killed. "Look at us closely," a martyr, dying with others, cried to his tormentors and the surrounding multitude, "in order that you may recognize us in the day of judgment."

What do those, who to-day call themselves Christians, make of this powerful testimony of the martyrs? Instead of rejoicing in such glorious, hundred thousand fold witness for the Bible; instead of giving God and His Word the glory; instead of exulting in true communion

with the saints, and in the firm hope that some day we shall rise again with this innumerable host, and shall behold Him in whom they and we believed; instead of taking strength from this hope, in order that they for their part might be witnesses to the truth,—they allow themselves to be shaken by every wind of doctrine; by every empty and shallow objection; by every criticism of faith, clothed in phrases that sound scientific; and they bow to every word of man. A sign of indigence, and a righteous judgment upon them. From those who will not confess Him God gradually takes away all light, and delivers them up to the spirits of falsehood who “are in the air.” Woe unto us who have nothing but a smile left for the simple, unshakable Bible-faith of those martyrs and heroes of faith.

But the Word of God and its effect may be likened unto the wind. Now it rages in the storm and the hurricane, and breaks to pieces the oaks of Bashan; men arise who are baptized with the Spirit and with fire, and in battle cast down the spirits of darkness and the children of the devil; so it was in the apostolic Church, in the Reformation, in the missions among savage people. Now this wind rustles faintly in the high treetops, and seems to die out. But just as in the ocean not a single drop of water, and in the air not a single atom, is really at rest, so the wind and the Spirit blow over cradle and grave, and ever again over new cradles and new graves, and carry away our words and deeds, our laughing and our weeping, so that we may laugh and weep anew. And restlessly Spirit and Word are working at the soul, molding and forming and fashioning its millions of cells and fibers, and shaping them, as a potter shapes the clay, by

means of a word at which it laughs, an idea that exalts it, a thought that comforts it, a remembrance that saddens it. What a wonderful thing this soul of man is in its weakness and in its great power!

What had these martyrs learned out of their Bible? Something very simple, and yet, as already stated, the very essence and content of all Christianity. They had learned to say *yea* to God and his entire Word; to say *no* to the devil, his children, and his entire kingdom. With these two little words they were omnipotent. "Pray to the gods! Curse Christ!" the Roman powers cried to them. "*No!*" they said calmly, and died smiling; and the entire Roman Empire, and later Papacy and Inquisition, with torture and fire, were not able to conquer such a little soul, or to harm it in the least; nor would a thousand worlds full of wrath and hatred and hellish torments have been able to do it,—they could only rend its garment, the covering of clay; but the soul itself soared up to God unharmed and joyful.

Has the Bible this same power still? Is it not, according to the opinion of many, beginning to grow old? No; eternally the same is eternal youth, eternally effective, it breaks hard hearts and heals wounded hearts; this Book, and those who believe it, conquered the Roman Empire by means of the Word; brought about the Reformation in spite of the pope and emperor by means of the Word. And in the final conflict, which is preparing, they will conquer the world and Antichrist, and out of the conflict there will again go forth a great congregation of witnesses, clothed in white. Meanwhile the Bible is converting souls out of all languages and peoples and tongues, as it has ever done. And after conversion it

falls from the eyes of man "as it had been scales," and he is amazed to find that this Book, which he had thought to be merely a book of general religious content or edification, deals particularly with *him and his affairs*; that it is a Word of God, *addressed to him!* Into my soul, too, which was waste and void, and in which darkness was upon the face of the deep, God one day thundered, Let there be light! And there was light; the waters were divided from the waters; the dry land appeared, plants grew, and finally there came forth *in ovo* man in the likeness of God. Then I got me out of my country and from my kindred, and was a stranger; I went to Egypt and was compelled to burn brick; I went through the Red Sea; I thirsted in the wilderness, and ate heavenly manna; I was bitten by fiery serpents; I stood undone before lightning Sinai; I ascended Nebo, in order to behold from afar the promised land. Like Job, I wrestled with God; with David I sighed and shouted; with the preacher I said, All is vanity! With the prophets I rejoiced in a great future; and to me also, the prodigal son, who for a long time had herded swine, the word came, "Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee!"

The Bible still commands the highest respect of great and unbiassed minds. Thus Goethe writes: "I consider all four Gospels to be thoroughly authentic; for there is active in them a grandeur that proceeded from the person of Christ, and that in kind is as divine as the divine has ever appeared on earth." "I am convinced that the Bible grows more beautiful, the more one understands it." And the seventy-two-year-old philosopher of reason, Kant, writes (*Brief an den Abt Sièyes in Paris, 1796*): "The Bible is the Book, the contents of which itself tes-



tifies to its divine origin. In the greatness of the plan of salvation and its execution, it discloses to us the greatness of our guilt, and the depth of our fall. The Bible is my greatest treasure; without it I should be miserable." In a letter to Stilling he writes: "You do well in seeking your only comfort in the Gospel, for it is an inexhaustible fountain of all truths which, when reason has surveyed its entire domain, can be found nowhere else." (See Stilling's *Leben*.) Similar thoughts were expressed by Herder, Arndt, Napoleon I, Wilhelm von Humboldt, Franklin, Schiller, Gladstone, Bismarck, and others. Such statements, to be sure, are never mentioned by the admirers of these men, such as the present disciples of Goethe and Kant; they are not suited to their idea of enlightenment, and can not well be harmonized with their assertion that the Bible is revered only by feeble-minded persons.

But this Bible not only remains worthy of reverence, it is still a hammer, breaking human hearts that are as hard as rock; a two-edged sword that pierces even to the dividing asunder of the joints and marrow; a power of God that makes a new creature out of the sinner. Upon the urgent request of a friend, a splendor-loving lady in Geneva, Claudine Levet, once (1532) resolved to hear the hated heretic Froment. She put on amulets, rubbed virgin wax on her face, placed verbena leaves on her temples as a safeguard against the evil sorcerer, and sat immediately in front of the plain-looking preacher with an air of derision and contempt, crossing herself. But while he spoke, the expression of her face changed. When he closed, she asked, "How do you know that what you said is true?" "Here it is written." "Give me the

book." Quietly she went home, ordered that no one should disturb her, and remained locked in her room for three days. She came forth from there an altogether different person. She is lost to us, her aristocratic friends lamented; she no longer cares for festivities, beautiful garments, and pleasures, but continually wants to visit the poor and the sick, and read her Bible. A few years ago there was a prize-fighter in England, strong as a giant, a rough and dreaded man. A word from the Bible struck him like a thunderbolt. A short time after this he was met by a rival, who, having heard that he had joined the sullen saints, mockingly challenged him to a fight, and struck him in the face so hard that the blood gushed. He wiped off the blood, and said calmly: "If I did not know the Bible, I would beat you to death. I forgive you, and will not fight with you." In a hospital in Vienna there lies a poor man in his prime, who formerly was very active, and traveled a great deal, but for years has been incurably paralyzed, so that he can move only his head and his hands, and often suffers intense pain. A cheerless and hopeless existence, you will probably think. No longer! He now has his Bible, and writes, "Not only the days, but also the nights are too short to thank God with shouting and tears of joy for all He gives me in His Word." Only three instances out of hundreds of thousands.

Thousands have mocked this divine Word; millions have despised it; but mockers and despisers have passed away and are forgotten; comparatively few know their names. Two hundred and thirty years ago, Voltaire said, "Fifty years hence the world will hear no more of this Book." How now? Translated in hundreds of lan-

guages, distributed in millions of copies, it is preached to all nations, as "a testimony against them." Of the Bible not a verse, not a line has passed away, nor will any pass away as long as the world stands.

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Whence has the Bible this marvelous might and power over hearts? From the fact that it says the exact opposite of what all sacred books of all nations teach. It conquers man by telling him what he most dislikes to hear, what to him is a most unpleasant sound—a mark of the high origin both of man and of the Bible. The Bible is the only book (this the historian of religions, Professor Max Mueller, of Oxford also asserts) which declares that man can not be justified by his own deeds.

That man strives after justification is one result of the fall, which fall is witnessed to by conscience. At all times all ancient religions, millions of Brahmins and fakirs, monks and nuns, and those of the laity, have sought justification in mortifying the body in abstinence, in acts of penance, and in self-imposed torments; others in pilgrimages or crusades, or in founding cloisters and churches, or in pious legacies. Why have men at all times obeyed priests, who often demanded great sacrifices from them? Because in the depths of his soul man, even unrighteous man, hungers and thirsts after righteousness; a strong proof that he feels himself to be unrighteous. The scholar, too, and the statesman, the warrior and the artist, we all, are endeavoring to be justified by works. Through our actions we all want to justify ourselves as great or highly gifted, as righteous or virtuous or pious, as energetic or prudent or practical men; in

short, we want to show the world that we are right, and can do things right. We all make our justification—in our sight and the sight of others, not in the sight of God—the chief task of our life. *Ein gemachter Mann, un homme arrivé*, a self-made man; thus we move about in our righteousness. The poor are ashamed of their poverty, because it witnesses against them that they are not able to get along with life; that they are not able to gain a place in the sun; that they have no right to existence. Whether haughtily or good-naturedly, the rich, wherever they go and wherever they are, say with their entire bearing: “Look at us! We are the people who have accomplished what you all would like to accomplish and can not;” and the world looks upon them as justified, and tips its hat. What is the reason of a great part of philanthropy? The ease with which one in this line can justify himself in his own sight and the sight of others, and, many think, in the sight of God also.

Concerning this conduct of man, the Bible passes annihilating judgment: “*A man is not justified by the works of the law.*” This Book says that you who are estranged from God, who place your ego upon the altar, sing sweet songs of praise to it, and love it with all your heart and all your mind, are nothing, an extinguished light, a fountain gone dry, salt that has lost its savor, a dry limb, just good enough for the fire. Princes and subjects, men of rank and vagrants, church-goers and blasphemers, ingenious minds and blockheads, potent and impotent, rich and poor, ladies of rank and honorable matrons, pure virgins and common wenches, artists and business men, pious and godless authors, priests and monks,—whatever your name, your bearing, your station,

you are all worthless and damned. "*The Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men, . . . and there is none that doeth good, no, not one.*" (Psa. xiv, 2, 3.)

One must admit that this Biblical contempt of all that mankind does and has and is, is simply grand. Here there is at last something absolute, without ifs and buts, without circumlocutions and compromises, without exceptions and clauses. And something in us answers, It is so.

But to him who believes in the condemning law of a just God; to him who, being undone, cries out, "Is there no hope for me? Wilt Thou, O Lord, show wrath eternally? Lord, be merciful to me, a sinner!"—to him the Bible proclaims a second truth, also unheard of, taught by no other religion, found in no other book, never conceived of by the heart of man: "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." God Himself, in His Son, who says, "I and My Father are one," is made flesh and assumes our guilt: "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself." The Master suffers for the servant. What a message! And, indeed, only God can take away the sin of a world; Socrates, Plato, Buddha, Mahomet, and all other teachers of mankind, were not even able to ward off guilt, disease, and death from themselves. How then could such, or even a Jesus were he a mere man, be able to hear the groaning of the creation, and deliver plants and animals and the visible universe, even to the most distant fixed star, from the curse of vanity and of death? He who believes that Christ is God, and yet does not speak

of Him as Redeemer, shows that he has not anticipated the greatness of the creative Logos, and therefore can not anticipate the greatness of the redeeming Logos. Here, too, unbelief distinguishes itself by its limited view of the cosmic world.

*Law and Gospel*—this the Bible, and the Bible alone, proclaims; the inexorable justice and the incomprehensibly great love of the living God; that which crushes, destroys, and condemns, and that which comforts, raises up, and revives. And the second is never without the first. One may speak and teach ever so much about the Gospel, if he does not believe in the law of Jehovah, given from Sinai, his essence of Christianity, his Christology, his ethics, yea, his entire religion, is an aircastle. The granite substructure is wanting. This is true of modern teachers. They deny the law, which damns. Then what need is there of redemption? They teach that man of himself can attain to sonship, and can justify himself. Then why the incarnation of God? We do not want to trouble Him. But what they accomplish without Him, is not something divine; it is something quite human—a little moral doctrine mixed with *bel-esprit* religion for the parlor-table of self-sufficient Philistines of the spirit.

Because God is our Creator; because we are fallen, and unable to pay our debt, and he has done it for us, therefore the Bible, in the third place, makes the unheard-of, blissful and dreadful demand, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength"—a demand, invented by no other religion, proclaimed by no other sacred book, and never having entered into the heart

of man. And it is a bitter word for man. "I," and again "I," and a third time "I!" then nothing for a long time; then finally some one else or something else,—this, consciously or unconsciously, is the motto of the man of this world. To love one's self a great deal, and to love God a little besides,—this, in practice, even some pious people consider the normal relation of things. Deliberately, and with the aid of my reason and the advice of prudent, practical men, to choose my way, and then to pray God that He might accompany me on this way; to be wrapped up in business affairs all day long, and in the evening to pray that God might bless my labors, in order that I might have my daily bread, and be able to lay by something for the future and for my children; to be spent in my vocation, in order that I may prove myself a worthy man, filling my place for the welfare of mankind and being an honor to myself and to my God,—is not all this proper? God certainly can not demand more of me. Yes, He demands incomparably, unreasonably more! *You and I shall love Him with all our thoughts.* And conscience tells us that He has a right to demand this. What shall I do? God *commands*, and I *am not able*. Here, too, man is helpless. Here, too, God Himself steps in, and says: I will do it. Christ, the incarnate God, thus loved the Father. Here, too, he fulfilled the law that He had given. Apart from Him, man can do nothing.

And since love alone is truly fruitful, this love for the highest and best produces good works in those "in whose hearts it is shed abroad through the Holy Ghost," and does this as naturally as man breathes; and as little as a man boasts of breathing, so little the Christian boasts

of his works. He shall do good deeds every day, and every evening he shall pray, "Lord, be merciful to me, a sinner, and forgive me even my good works!" If Luther, at the end of his life, confessed that his most severe struggle had been against the thought that he had at any time done some good deed, what reason could we poor little Christians have to boast of our good works?

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If, as we have seen, the revelation of Jehovah, God, is the radiant central point of the Old Testament, the New Testament is the good message that this God came into the flesh and became man, in order to take away the sin of the world. This Jehovah is the Messiah that was promised long ago; He bruised the serpent's head; in Him all the nations of the earth are blessed; and if a certain man dared to proclaim to the Christians of German tongue, The Son does not belong in the Gospel, we say, *The Gospel is the Son, and the Son only*. Here there is light; and in this light, which illuminates the Old Testament also, we recognize with glad astonishment in the entire Bible the revelation of Christ, as the Alpha and Omega, as the beginning, the middle, and the end of creation; yea, as the only revelation of the unfathomable Godhead given to creatures. "No man knoweth the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him."

*The Bible reveals Christ, in the first place, as the Word of God, which created the universe.* "And God said." We have said: God, as He who He was and has been from all eternity, "dwelleth in the light which no man can approach unto." "No man hath seen God at



any time." He is true being, the source of all forces and development. He, the Endless, the Infinite, would eternally be incomprehensible to His creatures; for in Him there is nothing finite or created. The creature must be finite; this is implied in the Word itself. Even our eternal life is not infinite: in the first place, because it has had a beginning; in the second place, because, in connection therewith and in consequence thereof, it does not include the life of all other beings, even of God Himself; but it is endless, because it eternally flows into us from God, the source of all life. But God eternally and continually begets the Son, who says of Himself, "I and My Father are one." "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father," but who, as regards creation, is also "the beginning of the creation of God." He, the eternal Son, Christ, is the revelation, the visibility, "*the image of the invisible God*, the firstborn of every creature: for by Him were all things created that are in heaven and that are in the earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: *all things are created by Him, and for Him. And He is before all things, and by Him all things consist.*" (Col. i, 15-18.) He, the Word, expresses in finite, creative form, what from eternity he beheld in the Father. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was God." Creation is a gift of the Father to the Son; according to the Father's eternal thought it is created by the Son to the honor of the Father. This creation, effected through the Word, also contains the Word of God, as law. For every divine thought is absolute and eternal law. In Eden, Adam was in need of no other law than that expressed in divine nature surrounding him. As long as he remained sinless,

the words of creation were lively and intelligible for him. In the material light, not that of the earth, but that of the garden that God had planted, he would have seen the law of eternal light and of knowledge; in the plant he would have seen the law of spiritual growth and fruitfulness, etc. The tilling of the garden that God had planted would have fully sufficed, without the law from Sinai to bring him in ever closer and loftier communion with God. Thus he would also have had part in the tree of life. But when he fell, creation came to be for him, as it still is, an external, lifeless, material phenomenon. The quick *words* of God have come to be mere dumb *things* for us, and tell us nothing. We do indeed behold the tree and the animal, the sea and the mountain and the cloud with a certain childish interest; but we do not understand these divine hieroglyphics, these letters of Jehovah's name; do not understand what they are in themselves, and what they are for us; and many have looked upon the lilies of the field and the birds of the air all their lives, without learning even the first beginnings from them, namely, that the God who nourishes them, and clothes the grass thus, can also provide for and clothe us without our assistance and our care; or he daily beholds the tree, which has grown from a tiny seed, and which annually bears many hundredweight of fruit, but does not recognize in it a multiplying of nourishing matter, equally as wonderful as the feeding of the five thousand with five loaves and two fishes.

In the second place, *the Bible reveals Christ as the Jehovah of Sinai.* That He is the Jehovah of Sinai is clearly contained in John i, 3, 14. And he adds, "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son,

He hath declared Him." (Ver. 18.) Therefore even Moses on Sinai did not see the Godhead, but the Son, "the image of the invisible God." Through John, the Holy Ghost plainly says of Isaiah, "These things said Esaias, when he saw His glory, and spake of Him." (John xii, 41; cf. Isa. vi.) If possible, Paul speaks still more clearly, referring to the children of Israel in the wilderness, "They drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them; *and that Rock was Christ*," and "neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents." (1 Cor. x, 4, 9.) Of Himself this Jehovah Christ prophesies; "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise to David a righteous branch; . . . and this is His name whereby He shall be called, **THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.**" (Jer. xxiii, 5, 6.) And again: "Thus saith Jehovah, which stretcheth forth the heavens, and layeth the foundation of the earth, and formeth the spirit of man within him: I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications; and they shall look upon Me *whom they have pierced*, and they shall mourn for Him, as one mourneth for his only son." (Zech. xii, 10.) If the Logos is He who creates, and every creative word is a law, then it is just and natural that He reveals the spiritual law also, legible for sinless Adam, but for fallen man hidden in the material laws of creation. Upon the granite summit of Sinai Christ descended in fire and thunder, the dreadful, just, holy, jealous God, before whose countenance sinners perish; and the merciful God, who visits the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate Him, and shows mercy unto

thousands of them that love Him. Now this Jehovah, as the image of the invisible God, clothes Himself in His terrible majesty, and declares to Moses, who would behold the Father in Him, "Thou canst not see My face; for there shall no man see Me and live." Now He clothes Himself in loveliness, and the seventy elders are permitted to see the God of Israel, above whom the vaulted heavens are like unto sapphire. Now He lays aside, as it were, the insignia of His majesty and power, converses face to face with Moses, like a man with his friend, and says with touching familiarity, "Speak no more unto Me of this matter." (Deut. iii, 26.) But here He is ever the law, and in the conscience of every man expresses clearly and definitely the categorical imperative that lies dormant in Him.

Then *the Bible shows us Christ as the great divinely commissioned Messiah, the fulfiller of the law, and the Redeemer from all sorrow; of whom Moses, David, and "all the prophets" (Acts x, 43) spake.* In opposition to those, who in our day combat the prophecy of Christ in the Old Testament, Christ and the Scriptures declare that the ancient men of God had a clearer prescience of Christ and His sacrificial death than their mere biography and their works lead us to anticipate. Thus Christ says of Abraham, "Abraham saw My day, and was glad;" and, as said above, Isaiah saw His glory, and spoke of Him.

From Moses and all the prophets, Christ explains minutely to the disciples of Emmaus the prophecy of His suffering and His glory; for "to Him give all the prophets witness, that through His name whosoever believeth in Him shall receive remission of sins." (Acts x, 43.) But

in order to see this, it is necessary, of course, that Christ open our understanding, as He opened that of the disciples of Emmaus, that we may understand the Scriptures.

Then the New Testament relates how the long-promised sun rose, which, like a morning star, had shone ahead in prophecy. "The people, that walked in darkness, have seen a great light." And with Simeon and the prophets the spirits of the perfected saints shouted, "For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given; and the government shall be upon His shoulder: and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." (Isa. ix, 6.)

It is overwhelmingly beautiful, how in this Biblical theosophy of one cast the Son of God, who, as the creative Logos, is the mouth of the Eternal, and who afterwards was the proclaimer of the law contained in creation, now that man feels his inability to fulfill the law, says: Now I, who am Myself the law, will fulfill this law instead of, and in the name of, man. On this account fallen man will hate Me and kill Me, and will thereby, without having willed it, fulfill the eternal decree of redemption. "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." This is the bright sun that sheds its light back over the entire Old Testament, and ahead over the New Testament, till to the last verse of Revelation.

Finally, *the Bible shows Christ as the judge of the world.* At the close of the world's history, God, the Father, "commits all judgment unto the Son; for the Father judgeth no man." (John v, 22.) He, the Word of God, who created the world, who gave the law unto

men, who in their stead fulfilled this law, and now demands of them only that they believe this fulfillment,—He will judge this human race, which proudly and self-righteously says: I do not believe the message, and am not in need of a Redeemer; I am able to help myself. This close will be great, blessed, and destructive beyond measure, unspeakably satisfying and fulfilling all demands and longings, when the Creator and Redeemer shall descend upon the clouds in all His unveiled majesty, to the unspeakable comfort of His own, to the most awful consternation of His enemies, who have corrupted the earth. “Surely I come quickly.”

These are indeed great secrets, sublime and dreadful mysteries. Here below we shall never be able to comprehend the incarnation of a God,—whether in heaven? But: *Thus it is written.* And him who says he can not believe it, because he can not grasp it, we answer astonished: My brother, what are you and I able to grasp? Are we not walking among mysteries and over abysses? Do not things that we can not grasp, can not fathom, stare us in the face at every step? Where were you, where was I fifty or a hundred years ago? Did at that time any creature in all the universe have any knowledge, any anticipation, that we should arise? Then a soul fell upon the earth. Why? for what purpose? What is a soul? This soul clothed itself in matter, and became visible, a grain of sand in this earth, which to it is entirely new. Now, by means of a few pounds of thought-substance and brain-substance and mysterious senses, it grasps the world and God, and applies its criterion to both. A few moments more, and, perhaps suddenly, the body of clay crumbles to dust, and this soul slips away

unseen,—a spirit that had appeared, and had for a few seconds moved a bit of matter. Where is it? Where shall we be a hundred, a thousand years hence? What world shall we then perceive, and with what kind of senses? In what kind of words shall we then speak? In what manner of visibility shall we appear? By means of what heavenly or hellish substance shall we think and act, and what will be the content of our thought and action?

How, then, can we coolly say of the deeds and the nature of *God*, It can not be, for I can not comprehend it?

What is the position of present Christianity in the face of this clear and grand message of the divine Word? Millions in this country, who nominally belong to the Church of Christ, no longer know anything of this message, have forgotten it; and many who know of it, do not want to know anything of it. Life is short, they cry; we must hasten to gain money and possessions, glory and honor, power and knowledge, before we pass away; what follows after, no one knows. Others accept of the Gospel what suits them, calmly ignoring the terrible threats of Christ against His enemies, and His words of the judgment and eternal fire, and lying to themselves and others, that Christ had proclaimed a mild religion of love (by which they mean tender-heartedness and sentimentality) and of freedom; that it is true Christianity to get away from rigid Church dogma, and to lead a spiritually free and æsthetic life, with religiousness, virtue, and charity. Such doctrine is pleasing to a generation whose inmost soul is opposed to all law and all authority. Banish even from the schools, they cry, these childish

legends of a creative Word of God; this Mosaic law, compiled by sly priests; these pretended prophecies of illiterate and superstitious "prophets,"—away with all traditions! We want to be free in religion and science, in art and literature, in State and family; fettered by no prejudices and presuppositions; believing in our own reason, and in nothing else. What the result is, we see daily.

They all do not know the Christ of the Scriptures.

This is true of those who, in our day, believe in the historic Christ rather than in the Christ of the Church. Have we any other historic sources concerning Him than, according to God's counsel, solely the four Gospels? But that does not matter to them. In the first place, all that is miraculous in Him is deducted as unhistoric; then the fourth Gospel, which reveals His glory more than any other, is declared unauthentic; finally, whatever of His words and deeds is not in harmony with preconceived opinions is designated as unreliable report, and various things in keeping with His age and its views, and of which the Bible knows nothing, are falsely attributed to Him. Out of what remains after such procedure, they form a small figure, and offer their fabrication as the "historic Christ."

Of the Jesus of others it may be said, "The chief priests held a consultation with the elders and scribes and the whole council, and bound Jesus, and carried Him away, and delivered Him to Pilate." Even in our day high servants of the Church, elders, held in the ban of human traditions a century old, and such as consider themselves well versed in the Scriptures, bind Jesus—not Christ; for Him they do not know, and He will not per-



mit Himself to be bound by men. They bind Him and say: Now He can perform no miracles, can cast out no devils, can not forgive sins, can not rise on the third day, can not sit down at the right hand of God, and can not return in the clouds for judgment. Having thus bound Him, they deliver Him up to the world, which no longer has reason to fear Him. But we refuse to accept a Jesus bound thus. How can He, being bound, give us liberty? If He is not risen, we are yet dead in our sins, and are lost. Then we agree with modern scribes: "This Jewish rabbi has no answer to the problems that now move Christianity; He belongs to His age, and not to ours." Then this man, who parades false miracles, who presumptuously considers himself to be the Son of God, even God Himself, who so misjudges men and conditions, that He brings ruin upon Himself, is a repulsive personality. Either the Son of God, or one Himself deceived, and deceiving others! How long halt ye between two opinions, ye modern Christians?

Others, of emotional nature, believe in a romantic Christ, à la Rénan, a pale young enthusiast with wonderfully deep eyes, surrounded by penitent Magdalenes, inwardly lamenting the affliction of His people, dreaming of its future glory and of its re-establishment as a kingdom of God on earth. But the idealist is lacking in energy; He flees to the desert when He hears that the multitude desires to make Him king; when He hears that Herod has killed His friend John, disheartened by the hatred of the priests and the indifference of the multitude, He despairs of His mission and resolves to die as martyr, at least, in order that after His death He might still seem great to His fanatic followers. And in their ecstasy these emo-

tionalists imagine that they see Him enter among them, that they hear His dear voice, and believe that, through their tears, they see Him ascending to heaven,—a picture, every feature of which is as untrue, as those which the modern art of Max Klinger, Uhde, and v. Gebhardt present to us.

Others compare Christ with Buddha, find a striking similarity between the two, and even consider Buddha to be the more original and the higher of the two, and Christ to be his disciple. Such views can, of course, be entertained only by those in whose heads are the beginnings of Nirvana, and who in this mental twilight are no longer able to distinguish black from white. In answer it may suffice to quote the very pertinent words of A. W. Hunzinger (*Alter Glaube*, 1902): “Was Christ a pessimist, an atheist, a nihilist, like Gautama Buddha? Is the eternal life of the Gospel the empty Nirvana of the Buddhistic despiser of the world? Is the new birth of water and spirit, without which no man can see the kingdom of God, the same as the endless transmigration of souls, taught by the visionaries of India? And is the impersonal, unrelenting natural law of cause and effect, which makes all things revolve and suffer incessantly, at all similar to an omnipotent and merciful God’s government of the world, who numbers the hairs of our head, and without whom not a sparrow falls to the ground? Has the eternal redemption which the Son of God purchased on Calvary anything at all in common with the self-annihilation by means of which the Buddhist, weary of this world, destroys the delusion of his existence?” The dying words of Gautama Buddha were, “All is vanity!” The dying words of Christ were, “It is finished!”

Many preach the social Christ. This, too, is a modern widespread error. Let us consider it more minutely.

*Jesus was not a social reformer*, and did not pretend to be one; and to brand Him such, is to ignore completely facts reported concerning Him. This Dr. Sheldon does in his book, "In His Steps," which is characteristic of this tendency. Are we not to walk in Christ's steps? Certainly! That the Christian should follow Christ is nothing new. Christ Himself commanded it; and for nineteen hundred years several millions of Christians have done so, even though in weakness, and thousands of martyrs have borne their cross after Him. Should we not, every one of us, have the mind which was also in Christ? Certainly! But this mind does not make a Jesus out of us. Let a soldier be ever so faithful in executing the commands and plans of his captain, even endangering his own life, yet he is not the captain. Let a man be ever so faithful and loyal to his king; let him be a thorough-going, monarchically-minded royalist, yet he has not the power of the king. Every apprentice, pupil, disciple, walks, and should walk, in his master's steps; but that does not make him master. Between Christ and man there is an infinitely greater difference. These two natures are incomparable. Christ's actions, even though he walked on earth as a man, were thoroughly divine, sinless, and holy. Your actions and mine remain human, stained with sin and unclean, and can never be accepted of God as good. But does not Paul say: "I can do all things through Christ?" Yes, he can do all things, as long as Christ works in him; but this strength is not of himself, and is not at his disposal. "It is God which worketh in us both to will and to do of His good pleasure."

Here, too, I am to take no thought for the morrow, and am not to resolve, or even vow, that henceforth I will do what Jesus did. When the Christian resolves to do good, and says, "I will," God shatters his resolution, and shows him his impotence; for God is not in need of our action; but He would make us sinners truly, in order that He may be able by grace to save us. All good that man may do, is God's free gift to him.

What did Jesus do for the distressed who came unto Him? In the first place, He forgave them their sins, if they desired forgiveness. (Matt. ix, 2, *et al.*) Can you do that? In the second place, He healed them, suddenly and completely: "Take up thy bed and walk!" "Be clean!" Can you do that? In the third place, with a look that pierced their inmost heart ("for He knew what was in man"), He spoke words to those who approached Him with questions, words oftentimes unexpected, which, as in the case of the rich young man, of Nicodemus, and others, like lightning, illumined their entire past life and the depths of their soul, but also pointed out to them the steep, narrow, heavenward way. Can you do that? No! For what purpose did Jesus come into the world at all? In order to redeem the world by His word and His death, and "to give His life a ransom for many." Can you do that? No. You are not Jesus, and you will never be Jesus. You can not take away the sin of the world. You can not forgive sins. You can not give away heaven.

Somewhat easier is the answer to the question, What would Jesus not do?—not do to-day, not do if He were in my place. For He is "the same yesterday, to-day, and forever." The answer is crushing for social reformers like Sheldon, for the Elsmereites, for Tolstoi, and for

many Christian socialists in Germany. They preach: Above all things, the Christian must take part in social conditions, must secure for the poor, the disinherited, the proletarians, an existence worthy of man; then, and not till then, will they believe in our Christianity; their bodies must be helped before the message of salvation can appeal to their souls. Did Jesus do that? No! Did He give any poor man money, or help him get clothes or a better home, or procure work for any man out of employment (and there were such in His day also)? (The five thousand and the four thousand, whom He fed, were people who had hastily gathered about Him, not starving proletarians.) Or did He ever, even in a single word, touch upon the slavery question, which for the entire Roman Empire was a burning question at that time, more so than the labor question in our day? or did He organize societies for the abolition of this scandalous injustice? Did He assist the suppressed in securing their rights, even where, by virtue of the influence of His word, it would have been an easy matter for Him to do so? No! "Man," He says, "who made Me a judge or a divider over you?" In the Sermon on the Mount He establishes a law that is binding for the individual Christian, but useless for a Christian socialistic State. Or is the stealing of a coat to be rewarded by the gift of a cloak in this Christian socialistic State? Did He inflame the failing courage or the dying patriotism of the people of God? Did He, with flaming words, enkindle love of country and of freedom? or did He appoint the ministers of His Word to worldly office, in order to secure for them a wholesome influence on the people, and to give this influence more power? No! "I send you forth as sheep in the

midst of wolves." "My kingdom is not of this world." Did Jesus impress upon His listeners the benefits of civilization and money, or the cultivation of Christian art, and their employment in the conversion of the world? No, He says, "What shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" Did He advocate or agitate better legislation on the observance of Sunday or of the Sabbath, or the improvement of the condition of the laborer? Or did this Jesus promise his "little children," of whom it is written, "Having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them unto the end," as much as "an existence worthy of man," with indemnity in case of death, disease, old age, and invalidity? Did he bequeath to them—it would have been an easy matter for Him—many millions for benevolent and missionary causes? (How much good they could have done with it, according to present-day notions!) No; He promises them hunger, need, imprisonment, persecution, martyrdom. "I will show him how great things he must suffer for My name's sake." (Acts ix, 16.) Did Jesus have no heart in His bosom for His fellow-men? Certainly. But because His love is infinitely more ardent than our love; because heaven is infinitely more than the earth; because eternity is infinitely more than time; because the soul is infinitely more than the body,—therefore he looked to the infinitely more important, and looked away from the unimportant. "The dead"—the intellectually dead also—"are raised up," He reports to John, "and the poor have"—not their poverty banished, but—"the gospel preached to them."

Neither did Jesus do in particular what the social reformers of our day demand. He was no abstainer,

founded no abstinence societies, and would not do so to-day. In Cana He changed water to wine, and not wine to water, as many abstainers would have done; this, too, was a symbolical deed. He ate and drank what was placed before him, and repeatedly instructed His disciples to do so (Luke x, 7); and they said "Behold a gluttonous man and a winebibber!" Would to God that noble endeavors would succeed in reducing the number of saloons quite materially, and to check the vice of drunkenness, which is spread by them! But abstinence must never be made a religious question and the criterion and characteristic of Christianity, or be lauded as "a saving of souls from death;" this is not according to the Bible. Drunkenness, like all vice, is a fruit of sin, not its root. The drunkard is not a sinner because he drinks; he drinks because he is a sinner. His estrangement from God begets thirst for the stupefying and forgetting of his guilt and misery. Nor was Jesus an apostle of peace; He did not found peace commissions, and would not do so to-day. "I came not to send peace, but a sword." True, he left His peace with His own; but to the world He announced terrible wars, a rising of nation against nation, as the final chapter of its history. Jesus did not found savings banks, widows' funds, loan and life insurance associations. He said, "Take no thought for the morrow; after these things do the Gentiles seek." Jesus did not gather people unto Himself by singing and shouting, as the Salvation Army does. Of Him the prophet said, "He shall not cause His voice to be heard in the street." And He reprimanded the Pharisees severely for praying on the street corners. Jesus did not recommend His cross, the sign of the Son of man, the lofty symbol of His

dreadful suffering, as the colored sign to the world of some virtue. The Christian knows only the black cross, invisible to the world, which he daily bears after his Savior. "The kingdom of God cometh not with observation."

These are a few of the things that Jesus did not do, and that He would not do to-day; for He is not a reed shaken with every wind of the spirit of the age.

*Philanthropy is not Christianity* any more than are abstinence, temperance, diligence, order, frugality. Even heathen have possessed these virtues in a high degree. Rich Hindoos have ever made grand donations for philanthropic purposes. Mohammedans and the otherwise cruel Tartars distinguish themselves by bountiful almsgiving, and by hospitality, even toward the poor. In all Italy Emperor Trajan had thousands of orphans educated and cared for, and in modern times a Girard spent millions for the poor and for schools, with the stipulation that no clergyman of any denomination should be permitted to enter the institution founded by him in Philadelphia. And to-day atheists, haters of Christianity (like Zola), hardened misers, and miserable usurers still practice abstinence and frugality, proof sufficient that these virtues are not in themselves Christian.

And it is equally erroneous to make poverty and need synonymous with moral depravity and godlessness. That is calumniating the poor. Whoever has learned to know shepherds, fishermen, and seamen, or the poor peasants of Italy, Switzerland, Tyrol, Scotland, and Germany, has found them, for the greater part, sounder, more God-fearing, more content, and happier, than the rich, the educated, those engaged in industries, the cultured, and



the so-called better society, where so many thousands of respectable people, and slaves to every bodily and intellectual fashion eke out a miserable existence, filling their homes with all kinds of unnecessaries, and their imperishable souls with love for money, honor, and self, with worthless gossip, with all forms of conventionality, superficiality, corruptibility, and vanity. The drunkenness of the poor is also exaggerated. I have lived among laborers for months, and do not remember having seen a single drunken man among them. I have known poor farmers, beggars, peddlers, crippled and blind persons, invalids paralyzed for fifteen years, washerwomen, and day laborers, who were incomparably happier and nearer to divine truth than rich and aristocratic persons; for poverty and hard work are excellent means of education in the hand of the great heavenly Pedagogue. Even if social reformers should succeed in banishing all need and poverty, and should make it possible for the family of every abstinent poor man and laborer to live free from care and be content in a neat little house with electric lighting, bathroom, and yard, it would still be quite questionable whether the kingdom of God would thereby have been brought any nearer. Great are the blessings of poverty, whereby we do not mean social misery, this result, fruit, and penalty of our much lauded industry, but the neediness, the small possessions that God grants the millions. (It would be a small matter for God to flood them and the earth with blessings, so that they all would have a superabundance, as he will some day do in the millennium,—see the prophets.) Poverty makes poor in spirit, simple, modest, contented, courageous, grateful, liberal; it turns the soul away from the many

and manifold things that hold the rich man captive, directs upward, teaches to pray, and makes dying easier. Jesus says poverty is an aid, riches are a hindrance, to salvation. Were Homer and Socrates, Mahomet and Buddha, rich? What have the Cræses and the Luculuses accomplished? What do they accomplish to-day? What did Moses, Elijah, John the Baptist, the greatest among them that are born of women, the apostles, and Christ Himself, possess? History shows that the poor nations have ever conquered the world, and when they became rich, they were ruined by their wealth.

That our understanding of, and our open vision for, the blessings of poverty and the curses of wealth is ever decreasing, is a result of our present-day admiration of matter in art, business, industry, commerce; a result of the cult of possessions, of convenience, and of enjoyment. Our increasing reverence for wealth, our dread of poverty as the greatest evil, our exaggerated commiseration of the poor—I do not say of the wretched—as if many a millionaire did not deserve far more pity than the day laborer or farmer, who is satisfied with his lot,—all this proves that we are not living in the light of eternity, since in this light the unequal division of this world's goods, and the evils resulting therefrom, would seem to us a secondary and transitory matter.

When once this brief earthly existence shall have passed away, with its glory and its need, its money and its misery, its knowledge and its ability, there will no longer be any labor problem, social problem, or problem concerning the poor. Whether we have been rich or poor, whether we have traveled through life first class or fourth class, will then be of no importance whatever;

for one can die peacefully and happily in the poorhouse, in the hospital, or, like poor Lazarus, in the street; and one can die despairing in torments of body and soul in a palace and on a magnificent bed. If a man is converted, he always has an "existence worthy of man," whether he live in a garret or in a palace; if he is not converted, he has an "existence unworthy of man," whether he live in the most beautiful villa, in the office of a bank, or in a clubhouse, in a poorhouse, or in the gutter of the highway. This life, with all its questions and interests, is unimportant, life eternal is infinitely important; and therefore Jesus did not consider it worth the while and the trouble even to discuss the many social reforms that present-day Christian social reformers push to the front.

The fundamental error is not that the world, or so-called Christendom, does too little for those temporally poor and wretched; but that, blinded by sin, it believes that it is something, that it has something, that it is able to do something, that it knows something. In order to take away this harmful delusion Jesus came, and says: "Thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked. . . . Be zealous therefore, and repent." (Rev. iii, 17, 19.) Humanity, like the prodigal son, has left its home and its Father, and is trying to feed on the husks of modern science, modern theology, modern philanthropy; but the soul is not satisfied with these. There is no help for the soul, except it come to itself, arise, come to the Father and say, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before Thee, and am no more worthy to be called Thy son."

The true imitation of Christ consists, in the first place, in the knowledge that without Him we are lost and condemned sinners, and in laying hold by faith upon His merits and His propitiatory death, whereby we are justified in the sight of God. "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." (John xii, 24.) It consists, in the second place, in continued repentance for our sin. "The whole life of the Christian," Luther writes, "is continual repentance." It consists, in the third place, in each one's bearing the cross in the condition, station, and age into which God has placed him, whether the cross be of poverty or of riches, of disease or of health, of honor or of disgrace, of toilsome labor or of quiet waiting, of the praise of men, or of being misunderstood and despised by them; for, apart from God, anything in this world, even fortune, riches, and honor, may be a cross for Christians. From this imitation of Christ there will proceed of themselves the breaking of bread for the hungering, the clothing of the naked, the doing good in the spirit of Jesus according to every man's ability and station. Not, do good to the poor, in order that you may be Christians; but, become Christians, then doing good will result from within of itself, not as a duty, but as a natural enjoyment, like breathing or eating and drinking.

The Christian socialists have not been successful in their attempts to reach the soul by caring for the body, and to reconcile the enemies of God with Christianity by improving their earthly lot. Even those ensnared in falsehood perceive the intention, and are disgusted. Therefore social democracy has plainly said, We use these "ogling elements" for our purposes, and despise

them. There is no way to the human heart save the one pointed out by Christ; and only the preaching of the Gospel can convert men, and make of them new men and children of God. "One thing is needful," and we experience daily how those who make this one thing a secondary matter in order to win men, fall away from Christianity, and affiliate themselves with revolutionistic parties.

The hope of Christian socialists that social reforms will cause poverty, war, and bodily and intellectual misery to vanish, is a vain dream. This world, this earth, which for six thousand years has drunk the blood of the just and the tears of the oppressed, the atmosphere of which incessantly resounds with blasphemies and curses, with lies, obscenity, words of haughtiness and wrath, will not be made pure and holy by a little doing of good. It is incessantly approaching judgment and destruction by fire, as surely as with the sun it annually speeds several million miles on through the abysses of space. Then Jesus will come again. This He has plainly foretold. Therefore be "ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their lord." Then, indeed, He will take up the social question earnestly, and will carry it through in the millennium and on the new earth, with a thoroughness, a power, and a wisdom that will confound all social reformers. *That* is our hope.

In the meantime it is written for us: "Take heed that no man deceive you. For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many." "Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there; believe it not." (Matt. xxiv, 5, 23.)

But Christ is not in need of our conceptions and pre-

sentations; He is who He is. Culmann has well said of Him (*Christliche Ethik*, p. 259): "The word of the Lord 'I receive no testimony from man' (John v, 34), is valid in the entire absoluteness with which it is expressed. The sun is not in need of an oil-lamp in order to come to light; it is made evident by itself. No testimony of John the Baptist combined with the testimony of the prophets of the Old Testament, of whom he is the last; neither the analytic scheme of the Gospel of Matthew, nor the synthetic of the Gospel of John; no human art or science or logic; neither proof from the Scriptures, nor from miracles, is able to effect the conviction that God Himself begets in man through His kind indwelling."

O Jesus, how differently dost Thou stand before us, Thy disciples, from before the world that is biased by falsehood! When, according to the divine counsel, the revolving ages had progressed far enough in the heavens of heavens; when Thy hour had come, Thou didst leave the glory which Thou didst have with the Father before the foundations of the world had been laid, and didst descend into this apostate world, sent of the Father, and impelled by ardent love, to seek and save them that were lost. God and man, Thou didst fulfill the law and the prophets without sin. Salvation and thanks be unto Thee, Lamb of God, that takest away the sin of the world, and my sin! Thanks be unto Thee that Thou didst redeem us, "who through fear of death were all our lifetime subject to bondage," "from Him that had the power of death," "into the glorious liberty of the children of God." "To whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believed, and are sure that Thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God." Thou hast opened

our eyes, so that we see how this world, which despises Thee, and does not know Thee, has wasted its heritage, and is now herding the swine of its lusts. Now we wait for Thee and rejoice at Thy coming, laugh at our enemies, scorn the scornful, despise their despising, and look expectantly forward to the coming of Thy day.

O Christ, Thou only begotten Son of God, born of the Virgin, God of God, light of light, born, and not created, of like substance with the Father, through whom all things are created, who for us didst come down from heaven, didst through the Holy Ghost become very man of the Virgin Mary; who wast crucified for us under Pontius Pilate, didst suffer and die, wast buried, didst rise again the third day according to the Scriptures, didst ascend into heaven, and sittest at the right hand of the Father, whence Thou wilt return again to judge the quick and the dead,—Thou, of whose kingdom there is no end, we salute Thee! Have mercy upon us! *Kyrie eleison!*

### III.

## OBJECTIONS.

*"Yea, hath God said."*—GEN. III, 1.

AT all times there have been objections enough raised to this Bible. As early as in the Psalms of David and in the Prophets, one can see how the godless scoffed at the law and the promises of God. "The Lord will do neither good nor evil!" they cried; and it came to be a byword of mockers that "the Lord is slack concerning His promise."

In our day, doubts and objections shoot up like mushrooms. Science is said to have shown that there is nothing in the Mosaic record of creation; natural philosophy is said to have done away with miracles; Biblical criticisms is said to have proved that the books of Moses are spurious, etc. Biblical criticism proper we shall consider later on. For the present we select a few of the multitude of objections raised by such scholars as would be glad to believe.

The view has become almost universal that to-day we can no longer hold the mediæval conception of the inspiration of the Holy Scriptures.

Here we must reach out somewhat far.

Our impersonal age has everywhere liked to see and hear clever and prudent diplomats, brilliant speakers and authors, amiable and intellectual men; and yet it forgot them, and let their memory die out after their death, and



as soon as the aroma of their amiability had passed away. But where are the rock-firm, weather-hardened personalities with penetrating wrath, who stand by right and truth without precaution, forbearance, or consideration; whose yea is yea, and whose nay is nay, over against high or low; who during their lifetime wandered about unloved and unsought, and after their death were more and more missed and mourned, because it was perceived that they had afforded others also strength and support? We consider ourselves quite prudent and objective when we place the impersonal above the personal; and consider ourselves wise when we divest God more and more of His personality, in order, under one name or another, to imagine Him an absolute being, as characterless as possible. That is a misapprehension of the great truth that personality is above and beyond the impersonal. The true and heavenly world is and will be the efflux, the effect, and the manifestation of personalities. The good one is the cause of that which is good, and the evil one is the cause of that which is evil. Those who say that a thing is not good because God wills it, but God wills it because it is good, place something beyond and above God by which He must be governed. They make Him subject to that which is good, *i. e.*, they deny God. "There is none" and nothing "good but One; that is, God." That willed by Him is *the good*; that not willed by Him is *the evil*. The good is the emanation of a good being; the evil is the creation of an evil being. In heaven there will emanate as a constant creation justice from the just God, holiness from the holy God, life from the living God, light from God, the uncreated light. A good thing without a good person, and an evil thing without an evil

person, is just as absurd as love without a lover and a loved one. There are no principles or ideas without personality, and those who believe good and evil to be something impersonal floating about in space, are no wiser than the materialist who assumes that from eternity there have existed moral and immoral gases, virtuous and vicious molecules, or that morality and virtue, good and evil, are later and more complicated chemical combinations. But how eternal matter in the weariness of its eternity chanced upon the idea of the manufacture of virtue, and later upon the construction of the idea of God, are world-riddles, which even Haeckel is not able to solve; and equally inexplicable is the fanatical hatred entertained by him and his followers against this God, who, according to them, is merely a product of the mechanism of atoms, and of matter, so highly revered by them. And from their view of the world it will always remain wonderful that the chemical and physical apparatus, called man, does not rest, before he believes in or denies a God, loves or hates Him, as is shown by these men themselves.

A personality is a center of forces, which, wherever it may be, it consciously or unconsciously sends forth. It is a spirit, which is unceasingly influencing and enthusing others for higher or for lower things; for in what else may the activity of a spirit consist? Thus God, as the highest personality, is the center from which the forces unceasingly stream that keep in motion the world, the universe, "the one thing that revolves;" the forces through which the creation once originated, and through which it now exists in eternal origination. But not only through so-called natural forces does He main-

tain and animate the universe. These forces are only the effect, the emanation, of higher spiritual forces, with which He enthuses the universe, or, which is the same, constantly inspires it. Inspiration means "breathing into," and the universe would crumble into original nothingness if God ceased to breathe life and spirit into it continually. This inspiration, in the first place, is an inspiration of vital force in general. But to His children God promises *His Spirit*, the "holy" Spirit. Him He gives in greater measure to those whom He calls to do great deeds in His kingdom. "Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." How, then, does an ever less spiritual world, and, alas! many a Christian also, come to give up the inspiration of the Bible as an unintelligible and antiquated notion? If we accept a God at all, who is Spirit and reveals Himself to His creatures, the inspiration of the Bible is rather a conclusion so irresistible, and a concept so clear, that we should be obliged to construct it *a priori* if the Bible were silent concerning it. But this divine Word not only repeats a hundred-fold, "And the word of the Lord came to," but says expressly, "*I will put My words in his mouth.*" This we call inspiration. Even the heathen knew that "there are words given by inspiration from above." Inspiration through the Holy Ghost is a temporary enhancement through the Holy Ghost of the divine in man up to such communion and oneness with God that man of himself speaks divine words. But since God never annuls the laws of the individuality that He has created, and just as in heaven Isaiah will eternally speak other words than Daniel, and John than Paul, this inspiration manifests itself in man only within the formula

of his soul. It can not inspire him with any untruth; but it can impart more or less to him, and of the infinite aspects of the Godhead it will constantly reveal through him those which are most akin to his *ego*, and which, through the different inspired men of God, illuminate different parts of the great plan of creation and redemption, as with an electric reflector. God never reveals Himself fully to any creature, but only to the Son. But "damnable unbelief and the miserable flesh," Luther says, "do not permit us to see nor to take into account that in the Scriptures God is speaking to us, or that it is the Word of God; but we think it is Isaiah, Paul, or some other evil man, who has not created heaven and earth."

Inability to believe in inspiration is a natural and explicable appearance in our age. The lack of spirit in our life, in our art and literature, in our social conditions, must necessarily beget such inability to believe in the power and ability of the Spirit. Our entire modern life, viewed candidly, is nothing but a continual admiration of self; a lauding of self, of our knowledge and ability, our power, our wisdom, our reason, our wealth; in short, a constant adoration of self. How can the Spirit of God breathe through men so entirely steeped in self-love? Who constantly lives in a calm, can not believe in the roaring storm. But when again "the four winds of heaven shall strive upon the great sea" of nations (Dan. vii, 2), then Christians will again believe in divine and in satanic inspiration.

We still believe in inspiration, many Christians say, but no longer in the now untenable verbal inspiration of the Scriptures (as if the latter had not at all times seemed to the wisdom of man to be untenable). And we say,

We care little for an inspiration that is not verbal. If one would lay hold on such inspiration, it is volatilized to fog or to a mere impulse of the Spirit to speak good and true words, such an impulse as Augustine and Luther also felt. To the fervent longings and questionings of the soul—where it may find sure, firm, absolute, even verbal, literal, not human, but divine truth—it answers: The Bible contains inspired and uninspired parts, parts entirely true, and parts partly true, sayings inspired of God, and others expressed by pious men in their own manner, parts of greater and of lesser value side by side; the thought is sure, but the wording of it is not; it might just as well have been expressed differently. Here, too, a mistaking of the absolute value of the Word, and of every word. We say, If the word wavers, the sense wavers. But if *we* are to determine what parts of the Bible are inspired or not, according as their content seems to us to be important or unimportant, to pertain to the history of salvation or not, we constitute ourselves masters of the Word, and are at the mercy of our own caprice, and that of others. What shall I do with this semi-faith in a semi-truth? Where and how shall I distinguish? At every word of Scripture I feel myself again benighted by doubts.

Faith in verbal inspiration, many believing Christians exclaim concernedly, is repulsive to people. Indeed, if repulsion is to be avoided, many things must be changed, and a wide field opened for inoffensive exposition. But we do not see that Christ feared lest he might repel His listeners, or that He in any way took pains to make truth more acceptable and credible to them. Even His disciples said, "This is a hard saying"—and it was—"who

can hear it?" And "from that time many of His disciples went back, and walked no more with Him." But Jesus did not take back a single word, did not explain Himself, but asked, "Will ye also go away?" (John vi.) He who fears lest he repel people is on the way to seeking praise of people.

Do we not perceive, even in man, that the higher and more powerful enthusiasm floods and flames from within and without, the more it inspires the exact word, and no other? Do we separate the words of our classic writers from their spirit, and allow ourselves carelessly to translate their words into every-day language? Do we not, on the contrary, seek most diligently for their original setting? But when the Divine Word is in question, the blind cry in a chorus: God can not. How shall he do it? Or they speak childishly of a "dictation," of "involuntary tools," and thereby show that they have no conception of the nature and power of inspiration. But, of course, how shall he who never felt inspired, as in prayer, understand verbal inspiration? The word is the visibility and the form of the spirit. Is form a mere secondary matter in Goethe's "Iphigenia," or in Michael Angelo's Moses, or in the head of Juno Ludovisi, or in the Parthenon, or in the Cathedral of Cologne? Can we separate it in these from the spirit? No. The same is true of the Word of God. "*Le style c'est l'homme*," and those who think nothing depends on the mere word, do not know how their mental poverty and thoughtlessness is reflected in their slovenly and clumsy speech, in their stereotype expressions, and unfitting adjectives. "By thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned." Every improvement in man is

manifest in an improvement of his speech. How, then, if in certain moments he is divine!

Shall we not all some day in heaven be truly, fully, and wholly inspired? Will not the Spirit of God, yea, the seven spirits that flash before His throne, there breathe through us and set us aglow, so that, being drunken with divine wisdom, being intoxicated with divine power and bliss, we shall speak nothing but divine words, full of truth, infallible, creative, omnipotent, because they are of God? And here it seems so hard to us to believe in a drop of this sea of spirit, in a spark of this ocean of fire. Lord, grant us a breath of Thy Spirit, in order that we may believe in Him!

He who can not rise to the mental conception of a complete divine inspiration ought, at least, to reach the faith that the God whose providence extends to sparrows and to the hairs of our head, willed that a Book, by means of which He desired to lead many millions of souls from darkness to light, should be written so, and not otherwise. But He wants to lead men to Himself by truth, not by falsehood.

But, exclaim many, you do not mean to say that, *e. g.*, the Mosaic record of creation is also true? Indeed, I mean to say just that. I believe every word of this record, if for no other reason than that I am absolutely unable to see why I should not believe it, although, or because, I have read many scholarly works on cosmogony, geology, and astronomy. I believe that we shall some day, in the light of eternity, behold truths and depths in it that far surpass all cosmogonies and cosmologies of all nations and all scholars. I believe every word of it, because it seems to me to be inconsistent, yea, absurd to

say: I believe in God, the Creator of heaven and earth, and I also believe that the Bible is a revelation of this Creator to His creatures, but I do not believe that this Creator's relation of how He created the world and us is true. I believe in it, because it seems equally inconsistent to me to say: Well, but God did not write this; Moses wrote it. Why did God not, from the very first, prevent his promulgating erroneous views concerning creation, and his thus deceiving millions? If it is true that this Moses spake with Jehovah face to face, that for forty days he held intimate converse with Jehovah on Sinai, and that Jehovah there showed him the exact model of the tabernacle, it would be inconceivable, yea, unpardonable, if this Jehovah did not give Moses instructions, however brief, for writing his important cosmogony. If the record of creation represents only the personal views of Moses at that time, then I ask modestly, Why did God permit him to begin His Word with such antiquated stuff, of which He foreknew that, in the enlightened twentieth century, it would be a stumbling-block to all educated persons?

Well, many Christians say, and thereby put themselves at ease, "We shall not be judged according to our faith in the story of creation." Have you that in writing? I, for my part, would not want to swear to it. The word, "I say unto you, that every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment," shows that judgment will be more minute and precise than we usually suppose. If every word shall be examined, whether idle, why shall not every word be examined that you spoke with premeditation and from conviction? With what intention you spoke, to please



whom, whether to appear amiable or clever, courageous or learned or cultured, whether to gain material advantage, whether you said all, what you kept secret and why, in what connection with that which preceded and that which followed, in what relation to your position, your station, your age, your vocation, your sex, your training, your health or illness, in what tone of voice, and with what mien,—all this must be examined into and taken into account, if the sentence is to be a just one. Then ought not every word of ours concerning the Word of God in its connection with our faith, our works, our entire view of the world, and our life to be called to account? Is not every such word a confession? Then shall faith in a part of the Scriptures count for less and be less important than an idle and unpremeditated little word of man, which probably dies away at once, having remained ineffectual? No! True, in this trial faith in Christ is the condition without which no one will be admitted to the examination. “He that believeth not is condemned already;” all that remains in his case is announcement of the sentence, and execution. But, in accordance with the Scriptures, I believe in a thorough examination that searches heart and reins, and pertains to all deeds, words, and thoughts of the Christian in his earthly life. The Bible teaches that standing and achievement in various “branches” will be taken into account, as, *e. g.*, spiritual poverty, hunger, and thirst after righteousness, mercy, peaceableness, heart purity, suffering persecution, love of God and the brethren, patience, hope, humility, the use of various talents and gifts, good works, and likewise also faith in the Bible. The examination in the last branch may well cover the entire Bible from A to Z, and

it will hardly be possible for any one to offer the excuse that he had not believed that he would be judged according to his faith in the story of creation, or in the Book of Kings, or Job, or according to his faith in Revelation, which no one understands correctly anyhow. The reply would be: It is written, "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God;" and concerning this last book, "Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy." For Moses, Jesus demands full faith, and does not except the first chapters. He teaches that whosoever shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven. He speaks of a jot that shall not pass from the law; He demands that our speech be yea, yea, nay, nay; just so our faith, too; just so, too, our answer in the day of His judgment, and not, if, and but, partly and to a certain extent. And thus full, entire faith in the Bible may some day receive a higher reward than half a faith.

"Tut, tut!" many exclaim, impatient with such faith in the Bible, "all that is rigid faith in the letter of the Scriptures; one must know how to distinguish between the word and the spirit, must not cleave to the word, but search out the spirit of it!" Indeed, a spiritless word! Whoever speaks thus, understands neither the word nor the spirit nor their connection, which is the more intimate, the higher the spirit is. Christ says, "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life," and exhorts a hundred-fold, "Believe My words!" not My spirit. "If ye continue in My word." "The word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day." (John xii, 48.)

There is only one word for each thing (hence, "to call a thing by its right name"), and only one expression for each truth. Whoever is not exact in the use of the word, and thinks he can express the truth just as well so or so, conceals and effaces it, and robs it of some of its power. We all do this, more or less, when we expound the Word of God, and elucidate and explain it by means of our word. What a great thing every word is; how it is connected with the entire language; what a world of ideas it is! There might be a book written on each one, even on "in," "for," "against," "but," and their rôle and operation in the language; on "I," "thou," "he," "she," and especially when there are brought into connection "I" and "thou," "he" and "she;" or on words like "to go," "to stand," "to see," "to hear," "to do," "to think," "to live," "to die." After all, are not all books that men have ever written mere paraphrases of and reflections on the words light, darkness, spirit, day, night, sea, land, plant, sun, moon, animal, man, soul, etc., which God once spoke? But in our day words and writings flow about us incessantly, and we speak and read and write so much and on so many subjects, that we no longer have time to think about the word and its value.

To this mistaking and disregarding of the Word is due the fact, that when the reality and plasticity of the Bible causes them anxiety, so many Christians of our day, and teachers of the Word, too, at once think, "That must be understood spiritually." This is one of the neatest inventions of him who is a liar from the beginning to paralyze the Word of God, and to weaken its influence even with Christians. In this he has been very successful among pious people—yea, especially among these—

and has cradled thousands into quiet slumbers; for he does not fear allegories; he knows that no one is really afraid of an allegorical, a figurative hell, and that no one really longs for an allegorical, purely intellectual heaven. He, His power, and His kingdom are too dreadfully real to be shaken by paper arrows, and by interpretations that are full of imaginings. But the fatal passion to resolve personalities to mythical persons, dogmas to changeable views of the age, divine laws to parables, is in keeping with the weakness of a generation which more and more puts temporary sensibility in the place of law, humane-ness in the place of justice, philanthropy in the place of Christianity, tolerance in the place of confession, and social questions in the place of questions pertaining to eternity.

It is divine prophecy especially, about which even Christians, possessed of this spirit, busily weave their veil, in order to hide from themselves and others the uncomfortable light of its countenance. We have seen that, up to the present time, prophecy has been fulfilled literally and in its smallest detail; *e. g.*, that pertaining to Babylon and Nineveh, Tyre, and Egypt, the life and sufferings of Jesus, the Jewish nation. This these Christians do not deny; they rather point triumphantly, and justly so, to this literal fulfillment, as to a strong proof for the truth of the Scriptures. But they want to hear nothing of a literal fulfillment of that part of prophecy that has as yet not been fulfilled. All that is yet future, is to be understood as figurative and spiritual! Has Babylon been converted only figuratively and spiritually into a heap of ruins and a retreat for jackals? Did Christ die only figuratively on the cross? Did he drink spiritual vine-

gar, and were His spiritual garments divided by lot? Or has God only figuratively scattered His people among all nations? And is it now only figuratively without king, without prince, without sacrifice, without altar, without ephod, and without sanctuary, as God had threatened? No; all this came to pass literally and really. Why, then, when God, a hundred times over, affirms to His prophets, and swears by Himself, that "He will gather His people from all the nations, whither He has driven them, and will bring them back into the country that He swore to give unto their fathers," do they assert that these are merely figurative expressions? and why do they "spiritualize" these glorious and minute prophecies through insignificant interpretation?

And these of weak faith prudently teach us to be sure to guard against a literal faith in the Word. Thus a theologian writes concerning the first resurrection (Rev. xx, 5): "We dare think only of souls" (resurrected souls!) "and must guard against holding this to be a resurrection of the body. That would open the way to dangerous fanaticisms." We, who believe in the Bible, despise such anxiety, and say: If it is written that such and such "dead lived; and that the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished; this is the first resurrection," this means that some of the dead (see also Dan. xii, 2) will rise again, and others will not rise again—"and will live and reign with Christ a thousand years." If the author referred to above takes the two witnesses of Revelation to be Luther and Calvin, or the Lutheran and Calvinistic Churches; if others take them to be the law and the prophets, or the Old and the New Testament, we say, Away with such weak and inco-

incident interpretation of the Scriptures! Even this difference of contradictory views shows that their expositions are not true; for there is no longer any doubt concerning any fulfilled prophecy; *e. g.*, that pertaining to Babylon. Did Luther and Calvin have fire fall from heaven, or change water into blood, as Moses and Elijah and the two witnesses in Revelation xi, 6, did? Were they killed in the city where also our Lord was crucified, and did, at their death, they that dwell upon the earth rejoice over them and send gifts one to another? (Rev. xi, 8, 10.) No, that will be fulfilled literally in the two witnesses. This we call a calm, sober, clear faith in the Bible; a faith that honors God and His Word. On the other hand, we reject the above and similar spiritualizing of the Scriptures as arbitrary and subjective notions, and as dangerous fanaticism. We know full well that the Word also has a spiritual sense; indeed, we believe that Christ's thirsting and his drinking vinegar, and other details, which all came to pass, in order "that the Scriptures might be fulfilled," have a sense so deep that only angels and the redeemed can know it; but we believe in a fulfillment of future things just as literal as of past things, even though they are reflected before their definite fulfillment in certain facts and in spiritual conditions, which is usually true of prophecy. Is God's arm shortened that He should not be able to do such things in His time?

The confounding of Israel with the Church, and the spiritualizing of promises given it to images of the glorious conditions of present-day Christianity, has, like all error, had a soporific and spiritually paralyzing effect. Israel is not the Church, and will not be the Church in

heaven. Beautifully, and answering to body, soul, and spirit, the Scriptures distinguish three stages of humanity as related to God. Firstly, the nations, to whom is given the natural law,—the same that was given to Adam, but which shone forth much more brightly in paradisaic nature (Rom. ii, 14-16),—who are judged according to the same (Matt. xxv, 32), and over whom we Christians shall rule in the new earth (Rev. ii, 26, 27). Secondly, the people of Israel, chosen from these nations, to whom the law of Sinai and the promise of future world-glory was given. Thirdly, Christians, the congregation and bride of the Lamb, from all tongues and nations, to whom is promised persecution and tribulation on earth, and a reigning and ruling with Christ in heaven. These three grades will be found again in the new heaven and the new earth; they are eternal, as is also the fulfillment of the promises given them. To Israel, and not to the Church, are given the promises of the Old Testament. The mystery of the Church, the calling of the nations, was not revealed to the prophets (Eph. iii, 3-6; Col. i, 26), and this in itself is a reason why their words can not be applied to the Church. With such confounding we have lulled ourselves into unreal dreams, and close our eyes against clear facts. The earth is now not “filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea,” and it is quite necessary to say, “Know the Lord;” for they do not know Him. Darkness still covers the nations,—several hundred millions of heathen, Buddhists, Mohammedans. Else why missions? But their progress is far and constantly surpassed by the increase of the population of the earth. According to the newest statistical reports of the Statistical Society of

London, the population of Europe has increased from two hundred and sixteen millions to four hundred millions within the last seventy years, and the population of the earth from eight hundred and forty-seven millions to one thousand six hundred millions. How insignificant, compared with these numbers, are numerically a few thousand or hundred thousand converts! Thus infidelity and heathendom are incessantly spreading, and we are not drifting toward the conversion of the world, but toward the foretold apostasy. (Luke xviii, 8; xvii, 26-29, *et al.*) The nations, the Christian, too, are not forging plowshares from their swords, but *vice versa*. The constant wars within the past nineteen hundred years, the persecutions of Christians, from the Roman emperors to the Armenian, the horrors of the Inquisition, the thirty years' war, and the French revolution with its dismissal of God, are not the results of Satan's being bound, nor images and fruits of the peaceful and glorious kingdom of the Messiah promised to Israel. We know well that, in the elect, a kingdom of peace and joy will be effected through the Holy Ghost, and also that by virtue of the great harmony in the one God all external things answer to spiritual things, and that in so far we have power to use the glorious promises given to Israel, as images of inner spiritual states; but it is a harmful delusion and a weakening of the Word of God to assert that these spiritual states are a full realization and fulfillment of these prophecies. Whoever reads with unbiased mind Jer. xxxii and xxxiii, and the glorious closing words of the prophets—*e. g.*, Isaiah lxvi, 18-24; Ezekiel xxxviii, xxxix, and xl, xlvi; Hosea xiv; Joel ii and iii; Amos ix, 11-15; Obadiah 17-21; Micah vii, 11-20; Zephaniah iii, 8-20; Zechariah



xiv; Mal. iv, 1-6—can not evade the overpowering impression that more than images are given here. Surely, these do not refer to our Protestant State Churches; Jehovah did not promise to give these unto Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; it is not this that he swore a hundred times over by Himself to give unto His people; for the Israel of to-day has little enough of this, and we, too, would refuse to accept such an incomplete, actually not existing fulfillment of the Word. But some day, after Israel, having been called back out of all nations, recognizes Christ as the promised Messiah and King, and laments its rejection (Zech. xii, 1-10), there will come up to Zion in Christ's millennium, not the resurrected Christians, but the nations to worship, and will send ambassadors to the feast of tabernacles in the temple of Ezekiel; and whatever people will not do this, "upon them shall be no rain, saith the Lord." "The law shall go forth of Zion." And in the new earth the resurrected David will be king of Israel eternally, as God swore unto him.

But miracles! Ah yes! these wicked miracles, of which the Bible is full from beginning to end! If God wanted to perform miracles, at all events he might have kept them secret, at least the most incredible among them, *e. g.*, Balaam's ass, Jonah in the belly of the fish, for He certainly foresaw that it would make faith in His Word impossible for a later, advanced, enlightened age and free theology! But there they stand, in closed ranks, reported in all earnestness and simplicity by eye-witnesses; and the entire life of Jesus, from His birth to His resurrection, is represented to us as a continuous chain of miracles.

How now?

In the first chapter we saw that science, as a whole,

stands before the origin of the world, before the origin of organic life and of self-consciousness, as before unsolvable riddles, and has abandoned the hope of ever solving them. Darwin himself candidly confesses, "The entire process of the development of life is the manifestation of a power which, for the human mind, is absolutely inscrutable." That this universe exists, is the wonder of wonders. Whence came it? Who made it? How did it originate? It matters not whether we take refuge in the utterly inconceivable assumption that it has existed from eternity, or whether we say that it originated of itself, or was created by a God, we are placed before the miracle of origin as before the Father from whom we and all things have come. *We have originated from the miracle.*

But the existence of this universe, which seems "natural" to us, is as wonderful and miraculous as its origin. We can no more comprehend the continuous generation of organisms and of life in general than we can comprehend the primal origin of organic life. The primal origin of consciousness is no greater a riddle than its existence, and than the fact that the food I ate a few hours ago now takes part in my thought and joy and sorrow. Our existence is a miracle also. "All quite natural and simple!" exclaim the superficial. But natural is derived from "nature," and this nature is the great, incomprehensible miracle. *We live in the miracle.*

Passing away and dying, also, the suddenly manifest difference between a living and a dead person, the ceasing and being no more, of that which was, is a miracle. However much we may try, perhaps at the sickbed of a loved one, to familiarize ourselves with the thought of death, it always appears as something unexpected and incom-

prehensible; and to the murderer who grows pale before his victim, it appears as a miracle of hell.

Whether in this ocean of divine miracle, in which we arise, exist, and pass away as miraculous products, single waves ever and ever rise as particular and extraordinary miracles; whether at one time an animal (do I know what an animal is?) uttered a few intelligible sounds; whether among millions of wonderfully generated men a few rise again; whether a divine spirit subdues the sea, which at one time came into existence through the spirit (do I know what atoms of water or natural forces are?),—all this seems to me to be unusual, indeed, but not impossible, and does not confound me. But to me it seems folly to appeal to reason in negating it, as though reason could judge concerning things of which it does not and can not know anything. That their entire conception of the world shrivels up more and more, and the world seems to them to be boarded up, is a just punishment of those who place their little reason upon the throne, and make it the only valid criterion for God and the world.

With accustomed superficiality the man of the world also treats miracles, either at once disdainfully dismissing them as “silly stuff,” or ascribing to God and His Son a few smaller and easier miracles, as a well-known Berlin professor does, but energetically protesting against the greater and more difficult ones. Confounded he sits before Lot’s wife and Balaam’s ass, like one who has never before seen an egg, and now takes one, opens it, and exclaims: “What! am I to believe that, simply by virtue of a certain degree of warmth in the incubator there will come forth from this slimy white and yellow fluid a perfect animal that can walk and fly and cackle? Why,

whence shall feathers, and feet with claws, and the hard bill come? I shall never believe such stuff." For in the presence of this fact, as well as of thousands of others, science as a whole is as helpless as in the presence of the miracles of the Bible. But we wise people consider the miracle "quite simple and natural" that is repeated daily, and deny it if it occurs only once within a hundred or a thousand years.

Here, too, the believer reasons from another and a higher position than the unbeliever. That faith in a living God—and that a God must be a living God, does not require proof—includes faith in miracles, is self-evident for him, and he says with J. J. Rousseau, "Whoever says that God can not perform miracles, ought to be in an insane asylum." The Christian lays hold on the root of miracles instead of criticising every wonderful fact and the report thereof. He knows that this material world and all its phenomena are the fruit and effect of the spiritual world; that therefore the material is secondary, the spiritual primary. Even so in the miracles of Christ. Whether the man that was born blind could see for a few years; whether Lazarus lived a few years longer; whether a leper was temporarily healed or not, is of itself and for the history of the world a matter quite unimportant. The matter of primary importance was the reference to the power of Jesus to do this, to His higher power to forgive sin, and thereby His legitimation as the Son of God. Therefore those who deny His Deity also, of necessity, deny His miracles. But the Christian has experienced in himself a spiritual miracle, grander, more radical, and of more immeasurable (because eternal) importance than if all the asses in the world should begin to speak, or all the trees of the forest to sing. On his precipitous path

he, an immortal, divine being, an entire eternal spiritual world, was seized by an omnipotent hand, hardly knowing what was happening to him, and, behold! he rises toward the clear sun again, a new creature; a deed far greater, eternally far more important, than if a new continent had risen from the floods of the ocean; a deed of God, a miracle, understood only by him who has experienced it. Now this child of God carries the miracle in himself, is himself a miracle, and can believe in miracles. He whom God has not converted to Himself can not believe in miracles, and, at its best, his faith in miracles is, like that of pious heathen, a dismal anticipation of the incalculable operations of good and evil powers.

He who does not believe in miracles does not believe in God, but has instead an unreal notion, an impotent, indefinite something to which it were senseless and useless to pray, and which is more powerless, even, than all the idols of the heathen; for the heathen felt that a God without miracles would be a chimera that could profit nothing. Such a one, man can neither fear nor love. But men do not want to believe in miracles because they do not want to believe in God; one follows from the other.

Therefore it is not the miracle, as such, that repulses the unbeliever; in poetry, in art, on the stage, in "*Rhein-Gold*," and in "*der Götterdämmerung*" he does not object to fables and miracles, employs terms like wonderful, wondrously beautiful, miraculous, as expressions of ecstasy, and *admires* the beautiful and the grand. Indeed, as all the actions, imaginings, and strivings of man are a continuous, even though involuntary, confirmation of the Word of God, even so the very man who ridicules divine

miracles is unceasingly in quest of wonders of art, science, industry, and progress. He, too, would like to rise into the skies, change stones to bread, strike water from the rock, silence storms and waves, speak in thunders, make the lightning and the ray of light his servants, conquer disease and death, in short would like to imitate God, and proclaims, by his inexterminable desire for wonders, that he has been created for miracles.

But the Biblical miracle, the miracle to the honor of God, the miracle as immediate action of a personal God, is obnoxious to him, and must under no conditions be believed in. The reason can easily be seen. A world-machine that runs correctly and regularly, like a wound clock, by virtue of the mechanism of atoms, is much more composing and comfortable than a personal, just God, who is jealous of His honor, whose flaming eye examines my heart and my reins day and night, whose hand may at any time nab me in the neck, and who this very night may thunder a "hither, and be judged!" at me, instead of letting me quietly be resolved into my chemical elements. And therefore all one may say to such concerning miracles profits little. They will still repeat in chorus: I shall never believe in miracles, because, . . . once for all, I do not want to believe in them. Theoretically I believe that God is omnipotent, but in practice I do not. He may at one time have created the world, but I can prove to him scientifically, that he can not encroach on this world *ad libitum*. I am absolutely unable to harmonize it with reason, and it is not in keeping with the conceptions of the present age that this Almighty Creator of heaven and earth should be able to reign so freely and according to His own pleasure in His own house.

And even Christians can say in public addresses: "A God who performs miracles is to me an unintelligible, frightful power, not the Father in heaven." "I can not imagine that our Father in heaven should be obliged to repair a world created by Himself." What a superficial, mechanical conception of the work of a living God, as a one-time world-fabrication! Their hearts full of dread and longing, the children of this Father look up to him, and lift petitioning hands toward heaven. But He can not help them, can not comfort them, can not gladden them by an extra gift; for every answer to prayer would be a miracle, a mending of His world, and this ruined world, depraved by sin, needs no mending. Poor Father, poor children! But why did Christ come into a world which our Father in heaven does not want to mend? Then why a redemption at all?

Further discussion is impossible. This much, however, even the most simple-minded can see: that whoever denies miracles at all, makes all the authors of Biblical books liars, and stamps the Bible an old book of fables; a view which, indeed, is shared by enlightened science, and also by modern Bible critics. Bible and Christianity stand and fall with miracles. It is rather unimportant, however, that among sixteen hundred millions of people a few thousand enlightened persons teach, and a few hundred thousand repeat after them, that God can not perform miracles. That will not hinder the eternal Majesty from exercising His sovereign rights according to His pleasure. "The Lord laughs at them." But we, His children, have a God and Father who can perform miracles, and we rejoice in His works.

Further, many say: "The Bible certainly contains

much that is unnecessary. What shall I do, *e. g.*, with the many genealogies?" Well, what narrow pride is this, that is ever relating the whole world to itself! Where is it written that God had written His Book solely for you and me? For us it may be quite unimportant whose name stood in the "golden book" of the nobility of Venice; but for them and their descendants it was and is of very great importance. Would to God that my name and yours stood in His book of nobility, read even by angels! What if this Bible were a duplicate and copy of a heavenly Bible, containing the legal documents of God, in which is written what is important to God, "for an eternal memorial before the Lord?" Then every name, yea, every word in it would have an eternal meaning, and not be understood this side of heaven. Thus the mighty angel prince of Persia says to Daniel, "I will show thee that which is noted in the *book of truth*" (Dan. x, 21), *i. e.*, in the heavenly Bible. See also Malachi: "The Lord heard, and a book of remembrance was written before Him." (Mal. iii, 16.)

The objection that the Bible contains much that is useless is refuted for the Christian by the words of Christ already cited: "But I say unto you, that every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment." If the Bible contains idle things, I can reply in the day of judgment: O God, in Thy Word Thou hast Thyself spoken many idle words, the story of Thy creation, which, as I hear, does not harmonize at all with science, also the many genealogies and repetitions, etc.; and if Thou didst not speak them Thyself, Thou didst have them proclaimed for centuries by Thy holy men to many millions; and now Thou dost demand of



me, that I, one of the least, should not have spoken a single idle word during my entire lifetime.

It is said that the Bible contains evident errors, *e. g.*, in historic dates. Well, no earnest investigator any longer scoffs at Biblical chronology. The fifty thousand or one hundred thousand or "unnumbered thousands" of years of the human race, which originated in the mind of several scholars, but which never have been proved, have passed away; and, indeed, they are impossible for psychological and other reasons. This is admitted by the historian of materialism, Albert Lange, who continues, "If Professor Fraas restricts himself to periods of time that remain within the six thousand years of the Biblical story of creation, there can be no well-founded objection raised." (*Geschichte des Materialismus*, Vol. II, p 317.) The theory of man's descent from the ape is coming more and more to be a thing of the past. The oldest skulls—*e. g.*, those of Cromagnon—show a facial angle as beautiful as that of the average inhabitant of Paris or Berlin, and a somewhat greater brain capacity. We know now, *e. g.*, that the lake dwellings (*Pfahlbauten*), begun about one thousand years before Christ, as well as the stone age among other peoples, continued centuries after Christ; that just as even now there are many savage nations alongside our civilization—yea, just as the inhabitants of once highly civilized countries like Mesopotamia, Egypt, North Africa, have grown savage again—so in the days of the mighty empires of Memphis, Nineveh, Babylon, Tyre, Carthage, there were cave-dwellers and low tribes, which were banished by civilized nations. The historic past of Europe does not reach back two thousand years before Christ, and although Champollion dated the be-

ginning of Egyptian history under King Mena, or Menes, from 5867 before Christ, this number was reduced by investigators more and more, until Wilkinson—whether he is right or not, we do not know—arrived at the year 2320 before Christ. It also seems that traditions of the history of the world before the flood, which, as might be expected, Noah and his sons in their long life had handed down to their descendants, had been used; and it is said that Egyptian records often distinguish between history before and after the flood.

As far as other supposed errors in Biblical dates are concerned, it is here the ignorant again who are at once ready to pass judgment. He who is better informed, and who has examined the records of history, is more careful, and knows that seeming contradictions are not always real. An instructive example of how two supposedly irreconcilable dates nevertheless can both be correct is afforded by the Biblical report of Hezekiah's tribute to Sennacherib, compared with the discovered full account of Sennacherib concerning his campaign. The Bible says, "And the king of Assyria appointed unto Hezekiah, king of Judah, three hundred talents of silver and thirty talents of gold." (2 Kings xviii, 14.) But Sennacherib relates that he had received thirty talents of gold, but eight hundred talents of silver. Criticism could easily assume that the Jewish writer had been prompted by patriotism to reduce the amount; or without further ado the well-known "error in writing" was here also accepted. But more recent Assyriology says: "The silver talent of Palestine was exactly eight thirds of the Babylonian silver talent; the talent of gold, however, was alike in both countries." (Basil Evetts.) Therefore Hezekiah's three

hundred talents were exactly eight hundred for Sennacherib. (Urquhart, *Die neueren Entdeckungen und die Bibel*, Vol IV.) See also in the same work the explanation of Gad's seven and three years of famine, and the difference in the amount paid by David to Ornan (pp. 31-35). In this simple manner full knowledge of things would often harmonize apparent contradictions. Thus reports of a battle may vary in the enumeration of the troops engaged and of the soldiers killed, because in the one report only the country's own legions are counted, as was customary with the Romans, and in the other also the alien auxiliary troops were counted. Thus contradictions may arise concerning the term of office of a ruler who, like Louis XIV, ascended the throne as a minor, because in one statement the years of regency are counted to his term of office, in another not; or where a city was twice destroyed, and in one case one destruction, in another the other, is referred to; or where a city was destroyed, and then was built again under the same name; or where a city was destroyed, and built again under a different name; or where two kings ruled the same country contemporaneously (thus in the case of Belshazzar, who consequently promised Daniel, that he should be the third ruler in the kingdom, not the second). Or a city or a person may have two names, like Joseph, who was also called Zaphnath Paaneah, or like Daniel, who was also called Belteshazzar; or like Voltaire, whose name was changed in later years, formerly having been D'Aroutet; or like Melancthon, whose works were at one time published in Italy as those of Terranigra. Then why could the father-in-law of Moses not have had two names in different languages, one of which perhaps was his title,

priest or high priest? (Ex. ii, 16.) Thus it is possible that, in speaking of an embassy, one may refer to the leading man or spokesman, while another may refer also to his attendant or attendants; that one should speak of "him," another of "them." And so on! Such and many other examples of contradictions, which the thinking man can easily solve, make him hesitate in passing judgment. And I am convinced that the apparently contradictory reports of the evangelists concerning the resurrection of Christ would be in full harmony if all the details of the complicated event were known; and I have seen reports more contradictory than these, which, upon examination of the facts, proved thoroughly true. Thus only one of the two blind men near Jericho can have spoken; but likely these are two similar events, like the multiplying of bread and fish, to which Jesus explicitly refers, as having been two distinct events. Undoubtedly Jesus healed hundreds of blind, of whom there were and are yet so many in Palestine; "He healed them all." How often He may have been petitioned by them in the words, "Son of David, have mercy on me!" Indeed, repetition is an essential trait of His works and words, too often ignored. He was obliged to proclaim the same divine ideas at one time to the apostles and disciples, at another time to the multitude, and He did it in almost the same words. It was no more necessary for Him to cast about for new forms of expression than for new deeds. How easily He could have astonished the multitude by ever-changing miracles; but, as He had the messengers report to John, He always performed the same: "The blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, to the poor the gospel is preached."

(Luke vii, 22.) And yet in each case the deed was individual.

Questions, too, like those concerning ruminating hares and oviparous hedgehogs have been answered diversely. Professor Ruetimeyer, of Basel, one of the foremost authorities on ruminants in Europe, wrote concerning this question: "That the hare ruminates is not new to me. But I call attention to the fact that in present-day anatomical and embryological classification the habit of ruminating alone is not a valid basis for classification; otherwise ruminating fishes would also have to be taken in." Concerning the oviparous hedgehog it has been reported that Director Hancke, of the Zoological Museum in Adelaide (Southern Australia), and at the same time the Englishman Caldwell in Northern Australia, without having mutual knowledge of each other, had found oviparous hedgehogs (the egg 15mm. long and 13mm. wide). Others say the Hebrew word *kippos* does not signify hedgehog, but a kind of serpent (arrow-snake). I do not know, neither do I care, which explanation is the correct one.

In short, so many things in history and science, which were ridiculed for many years, have proved true and simple, that a Christian may quietly let such matters rest. But what about the many variants, of which there has been so much ado since Tischendorf? Of the Old Testament, Professor Kautzsch, one of the foremost Old Testament scholars, says, "Almost total absence of variants." Attacked from all sides for thousands of years, this word stands unaltered, like a granite rock, amid the surging waves. And of the variants of the New Testament there is not one that proclaims another doctrine, or contradicts

the remainder of the Scriptures. If, *e. g.*, in the *textus receptus* we read, "Jesus distributed the loaves to the disciples, and the disciples to them that were set down," instead of "Jesus distributed the loaves to them that were set down" (John vi, 11); or, "Thy sins be forgiven thee," instead of "Thy sins be forgiven" (Matt. ix, 2, 5), any one can see that the sense is wholly the same. Equally justified are "the holy angels" and "the angels;" "of my Father" and "of the Father," "of the Lord Christ" and "of the Lord Jesus Christ," etc. And we shall certainly not lose confidence in the Word, because we read "a great multitude" instead of "a multitude;" "Jesus said," instead of "He said;" or "He came," instead of "Jesus came;" or because frequently "and" or "also" or "even" is found in one version, and not in another. What a contradiction it is that those who deny inspiration, and teach that one should not cling to words, are just the ones who contend most about words, and frequently about words only.

It belongs to the dispensations of Divine Providence relative to the Bible that God has isolated it, and fenced it off, as it were. We know Greek and Roman literature, know also a good part of Egyptian literature, and shall soon have entire libraries of deciphered cuneiform writings. As Hebrew literature we have only the Bible, not a single original work in this language dating from the time of Abraham, Moses, Samuel, David; neither a grammar, but only a few Jewish commentaries on the Bible, *e. g.*, the Talmud, the Sohar, and others. This is not fortuitous, the divine intention is clear. The Scriptures are to stand unalloyed and unparalleled, are not to be supported by any other authority, and are to be self-expository.

It is certainly not the fault of the Bible that it reports so much that is immoral! Why are *we* so bad? If the human race had remained pure from the beginning, its history would also be pure. The Bible knows neither consideration nor indulgence, but only truth. And that the open enunciation of this truth is repulsive to us, ought to make us ashamed; for it proves how little we are in the truth, and how little we can bear the truth. We are a poor, proud, hypocritical, virtue-dissembling generation, which is ever trying to cover its nakedness and leprosy with beautiful rags; is ever adorning and painting itself, in order to play its part on the stage of life and in society, and whose members are ever complimenting one another on their beautiful, flourishing, and healthy appearance. Our incessant endeavor is toward appearing better than we are, toward making as favorable an impression as possible on others, and toward avoiding at all events to let others see the filthy dregs of our hearts. There is no person, the history of whose life and soul is not immoral, and this true history will some day come to light. "We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ." Of our revelation before the judgment seat of Christ the Bible gives us a prelude, and says sternly and coldly, Such are you, even the best among you.

The Bible knows no fear of men, and does not interrogate our pleasure or displeasure, nor our view-point. It establishes its view-point as firm as a rock, and whoever rushes up against this rock, crushes his skull. The Bible does not occupy itself with Christian literature; does not purpose to be a book on religion for the educated; knows nothing of ethics or æsthetics, and does not write moral stories. In it, poor Lazarus does not finally

marry a wealthy relative, nor is the rich man bankrupted and eventually converted; at the death of Paul, Peter, John, it does not write a necrology *ad majorem gloriam* of the deceased faithful servant of Christ, and does not make as much ado about the death of the pious as we do. It is not concerned about the good reputation of its heroes; they are cowards and liars, perjurers, adulterers, and murderers, sinners all, for it knows only the honor of God, not the honor of men, and knows of only one sinless person. In its power and freedom it moves calmly on, knows neither system nor method, neither pious nor impious fabrication and tendency, neither the scholarly nor the edifying nor the pulpit style; it dashes to pieces good and evil prejudices, it sets down primitive granite mountains, and does not devote much time to scenic gardening and decorative floral culture.

“But the horrible shedding of blood in the Bible!” others exclaim; “I can not believe that a kind God commanded such a thing.” Here, too, we ask: Whose fault is it? Who first shed blood? Certainly not God in Paradise. Who slew his brother? What heroic deeds do the “Iliad” and the “Nibelungenlied” celebrate? Murder, and again murder. Of what is the history of the nations full? Of what do they boast? Of great battles, in which they murdered men, their brothers, by tens of thousands. The earth drops human blood. Now a just God says: As ye have done, so shall it be done unto you; as ye shed blood, so will I shed your blood. “And I heard the angel of the waters say, Thou art righteous, O Lord, because Thou hast judged thus. For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and Thou hast given them blood to drink, for they are worthy.” It is characteristic of



the pale Christianity of many present-day weaklings that they are no longer able to recognize and to bear the dealings of a just God in the history of the world and in the Bible, and speak of a stern Jehovah as opposed to Jesus, who preached only love. They not only do not know that the God who commanded Joshua to exterminate the Canaanites with their wives and children, because of atrocities they had committed for centuries, is the same God who, having become man, took little children up in His arms and blessed them, and that the Jehovah in whose spirit and power Elijah killed four hundred atrocious murderers of souls, who, according to the law of Moses, had merited death tenfold, is the Christ who said, "Love your enemies;" but they do not even perceive that Christ judges more severely and terribly than Jehovah. He does not punish with the death of the body, but with the eternal damnation of Gehenna, with the fire that is not quenched and the worm that does not die. Compared with this, what are all the temporal punishments of the old covenant? With His "Ye have heard, . . . but I say unto you," He threatens with hell-fire him who says to his brother, "Thou fool!" Capernaum and Bethsaida He casts into a deeper hell than Sodom and Gomorrah, which He had destroyed from the face of the earth with fire and brimstone. When Jerusalem was taken, He, who had wept for the city, visited upon hundreds of thousands—to Him is given all power in heaven and on earth—the word, "His blood be on us and our children;" and He also let Nineveh and Babylon, Carthage and Rome, perish in blood on account of their sins. He, the "meek and lowly of heart," will some day "tread the wine-press of the wrath of God," and "in flam-

ing fire take vengeance on them that know not God;" and in the face of the terrors of this destruction of the world, even the most horrifying events of the world's history will grow pale. But to the angels the Son of God, who in the agonies of death and with His sweat as great drops of blood falling to the ground pleads, "Father! if it be possible" . . . and it is not possible, . . . is the most terrible revelation of divine justice. Whoever has so little of the Spirit of God that he does not understand this holy and righteous wrath, may forbear speaking to us about His love. He does not understand God's love, for it rests upon the rock of His righteousness. Would this God not gladly have spared His own Son?

And just those who in our day object to the Bible on the ground that it is full of childish tales, say the Bible is too difficult to be understood by children. For this reason there is a strong agitation among teachers, especially in Northern Germany, against the memorizing of passages of Scripture that are not understood. If one hears the objections of these men, and their very meager conception of Bible history, Christianity, and religion in general, the impression is indeed received, that they themselves do not understand the Scriptures, and that it would be better for the child to receive no religious instruction at all than that imparted by such men. It is proof of some knowledge of self that they reluctantly impart instruction for which they are so ill fitted. Roscher is right: "The schoolmen who want to limit the memorizing of passages of Scripture so much in our schools, must never have experienced what unspeakable and inexhaustible refreshment such treasures of memory can afford in sorrowful night-watches."

And when in many school organs one reads their effusions about "the poisonous fangs of evangelical orthodoxy that must be extracted," their "nocturnal demonism," "mediæval darkness and spiritual servitude," it seems as though the pending conflict between Christianity and modern heathendom will be opened in the domain of the schools, and that persecution will begin by compelling believers, for the sake of "uniform education," to send their children to non-confessional schools, which will soon be godless schools. And here, as also in France, there are persons voicing the opinion that the modern State can no longer suffer its future citizens to be educated in the old superstition; that it is justified in giving them—in forcing upon them, if necessary—enlightened instruction.

Besides the inability of the teacher, the family and its entire irreligious, stupid, soul-deadening atmosphere are the cause of the child's lack of understanding of Bible history,—a lack that oftentimes really obtains, but for the most part is only asserted. The Bible, too, teaches an inherited debit. Just as even little children of successive generations of pious people often manifest a surprising susceptibility for, and a touching understanding of, Bible truths, corroborating the word, "Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise," so the descendants of parents steeped in rank materialism manifest the exact opposite. Here souls of children may be found which, being covered with a thick crust of clay, manifest only the lower instincts, and seem calloused against that which is lofty and true.

Moreover the argument in our day, so often directed against Biblical instruction and the memorizing of Scrip-

ture passages, viz., that a child must be given only what it can understand—is one of the sayings of modern pedagogy that sound reasonable, but in truth are fundamentally wrong. Even the medium teacher, educator, and father, who believes that he must explain minutely whatever he tells or shows the child, thereby trains tedious products of reason after his own likeness that move in commonplace matters, and yet are pedantically conceited.

According to the above principle a mother ought not to speak or sing to her child or converse with it at all during the first year, for it does not understand her. (How much intimate and gladdening chatting, stammering, babbling, how many confessions of soul and declarations of love would be lost to the mother and to the child!) But God—or instead of this word, foreign to the pedagogues of to-day, let us say *Nature*—proceeds in a manner exactly opposite to this. It casts the child to be trained into a world which at first it can not understand, and without even giving it the means (*e. g.*, language) for understanding and learning. And despite this great mass of utterly new facts and impressions, which seem impossible for it to master, in this sea of unknown phenomena, among this multitude of strange organisms and beings, the little newcomer grows and prospers in body and soul, learns to think without being instructed, observes and compares, learns to speak without lexicon or grammar, learns astonishingly much without teacher or text-book during the first three years of its life, perhaps more than in all subsequent years. For from the moment of its creation the human soul is a power of God that is able to grasp and apprehend this world, because it is greater and less temporal than this world. Even in the

smallest child this personality of divine descent effects the astonishingly rapid and harmonious development of body and soul. Here already there is a mighty power of assimilation constantly active, which does not first understand and then appropriate, but which immediately sees and eats and drinks, and grows large and strong therefrom. This child-soul is not a reservoir to be filled—this is only the head—but a bud, which has in it all the life, all the forces and essences of the full blossom, yea, of the fruit.

Of this modern pedagogues understand less and less; they want to train the child, and get farther and farther away from it; are more and more wrapped up in abstract ideas, in dry hazy theories, and dry up and wither spiritually. How do you expect to influence the child, yourselves having nothing of the childlike left in you? To you the word applies, "Except ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven," neither shall you arrive at a correct pedagogy on earth.

And the demand, objectionable alike from pedagogical and from religious standpoint, that children should be acquainted even in the schools with "the certain results of Biblical criticism," feignedly for the purpose of furnishing them weapons for the conflict, can be made only by men who do not know and do not believe that God, according to His promise, puts His praise into the mouths of children, and that His Spirit can enable these little ones, and often has enabled them, to lay low with a smooth flint from the brook the Goliaths of unbelief in the heavy armor of science. Those among them, to whom God does not give His Spirit for this purpose, will

not be aided either by Saul's armor; and may God protect us from the defense of the Bible on the part of critically trained high-school and college pupils!

But the Bible contains so many contradictions! Yes, it does contain much that is hard to comprehend; reports, that leave us in the dark; enigmatical, seemingly unnecessary statements; incomprehensible commands, the ground and purpose of which can not be seen; inexplicable deeds, even of pious persons; words at which one shudders; stones of stumbling in the middle of the road; fences, that bar the path. And, withal, no explanation or elucidation, neither reference to nor consideration of any other enunciations, or anything related in a different way! This is true of the evangelists, who knew one another (John knew Matthew); each pursues his own course, utterly unconcerned as to whether his words agree with those of the other, or not; this, too, is not human. Indeed, God has not made faith in His Word easy for us—it would not be His way—and those mistake who consider Christians to be a credulous multitude who, without distinction or reflection or examination, accept and believe all that is written in a venerable old pious book. No; like the trees of the forests by storms, so are we oft-times swayed hither and thither by mighty winds; we, too, know doubtings, and the anxious, earnest, regardless striving for truth at the cost of most precious personal opinions, of which our opponents boast so much. How, throughout the Word, election and eternal decree surge and wrestle with man's self-determination, and the great question of fate with that of freedom! But have the wisest of men solved it even in the course of six thousand years? Just because God has let such questions stand,

and no man is able to answer them, we, too, let them stand; for we know that some day a higher, heavenly analysis will solve problems that can not be approached by earthly arithmetic. "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure;" this, said a student to me, is the most absurd contradiction thinkable. But the Christian who daily experiences and passes through both, needs no explanation, and hears God laughing (Psa. ii) at those who think themselves wise; those at whose feet He has, with sovereign irony, cast such diamonds in the rough, in order that on them they might break off their wisdom teeth. Why did God not give us a Word reasonable and intelligible from A to Z, systematically and methodologically arranged, with thorough demonstration; why not a reasonable catechism and text-book on religion? Because He wants to drill us in faith, because he mocks at the wisdom of the wise, because he wants to show us that His wisdom is not needed to confound our wisdom, for His foolishness suffices for this; because it was His good pleasure to hide such things from the wise and prudent; and because of this His Son, who looks deep into the eternal decrees of eternal wisdom, rejoices in spirit and thanks the Father. (Luke x, 21.) But, of course, man can not overcome this. Who wants to confess to God and to men that he is a poor fool, blind and ignorant, unable of himself to grasp the heavenly and the eternal! That would be a mockery of all progress, all science and enlightenment, yea, of reason, which, some say, with pious mien, is also a gift of God. There are two kinds of men, and two Bibles. A natural Bible, an ordinary little book that

looks like other books, and contains a variety of matter, related by different persons at different times, a mixture of historic and religious matter, things intelligible, and things incredible. The natural man knows only this natural Bible. There is another, a spiritual Bible, which is inclosed in the natural Bible as the kernel is inclosed in the shell; a fruit, juicy and nourishing, a Word full of divine and eternal ideas; this Bible only the spiritual man knows. Augustine was right: the dark places in the Bible come from the dark places in our hearts.

The Word of God had to appear in the form of a servant, even as Christ did, say many, and thereby want to cover up the faults they think they find in it. Yes, this Word scorns all pomp and all art of speech, despises winning introductions, ingenious arrangement, clever notions, stirring pathos, captivating oratory (true oratory, Pascal has well said, scorns oratory), and carelessly casts great words of life, germs of eternity, upon the street, upon the rock, among the thorns, and upon good soil. To us refined and overrefined moderners, who are ever running after new, catchy, sensational words, and who in art and speech attach greater importance to the form than to the content, this Word and its garb may indeed seem very uncomely, rude, rough, simple, and poor. But just as Christ, who was derided by the highly educated Pharisees on account of His words and His appearance, remained without sin, even in the form of a servant, there being "no deceit found in his mouth," even so the divine Word.

Finally, if many say, "Of the Bible I consider only those parts to be the Word of God from which I receive something, which give me something," they really mean



this: Of the Bible I take that to be God's Word which is agreeable to me, which is in keeping with my reason, my views, and my inclinations, which does not contradict my enlightenment, my knowledge, my prejudices, which does not pain me. But whatever undoes my wisdom and my reason, whatever humiliates me, whatever crushes and condemns my hard, proud heart, and annihilates me, the sinner, in the presence of Divine Majesty, in order to offer me salvation through the merits of Christ alone; the entire doctrine of repentance, conversion, and the new birth,—all this I do not accept; this to me is not the Word of God.

Having now considered a few of the objections of candid persons who would gladly believe, we can pass by the numerous objections constantly raised and repeated by despisers and scoffers from olden times down to Voltaire and his present-day disciples. Even Hercules would not be able to clean this Augean stable with its three thousand oxen, and we believers are not able to rid the world of unbelief. For many do not want to believe, but remain doubters. They are more at ease as such, for unbelief lays no duties upon them. A lady, *e. g.*, who through the writings of modern philosophers had lost faith in the Bible, sent me a list of objections to the Bible, and after I had conscientiously refuted them to the best of my knowledge, she sent me a second list with the assurance that she would believe, if I refuted these also. I answered: "You are suffering with skepticism, that constant symptom of spiritual anæmia and chlorosis with which certain persons, who will have to answer for it, have inoculated you; and if I refuted your new objections, the spirit of doubt would suggest a hundred

others to you; and if I could refute these also, he would trump, and whisper to you, 'What, God's Word! Why, how do you know that there is a God at all?' Pray *God* that *He* might heal you; I am not able to do so."

Alas! Why do we find it so hard to believe in God? Why do we distrust Him so much? On earth a child believes its father, a wife her husband, a friend his friend wholly; it is a matter of honor and pride to them to believe in such persons! Should God, whose kindness extends to all creation, not have sent us a single word of love, of truth, of mercy concerning all our anxious questions? Should He who, like a father, feeds and preserves our bodies, not be at all concerned in our souls? And when we open His Bible, and find there that He most positively asseverates, yea, swears by Himself, that He had for a short time forsaken us in His wrath, but that in eternal mercy He will turn unto us, that He will wipe all tears from our eyes, and will be our God eternally, the evil heart, in the presence of such promises, the glory of which was never conceived of by human heart, must doubt, interpret, carp, find fault, and grumble! Why can we not determine once for all to cast from us faint-heartedness and discouragement and the whole trash of enlightenment, unbelief, and criticism, and full of rejoicing to cry out to this God: "Yea, Father, I believe Thee! I *will* believe Thee! I *will* trust in Thy Word!" We shall err as long as we are on earth; but why not rather err on God's side than on that of men? Is it so dangerous, do we risk so much, even though we believe this Father a little too much, trust Him a little too much instead of ourselves, build firmly upon Him instead of upon this corruptible world—we who daily follow men

blindly, and swear by their word, as if we had never experienced how the word of men deceives and is broken?

As the whole cross is more easily borne than the half of it, so full faith in the Bible is easier than faith intermingled with doubt; in the latter you will never find rest for your soul.

The many doubts, discussions, and investigations concerning faith in the Bible are like the spirit of care, and both are an offense against the Almighty Heavenly Father. Whoever has to do with the spirit of care, and hopes to be able to conquer it with calculations and logical reasons, will not get through with it. New ifs and buts constantly present themselves to the anxious mind, and back of every care there is a new and greater one, for our possessions and our existence are too insecure and exposed to too many possibilities and dangers, and finally the distracted soul despairs. Thus I once heard that an unmarried old farmer of my neighborhood had hung himself in his barn because he had only sixty thousand marks left, and perceived that he must eventually go to the hospital. With glad courage and with constant help from above, God will honor the faith of him who, once for all, bids adieu to this spirit of care, and determines no longer to care for the morrow, but to trust in the God who feeds the birds and clothes the lilies. Thus I found a widow in a poor congregation among the mountains. She had seven children, the oldest of whom was still in school, and was so poor that when I gave her thirty *pfennig* for service rendered, she was deeply moved, and exclaimed gratefully, "I do not earn so much money in a whole day!" Now her children are all grown, well, industrious, and useful. God helped; how, I do not know, and it is a

secondary matter, too. He has ways enough, where we see none.

Thus it is with faith in the Bible. If you want to investigate thoroughly, examine into the various opinions of men, and conquer your doubts one by one with demonstrations, before you believe, you will never get through. Constantly this man or that man, a periodical or a new book, will bring up new exceptions and objections, and gradually even the little faith you had will be lost. In this way you will never arrive at a true faith. Choose the shorter way. Cast from you your beggarly wisdom and that of all men; cast yourself at God's feet, and ask Him for enlightenment through His Spirit; He will not gainsay you, for it is His will that we believe in Him and His Word; then, with glad, firm faith, you can calmly watch the strife and conflict of opinions and views. Let the waters roar and the waves beat; you are standing on the Rock of Eternity.

#### IV.

## BIBLICAL CRITICISM.

*“Sei ruhig, bleibe ruhig, mein Kind,  
In duerren Blaettern saeuselt der Wind.”*

—GOETHE.

SAD to say, it is hardly possible in our day to speak of the Bible without making mention of Biblical criticism. Like all else, it is not a new thing, and even in the Middle Ages rationalistic Rabbis showed an astonishing degree of modern wisdom in dealing with the Old Testament. But Biblical criticism was probably never before carried on as generally and as radically as in the present day.

We must here distinguish between Biblical criticism and Biblical investigation. Biblical investigation, Bible study, the Christian is not only permitted, but commanded to pursue. “Search the Scriptures, for they are they which testify of Me,” Christ says. Biblical research has produced many excellent works, such as Calvin’s “Institutes,” Arnd’s “*Wahres Christentum*,” Bengel’s “*Gnomon*,” Culmann’s “*Ethik*,” and others. Instead of the verbally inspired original we now have translations. Any one who knows anything of language and languages realizes that a translation, as such, means a weakening of the text, and a loss of depth and mansidedness. There is never perfect congruity between any two languages; and although there is (apparently) congruity between

words like house, tree, mountain, yet the higher the word and idea, the greater the difference; *e. g.*, in *Seele*, *Geist*, *esprit*, spirit, *Gemuet*. If it is true that every higher word of man—*e. g.*, that of Homer, Dante, Shakespeare—in reality can not be translated, how much less the divine Word! Here it is the task of the believer always to look for the translation that most nearly preserves the sense of the original. It will often be impossible to give the exact sense of the original, and in many cases it will even remain an open question which is the best translation. But such a study is not criticism. Such Biblical research says, I believe, therefore I investigate. Biblical criticism says, I investigate, in order to see whether eventually I shall want to believe. It is this Biblical criticism of which we here speak.

Is not theology, as the science that treats of God, a lofty science, and worthy of respect? Certainly! Calvin was right: "Theology is the queen of sciences, and all other sciences are its handmaids." And, besides the men of Scripture, the greatest men of the Church are theologians, *e. g.*, Calvin, Knox, Luther, Melancthon, and others. True theology, founded upon the Word of God, is highest science. The venerable Bishop Amos Comenius said at the close of his fruitful life work: "If I am asked as to my theology, I take the Bible, and say with all my soul, I believe everything that is written in this Book!" From what other source shall a man take his theology? If not from the Bible it will soon be true, *corruptio optimi pessima*.

It goes without saying, that we can not here consider minutely the almost innumerable works of this criticism—it is said that about eight hundred new works appear

annually in Europe and America—if for no other reason than that it changes to all shadings of color, and reveals all steps and stages, from shy moderated criticism to the boldest destructive criticism. It would sooner be possible to compile from these a copious anthology of contradictory views and hypotheses. But all shadings and factions have one common basis. “Freedom of investigation!” is the battle-cry of criticism, as well as of modern science in general. We want to look at things as they are, say these men, and search them out thoroughly, without being influenced by notions handed down from past ages, without being misled by faith in authorities, and without being hampered by anything that hinders free thought, and befores open vision; then we *know*, and need no longer *believe*. This they call the unbiasedness of science. To the multitude this is imposing, and seems great and beautiful. But this unbiasedness is self-deception, and an impossibility.

Freedom of investigation would, above all else, require that man himself be free. But he is not free. And it is the priests of free investigation who repeat *ad nauseam* that prophets and apostles were children and products of their age, that they were shut up in the then doctrines and views, and had voiced the same. No. The Truth, the Son of God, the Light that came into the world, had, in distinction from other men, freed them from their age and the spirit of their age; and just this is great in their word and their doctrine that they look away from the relative, the temporal, and that which belonged to their age, posit absolute and eternal things, and are silent as to their descent, their family, their relation to their relatives, to the temple and the State, and

to the culture and civilization of their age. Read the first Gospel. What does Matthew write concerning himself? One verse (ix, 9), and not a word more. How a man who had been permitted to associate personally with the Son of God for three years would have told us what he had asked the Lord, and what the Lord had answered him; what he had felt, thought, perceived, and believed at the time of his call, how much derision and opposition he had endured; and at the close of his book he would have reported, even though briefly, how he had fared later on! Not a syllable about all this. And in the face of all this unselfishness we are asked to believe that these men had been entirely shut up in their relations and circumstances, and had intentionally composed, arranged, and had misrepresented for a purpose! Well, they at least did not seek honor for themselves. If they and Christ had been children of their age, and had represented the views of their age, they would not have been persecuted, and Christ would not have been crucified; for every age loves its children. Thus our age loves and reverences these modern investigators, and they in turn do not tire of boasting how our age, the modern age, the twentieth century, the age of light and enlightenment, how recent science and investigation had brought us free and true knowledge. What is this but confessing to be a child of one's age and its views, and entering the service of this age? But how shall we harmonize this with the fact that at the same time they boast of being the unbiased ones?

He who has not been liberated by God is ever a child and servant of his age, is a co-sufferer in its spiritual tendencies, its spiritual atmosphere, its particular narrowness, and its peculiar errors, and is constantly being in-



fluenced, consciously or unconsciously, voluntarily or involuntarily, by his career and his station in life, by family and profession, possessions or poverty, health or invalidity.

But the great, all-conditioning presupposition which controls every one, even though he be unconscious of it, which saturates him as water saturates a sponge, and of which he can no more rid himself than he can jump out of his skin, is he himself, his personality, his *ego*, the formula of his soul, which makes him just what he is, and nothing else. Thus to the melancholic the world appears in a peculiar light. His world, his knowledge of the world, or in the last instance his view of the world, is different from that of the sanguine or the phlegmatic person.

Even unbelief must admit that, as we saw in the first chapter, the criterion by which the subject measures the object is, and can be, only its own *ego*, and that all thoughts rest upon the law of identity: "A=A," or better: "I am I." From this presupposition all knowledge proceeds, and it will always be individual. Even in the small child this dissimilarity expresses itself in the manner in which in eating and drinking it appropriates to itself the material world. It "likes this," and "does not like that." It does not occur to any one to inquire after the reason. Personal taste is the inalienable royal prerogative of individuality, both in things of the body and in things of the spirit. "Do you like music?" "Are you interested in painting, or do you prefer sculpture?" These are facts generally known, but not generally considered. This shows that every one brings presuppositions along into the world which have their roots in the formula of

his soul, which formula he does not know, and which makes him the person he is.

These presuppositions exert upon the sum total of his knowledge an influence that he can not evade, since it belongs to the great "unconscious" in him; and if he could be examined with spiritual Roentgen rays, one would know in advance what to himself is yet hidden, viz., what his position will be toward any question whatsoever. Thus in Professor Marshall's interesting book, "The Deep Sea and Its Life," I happen upon the passage: "Though we are forced to the conclusion that those oldest and most primitive beings, which must be considered the common progenitors of the entire plant and animal world, must somewhere and at some time have originated spontaneously from inorganic matter, we can not well conceive of this event's having happened without light." This is called science "without presuppositions."

How untenable the conception of the absence of presuppositions in science is, appeared when, in the case of Professor Spahn, this pet term was hurled into the world of German scholars by Professor Mommsen. Thereby Mommsen had pointed out that a Protestant is hindered by his presuppositions from appreciating correctly "the mighty spiritual work of papacy." This was displeasing to Professor Dr. Fricke, of Leipzig, who was also "free from presuppositions." While he agreed with Mommsen in theory, he declared papacy to be "the adulterated religion of a derailed mechanical philosophy that is capable of all manner of abuse." Therefore freedom from presuppositions is synonymous neither with unity of spirit, nor with objectivity. For Mommsen and

Fricke are both convinced of their objectivity. Who is right?

Thereupon Professor Mommsen, in a reply to Baron v. Hertling, essentially relinquished his first demand. As was to be expected, the great historian is sufficiently discerning to admit that "freedom from presuppositions in all scientific research is the ideal goal toward which every conscientious man strives, but which no one can reach. Every one originally brings with him religious, political, and social convictions, and shapes them according to the measure of his experiences in labor and in life." Indeed, he is sufficiently just to emphasize expressly, "No true Catholic can be blamed for the fact that his view of the world, and consequently his research and teaching, is influenced by his faith." And finally he limits his demand to this, that "no Catholic can believe or teach anything that contradicts his reason." That sounds nice. But right here is the difficulty. Who shall determine what contradicts the reason of another? Professor Mommsen, *e. g.*, and no doubt many of those who applaud him, consider miracles to be contrary to reason. But at all times men like Socrates and Solomon, philosophers like Augustine, Pascal, and Leibnitz, naturalists like Newton and Linne, reformers like Luther and Calvin—men to whom reason can not summarily be denied—have harmonized the possibility of miracles thoroughly with their reason. It is the fashion of our day, *e. g.*, to consider the doctrine of the infallibility of the pope bald nonsense. Well, no one has ever claimed that the pope is infallible in worldly matters, and Bishop Keppler lately emphasized, publicly, that even the pope is a poor sinful man, in need of divine grace; but the assumption, which I myself do not hold,

that in difficult questions of the faith God at all times grants the head of His Church on earth sufficient enlightenment from above, that he will give the correct decision, I hold to be far less contrary to reason than the dogma of many naturalists of our day, that nothing had at one time come to be something—why, how, for what purpose, they do not know.

The entire theory that science is free from presuppositions rests upon the great, false presupposition that man can be without presuppositions. Only the Holy Ghost can make man free from his presuppositions.

But granted that man were entirely free, that he came into the world without presuppositions, or could free himself from presuppositions, there would still remain, before Biblical criticism would have to be recognized as justified, the great question whether man, even though he be free and without presuppositions, is able to examine into divine revelation in order to determine its genuineness and truthfulness. Does he possess the necessary means and apparatus? Do his understanding and reason suffice to examine and understand a Book that claims to be supernatural?

We have seen that human reason is a variable quantity, that it contradicts itself in different persons, that it can not master even the visible creation, and that it ever vacillates between finiteness and infinity. But even if reason were in harmony with itself and could fully comprehend the world surrounding us, the question would still arise whether it can give us any information concerning the invisible and eternal, concerning that which eye hath not seen and ear hath not heard. All deeply discerning, earnest thinkers have at all times answered:

No! This question is negated by the history of philosophy, this constant endeavor of man to find the eternal ground of the temporal by means of his reason. What assertions the worldly wise have made concerning God and the soul, immortality, spirit, and matter, time and space, and how they have alternately affirmed and denied all these things! How one here contradicts the other; how, oftentimes with bitter mockery, Plato charges Zeno, Kant charges Locke, Schelling charges Spinoza, Schopenhauer charges Hegel, with thinking wrongly, inconsistently, therefore unreasonably! But in regard to the main point the sagacious critic of pure reason says: "When I hear that a more than ordinary mind has demonstrated that there is no freedom of will, no hope of a future life, no God, I am fully assured, in advance, that he has done none of these; not because I believed myself already to be in possession of undeniable proofs of these important tenets, but because transcendental criticism, which has disclosed to me the entire store of our pure reason, has fully convinced me that, being wholly insufficient for affirmative assertions in this field, it will know as little, and even less, that will enable it to assert negatively concerning these questions." (*Kritik der reinen Vernunft. Recl. Ausgabe, S. 575.*) And if reason can not tell us whether there is a God or not, how can it instruct us concerning the attributes and deeds of this God, or how can it examine into a revelation of this God, in order to determine its divinity? Hence Kant also says that, for this reason, there can nowhere be a theology of reason. Fr. v. Meyer says, "God has created two lights: a great light, Revelation, to rule the day; and a lesser light, Reason, to rule the night."

Here, too, the Bible transcends human wisdom. Unmercifully it cuts into the flesh, and mocks at reason, when it would meddle with divine things. It "destroys logical conclusions," and demands "captivity of every thought to the obedience of Christ." (2 Cor. x, 5.) It charges reason with a natural disposition to evil, and speaks of Christians who in times past "fulfilled the desires of the flesh and of the mind" (Eph. ii, 3), and frankly says, "You were sometime enemies in your mind by wicked works." (Col. i, 21.) It declares categorically, "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned" (1 Cor. ii, 14), and exclaims triumphantly, "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?" (1 Cor. i, 20.)

Man created in the image of God could hear and understand God and converse with Him. But man fallen away from God can not; his eyes have grown blind, his ears deaf, his spirit paralyzed concerning higher and loftier things. He has not only by nature become incapable of perceiving and understanding divine revelation, but the God of this world incessantly benights his mind, covers up and conceals from him the truth, and juggles him into falsehood and error by the delusion that he is a God, and can discern good and evil. And this is not enough. As a punishment for their deceit, God has hidden the truth from "the wise and prudent of this world." (Matt. xi, 25.) What God conceals, man alone will never find.

This, then, is clear Bible doctrine: Man, who is born

in sin and lives in sin, who is under the influence of Satan, and from whom God has hidden the truth, can not understand, tutor, and criticise the Bible. *“Your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.”*

Criticism says the opposite, and affirms the question raised above. It proceeds from the presupposition that human reason, human wisdom, human science, is able to perceive whether a revelation, if there be such at all, is divine, and what part of it is divine. Therefore the critic does not ask God to assist him in this matter; for that there is a God, and that He answers prayer, is to him a presupposition which he must first examine critically. Nor is he in need of the Holy Ghost in this matter; for he must first investigate whether there is a Holy Ghost, what He is able and not able to do.

Thus two fundamental views, more radically opposed to each other than these two, could not be conceived of. The Bible negates Biblical criticism; Biblical criticism negates the Bible.

Of course, this clear fact does not seem to be evident to the many in our day who prefer to remain on the boundary between good and evil, truth and falsehood. These think that whoever studies the Bible by the aid of his reason must eventually be able to understand it, and to judge it correctly, without being obliged to believe in it. No. I once received instruction from a well-known mathematician and physicist. One day a coppersmith was hammering near the open window; and the noted professor asked me almost timidly: “Do you notice any difference between this noise and the most beautiful music, as people call it? I am not able to do so.” This man was

thoroughly versed in the theory of sound and sound waves, and could teach and demonstrate it; but he was utterly unable to appreciate the higher realm of melody and harmony resulting therefrom; Bach and Handel, Mozart and Beethoven passed by him without leaving trace or effect. Thus the servant of Elisha had reason to believe that he had good eyes and acute vision, and yet he was blind concerning the higher world. He did not see the heavenly body-guard surrounding the prophet until God opened his eyes. Therefore David prays, "Open Thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of Thy law." And concerning the disciples it is said, "Then opened He their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures." Without this opening they could not understand them. Thus the scribes held the Scriptures in high esteem, were well versed in them, had more "authorities" than we, studied them day and night, read and wrote many commentaries, taught the Scriptures daily, and . . . understood nothing concerning them. When the Son of God came into the world, in order most clearly to fulfill these entire Scriptures, they crucified Him as a heretic and blasphemer. The Bible, like Christ, knows only two classes of people,—the blind who perceive their blindness, and whose sin and blindness are taken away; and the blind who say, "We see," and whose sin remaineth. (John ix, 41.)

The Bible either is what it claims to be: a Word of God to men,—“And God said!” “Thus saith the Lord: I have put my words in thy mouth!”—or it is not. But if not, then it is a fabrication of arrogant, ambitious, and mendacious men. Assail it, ye critics; show forth clearly



the deception, and receive thanks! But if it is revelation, then, hands off the sanctuary, and cease criticising it and grumbling about it! A divine revelation that is full of mistakes, unreliable, and useless, unless it is first revised and corrected by men, is an absurdity.

Lessing, who was disposed to criticise, recognized this, and writes: "If there can be and must be a revelation, its containing things that transcend reason must be a reasonable proof of its truth, rather than an objection to it. Whoever polishes such revelation out of his religion, might as well have none at all; for what is a revelation that reveals nothing? A certain captivity of reason to the obedience of faith rests on the essential idea of revelation; or, rather, reason voluntarily surrenders, its submission is nothing but a confession of its limits, whenever it is assured of the reality of revelation."

And Luther wrote to Spalatin, who asked him concerning the best method of studying the Bible: "Above all things it is quite certain (*primum id certissimum est*) that one can not search into the Holy Scriptures by means of study, nor by means of the intellect (*ingenium*). Therefore begin with prayer, that the Lord grant unto you the true understanding of His Word. There is no interpreter of the Word of God, except the Author of the Word, God Himself." (L. Ep. I, p. 88.) In another place he says, "Scripture without any commentary is the sun from which all Doctors receive light."

To many theologians and non-theologians the matter does not seem so simple, and it is true that the question, whether the Bible is a revelation or not, involves other deep, serious, and difficult questions, *e. g.*, that of inspiration. Luther says: "Before a man learns to understand

the first words of Moses, 'In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth,' he is dead; and though he lived a thousand years, he would not fully learn to understand them." So here, too. All objections to revelation and inspiration do not refute them, and all proofs do not prove them. Such truths lie beyond the possibilities of demonstration, and must be experienced through much spiritual labor and prayer, until a lively consciousness of their truth arises and is developed more and more in the depths of the soul,—a consciousness which the believer often is not able to express in words. Just as the grain of wheat must perish before it is transformed into a new plant, just as all natural virtues of man must die in order to rise again as divine virtues, so, especially in young Christians, the handed-down inherited faith in the Bible must perish, to rise again, a new and lively faith. But great, deeply-rooted truths irresistibly urge to a decision, and, according to the penetrating word of Christ, eventually always tend toward a Yea or Nay. Therefore to the soul of a disciple of Christ the question is ever present: Must I and will I, with folded hands, look up to the Bible as to the Word of God, or dare I from the throne of my reason to overlook it, and judge it as to its truthfulness and untruthfulness, even though I do it respectfully and with a certain degree of reverence? No matter how much labor men have spent to that end, these two view-points can not be united, and every one is drifting, even though slowly and perhaps unconsciously, toward the one or the other. There will remain secondary questions. But why did God promise His children wisdom and the Holy Ghost, if not in order that they might search out the main questions of salvation, and thereby arrive at a clear, joy-

ful faith? It is Bible doctrine, corroborated by experience, that by virtue of direct enlightenment through the Spirit this is possible among the simple and poor in spirit, rather than among the wise and prudent, with all their study.

Augustine says, "Our eyes behold in the Scriptures inasmuch as they are dead to the world; but inasmuch as they live to this world, they behold nothing." And Krummacher says, "The divinity of the Holy Scriptures is experienced by man only in the measure in which he himself becomes more divine."

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With what does Biblical criticism operate? It tries, above all else, to determine historically whether the Biblical reports are true, whether they were really written by the authors to whom they are ascribed, and whether they originated at the time at which they have so far been supposed to have originated. Since in many cases dates and reliable sources are wanting, the attempt is made to deduce these things from the contents of the books themselves. The manifoldness, differences, and contradictions contained in the conclusions arrived at in this way show that here a wide domain is opened for more or less ingenious surmises. It can be said that in this entire domain there is not a single theory or hypothesis, over against which there is not a contradictory one. Here, too, the open confession of Professor Juelicher in his introduction to the New Testament applies: "In the most important questions our knowledge is exceedingly deficient. Especially in regard to the individual writings we are left almost entirely without external testimony, and are solely

dependent upon the knowledge we derive from the writings themselves, whereby we are forced to a critical investigation of details, in which hypothesis is added to hypothesis."

At the same time these critics assert (and we believe them): We are only seeking truth, truth at whatever price, even though it cost us the most revered tenets of faith, the most precious views that have been handed down to us; we want truth! So do we, all of us. Who seeks and desires falsehood as such, and for its own sake? Even materialists like Vogt, Moleschott, Haeckel, even atheists like Nietzsche and others, seek truth, oftentimes very earnestly. For man was created for truth, and is cognizant of this fact. What man offers and recommends to men his view of the world, his science, his faith, as a lie? Who would accept his ware? But whoever strives for a goal, must pursue the proper course, lest he be led farther and farther away from it instead of drawing nearer to it. Therefore Christ affirms, "I am the Way," before he says, "I am the Truth." "No man cometh to the Father," therefore not to the truth, "but by Me." Either Christ was deceived; either He is neither the Way nor the Truth, and there are other ways to the truth, except Him, and then His teaching is error and falsehood; or He knows that He is the Truth and speaks the truth,—then the whole of this criticism has strayed from the right way, and will never arrive at truth. For it does not seek truth in Him. Mythologies and myths of perished nations, fragments of Babylonian and other legends, remnants of the wisdom of Indian and Egyptian priests, uncertain and disputed investigation of languages and names, for the most part uncontrollable reports, state-

ments, assertions, opinions of persons who died long ago, and who, like us, were onesided, biased, unreliable, and sought their own honor,—these are the sources, the authorities, from which criticism, after hundreds and thousands of years, expects with much diligence and the aid of reason to sift out the reliable from the unreliable, the true from the untrue, and to arrive at certainty concerning eternal truths. True, we are dependent upon this course of historic research for the establishment of historic facts; but it is foolish to make these the touchstone of the supernatural and eternal, and absurd to attempt to prove from Babylonian monuments and inscriptions that there are neither angels nor devils, or to prove from “Roman sources” that Christ was not conceived of the Holy Ghost and born of the Virgin Mary. How impossible it is for criticism to arrive at absolute truth by means of historic investigation is shown by its contradictions. No two investigators interpret the historic status exactly alike. While Professor Delitzsch combats the Bible with Babel, Professor Sayce, Dr. Jeremias, Mr. Urquhart, and others, find there a striking justification of the Old Testament.

Viewed in another phase, this criticism, in spite of its search after truth, and its results, arouses justified suspicion. It is an attribute of truth that it affirms, and does not negate; that it gives, and does not take; that it manifests vitality, is productive, fructifying, and fruitful; that it strengthens the soul, even though its severity be dreadful and destructive; in short, that its vision gladdens the spirit in its innermost depths. Can anything of this joy of eternity be felt at the results of criticism? Does it offer fruitful thoughts, great ideas, a grand, victorious

view of God and the world that edifies the soul, lifts it beyond the vain and earthly, and draws nearer to God?

And what are the results of this more and more destructive criticism? That the Biblical records of creation, the fall, and the deluge are myths, distorted legends handed down from Babylon or elsewhere, is to it more and more a matter of course. (Besides, it invented the stale theory of the two records, the Jehovistic and the Elohist, which is recently being rehashed in regard to the flood.) The Abraham of the Bible never lived; the Israelites found a chief of this name in the Land of Canaan, whom they chose as their national hero, and their priests saw to the further legendary embellishment. How about Moses, this colossal figure of a single cast, even though viewed only from a psychological standpoint, whose iron law has to this day retained an infrangible power among his people? Well, modern criticism says smiling, Moses never lived; and Professor Delitzsch puts in his stead "the priestly scholar, who wrote Genesis i, and anxiously endeavored to eliminate all mythological traits from the Babylonian records of the creation of the world." (*Babel und Bibel.*) He and his books, which chronologically come *after* the prophets—at the time in which Moses is supposed to have lived the Israelites could not write at all (thoroughly refuted by recent discoveries)—are the fabrications of unknown priests, who after the Babylonian captivity felt the need of giving the crushed nation a support. On the whole, the "great unknown" plays an important part in criticism. Who wrote "Ecclesiastes?" Of course, Solomon did not, although much in the first chapter agrees verbally with what is otherwise reported of him, and although psychologically

the entire book is thoroughly worthy of him. (Why should we not have an Aramaic transcript of the Hebrew original? Even Rénan admitted the possibility of this.) No, an unknown Jewish king, who disappeared without leaving a trace, wrote this mighty mental production much later. And who was Daniel, since in this book it repeatedly stands written, "I, Daniel?" Another unknown person, of whom otherwise nothing is known; and my modest surmise that this unknown person might perhaps have been called Daniel, and have been identical with the prophet, does not merit serious consideration. "Do you really believe," a learned theologian asked me amazed, "that there ever lived a man named Daniel?" Criticism says that whatever this would-be Daniel did not expressly make mention of, he did not know. (Thus it is impossible, too, that Schiller and Goethe lived in the time of Napoleon I; they do not even know his name.) Who wrote Genesis? Who wrote Deuteronomy? Who wrote the Psalms of David, these incomparable lyrics, these effusions of character, of personality? Who wrote the granite prayer of Moses (Psa. xc)? Who the second part of Isaiah? Who is the author of the Books of Ezra and Nehemiah? The unknown, the unknown! Thus the English Bible critic Cheyne ascribes the first chapter of First Samuel to an "unknown" author, who, in round numbers, lived five hundred years after the time of the prophet; and Hannah's song in the second chapter he ascribes to another unknown person, of whom no one knows, when he wrote. And in a work that passes as orthodox, we read: "He (Eli) is stated to have judged Israel forty years; but this chronological notice, as also the statement of his age, is probably due to a later deu-

teronomic redactor." (Hastings's Bible Dictionary.) Arbitrary assertions made at random, by which they essay, in the presence of the unknowing, to surround themselves with the halo of higher scientific knowledge. Or exact dates are given with astonishing certainty, and on the ground of incredibly weak arguments. The parables of Balaam, "in which we evidently are reminded of the triumphs of David," and Jacob's blessing, with which he, dying, blessed his sons, were written in Solomon's day, the Ten Commandments were written in Manasseh's day, the unknown deuteronomist compiled the present book in the year 561 B. C. by blending the Elohist and the Jehovistic records, and the unknown ruler wrote Ecclesiastes in the year 264. Indeed, Professor Kautzsch knows that the Book of Daniel was written "in the early part" (probably in January) of the year 164 B. C., and another critic knows that it was written in the latter part of the year 165. Exact results of free research!

And here come the moderates, those who would mediate, who would please all, and who believe themselves to be the wise ones, following the golden mean. Moses, they say, certainly lived; but his history must be considered soberly. In Midian he learned to know the tribal god of the nomadic Kenites, Jah, and it is probable that during a great thunder-storm the thought flashed through his soul, With this God you can rescue your nation from its tormentors. Elijah is not wholly a myth, he represents the then type of prophecy in its conflict with royalty, which conflict became historic after Samuel; the chariot of fire is, of course, a thunderstorm, during which a prominent prophet was killed by lightning. No, Isaiah could not prophecy; like Plato, he imagined an un-



justly persecuted righteous man, and used the figure of his riding on an ass as expressive of his meekness. Jesus then orders the ass, in order to make the word of Isaiah a fulfilled prophecy. And Daniel? Well, yes! But not the great seer, to whom superterrestrial beings reveal the remotest future and the end of the world. "He is to be interpreted solely in relation to the history of his age. His horizon does not extend beyond the Graeco-Syrian empire, witnessed by him." (See, *contra*, Dan. xii.) Hence not prophetic words, but political chatterings of a then statesman. And so forth. It would not be worth while to enter upon the attempts of these to make the miraculous in the Bible acceptable to the modern scholar; *e. g.*, when the standing still of the star of the wise men is explained as being due to the hills about Bethlehem, which alternately hide a star, or let it appear to be standing still above a house. Poor wise men, who at anything like that could "rejoice with exceeding great joy." More dangerous is the effacing of the boundary-line between yea and nay, between truth and falsehood. A well-known French theologian shows "that salvation or damnation is not the result of a correct faith or of pseudo-faith, since religious faith must be distinguished from moral conviction, and Biblical faith (*la foi biblique*), which is essential to salvation, must be distinguished from faith in the Bible (*la foi à la bible*), which latter depends upon our scientific judgment." (*Revue de théologie*, May, 1897.) A German theologian repeatedly exhorts us, at all events to distinguish between "truth" and "infallibility." Another writes concerning the resurrection of Christ (and it would apply equally well to Elijah's ascension to heaven), "This occurrence, though not real,

is nevertheless true, since it presents objectively what subjectively busied the minds of the apostles (or of Elijah)." Hence a true lie! Why be zealous any longer against the admission of the Jesuits? It seems to me we already have them among us.

The extensive works of Biblical criticism on the historic development of Israel would be interesting (here, too, we must distinguish between earnest Biblical research and negative criticism), if some of them did not breathe hatred against the Holy Scriptures (as *e. g.*; Rénan's "History of Israel," concerning which a highly-gifted Frenchman properly remarked to me, "Under every stone a scorpion!"), and if they did not *all* overlook primarily the one true God Jehovah's direct and oft-times wonderful guidance of the people of Israel. These critics do not know, and do not care to know, that this God really chose this people from among all nations to be His people, and that He led them, as a shepherd leads his flock; that He is the Holy One of Israel and their watchman, whose eye sleeps not and slumbers not; that His future purpose concerning this people includes grander and more glorious things than the world has ever witnessed. In the history of Israel they see nothing but the product of the conflict of ambitious priests with royalty, and of various foreign influences. Hence there can be no thought of a true understanding of these things. That is like degrading the "*Divine Commedia*" of Dante to a dry report of the political disturbances of the Florentine Republic, by eliminating from it all that is wonderful.

Only one example of how arbitrarily criticism deals with the Biblical sources, the only ones we possess. In his "History of Israel," Dr. Winkler knows that the

weather-god Jahu was known to the Israelites dwelling north of Judea before the time of David, but that David was the first to introduce the Jahwe-cult in Judea; for, he argues, "we must assume that at the time of Israel's entering into Canaan, and their conquest of the country, there was a leader whose power and authority rested upon a sure foundation;" but "Joshua has no marks of an historic person," wherefore Winkler "renounces the conquest under Joshua's leadership as an explanation of the development of things." But he used an "historically authenticated man, who united Israel in a manner historically possible, and forced his Jahwe-cult upon it as the sign of its unity," and this man is David.

"The religious peculiarity" of the people of Israel is either deduced from its historic fates, and daring assertions made concerning Abraham's connection with the dynasty of Hammurabi, and conclusions drawn from "names of deities, such as Khusha and Ilali, which possibly are also Arabic,"—or the ancient Arabian worship of the heavenly bodies is brought into connection with old Israelitish tradition.

The office of prophet, or "nabiism," together with the phenomena of ecstasy and ecstatic states, was adopted from the Canaanites by the servants of Jahwe, at the close of the period of Judges. (Whence did the Canaanites derive it? For, according to criticism, everything must be deduced, taken, and borrowed; it knows nothing of an original and direct divine inspiration.) Others explain the office of prophet more "psychologically." The Word of God, they say, is simply "the same inner voice by which God speaks to us all." and the "faculty of pre-

saging (*Ahnungsvermoegen*), as it manifested itself in Socrates's *dæmon*," is called in as an auxiliary in the explanation of prophecy. The visions of the prophets are hallucinations of the sense of sight and of hearing in consequence of affections of the nervous system. Ezeziel, *e. g.*, "suffered temporary speechlessness and lameness" (Bertholet). Of course, they copied and borrowed, wherever they could. And we are justly astonished at Professor Delitzsch's assertion, that "they went so far as to ascribe the Babylonian Marduk's heroic deed (the conquering of the dragon) to Jahwe" (*Babel und Bibel*).

Concerning the poet who wrote the Book of Job criticism thinks: "His magnificent language, his allusions to cultural development, and his religious ideas show that he wrote at a later period of Israelitish history, approximately about 600 B. C." (Baethgen.) (On the other hand, Assyriologists like Sayce, Halévy, and others, have shown that there was a flourishing literary age in Canaan as early as 2000 years B. C.) The beginning and the close of the book are folk-lore, the speeches of Elihu are spurious (why more so than those of Bildad and Eliphaz? That he expresses different thoughts in a different way, rather argues their genuineness); indeed, a learned critic knows that when Ezeziel mentions Job together with Noah and Daniel on account of his righteousness, this does not refer to the present Book of Job, but to a "national tract on this legend," which has disappeared without leaving a trace. Said book contained, in addition, a chapter on the victory of Jehovah and the defeat of Satan, which was dropped in the poem. The passage, ii, 10, is a remnant from this national book; fifty-nine verses and twelve parts of verses, on the other hand, are to be dis-

carded entirely. (Budde, *Das Buch Hiob.*) Uncanny omniscience or . . . gift of invention!

In spite of all sagacity, this criticism, with few exceptions, lacks the noble faculty of enthusiasm and admiration. It is neither filled with moral indignation at the forgery and abuse of names of authors, however scandalous they may be, nor has it any appreciation of these works, so magnificently lofty, even apart from the Christian belief in their divine inspiration; for the Book of Job, the finest, Lamartine thought, that has ever been written; for the wonderful poesy of the Psalms of David; for a song like "The Lord is my Shepherd!" for the deep and mighty earnestness of the prayer of Moses; for the royally priestly prayer of Solomon at the dedication of the temple; for the enthusiasm of Isaiah, shouting to the high heavens, or rushing along like a mighty stream; for the lofty visions of Ezekiel; in short, for all the beauty which even non-Christians have admired in the Old Testament. It is animated by distrust toward the Bible and its authors; it scents forgery and pious deceit everywhere, and constantly inquires with Nietzsche: "Why truth? Why not rather falsehood?" and thereby stands in direct opposition to love, which "rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth, and which believeth all things." But, of course, what have criticism and love in common?

This would-be prudent criticism seems to be unconscious of the fact that it literally wades in psychological contradictions and inconsistencies.

Thus the hypothesis that the law of Moses had been compiled after the time of the prophets is absurd "for internal reasons" (to use this expression of criticism). Not only is the story of Abraham, Joseph, and Moses,

which bears the stamp of truth throughout, constantly being corroborated by archæological discoveries (thus also the Book of Joshua, which mentions the law of Moses, by the discoveries at Tell Amarna), but only the law of Sinai explains the character of Israel, and its enormous power of cohesion. To deny this, is to take away the backbone of this people, and the best and simplest explanation of its history and religion; and the prophets have no other text, than the continuous disobedience of the nation to this law. Then all foundations are taken away, and we are forced to the insane attempts of criticism to obtain the religion of Israel by welding together fragments of various idol worships with fetishism. (Nowack thinks, "The Ark of the Covenant probably contained a stone which was considered to be the dwelling-place of the deity!"—the origin of the Israelitish religion.) We shall not speak of other and higher reasons here, for criticism does not believe that the Bible is the Word of God, does not believe in Divine Providence, and does not accept the witness of Jesus. But the contradictions involved in this criticism will suffice. "Their Jahwe—a moralized idea of God, a tribal god, a god of battles, of mountains, of steppes, the west-semitic noon-god, an astral-theoretic image, a monotheistic product of legends!" (*Evangelisch-lutherische Kirchenzeitung*, 1902, No. 35.) Thus criticism desecrates the name that should be kept holy, and makes the true God an idol. And this claims to be Christian science, Biblical theology!

Criticism does not feel that such sharply and strongly drawn images of superhuman greatness, marrowy personalities like Abraham, Moses, Elijah, can not be post-fabrications, falsifications of any unknown person what-

soever,—these unknown persons would indeed be greater than Goethe or Shakespeare. The spiritually powerful prophets, whose grand contempt of the earthly and sinful, and whose life in and with a holy God every unbiased person must feel, are said to be liars, who, in order to make a deeper impression upon their nation, fable-fabricated visions, and constantly assure that the Word of the Lord had come to them. (We shall see, later on, how these contradictions multiply, when the apostles, and especially when Jesus, is spoken of.) What all these men made themselves and others believe! For evidently criticism shares the opinion of the learned philologist who said to me, “We can not imagine a people more stupid than the ancients!”

At all events, it is remarkable that the word of these ignorant, superstitious men exerted so mighty an influence upon mankind for centuries, and that it still stands unaltered; that, on the other hand, the word of critics who are far their superiors in scientific knowledge, in enlightenment, culture, and sagacity, dies away so rapidly, and comparatively without effect. “What do you want with your examples from the old lumber-room of rationalism?” exclaimed a Bible critic, who was provoked because I had quoted from the school of Strauss, which only fifty years ago was so highly lauded. Indeed, these dead ride swiftly. Will Ritschl and Harnack be known two thousand, nay a hundred years hence? Who will then bless mankind with surprising results, and with a new essence of Christianity?

In short, it is at least admitted by some critics that there is divine truth in the Bible. But it is a veritable chaos of fragments from unknown authors with fictitious

names, of unauthentic or purposely forged writings, is full of legendary personalities and invented stories. Moreover these men are constantly uttering sentences like: "It is altogether incredible," . . . "It is highly improbable," . . . "It can hardly be assumed," . . . "It is self-evident that there can be no thought of miracles here," . . . "Naturally the passage is to be explained in this manner," and it is evident that these scholars, shut in by their prejudices, know nothing of the power and riches of an inspiration through the Holy Ghost, have never been deeply moved by the power of the world to come, and by the omnipotence of a living God, and that their Hebrew Jahwe is as strange and indifferent to them as the Egyptian Osiris or the Roman Jupiter. Here, too, it appears that much which is proclaimed to be science is, after all, nothing but the faith of the unbeliever; and what these gentlemen set forth as the results of deep scientific research is doubts and objections, such as an ignorant peasant could advance, and such as uneducated scoffers adduced long before they were advanced by Bible criticism.

Shall we yet make mention of the historic fancies of Wellhausen, which have been condemned by Assyriologists and Egyptologists, or of the ideally inclined critics, to whom everything resolves into poetic images? Abraham is the myth of the rosy dawn of day, or the four kings from the East (Gen. xiv) are the four seasons, and the "five kings of cities of the plain" are the five days that were added to the Babylonian year in order to complete it. According to another critic, Sarah is originally Sharratu, the wife of the moon-god Sin; hence Abraham here takes the place of the god of Harran. Jacob with



his twelve sons represents the year with its twelve months. Saul is the new moon, which carries its severed head in its arms. "Hallelujah" is originally an appeal to the moon-god, and means, "Praise ye the moon!" "Sin, Samas, and Ister, sun, moon, and stars," are older, and their thoughts more fruitful and more fashioning, than their reflecting summary in "Jahwe Sabaoth," in the "Lord of the heavenly hosts." Such things are written by sober men of science. Whether they, like the Roman augurs in their day, laugh when they meet one another?

What the aim of this criticism is, Professor Dr. Krueger, of Giessen, this champion of liberal theology, a man whose task it is to prepare servants of the Church for their high office, recently made public in his lecture on "Modern Science and Christianity:" "Critical research in the field of history has destroyed the Old Testament canon. There is not a theologian left, who could shut out this final result of Old Testament criticism. And it may be foreseen that, in the century just begun, the New Testament will suffer the same fate." Truly a sad performance, concerning which one does not know whether it should move him to tears or to laughter!

If the first sentiment of the Christian in view of this criticism is surprise and indignation at the frivolity and arrogant boldness with which they treat the authors and books of the Scriptures, this gives way, upon closer acquaintance with the same, to a feeling of weariness and pity, that men should devote life and strength to manufacturing so many boldly phantastic or insipidly childish (unfortunately taken altogether too earnestly even by many believers), contradictory explanations, hypotheses, and theories, in order to prove to us at length that we

must not believe the Bible. It would at all events be simpler if, in the sense of Professor Krueger, they would unanimously decree in a European council of criticism: The miraculous in the Bible is not true; the historic parts are altogether unreliable, and the non-miraculous and non-historic is a code of morals that we can prepare for ourselves; let us pass this antiquated, for the greater part unauthentic, book by, and proceed to the order of the day.

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Let us turn to New Testament criticism.

Learned criticism knows nothing of the connection between the Old and the New Testament, so clear even to the simple; does not know that the former is the foundation and preparation, the latter the superstructure and fulfillment, and that Jehovah is Christ; it constantly speaks of two wholly different religions. It is wont to ignore the fact that Christ constantly appeals to the Old Testament, and speaks of Himself as the fulfillment of the law, and as the One of whom all prophets prophesied. 'On the whole, the composedness with which the "views" of Christ, the founder and head of Christianity, are passed by, is one of the most astonishing facts of this criticism. In questions like those concerning inspiration, the Holy Ghost, faith in the Bible and in miracles, it would at least be becoming to inquire, first of all, what is taught by Christ, whom Christendom still, at least *pro forma*, with the mouth, and on great festivals, reveres as the founder of Christianity, and whom it acknowledges to be the only begotten Son of God, yea, God Himself, who died for us on the cross. For such a personality would be a source of first rank; *e. g.*, in regard to the authorship and the

genuineness of the books of the Bible; to say nothing of the fact that, if Christ is indeed the Logos, the Word of God, by which all things were created, it is *He* who, through Moses and the mouth of the prophets, prophesied concerning Himself. But His enlightened, progressive Christianity no longer attaches any value to His Word; it no longer considers Him a scientific authority, a "source." Any known or unknown scholar, and the statement, the opinion, the passing view of any poor proud sinner, is considered weightier than the word of Him who said of Himself, "I am the Truth," and of whom it is written, "Who did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth." (1 Peter ii, 22.) He says of Abraham, "Before Abraham was, I am." "Abraham saw my day, and was glad." And to the Jews He says, "I know that ye are Abraham's seed." But criticism investigates minutely whether there ever was an Abraham, and whether he was an Israelite. Christ appeals to Moses, declares his law to be holy, and that from it not a jot shall pass away as long as heaven and earth stand; of the life of Moses He corroborates the brazen serpent, the manna, the water from the rock, and says of his writings, "They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them." "Had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed Me, for he wrote of Me. But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe My words?" Liberal theology doubts the personality of Moses, or says: We still believe in the words of Jesus, but we no longer believe in the writings of Moses. Jesus testifies that David had prophesied of Him in the fortieth Psalm, and that Isaiah had prophesied of Him in the sixty-first chapter; modern theologians teach that there is no prophecy, and that David wrote none of

the psalms of David; and the clear witness of Christ (Matt. xxii, 41), notwithstanding, Professor Orelli can not "bring himself to consider the 110th Psalm to have been written by David." (Why not?) Jesus believed not only in the miracles of Moses, mentioned above, but also in Lot's wife, in Jonah in the belly of the fish, and his deeds are a chain of miracles. But the scribes of to-day make out that faith in miracles is no longer up to date, and is rather a hindrance to the spreading of Christianity among the cultured. Whether we should be astonished more at the presumptuousness—a mild term—with which shepherds of the congregation teach the opposite of what the Chief Shepherd taught, or at the indifference and stupidity with which their sheep are willing to partake of such food, we do not know. Christ says: "I am the door of the sheep. He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber." (John x, 1, 7.)

As these men despise the Word of the Master, so they despise the word of His disciples as well. In regard to the first three Gospels, Professor Holtzmann writes, "We will not deny that in the Synoptic Gospels we find both legends and designing narration." On the fourth Gospel, the author of which voluntarily and grandly withdraws, in order to let his beloved Master speak, he expresses himself thus: "But if, according to John xxi, 24, this Gospel is ascribed to the Apostle John, there can be no thought of its having been written by an immediate disciple of Jesus. Not the slightest trace of anything can be found that He Himself experienced! Everything is either taken from other sources, or is free composition accord-

ing to definite viewpoints. In decisive points, such as the narration of the anointing of Jesus in Bethany, the writer did not understand the document used as source. In narrating the trial of Jesus before the high priest, he clumsily introduces the disciple who was known unto the high priest." "John's appearing as the favorite disciple of Jesus is a certain Ephesian local patriotism," etc.

The spurious passage is a favorite of this New Testament criticism. How about the "three that bear record?" (1 John v, 7.) Spurious! None of the old Church Fathers quote it, and it does not occur in the older manuscripts. (Do these manuscripts bear any date? Do we know all the older manuscripts, and the oldest original manuscript?)

What about the angel at the pool Bethesda? (John v, 4.) Probably spurious; represents the belief of that age.

What about the words of Jesus to the rich who trust in riches, a word so natural in its connection with the context? (Mark x, 24.) A gloss! Later on embodied in the text by a friend of the Pharisees in order to disencumber their riches. (Pray, how do they know this to be true?)

Spurious also the passage that speaks of the great mystery, "God manifest in the flesh" (1 Tim. iii, 16), this powerful witness for the Deity of Christ. Why? Or simply because it is such a powerful witness?

Spurious also the report of the cursing of the fig-tree (Matt. xxi), according to one, because this would be an act unworthy of Christ; according to another, because the power of Jesus could manifest itself in men (in the manner of suggestion?), but not in trees.

Spurious also Luke v, 39 (the old is better); this is said to have been interpolated by Jewish Christians, in order to justify themselves in the sight of heathen Christians on account of their observance of the law.

Spurious the story of the adulteress, John viii, on account, as I once read, of "too lax morals."

There is a pretty reason given why Romans xvi can not be genuine: "Because Paul could not have had so many acquaintances in the great metropolis Rome." (Twenty-seven are mentioned by name.)

That Luke viii, 26, ff. (also Matt. viii, 28 ff., Mark v, 1-20, and other passages?) is spurious, criticism assumes, "for inner reasons." By virtue of these it knows that men can not be possessed of devils; then how could demons enter into swine?

Spurious also the command to baptize "in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost," given at the close of Matthew's Gospel (xxviii, 19, 20). For Christ had no knowledge at all of the doctrine of the Trinity, since this doctrine dates from the fourth century!

Concerning other passages it is said: They do not fit into the connection, they were interpolated later from other Gospels, and many more such surmises made according to the passing subjective impression and wisdom of the individual.

Here, too, one must be astonished at how criticism strains at gnats and swallows camels. If, as we shall see later, a modern theologian, and thousands of others likewise, declares the entire Gospel of John to be spurious; if he and they deny the truth of the records of other evangelists concerning the birth and childhood of Jesus,

and believe neither in His miracles nor in His resurrection, they have such an abundance of spurious, unauthentic, fabricated passages and entire chapters in these books, even though such passages and chapters had originally been a part of the manuscript of a certain Matthew or Luke, that there would be no use quibbling about this or that spurious verse. What matters it whether the record that Jesus gave the command after His resurrection and before His ascension, "Go ye into all the world," is the first, or whether it was interpolated later? Jesus did not rise again, neither did He ascend to heaven. His entire history is interwoven with false reports, and is saturated with untruth. Then all quibbling about individual words seems to me to be a superfluous and paltry effort.

We do not believe in spurious books, nor in spurious passages, and the negative fact usually adduced that the one or the other of such passages is wanting in this or that manuscript does not awe us. What shall this fact prove? Shall an author not have power to add this or that to his work as it appears in consecutive editions? And if God willed to have this or that passage written into His Word by way of addition, shall He not have liberty to do so? We assume that this omniscient God, without whose will not a sparrow falleth to the earth, concerns Himself also about the composition and fate of the Word He has given to men. The God, says Bengel, who numbers the hairs on our head, has undoubtedly also numbered the letters in the New Testament. If He in His providence has prepared these passages for mankind through centuries, in millions of copies and in hundreds of languages, then they are willed by Him, and genuine

enough for us, no matter when or by whom they were interpolated. We believe this, because, as we have already said concerning variants, it can not be proved that a single one of these presumed spurious passages contradicts the spirit and analogy of the Scriptures; on the contrary, they are often corroborated by other passages, the genuineness of which has up to the present not been doubted. Thus Paul confirms the words of the Lord regarding the "rich who trust in riches" by exhorting, "Charge them that are rich in this world that they trust not in uncertain riches, but in the living God." (1 Tim. vi, 17.) Variants, too, can be true. If *e. g.*, in Luther's translation the passage, "To know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge" (Eph. iii, 19), reads, "To love Christ is better than all knowledge," these words are both conformable to the Holy Ghost and to the spirit of the Scriptures; both are true and willed of God. We have already spoken of the fact that, in consequence of human guilt and of an easily comprehended logic of the divine world-plan, there has resulted an ever-increasing weakening and breaking up of languages, whereby a weakening of the original has been effected through translations.

As is well known, Harnack, Professor of Church History, and a follower of Ritschl, addressed himself to enthusiastic Berlin audiences in sixteen lectures, in which he expressed his views on "the essence of Christianity;" published in book-form also, it has had a wide circulation. A thorough review and minute refutation of this book can not be our task here—others have done this—but it is interesting to learn to know in this most recent representative of modern theology the mode of treatment and the fundamental view of present-day (moderated)



Bible criticism; and the homage shown him on the part of criticism shows that this entire tendency is backing him.

The book is not light reading. The author is not wont to express in a simple manner, but to intimate dexterously; he leaves things to be understood, to appear, he warns by hinting, adds modifying clauses, volatilizes, and in great measure leaves it to the reader to find out the meaning he really intends to convey. If he is asked upon what authority he bases his idea of Christianity, he answers, upon his own. He deals with the Scriptures according to his own pleasure, haughtily ignores what is not to his taste, puts aside as unessential what suits him less, and decides by virtue of his own sovereign power what parts of the Bible are to be believed, and what parts not. Professor Harnack agrees with the critic already quoted in saying that the Gospel of John is not genuine. "This Gospel, which was not written by John, and does not claim to have been written by him [so cf. John xxi, 24], must not be used as an historic source." "The author acted with sovereign freedom, transposed events, and placed them into a strange light, composed discourses of his own accord [how does Harnack know this?], and illustrated lofty thoughts by invented situations." (Professor Harnack, as is usually true of critics, has made progress in negation; in the preface to his "*Geschichte der altchristlichen Literatur*," 1897, he wrote: "From a literary and historic point of view it is *genuine and reliable*. In the entire New Testament there is probably only one book that is pseudonymous, the Second Epistle of Peter," etc. This grand book, the most glorious of the four Gospels, of which so many certainly not ordinary souls testify that it is to them a most precious treasure, is to be

considered as the work of a base falsifier, who, in order to gain greater authority, makes believe that he is the disciple whom Jesus loved, and brazenly adds, "And we know that his testimony is true." (John xxi, 24.) The priestly prayer, as also the other discourses ascribed to Jesus, was composed by John, and by him fathered on Christ. The other three Gospels, the so-called Synoptic Gospels, remain. These, too, says Harnack, "were not written simply to report the things that were; their purpose is to awaken faith in the person Jesus Christ, and the depiction of His discourses and deeds serves this purpose." Hence these, too, are colored and distorted for a purpose. But not only this; in the very beginning these men report "incredible things regarding the story of the birth of Jesus and the time preceding His birth." Christ was not conceived of the Holy Ghost (then whose Son is He?), and was not born in the manger in Bethlehem. Angels did not proclaim to the shepherds in the field the great joy, the birth of the great Shepherd of His people; no pilgrims from the East brought gifts; at the sight of Him, Simeon did not bless God that he now lets his servant depart in peace; Herod did not murder the babes in Bethlehem. All these, Professor Harnack declares, and he certainly must know, are "stories unworthy of belief!" After such a statement, who will yet dare to believe in them? But also concerning the works of Jesus these evangelists report "incredible things," *e. g.*, miracles like the quieting of the storm through the word of Christ, of which Harnack says, "We shall never believe it." Finally, they all mention a story of the resurrection of Jesus that is just as incredible as that of His birth. Therefore beginning, middle, and end of their report concerning

Jesus, His birth, His works, His words, His resurrection, are invented, and in this their books are altogether suspicious and unreliable. Then how can the works of men who make so light of lying be used as historic sources? To be sure, Harnack pleases to remark, "These traditions are entirely Galilean; the fact, that our first three Gospels take no note of Jerusalem, prejudices us in their favor."

Thereby Harnack assumes authority to determine which of the recorded words of Jesus shall be considered valid, and which not. The Sermon on the Mount is genuine; but the great word, "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life," was interpolated by John, improperly so called, and is questionable, to say the least; and probably equally spurious is also the forcible word in Matthew, "All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth;" in general all the words ascribed to Jesus after His pretended resurrection, including the comfortingly glorious word, "Say unto My brethren, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God!"

Even a non-believing but impartial judge sees that such procedure can not arrive at a presentation of the true Biblical essence of Christianity, but only at a one-sided and spurious Harnackian likeness of the same. Tomorrow another scholar can just as arbitrarily accept what Harnack rejects, reject what Harnack accepts, and picture to us an entirely different, equally erroneous essence of Christianity. Then we are at the mercy of "every wind of doctrine." If the Word can no longer be considered valid, where shall faith find a sure foundation?

"The Holy Scriptures," says Luther, "are the only pure fountain of Christianity."

In his historic conception of Christianity Harnack, like criticism in general, savors not the things that be of God, but those that be of men. Church history, as well as secular history, is nothing more than human workmanship to them. Just as the Old Testament is supposed to rest upon the thoughts and fancies, the ambitious and imperious strivings of certain priests and prophets, so the entire system of Christianity rests upon the circumstance that in such and such year of the reign of Tiberius, under historic and religious influences that can not be established definitely, mental processes transpired, ideas originated, clashed, and were clarified in the head of a talented young Jew that matured the conviction in Him that it was His life-task to call out to men: Be not afraid of God; long reflection has led me to know Him as Father. Do but love your neighbor, and do good unto him, and all will be right. Later on it became clear to him that He was the expected Messiah, "a notion," remarks Harnack, "to which we can no longer ascribe sense or validity." (As though Christ were not also for us the promised and expected true and complete fulfillment of the law and the prophets.) Of this idea of Christianity Harnack repeatedly remarks, That is very simple, quite simple. Yes, perplexingly simple, we admit; but the principal thing is wanting.

After the death of Jesus another rabbinically educated, dialectically inclined Jew, named Paul, constructed from this so simple doctrine of Christ the entire doctrine of the Church, to which under the well-known "Hellenistic influences" "the Logos idea" was added. Harnack denies

John's already having taught that "Jesus had been the bodily appearance of the Logos." (Cf. John i, 14: "The Word was made flesh.") Paul had been the first to make the resurrection of Christ the center of Christian doctrine; the first to teach the Deity of Christ, and the saving power of His death; the first to discover in Him the fulfillment of prophecy, to emphasize the fulfillment of the law, and to organize congregations and public worship. And contradictions are not wanting between his statements and the Biblical portrayal of the Apostolic Church.

Thus they deduce, combine, and construct, and the whole matter transpires nicely on this flat earth. To found this religion, in which millions will believe for centuries, and to which they will cling in death, criticism needs neither influences nor forces from above nor from below. Historic development takes care of all this through ingenious, religiously disposed, boldly speculative heads, and God and the Holy Ghost have nothing further to do with it. Mute and inactive—for He dare not intrude, He can not perform miracles, and has neither spirits nor angels at His disposal—this God and "Father," as Harnack often calls Him, observes from His heavenly throne—with what degree of interest, or whether with any interest at all, can not be determined—the historic-philosophic religious development of a Christian Church, about as He observes the progress of civilization in the Congo State, or the scientific play of natural forces in the formation of a madreporite reef in the Pacific Ocean.

The fact that Professor Harnack employs beautifully veiling words, as well as words that are ardent and certainly uttered with earnest intention, thus giving his book a pious, Christian tone, changes nothing in this opinion.

Let us consider a few more fundamental errors of this book and this tendency. In his third lecture Harnack says: "There can be no doubt that the notion of the two kingdoms, the kingdom of God and the kingdom of the devil, of their conflicts, and of the future final conflict in which the devil, who had long since been banished from heaven, is also conquered on earth,—that this notion Jesus simply shared with His contemporaries. He is not the author of this notion; He grew up in it, and retained it." After all, Harnack here wants to say that these notions are specifically Jewish and erroneous ones, which Jesus had found and unfortunately retained; and elsewhere he clearly shows that, to his mind, there is neither a kingdom of the devil nor a devil. Thus at the very start he turns the Bible topsy-turvy. From Genesis to Revelation the Bible teaches that man, and with him the earth, led astray by a fallen prince of light, is in the ban of the "god of this world;" that it is a question of the conflict between God and Satan for this world and mankind; that "for this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil;" and that finally Satan will be cast into eternal fire, and Christ, as conqueror, shall reign eternally with His own in a new earth. If there is no devil, there is also no conflict, no victory, no hell; and our promised redemption from the latter is a myth. "To the mind of Jesus all evil and misery belongs to the great kingdom of Satan." Yes! and to our mind also; for here, too, Jesus knows more than Harnack. This is the only true view of the world; every other view is half in the air.

How literally onesided a view of the world that must be that from the start denies the one of these two great

personal principles and their conflict, this basis of all religions, all history, and all tragedy, of all art and all soul-life which the individual can experience in his own person! If there is no devil, whence is evil, this unfathomable power which is manifested so personally in the persecutions of Christians, in so many demoniacal persons, and in other ways? In the history of mankind, even to-day, there are fearful manifestations of mad blasphemy, of distracting, gnashing hatred of God, and of the sullen rage of so many lost, more than one of whom perceived and expressed, with dismal clearness, that he was the devil's, that he was going, and wanted to go, to the devil. Whoever, in view of these facts, will not recognize the spirit, the inspiration, yea, the presence of a higher personality of evil, must at least admit a fall. Or is it reasonable to believe that God originally created man a blaspheming being, full of sullen hatred? In the temptation of Christ the conflict of these two personal forces is shown in a manner that reaches down into the very principles of being, and the height and depth of which we can not fathom. Of this devil, Christ says: "He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own; for he is a liar, and the father of it." Harnack and criticism teach, there is no devil. Who lies?

The denial of the notion of the devil as opponent of God, and of the conflict between these two, includes also the denial of God's wrath concerning sin and the sinner—a notion likewise hated by modern criticism, and which can not be found in Harnack. This holy wrath, which burns down into the nethermost hell, is the cause of the

moral order of the world, and of the constant self-punishment and self-annihilation of evil. This wrath, together with the pointing out of the way to escape it, is a fundamental doctrine of Holy Writ, even beginning with the curse upon Adam and the field. The precursor cries out, "O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?" Christ says, "He that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but *the wrath of God abideth on him!*" And to His disciples He says, "Fear Him, which after He hath killed hath power to cast into Gehenna; yea, I say unto you, fear Him." But criticism knows better, and has more definite knowledge of the Father than the Son has. Harnack, too, knows nothing of a wrath of God, and does not believe in Gehenna. He says evasively: "God does not execute justice according to the rule, 'Eye for eye, tooth for tooth' [what rule does he follow?]; His justice is subordinate to the power of His mercy." Well, a God who for mere pity winks at the evil men do, is an unjust God. But does not this God punish the sin of the fathers unto the fourth generation? Do we not see it daily also in so-called hereditary demerit? If there is no wrath of God, why do tornadoes, earthquakes, and volcanic eruptions ever destroy thousands amid terrors and torments? Men do not do it; there is no devil; there remain only evil natural forces, which eventually effect such things without the will, perhaps without the knowledge of God. Whence the great, intense anguish of creation, the groaning of the creature, the curse of death and decay? Why do we all die? why does the worm writhe that is tread upon? why are the suns in world-space destroyed in the conflagration of worlds? Will we deny all this with a glib smile, and say,



The world, as it is, is quite beautiful and good? Whoever has seen, in insane asylums, in hospitals for incurables, or in the presence of despairing death, a small part of the great suffering of mankind, must confess with a sigh: Here below we live under the wrath of God, and yonder we shall be amenable to the same, unless some one take away our guilt. Against this consciousness in the deepest soul of the millions the comfort of criticism avail-eth nothing.

Yes, God is love. But he is also a just God; and he would not be a just God if he did not punish evil. With terrible earnestness the Bible warns us against the judgment that will some day be passed upon all flesh that has sinned, and cries out: "Do not err. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God!" "Our God is a consuming fire!" The prophets and Revelation proclaim an eternal fire, kept for the devil and his angels and "whosoever are not found written in the Book of Life," "and the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever." Jesus, who was so kind, repeatedly confirms: "There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." "Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched." But liberal theological research has done away with these things. With an air of superiority Harnack writes, how in the soul of Jesus the coming of the kingdom of God had at first been reflected "in dramatic traits." "At the close of the drama he beholds Himself at the right hand of His Father, and His twelve disciples sitting upon thrones and judging the twelve tribes of Israel; so clear, so entirely in keeping with the ideas of His age, all this stood before Him." But later on, Harnack thinks, "all the dramatic in an exterior historic sense, and all ex-

terior hope for the future vanished" from the discourses of Jesus. Old, rejected notions! This Jesus withdraws all claim to coming again and judging the quick and the dead. We need no longer fear either judgment, or damnation, or hell.

God is not angry. Then why repentance and conversion? Why distress of sin, contrition, the terrible soul-struggles of so many pious persons, such as Luther and Calvin, the cry of David, "O Lord, rebuke me not in thine anger, neither chasten me in Thy hot displeasure?" Whence the complaint of Paul, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I see a law of sin in my members." Self-torment all, without a motive, looked upon by a good God with a kindly smile as utterly unnecessary excitement and emotion of the soul. Why, too, the whole dispute bearing upon justification by faith or by works? We are not in need of justification. God has nothing against us. Neither does He need to "begin a good work in us and perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." We seek Him, grow into sonship, and come to be "saints of God." All this we can do ourselves, and need no assistance from another.

It is well known that modern theology, in accord with modern enlightenment, has almost unanimously done away with miracles.

Concerning these, Harnack in the first place admits, "Who has here measured off exactly the domain of the possible and the real?" and agrees with many non-Christians even, such as the great physicist Tyndall, and even the atheist Buechner, who openly admit: We know too little to be able to determine what is possible and what

is impossible. But how does this agree with Harnack's next and unclear sentence, "It is certain, that there are no miracles; but there is enough of the miraculous and inexplicable?" And he continues, "We do not believe, and never again shall believe, that the earth ever stood still in its course, that an ass spoke, that a storm at sea was stilled by a word; but that the lame walked, the blind saw, the deaf heard, we shall not abruptly reject as illusion." As though there were lesser and greater, easier and more difficult, possible and impossible miracles. Either—or. It is a pity, then, that Harnack did not give us a catalogue of credible and incredible miracles, instead of his worthless division of miracles into five classes (why just five?). We should like to know where the miracle of Cana, the multiplying of bread, the healing of the distant servant of the centurion, and of the distant daughter of the Canaanite woman belong. The raising of Lazarus and of the youth of Nain no doubt belong to the impossible. With the well-known modern assertion that Christ had attached little value to His miracles (which, after all, has no bearing upon the question, whether there are miracles or not), Harnack contradicts the clear words of Christ, "The works that I do in My Father's name, they bear witness of Me." To the Jews He says, "If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin; but now have they both seen and hated both Me and My Father." (John xv, 24.) And this was their sin, that they did not believe in the miracles of Christ, and this the ground for the greater condemnation of Chorazin and Bethsaida, compared with Tyre and Sidon. (Matt. xi, 21, 22.) Could Christ have attached any greater value to His miracles?

It goes without saying, that criticism, being so shy of miracles, does not believe in the bodily resurrection of Christ. Harnack refers almost with contempt to the records of the same. "If this resurrection meant nothing more than that a dead body of flesh and blood had been quickened again, we should at once have done with this tradition." That certainly means, we should no longer give attention to such tales. Elsewhere Harnack writes (quoted by Professor Baumann in "*Die Grundfrage der Religion*"): "The mere fact that adherents and friends of Jesus were convinced that they had seen Him after His resurrection does not offer the slightest reason for the assumption that Jesus did not remain in the grave. What the disciples saw can not help us." Thus a criticism, pretending to be unbiased and without presuppositions, treats the most immediate and venerable sources, when their statements do not fit its system. Thereupon Harnack rejects the "Easter message," but demands "Easter faith," and speaks of Christ as one still living. Here again the well-known spiritual valuation of positive facts. But let us avoid subterfuges, and call things by their name. Resurrection from the dead means resurrection from the dead, and has never signified mere spiritual existence after death. True, Christ was alive even when His body lay in the grave; with the dying thief He went to paradise, and preached to the spirits in the nether world; but neither He nor His disciples ever understood this to be His "rising again the third day." After His death He did not show them merely His spiritual hands and feet, and did not partake merely of spiritual food in their presence, and with them. It would be silly and ridiculous, if any one should report definitely

concerning the resurrection of Schiller a few days after his death, and how he had eaten and drunk with him, and then should explain that he had meant Schiller's continued spiritual existence, and the enormous distribution of his words and works through the firm Cotta! Here, too: either—or. Christ repeatedly declares that He would rise again from the dead the third day. He did rise again. So the Scriptures report; so true, earnest, sober men witness most definitely. They not only say, "We have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of His Majesty" (2 Peter i, 16), but they also report, "*We, witnesses chosen before of God, did eat and drink with Him after He rose from the dead.*" (Acts x, 41.) Verily, an impudent lie, or a grand truth! Why did they firmly declare this? What advantage did they seek in doing so? What did they gain by it? Scorn and derision on the part of the Jews and Greeks, imprisonment, chains, scourging, and a martyr's death,—this is what they gained by the report that a God had been crucified, and had risen again the third day. But they lived and died for the witness: Christ is risen again from the dead. He is risen indeed.

Paul is right in emphasizing the absolutely indicative significance of this fact for the whole of Christian faith, when, after enumerating the witnesses of the resurrection of Christ, he, nobly indignant, addresses the Corinthians: "How say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen; then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain; then are we found false witnesses of God, because we have testified of God that He raised

up Christ!" And he bursts out into the pathetic lamentation: "If Christ be not raised, ye are yet in your sins! Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished! If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." "If the dead rise not, let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die." (1 Cor. xv, 12-19, 32.) He is right in emphasizing, "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." (Rom. x, 9.) Is Christ not risen, then His mission is wanting the divine seal, and we have not a single proof that His doctrine, however grand, and the faith of all His disciples and of all Christendom is not, as the materialist claims, the product of the molecules of His brain and the brain of others, and that after death they, like these molecules, will flit away in space. He had to return, bodily, tangible, in order to prove that, as promised, He had conquered death by His death, and had burst the gates of Hades. "I live, and ye shall live also." The unique force of this proof was felt by the keen scoffer Talleyrand, when, being asked by a philanthropist, "How shall I make men believe that my invented religion is the true one?" answered, "Have yourself crucified, and rise again the third day." This proof is lacking in Mahomet, Buddha, Confucius. Whatever they may have taught, they never returned to announce to us that their word is valid over there also, that they had conquered death, and were now and eternally of the living.

If Christ is not risen, Harnack's subsequent, far-fetched, and unclear contemplations on the possible merits of His sacrificial death, which are in the spirit of present-day criticism, are uncertain and useless speculations. But

if He is risen, He is truly He whom He claims to be, the only begotten Son of God. Then He will also return again bodily, and will "change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body, according to the working whereby He is able even to subdue all things to Himself." (Phil. iii, 21.)

This brings us to the main point, to the pith of New Testament criticism, and also of Harnack's work. Of a book entitled "The Essence of Christianity" a Christian expects that it show Christ as the Central Sun that illuminates the whole. Christianity is not morals, nor virtue, nor piety; it is not fear of God, nor love of neighbor; not good works, and not a life of highest ideals, devoted to the welfare of humanity and to the contemplation of God. "For the Gentiles also do even the same." Christianity is the enormous, incomprehensible, incredible fact, and converting and sanctifying faith in the fact that God was made flesh in order to save a world that had fallen away from Him, and was rushing headlong toward the abyss. This God, the only begotten, who dwelt with the Father in unspeakable glory "before the foundations of the world," said in the fullness of time, "Lo, I come (in the volume of the Book it is written of me), to do Thy will, O my God." He, "the brightness of the glory of the invisible God," He, "of whom and by whom all things are created," came down; "the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us," and "God was in Him, reconciling the world unto Himself." "In Him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily." "Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world." "Surely He hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes

we are healed;" "For God hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him." "Having made peace through the blood of His cross, all things are reconciled by Him unto Himself, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven." "By one offering He hath perfected forever them that are sanctified." "Who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God, angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto Him." And now "the blood of Christ cleanseth us from all sin," and God makes that "we may abound to every good work." "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus. Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea, rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." "Let us look for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ." He said, "Behold, I come quickly, and My reward is with Me." "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with Me in My throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with My Father in His throne." "And the Spirit and the bride say, Come." "Even so, come, Lord Jesus!"

*This is the Biblical essence of Christianity.* But the Deity of Christ, the corner-stone and foundation of true Christianity, is a grievous annoyance to criticism; for by this it is condemned.

Does Harnack teach and confess this Christ, God from eternity? No one, not even he himself, will affirm it. It is indeed difficult here to husk the kernel of his faith out of the multitude of phrases; but this much is easily clear:



His Christ is only a man, who by virtue of his own knowledge makes Himself Son, and who by virtue of His own power makes himself the Holy One of God. His view of Christ he summarizes in the following words, which he underscores: "*The Son does not belong in the Gospel, but only the Father.*" Hence a Christianity without Christ. But it is written, "No man knoweth the Father, save the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal Him." Harnack's book is a new proof of this statement. He has not the Father either. He does not know the true, holy, just, punishing, jealous, living, mighty God of the Bible, because he desires to come unto Him in some other way than by Him who says, "*I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father, but by Me.*" He has created his God in his own likeness.

What need is there, then, of extensive discussion? Here there is a gulf fixed between faith and criticism. In view of all this, shall we spend any time considering Harnack's discussion of Christ's relation "to the question of asceticism," "to the social question," "to the question of right or of culture?" What would it profit? These views of a young man who lived nearly two thousand years ago may be of historic interest; but they can not set the pace for our advanced and enlightened age. This Jesus of criticism, this poetic figure of a pious Jew by the Sea of Tiberias, profits us nothing. He does not take away our sin, and, after all, this "Essence of Christianity" leaves us as cool as the Islam, or as Buddhism.

Poor Jesus, grown up and shut up in so many erroneous notions of Your age, and yet the "Holy One of God," had You but been permitted to sit at Harnack's feet, this master would have taught You correcter ideas of

the essence of Christianity. He would have healed You of Your fear of the devil and his temptations; of the fancy that You were able to command winds and waves; of the delusion that You had raised Lazarus, and that You Yourself would rise again the third day. He would have proved to You that You were only a man, and that You could impossibly have dwelt with the Father in Your own glory before the foundation of the world. He would have shown You that You do not belong in the Gospel at all; for thousands of Christians(?) now enthusiastically recognize that he, and not You, is the true teacher of true Christianity.

We, however, continue to sit at the feet of this Jesus; and He says to us: "Be not ye called teachers; for one is your Teacher, even Christ; and all ye are brethren. Neither be ye called masters; for one is your Master, even Christ." (Matt. xxiii, 8, 10.)

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And what does this modern and this Harnackian theology foot up for eternity? For the touchstone of every religion is its answer to the question, What do you offer for us for the beyond? What do you give us, not for this brief space of time, but for a long eternity? As well have none at all, as a religion, a theology, which is useful for this world alone. "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." The goal of religion is: "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him. But God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit." (1 Cor. ii, 9, 10.) What does liberal theology offer us? It was

heresy, that "the Spirit that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken our mortal bodies" (Rom. viii, 11); a beautiful dream is the word: "It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption. It is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness; it is raised in power!" There is no resurrection of the body; let it go! Hence there is neither any new earth, nor a new Jerusalem in it, the inhabitants of which, clothed in white garments, pass in and out at the pearly gates; and why should there be? A well-known Christian professor writes, "All that has ever been said concerning the heavenly life, is fantasies." (The twenty-first chapter of Revelation also?) What remains? A so-called better beyond, misty and shadowy, of which we know practically nothing, but of which we must hope that all honest and pious people go there. Where do the remainder go, since there is no hell? How about the final judgment? Shall a just God never pass judgment on all the injustice done on earth? Shall this earth, stained with guilt and sin, eternally speed through space, or some day sink back into nothingness?

This so-called modern theology preaches again with new words the old heresies of Arius and Pelagius, and those of the Sadducees, who "say that there is no resurrection, neither angel, nor spirit" (Acts xxiii, 8), and this would-be progressive science takes us back many centuries to the standpoint of all pious heathen. Socrates and Plato hoped to come nearer to the Deity after death. Epictetus and Marcus Aurelius and the Greeks believed in the regions of the blessed (which they distinguished from Tartarus, the place of torment), and when Paul spoke to the Athenians concerning the resurrection of the dead, "some

mocked." If this is all criticism can offer us, then why this whole array of eloquence and research? why science and theology? Let us lead morally virtuous lives, cultivate religiosity and moral earnestness, but without anxiety; for there is no judgment, no devil, and no hell, and of ourselves we shall some day arrive in a better beyond. For a hope and a faith like these, which are shared by savage peoples also, by Yakuts and Tierra del Fuegians, we need neither Bible nor Biblical criticism, neither Christianity nor Harnack.

Why is this modern theology so sober and prosy, without grand homogeneous conceptions of the world and the cosmos? Why is its universe so empty, its heaven so cloudy, its God so lonely and speechless? Why does the whole of it seem so unsatisfactory and superficial to the Christian? Because in it the true living God and His breath is wanting. These cold lecture-rooms, in which a man by force of brain demonstrates God and the world; in which the ceiling hinders the view and the flight upward, and in which the horizon embraces only what can be seen from the professor's platform, are narrow and empty and tedious to the believer, who is accustomed to holding blessed communion with God in prayer; who has felt His presence, has tasted His goodness, and in His light has seen the light; but who has also wrestled with the princes and powers of darkness, and with the god of this world.

"The soul and God, God and the soul!" Harnack exclaims, and many are content with this motto. We are not; it rather frightens us. For God and the soul are incommensurable quantities. Is it not written: "God dwelleth in the light which no man can approach unto?" Then how will you, poor man, approach unto Him?

What has your little, finite, sinful, impotent, ignorant soul in common with the great, holy, omnipotent, omniscient God? What has the little, crippled butterfly of this earth in common with the sun, two millions of miles distant, and radiant in its plentitude of dazzling light; what in common with the sun's oceans of heat, and its tornadoes of fire? Astronomy teaches that if a youth could be up with the ray of light, and fly toward the beautiful sun Alcyone, he would perish in space of withering old age, before he could perceive any change in the luster and size of the star. Even so the soul that on its own pinions would wing its way to God. God is far away. And if the Eternal should approach the soul in a divine thunderstorm, how would it fare? Can the moth live in the melting heat of the furnace, or can the sin-bespattered soul stand before the countenance of Him in whose sight even angels are not clean? "No man shall see God and live."

Here modern theology knows no counsel, and needs none. Its God is incapable of wrath; sin is only unpleasant to him, and, whether or not, he is bound by natural laws and otherwise, He can neither answer prayers, nor hurl the thunderbolts of his wrath upon the earth, nor rise from his throne and meet the soul. He does not hear its petitions; how should he answer them? The soul must do it all. And it is able to do it all. Through religious and scientific training it is able to mount on high, to attain to sonship through speculation, and to become a saint of God; to this end it needs neither repentance, nor conversion, nor the sacrificial death of Christ.

Not so the Bible. It says: Fallen man can not come to God, and can not stand before God; the finite creature

can know nothing concerning the infinite Creator. There must be found a Mediator and High Priest; a God, in order that He have power to approach God, and to stand before Him; a man, in order that he have knowledge of our misery, and can be touched with the feeling thereof. But the Son came down, was made man, and is the only Mediator between the soul and God; His name is Immanuel!—God with us! He ascended to heaven again; He sits again at the right hand of Majesty. He will come again and take us with Him, in order that where He is, there we also may be. And because He is “the Word of God,” this Word from heaven, in opposition to mere human wisdom, knows great and heavenly things. This Christ showed Himself to the prophets in His glory, on cherubim, borne by flashing wheels of life, and His Word tells us of sons of God who shouted when He created the earth; it tells us of angels of mighty power, who protect children, and bear souls heavenward; of princes of light, who contend with princes of darkness for the nations and worlds committed to them (cf. Dan. x, 13); of great counsels of God, and of seers, and of watchmen in heavenly places; of terrible final judgments, and of the shining of the sun after the storm has passed. And from the seven spirits of God there proceed grace and peace, and from the throne of God there proceed voices, thunder and lightning, grand blessed revelations which man below is not permitted to know. “Seal up those things which the seven thunders uttered;” unspeakable paradisiacal words, which no man can utter. This Word offers the believer a grandeur and beauty of creation and Creator, such as the mind of man never dreamed of; a reveling in time and space, in power and might, in infinite, mate-

rial, and spiritual forms of life; a shouting of victory, and overwhelming joy of eternity, such as no poet ever fancied. These are things, of course, which men with dried-up souls, men of whom only the head is alive, regard with a shrug of the shoulder as the fantasies of poetic souls, with which they embellish their religion. But they satisfy, satiate, and strengthen the heart, this wonderful something in us, that can not live on dry, abstract things, but thirsts after concrete things, after great joys, after beautiful realities. Just as God gave men eyes to see, ears to hear, and hands to grasp, so the soul created by Him demands ideas that crystallize to visibility, a harmony of things that begets a grand, audible *Te Deum laudamus*, and an eternal life that hands can lay hold on, and that can be viewed by light; in short, it demands ready, genuine, shining gold, and will not be put off with the paper drafts and stocks of modern founders, which can nowhere be redeemed.

So-called modern criticism, which is coming more and more exclusively to be a mere criticism of the form and husk, is unable to offer anything that is concrete, true, and real, because it despises the only source of truth, the divine Word. Here there is no "And *God* said," but, *I* know that, *I* find that, *I* make out, *I* prove, *I* surmise that. . . . But despite all wisdom, *I* do not know whence nor whither; do not know what is above nor what is below; do not know why there is guilt and sorrow; do not know how it is to end, and who will redeem us; for our daily existence proclaims with fearful impressiveness that we are not able to do it. It knows little of the present creation, and nothing of the eternal; its overestimation of its own wisdom and knowledge is consistent only with

a small conception of the universe, and can be explained only on the ground of such a conception.

Christianity among Germans must have degenerated sadly to make it possible for them to regard with awe and admiration a picture as arbitrary, as superficial, and as contradictory to the Bible as Harnack's "Essence of Christianity." It can not seem strange that the book was welcomed with rejoicing by disguised and open opponents of the cross of Christ and of His Word, as a riddance from the hated, unrelenting truths of the Scriptures, or, as they say, from a dogmatic Christianity; but it must seem strange that believers, too, blinded by beautiful words, and by some elements of truth, are deceived in regard to the contents of the book, which is so clear to the discerning reader. The opinions of opponents of Christianity, or of such as remain distant, might open their eyes. The clear-sighted Ed. v. Hartmann, *e. g.*, writes (*Deutschland*, No. 1): "I find in the unique divine human nature of the Redeemer Jesus Christ the feature that distinguishes the Christian religion from all other religions. Judged from this standpoint, liberal Protestantism and the left wing of Ritschlianism no longer come under the idea of Christianity." And elsewhere he says: "What Harnack's work has revealed, is really nothing more than the self-decomposition of Ritschlianism; and this is another halting-place on the way of the self-decomposition of Christianity." And the liberal Rev. Georg Schneider rejoices: "To us this book has seemed to be a splendid justification of unbelief, and a declaration of war against the confessional Church, as bold as it could well have been made. . . . It witnesses that, in the eyes of science, faith in the crucified and risen God has seen its day."



If we ask, astonished, why the Church endures such procedure, and why it suffers that, in its seminaries and foundations and higher institutions of learning, eager young men, its future servants, are reared in heresies that are in direct opposition to the confession of the Church, high public officials of the Church declare, that in theological chairs "every tendency must be granted air and light," or, to speak plainly, every one must be at liberty there to teach what he pleases; for, others add sanctimoniously, it would be sad indeed if the Church had to bar out every free utterance, and had not power enough in itself to overcome error. Excellent gardeners forsooth, who say: In our garden air and light must be granted every kind of weed; our little plants will defend themselves against whatever endangers their existence. What manner of father is he, who, being told that his children are eating the fruit of the deadly nightshade, or poison toadstools in the forest, answers coolly: Just let them eat; their good constitution will overcome the poison. What manner of educator he, whose principles were: I permit my pupils to read bad books, to see bad examples, and to associate with bad company; it would be sad if the power of good training did not gain the victory. Then let us in the Church and the State, in the school and in the family, freely grant air and light to that which is evil and false; we believe that the good and the true will surely conquer.

Yes, we too believe that the truth will some day conquer, and we also believe that God can gain this victory without our aid; but then *we* shall be the losers. Yes, the Word of God will some day flash forth like the sun from dark clouds, and will strike down its enemies; but

it will also, in the day of judgment, lay those low who say concerning the living God, what the father of Gideon once said concerning Baal: "If he be a god, let him plead for himself, because one hath cast down his altar."

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What results has Biblical criticism matured? The well-kown champion of criticism in France, the late Professor Sabatier, thought, "*Toute la théologie est à refaire!*"—All theology must begin again from the beginning; that which has been handed down, belongs to old iron. A German theologian, to whom I put the above question, answered less radically, "Well, at the present time we can not yet speak of results; it is all unsettled yet." But this answer was perhaps too modest; for this criticism, as we have seen, can amply furnish *negative* results. Revelation? No. Inspiration of the Bible? No. Trinity? No. Fall? No. Devil, angels? No. Miracles? No. Decalogue from Sinai? No. Wrath of God? No. Prophecy? No. Christ God? No. Reconciliatory death of Jesus? No. Did Christ rise again? No. Resurrection of all the dead, and final judgment? No. Criticism, this child of the spirit that always negates, takes everything from us; but it gives us nothing. What do all these negations profit me? What shall I do with them? It causes one to stand on the path of life like a freezing wanderer, totally bereft, clad only in a thin shirt of morality, and not knowing whither to direct his steps.

Why are we (and our stay is brief enough) in this world? Is it not that we might seek God, and, having found Him, love Him and his dear Son, whom He gave for us; obey Him, believe in His Word, and show forth

our faith in good works? What have we in this poor life that is of much account save a little love, a little faith, and a little hope? Does criticism help us to love, to believe, and to hope? No. In the lecture-room and in the study, when delivered fluently in learned treatises and in scientific addresses, it is quite nice, noble, and presentable. But in view of the terrible, shocking realities of existence, mankind truly needs something better than theories, be they ever so brilliant; better than deductions, be they ever so ingenious. In the hard daily struggle we need strength and patience from above. We need comfort when the heart is bleeding, torn by the thorns of life, or at the grave of loved ones. We need help when despair draws near, and when frenzy threatens the soul, on account of annihilating misfortune, or inexpiable guilt. In the last hour, when conscience accuses our life, we are to receive weapons against the terrors of death and judgment. We must have a Father who hears and answers our cries and petitions, and some one who takes away the crushing burden of our guilt. We want to rise again some day, and finally be at home, body and soul, with this Father.

And because criticism of the Bible does not give us this, but the Bible without criticism has given it to us and to thousands, we prefer the latter.

"There must be criticism!" we hear even believing theologians and non-theologians announce, as a self-evident and irrefutable dogma of modern times. Why? Where is it written? As long as I find no trace of criticism in the prophets and apostles, yea, in Christ, the incarnate Word that is God, but find there only unconditional faith in the Scriptures, I consider it advisable rather

to follow them in this also. When, on the other hand, I see from the history of the Church how so many thousands of godly Church fathers and martyrs, apostles and missionaries to the heathen, reformers, confessors, and believers did such great things in God and with God, what godly lives they lived, and how happy they died, without knowing or wanting to know anything of criticism, I say confidently, Criticism must not be. Indeed, if I compare these non-critics with the critics, and the non-critical Church, many hundred years old, with the present critical Church, the conviction is forced upon me more and more, that the above sentence should be amended thus: Criticism ought not to be!

If we inquire after the ever-spreading spiritual influence of this criticism, the results are unfortunately quite visible. That this criticism has undermined, and to a great extent destroyed reverence for the Word of God, that despite all talk of "Father" it has removed Him to an unapproachable distance from us, and has robbed Him of the power and the willingness to hear our petitions and help us, is too evident to be denied. Like blighting mildew it has fallen upon thousands of young souls, and has robbed them of their lively hope, their childlike faith, their first love. Are these the effects of divine truth? Nevermore!

By virtue of criticism we are not only without faith, but also without character. Darwinism, refuted in science by the force of facts, but not so tangibly refutable in philosophic branches, has added materially to the lack of clearness in our spiritual life, and Professor Vaihinger, of Halle, is right in tracing Nietzsche's doctrine back to "a new valuation of Schopenhauer under the influence

of Darwinism." But Biblical criticism, too, is a cause of the uncertain, wavering present-day life, which is exposed to every wind of foolish doctrine. And since literature and art are products of this life, it is indirectly also the cause of the miserable productions of both, such as the modern representations of Jesus in art and literature. Only firm faith of some kind helps man attain to a homogeneous view and conception of the world, and only such a view and conception can make him capable of great, forceful, and fruitful activity. But whence shall such view and conception come to those who, in the fundamental questions of existence, waver between dozens of contradictory opinions; who look to Harnack to-day for the essence of their Christianity, after they had looked to Ritschl yesterday, and to Schleiermacher or Baur the day before yesterday, and who do not know where they shall have to look for it ten years hence?

Instead of the "It is written," with which our Lord and Master conquered the mightiest opponent, we ask: Is it written? Where? Who wrote it? Is the passage genuine? Who will prove it? The foundations under us totter, and from bogs and swamps there rise up mists that hide from us the view of the eternal peaks, clad in radiant white. A malarial atmosphere of doubts and uncertainty envelops our spiritual life, forces its way into our schools, and even into our Churches, and poisons our Christian literature; we and our children breathe it wherever we are, and it makes us wavering and defenseless outwardly, and sick and languid inwardly.

How void of judgment we have come to be is shown by the fact that many confess the Deity of Christ, and in the same breath doubt the truth of the Old Testament,

the Book which this God-man in opposition to the world and Satan posits, with the absolute word, "It is written," as "the Scriptures that can not be broken," as "the law of which not a jot or tittle shall pass away;" and he repeatedly appeals to Moses, David, and the prophets. That is to say, Christ is God; but, in His opinion of the Old Testament, this God is deceived. He has overestimated His own Word, and especially His law from Sinai. In this we dare not follow Him blindly.

Biblical criticism has brought about, that almost no Christian any longer distinguishes clearly between yea and nay, truth and falsehood, light and darkness, children of God and children of the devil, Christ and Belial. These are indeed Biblical expressions, but they are unparliamentary and obsolete. We now speak only of a more or less decided, or moderate, or positive tendency; of a more liberal and progressive view; of an unbiased, Protestant, or a stricter Lutheran standpoint, of a more or less outspoken left wing or right wing, of liberal, liberally-minded, or orthodox theology, and what more there may be of indefinite expressions that suit our pale spiritual life, and the indistinctness of which harms our thought and our soul. It is not a question of blessedness and damnation, of heavenly bliss and hellish torment, of Satan in the lake of fire, of cherubim around the throne of God, and of victors clothed in white, and palms in their hands; of redeemed and saints; of lost and damned. To us these are no longer lofty, shocking realities, but mediæval conceptions for the multitude, figurative expressions, customary only in pietistic circles, or in Methodist conventicles, or in pious hymns. Whether Christ is the Son of God, and whether by His death He saved us

from future wrath or not, are theological questions on which opinions may differ; more interesting are lectures on Babylonian legends, or on the relation of Byzantine art and renaissance to Christianity. Above us, God waits for us in an eternal sea of love and blessedness; beneath us Gehenna hisses and bubbles; this day yet thousands of souls will soar aloft, will be hurled down, among them perhaps you and I. We, however, discuss these deepest and highest things coolly and calmly as we would a problem in mathematics, and discussions that bear on eternal things have come to be mere oratorical tournaments in lecture-halls and classrooms, where all depends upon who can unhorse his opponent and gain the applause of the multitude and of the court.

What did an "evangelical" Church do when Professor Harnack's false "Essence of Christianity," distributed everywhere and everywhere discussed by scholars, enthused and deceived thousands? Did those who still say with all their heart, "It is written!"—did believing prelates and pastors, elders of the Church, and members of the congregation rise as one man against this heretic, and cry out, "That is not Christianity; you teach falsehood?" Such a deed would have made the angels in heaven, and Christ Himself, rejoice; and a thunder-storm would have arisen and purified the air. But we are afraid of the storm. The watchmen on the towers of Zion slept, or wrapped themselves in "academic quietude." Individual protests were heard; several pamphlets appeared, which were read by few; and that was all.

Then Professor Delitzsch openly showed the ultimate end and results of criticism, and placed those who lacked courage to break loose from Harnack, before the ques-

tion whether they would follow him also. He, by birth a member of the evangelical Church and a theologian said, in the presence of high representatives of this Church, of ministers of the cult and court-chaplains, of the chancellor of the empire, and of the emperor, "It was one of the greatest errors of the human mind to consider the Old Testament a religious revelation." And they all keep their seats. What did the Church do here, too? Where was there, I will not say holy wrath and fiery indignation, but only a unanimous, energetic defense of the Word of God and a refutation of falsehood? Why do we exist? Why are we called Protestants? Or do we hope that dignified academic quietude in the face of error will impress the world forcibly? It is in vain! Just as the unrighteous world demands righteousness from us, so the cowardly and unbelieving world demands a regardless testimony from us; and the world which delights in the words generosity and tolerance, deep down in its heart respects only firm and rugged men of thorough conviction.

True, there have appeared in answer to Professor Delitzsch's lecture a veritable flood of "Babel and Bible" pamphlets, and a numerous public has eagerly read them. But how few of them courageously and openly defended the entire truth of the entire Bible! On the contrary, most of these pamphlets, and the opinions elicited by reading them, showed how wavering and uncertain, how unclear, confused, superficial, and worthless the faith and Christianity of so many scholars are, and how many, who write and speak on revelation, do not know what revelation is.

Now Professor Harnack has gone a step farther. He



has taken sides with Professor Delitzsch, ascribes to him "the merit of having borne a correct view of the Old Testament into wide circles," and says that Wellhausen in his classic history of Israel had long ago proved that the Old Testament contains myths and legends from Babylon. Upon this Professor Zillesen writes in the "*Evangelische Volksschule*:" "The situation is now clear. Harnack has unmasked himself (which was hardly necessary) before all Protestant Christendom, and it will now appear how much spiritual power and how much life of God there is still left in the evangelical Church. Henceforth the evangelical Church must oppose unbelief, nourished and promoted by theologians within its own gates." God grant it may! But what happened, when *Kirchenrat* Rupprecht, his whole heart glowing for God and the Church, opposed Harnack's book? On both sides the man was smiled at. Why fall into a passion or become personal about theological questions, as though it were a matter that concerned the salvation of individual souls! It certainly is proper that such questions be discussed as calmly and theoretically as possible! Forcible language and warmth would be more in place against sects and associations which entertain narrow views of conversion and sanctification, such as the Church does not hold; but what does it matter if within the Church a Professor of Church History in good standing eloquently lectures to hundreds on his self-fabricated, anti-biblical Christianity, and rejects, one by one, the fundamental truths of the Church and all its articles of faith? Besides, such things have happened before. (See above, lecture by Professor Krueger on "Modern Science and Christianity.") Opinions go free, and every view is to

some extent justified. Yes, even those of the devil and of demons. They believe that there is a God, and a personal God withal, and tremble before His wrath; they witness that Jesus is the Son of God, the Most High, and believe in a final judgment and in torments of hell; they do not even occupy the extreme left.

Even orthodox papers, instead of championing the cause of truth against falsehood, endeavored to find something good in a book that had so generally, and even in the highest circles, been received with favor. His denial of miracles is mere "superficiality" (!); much in his work can serve as a "bridge to truth" (hence is recommended to the simple seeker). Others praised in accustomed terms the "refreshing warmth of heart," or "the high moral earnestness," and extolled the enthusiasm that Harnack calls forth among his students, as well as his personal piety. We are not dealing, however, with what Professor Harnack is, but with what he teaches; and what do the most excellent gifts profit, if they are devoted to the service of falsehood? Another paper naïvely remarked that Harnack might at least be used as an antidote for Nietzsche. Morphine against prussic acid!

Such indulgence, such clever attitude on the part of colleagues, even in the face of clear falsehood, appears good to men, and is lauded by them; but Jesus did not come into the world to bring such peace. "He that hateth not his father and mother and brothers and sisters for My name's sake, is not worthy of Me." How Paul, a theologian of no mean rank, judges concerning those who proclaim another Gospel than the one preached by him in the power of the Holy Ghost, is seen in Gal. i, 8, 9; and in 2 John x, 11, is seen what the apostle of brotherly love

and the favorite of the Lord considers the proper attitude toward such heretics. "For he that biddeth him God-speed is partaker of his evil deeds."

Does Professor Harnack's work contain nothing that is true and good? Certainly! But even if there were much more in it that is true and good, the Christian could no more partake of it than of wholesome food into which poison had been dropped. Whoever casts the Son out of the Gospel, whatever else he may proclaim, his word is less than useless. This, too, is Biblical doctrine.

Looking upon the faithful witnesses shown in the history of martyrs, one would shed tears of shame, above all on account of himself, then on account of our Christianity, which is eloquent, but careless, fearful of men, and cowardly in witnessing. One must blush for shame when he sees how thousands of men, young as well as aged, tender women and young children suffered being tortured to death, in order to witness before God and men against heresies, many of which were not as destructive as those we dispassionately hear in periodicals, in books and lectures, in our daily life, from our acquaintances, or from pretended ministers and teachers of the Word.

And yet easy terms were at times granted these martyrs. *E. G.*, when a friendly proconsul said, "Do but touch the sacrificial animal silently with your finger, and I shall let you go free." But "they accepted no deliverance." (Heb. xi, 35.) Or when an inquisitor demanded of a heretic, "Do but subscribe to 'I believe in the only true apostolic Church.'" But he perceived what was meant, did not subscribe, and was burned to death. Ay! stubborn fanatics! We, to-day, are not so foolish. Expecting from a young divine an energetic protest

against heretics, I once received from a pious man the reproving reply, "You do not consider that his position might be endangered by it." Under such circumstances, of course. . . . True, in connection with Luther celebrations we sing vigorously and joyfully,

"Though they take our life,  
Goods, honor, child, and wife.  
Let all go amain!"

But in our day every sensible Christian sees that one can not risk his position for the sake of witnessing to his faith. How will a child of God without position fare? "Even though I should oppose, as you think I ought," answered another, "it would not change matters; what purpose would it serve?" Probably none, save that Christ would some day confess you before His Father and His holy angels. But we no longer reflect upon such distant possibilities.

One feels like smiling, however, at those who look upon our ecclesiastical conditions, which are confused, and without power and confession, as an ultimate acquirement, as a beautiful adjustment of opposites, and as a definitive European equilibrium. These friends of peace will also be bitterly disappointed; for Christ is the same yesterday, to-day, and forever, and the world is world, and will remain world. Between the two, between truth and falsehood, Christ and Belial, there is no peace possible. True, in our day we lack material for powerful persecutors as well as for faithful, joyous martyrs; we are too humane, too liberal, too tolerant for this. But if God permits the minds of men to be shaken hither and thither again, persecutions will soon begin anew, as un-

merciful and bloody as ever. Of the last time it is written: "And they that understand . . . shall fall by the sword, and by flame, by captivity, and by spoil, . . . to try them, and to purge, and to make them white, even to the time of the end." (Dan. xi, 33, 35.) And when the man of sin, the *Uebermensch*, shall arise, then the great tribulation shall begin, "such as was not from the beginning of the creation which God created unto this time." But who believes this word in our day?

As a consequence of this indefiniteness and unclearness in matters of religion, and as a second evil fruit of criticism, there is unfortunately creeping in among our people a dismal, ever-growing distrust toward the servants of the Church. To proclaim God unto men, to be a *minister* of His Word, is a great honor. What a multitude of such servants of God will some day follow Him who appears upon a white horse, and whose "name is called The Word of God" (Rev. xix, 11-13); and on earth, even in his outward appearance, such a man, grown old and gray in faithful service for his Lord and in the proclaiming of His truth, is beautiful and venerable. But what if the servant assumes the place of master, and from his pulpit, in high-sounding, empty words bases the divine Word on human science? The day is past in which the congregation, persuaded that the parson could speak only true things, calmly and trustingly accepted every word spoken from the pulpit. The right of free research is preached to us. Well and good,—then we shall search freely; search, as the Scriptures permit us to do; search, as did the noble Jews in Berea. They "searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so," as Paul had proclaimed to them. (Acts xvii, 11.) We laymen, too,

partake of the spirit of criticism; we, too, wish to investigate, to compare, and to test what is told us as to its genuineness. We, too, want nothing but truth. And we can not harmonize that, as Catholics have deridingly remarked, from the same pulpit there are preached to us belief and unbelief, the Bible and criticism, Luther in the forenoon and Harnack in the afternoon; or that a servant of the Church who, in entering upon his office, solemnly said: "I vow before God, that to the best of my knowledge and for conscience' sake I will teach and proclaim the Gospel of Christ as it is contained in the Holy Scriptures, and witnessed to in the first 'Unaltered Augsburg Confession,' and in the remaining confessions of the Evangelic Lutheran Church," should then, by word of mouth and pen, teach the opposite of what is found in the Scriptures and in the Augsburg Confession. How can a man who, like Harnack, considers the record of the birth of Jesus to be "unauthentic stories," reverently celebrate Christmas with his congregation; or Good Friday, since he does not believe in the reconciliatory death of Christ; or Easter, and deny His resurrection? We can not understand how a minister of the Gospel who does not believe in the Trinity, and with criticism considers the baptismal command (Matt. xxviii, 19) to be spurious, can nevertheless solemnly baptize little children "in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost," or can still salute his congregation with—"The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost be with you all!" We can not comprehend how such a man, who theoretically holds that answers to prayer are impossible, can still reverently offer the Lord's Prayer before the congregation, or how this man, who

considers belief in miracles to be antiquated, can still from his pulpit solemnly read passages of Scripture in which miracles are reported. Thus Dr. J. Johanssen, an enemy of all confessions and whom no one will suspect of orthodoxy, writes: "These liberal theologians have not the courage of truth, to change a confession which they reject, but in their churches they still read the old confessions and offer the old prayers, which, according to their clarified view, they must hold to be an illusion."

On this account believing ministers of the Gospel must suffer also, must suffer to be looked upon as mere rhetoricians. It pains us lay Christians to have such write us repeatedly, "In our day the word of a believing layman has greater value, weight, and influence, than the word of a parson." This ought not to be, and it is an abnormal, unhealthy state of affairs.

It is evident that criticism must weaken the sermon. Through it the majestic Old Testament comes to be for young theologians a book sealed with seven seals. They do not know what to do with it, and works like Krummacher's "Elijah the Tishbite," come to be impossible. They do not proclaim the Word of God from their pulpits—for they no longer believe in it—but their own word; and oftentimes the sermons of these critics remind one strikingly of their opinion of John's Gospel, quoted above. Not a trace of anything they themselves have experienced! Everything has either been taken from sources, or freely wrought out according to definite viewpoints. They place events in a strange light, illustrate lofty thoughts by fancied situations, and do not understand the sense of the documents used as source. The discourse can not proceed from an immediate disciple

of Jesus. But even non-critical preachers no longer understand how to utilize two-thirds of the Bible, the law, and the prophets. And they are fearful of being reckoned biased, rude, and intolerant; they endeavor so to speak the truth that it may not touch any one unpleasantly, and to claim only what is indisputable and undisputed; and of their sermons the verdict passed by a lady on a sermon she had heard is often true, "All beautiful and good, and now we can lie down again and slumber on till next Sunday." "Why," asks Fr. Spemann ("From the Renaissance to Jesus"), "Why does the preaching of the Word so often walk on noiseless soles in our day? Why does the sermon wear felt shoes? Why do we always assume an apologetic tone? We are not to act on the defensive, we are not to offer excuses, we are to attack. We are state attorneys, and over against us all mankind is occupying the prisoner's box. High treason has been committed, a terrible deed." This mankind has murdered the Son of the Most High, who had brought them heaven. Repent and be converted; for now also the ax is laid unto the root of the trees. And he sighs: "O that men full of holy enthusiasm would again mount the pulpit! O that voices would again be stifled by tears! O that countenances would glow again!"

But, of course, to a proper position of preachers and hearers would belong that, once for all, they break with the great illusion and false doctrine that we are a nation of Christians. The Germans are no more a nation of Christians than England, or America, or other nations that call themselves Christian. Let us open our eyes! Our legislation, our *Reichstag*, our politics are not Christian,—this was openly admitted by their leader; our art,



our literature, our daily press, our stage, these chief manifestations of the character of the nation, are not Christian, but Anti-Christian. Cities like Berlin with its immoral street-life; others, in which, like in the second largest city of Germany, only three per cent of the population frequent the churches, ninety-seven per cent therefore feel no need of religious worship; those which with great majority elect a social-democrat (even though an irreproachable one) as their representative,—are not Christian cities. The multitude that fills our courts and streets, our beer-halls, theaters, and railway trains, does not consist of Christians; and it is a great, harmful lie, to proceed from the presupposition that this unbelieving, and in part godless, multitude presents the Church, the congregation of Christ, because they are baptized and confirmed.

Biblical criticism, with all its negations, proves itself, not only utterly helpless in the presence of these deplorable conditions and this gloomily growing flood of social-democracy; it not only positively aids the latter, by strengthening the multitude in its unbelief and its antipathy to the Bible, the Church, and the clergy, but, what is more alarming, it estranges from the Church even believing Christians, hence the Church's best support. This is frankly admitted by servants of this Church, who otherwise belong to its zealous defenders. Thus one writes in "*Alter Glaube*" (Vol. II, No. 21), "Through the unbelief that is being proclaimed from our pulpits, and is suffered to be proclaimed extensively and undauntedly, greater and greater circles of our people who believe in the Bible, are being estranged from the Church." That it has not even gained the respect of outspokenly anti-ecclesiastical circles, and what even pronounced enemies

of all religion think of it, is shown by the socialistic leader, Franz Mehring, in the verdict he passes on Harnack: "An orthodox man, who believes in the letter, and defends his faith with holy zeal, can still be an object of respect; but such a criticism of the Gospels, which is conducted with genuine theological subterfuges, can not."

The fruits of Biblical criticism are not good.

Christ prophesies: "*Beware of false phophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits.*" "Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree can not bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit." (Matt. vii, 15-18.) And the apostle says, "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but will heap to themselves teachers, and will turn away their ears from the truth, and will be turned unto fables." (2 Tim. iv, 3, 4.)

If we say this, we are accused of failing to practice mercy toward such as differ with us in faith. God graciously preserve us from meriting this accusation. We extend a brother's hand to every one, even to the Catholic or Greek priest or monk, who believes that Christ is the only begotten Son of the Father, that He died for our sins, and that the Bible is the Word of God. He is not our brother who does not believe this; we can love him, however, as our neighbor, can live with him in peace, and combat His views with might. But when those who ought to be ministers of the divine Word make this Word despicable, and treat the men who wrote it, and of whom the world was not worthy, as dishonest

knaves, who have composed, distorted, falsified, and invented miraculous stories, then there can no longer be any thought of mercy, but only of justice. Then we Christians, too, must guard an honor, that of our heavenly Father and His children; then it is time to tell these gentlemen that they have made their presence in good company (and by this we mean the true children of God) impossible, and that we can no longer wish them God-speed. (2 John x, 11.)

Then, with virtuous indignation, our opponents throw up to us intolerance, our fanatical zeal, and exclaim: You one-sided, gruff, stern believers ought not straightway to accuse of heresy and damn every one who can not share your literal faith and your rigid orthodoxy. In spite of this he may be deeply religious and morally earnest, and perhaps better than many of you; besides, there is progress possible even in the religious standpoint, and many a man, who for the present sees in Christ the teacher of purest morals, may gradually rise to a higher conception of Him.

To this we answer: We damn no man; for we do not hold the keys of heaven and hell. But Christ Himself, and the entire Word of God, damns him who does not believe. "If ye believe not that I am He, ye shall die in your sins." (John viii, 24.) "He that believeth on Him is not condemned; but he that believeth not is condemned already." (John iii, 18, *et al.*) These clear words are no fault of ours. Or is it to be true tolerance and genuine brotherly love, if, seeing a blind man on a wrong way that leads to an abyss, I call to him, "Just go on! You will see by and by that you are lost?" The Bible knows nothing of an evolution, of a progress in

error, or a bridge of falsehood, which leads to truth; and as it knows nothing of a narrow heavenly path that gradually descends, so it knows nothing either of a narrow heavenly path that gradually descends, so it knows nothing either of a broad road that leads heavenward again in gentle curves. We can see daily how moderate critics, who make human reason and human wisdom the judge of divine revelation; how Christian socialists, who want to invent a salvation for mankind other than Jesus, the crucified; how wits, who preach high morality and self-culture, and know a way to the Father other than that shown by the Son, get farther and farther away from the goal. Slight doubts grow stronger, lead to unbelief, unbelief to mockery, and the end is more or less concealed atheism, however little they want to have it called so. In fact they no longer believe in the personal living God. The Word says man must turn from the way that leads to hell. He must turn his back upon the goal pursued till now, must strive after the goal he had left behind, must put aside his reason and his wisdom, and must pray for God's Spirit, must again become as a little child. But who could expect such things from the proud minds, the princes of science, and those versed in the Scriptures, who greeted with a storm of applause, make their own intellect master of God and His Word, and declare to a reverently listening multitude what and how they are to believe and not to believe. "They shut up the kingdom of heaven against men; for they neither go in themselves, neither suffer they them that are entering to go in." (Matt. xxiii, 13.)

Well, now, ye critics and despisers of the Bible, great and small, pass by our "unscientific, simple, massively childlike [read childish] faith in the Bible," and our

“holy oneness,” with a smile of superiority and a shrug of contempt, and proceed to the order of the day, in order that among yourselves you may say indignantly: “Have any of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed on Him? But this people who knoweth not the law are cursed.” That does not awe us, and does not confuse us, and we would not wish to barter your scorn and contempt for your praise and friendship; but we greatly lament the desolation your heresies, like a creeping pestilence, have caused in the Church. We lament the hundreds of young men who often confess that they have been robbed of their faith; the thousands of souls that, disturbed by the word of such faithless preachers, have wavered and doubted, and perhaps have forever lost their peace. What shall these poor people do with your high-sounding,—in fact, spiritless and worthless—hypotheses, with your moral sugar-water, and your would-be gospel without Christ, without forgiveness of sin, and without eternal life? How pale this all grows in the face of the terribly real needs of life; how it shrivels up to nothing, when the majesty of death approaches man, and the fear of God falls upon the soul! “O vicar,” a dying woman anxiously exclaimed, “have you nothing more to tell me?” But he know nothing else; and how could he have prayed with her after he had been taught in the schools that God can neither hear nor answer prayer?

You have destroyed the congregation of Christ; but God will destroy you.

When we reflect upon present ecclesiastic theological conditions, we can not ward off gloomy thoughts concerning the future of the Church. The saddening feature is not the fact that heretics rise up in the Church—this,

according to Christ's prophecy, has occurred at all times—but the fact that the Church no longer has power to react against such. If there still were an energetic Church discipline, a nucleus of men who guarded the true doctrine, an authority that deprived such heretics of the right to teach and preach, then there were hope; but where are such? They are rather listened to and looked up to with enthusiasm by members of the Church, high and low, as the heralds of a new and better gospel; and the Church itself grants to every heresy "air and light" in its schools. If an organism no longer has healthy force enough to expel harmful and destructive elements, it is an evil omen for its subsistence. A Church that quietly goes on counting public deniers of God, blasphemers, mockers, and despisers of the Bible and Christianity, pronounced enemies of all religion, and thousands, yea, several millions of their followers as members in good standing, and suffers its servants to call such blessed when performing their funeral rites, is not healthy. "What communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial?" (2 Cor. vi, 14, 15.) A Church that knows two kinds of truth, one scientific-critical for theologians, and another popular-edifying for the congregation, no longer stands in the truth. Paul, departing, says to his congregation, "I am pure from the blood of all men; for I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God." (Acts xx, 26, 27.) A Church whose most distinguished teachers combat its confession of faith, whose professors deny what its ministers preach, whose students of theology are taught to despise the Word which they are to preach as parsons, judges itself. "Every kingdom divided against itself is

brought to desolation." Here nothing is to be gained by coloring, by covering up, by putting off with a haughty smile, by offering pious comfort, and by crying peace, peace. If critical theology has done away with the Old Testament and the New, and has sawed off the limb on which it sits, it has no longer a right to exist. The Moor has done his duty, the Moor may go. For moral Sunday lectures (and why on Sundays at all?) on duels, the training of children, the treatment of servants, and general self-culture of man, who do not need theologians or churches or pastors; and it is one of the signs of the times that in widely read periodicals, like the *Gruenen* and other papers, laymen assume the intellectual leadership among scholars. The critical putting aside of the Old and the New Testament has undermined the foundations of the Church, and the entire structure is tottering. Luther writes: "Where the Bible ends, there the Church ends." "The right of a Church to exist does not depend upon its being recognized as such by other Churches, nor upon its being recognized by the laws of the State" (nor upon its historic past), "but upon its being recognized by the Head of the congregation, and this recognition will depend upon the recognition which the Head of the congregation receives in said Church." (Limbach, *Siehe, Er kommt!* p. 122.)

Rome is not to be feared. Outward enemies have never yet harmed the Church. Against them our God is a mighty fortress, and His Word a defense and weapon. If we were men of faith, like Luther, with the Bible in our hands, we would, like him, easily conquer pope and Jesuit and monk. "I have done nothing," he says, "the Word has done it all." By what means did this man, by the

help of God, bring about the Reformation and defeat Rome? By the doctrine of justification through faith in the sufficient merit of Christ alone. Whoever rejects this corner-stone and foundation-stone of true Protestantism can no longer honestly call himself a Protestant and Lutheran, and his fight against Rome will be in vain. If we ourselves throw away our breastplate, and break our sword, God can, and will, no longer help us.

It is a grave and deplorable thing that so many honest-minded people still cling reverentially to ecclesiastic forms, and overlook the terrible loss. The adornment of the "house of God," altar, crucifix, and host, surplice and pulpit, and the accustomed routine of public service, are more important to them than the question whether the true doctrine of Christ is being proclaimed from the pulpit, or the shallow morals of modern enlightenment; and thoughtless men, and women without judgment, believe that they are serving God if, on Sundays in some church, they listen with more or less external reverence to a discourse, not on, but against the Gospel of Christ. Of the external orders in the Church, Luther says in "*Deutsche Messe*:" "They are of human origin, and may be put away by men at any moment. We do not establish such order for the sake of those who are already Christians, for they need none of these things; they serve God in the spirit." Others place the catechism by the side of, if not above, the Scriptures, cry, "Lutheran! Lutheran!" and think that in this word they have found the remedy for all the ailments of the Church; and yet scarcely one believes and teaches what Luther believed and taught. "True disciples," says Luther, "do not believe in Luther, but in Jesus Christ," and adds, "Even I myself do not



know Luther." (Cf. 1 Cor. iii, 3-8.) Others call themselves Reformed, United, Ritschlians, Harnackians, etc., anything but Christians. But, of course, who knows, in our day, what is to be understood by a Christian? It is one of the gravest signs of the times that this lofty name in our day has come to be so meaningless and worthless, because of its utterly wrong interpretation and its abuse. It will not be installed in its rights again prior to the persecutions of the future.

But the Word of God can not be bound. Gradually a reaction will take place, and more and more earnest souls will tire of the husks of liberal theology. Thus a French religious periodical writes: "What we now need is not more destruction, but reconstruction; let us return to the powerful and succulent exegesis of Calvin" (and Luther), "instead of German exegesis, which is almost exclusively busied with investigations bearing on authors and dates." The Spirit bloweth where He listeth, and you hear the sound thereof. In thousands He awakens a hunger and thirst for the entire Scriptures, and for the unadulterated teachings of Christ; and everywhere true Christians assemble, who for themselves search the Word of God, and will not have the false and spiritless results of so-called science forced upon them as Christianity. I believe in the communion of saints. I believe in the true priesthood of all believers. (1 Peter ii, 9.) Thereby a favorite thought of Luther's, the realization of which began in the "*Stunden*" of the Pietists and Hahn Brethren, is being fully realized: the *ecclesiola* in the *ecclesia*. He writes in "*Deutsche Messe*:" "Such as want to be Christians truly, and to witness to the Gospel with hand and mouth, should enter their names, assemble in some house

for prayer, reading, baptism, receiving the sacrament, and for performing other Christian works. Here Church discipline can really be exercised." And in his Maundy Thursday sermon (1523) he says, "Such as truly believe, should assemble in a separate place, and have their own divine worship." The great reformer clearly perceived the far-reaching difference between evangelization and divine service. It is the lack of clearness regarding this difference that cripples the sermon of to-day, which is addressed now to godless persons or socialists or Roman Catholics who are not present, now to children of the world and nominal Christians who are accosted as baptized persons, now to true Christians and believers.

Christ preached the Gospel to everybody and everywhere, in the boat and on the mountain. He celebrated divine service in the upper room, when he brake bread with His disciples and offered His high-priestly prayer. There, too, the one false brother went out. But the Lord left the world outside. The field in which "wheat and tares should grow together until the harvest" is not the congregation of Christ; it is not the Church; it is the world. Christ says so. (Matt. xiii, 38.)

Many a Christian begins to see that we have done what the Reformers earnestly warned against,—relied too much upon the aid of princes and of the State, and that this aid has done more harm than good to the Church. Pascal says, "The true state of the Church is, to be protected only by God." And Calvin says: "Even though all the princes of the world should combine for the purpose of sustaining the Gospel, we should not rely upon them; but if, as it seems, almost all the world wants to hinder the onward course of truth, we must not doubt that God can bring to naught all their purpose. He will

do above all we believe and hope." (Calvin, *Opp.* V, p. 680-684.) Will the movement alluded to above lead to a free Church in France, as appearances seem to indicate? We do not mistake the dangers that are connected with such a Church as well; but pointing them out does not answer the question. If such a Church answers the requirements of the Scriptures better than the present order, the true Christian must strive to realize it. We Christians are not here for the sake of the Church, but the Church is here for the sake of us. The Church is not an end, but a means,—a means for the visible presentation of the congregation of Christ, for the realization of the communion of saints, for edification in and upon the teachings of the divine Word, and for the worship of God in spirit and in truth. Wherever the Church is not this, it is less than worthless, and may pass away and perish. It is no misfortune; the cause of Christ will not go under on that account.

Concerning the polity of the first Church in matters of doctrine it is reported: "It pleased the apostles and elders, with the whole Church, to send chosen men of their own company, . . . and they wrote letters by them after this manner: The Apostles and elders and brethren, . . . for it seemeth good to the Holy Ghost and to us." (Acts xv, 22-28.)

Whether it will ever come to that again, God alone knows; we will let Him dispose. It is His custom, in His own time, to shatter religious forms and institutions, even though they be many hundred years old and be ever so venerable, in order that we may learn that He is not in need of our Churches and forms; and Christ, the true Lord of the Church, watches over His congregation. The gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

v.

## BIBLICAL FAITH.

*“Lord, I believe! Help thou mine unbelief!”—MARK IX, 24.*

LET us be brief.

Is there a God? Yes. Without Him the material and the spiritual world is an unintelligible chaos, without sense and purpose. This God must be a personal, living God; an impersonal God is no God; and a dead God is folly.

If this God of Life created us, why is death in us? Because we have fallen away from Him. Is this God and our Creator nevertheless concerned about our temporal and eternal welfare? Yes. How can we know it? Only through a revelation on His part.

Has He given us such a revelation? Yes. He has at all times revealed Himself to individuals through appearances, visions, and dreams, and to mankind as a whole through the written Word, the Bible, given to His servants. “If there be a prophet among you, I the Lord will make Myself known unto him in a vision, and will speak unto him in a dream. But with My servant Moses will I speak mouth to mouth, even apparently, and not in dark speeches, and the similitude of the Lord shall he behold.”

What is the Bible therefore? A divine revelation. “Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard. . . . God hath

revealed them unto us by His Spirit." "The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto Him, to show unto His servants the things which must shortly come to pass." (Rev. i, 1.) "The mystery of Christ is revealed unto His holy apostles and prophets by His Spirit."

How did this revelation take place? In this manner, that the third person of the Godhead, the Holy Ghost, ever and ever enthused, filled, inspired a man, so that he could not do otherwise than speak and write what the Triune God wanted to impart to mankind through Him. "Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." (2 Peter i, 21.) "This Scripture must needs have been fulfilled, which the Holy Ghost by the mouth of David spake before." (Acts i, 16.) "Behold, I have put My words in thy mouth." (Isa. li, 16; lix, 21; Jer. i, 9.)

Were these men not involuntary tools? No; no more than a Christian who from a full heart repeats the Lord's Prayer after Christ.

But the style in which the Biblical authors write differs individually. Yes, divine inspiration does not destroy individuality, it elevates it.

Is it not possible that these men deceived themselves, and took their word to be the word of the Lord; or that they were deceived in secondary matters that do not belong to immediate revelation? No; for God willed that through them just these things, only these and nothing else, should be imparted to mankind. God knows no secondary matters.

In the original, then, the Bible is verbally inspired? Yes. Christ says: "It is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than one *tittle* of the law to fail." (Luke xvi, 17.)

Must a Christian believe the whole Bible? Yes. It is a unit, and man dare not select what he would believe, and what not. Whoever does not believe the Old Testament, does not believe the New either. Paul testifies before Felix, "I believe *all things* which are written in the law and in the prophets." (Acts xxiv, 14.) Christ came into the world in order that "all things be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the Psalms, concerning Him." (Luke xxiv, 44.)

Then I am to believe every miracle related in the Bible, however unreasonable it may be? Yes. There are no reasonable miracles, only unreasonable ones. It is childish to distinguish between easier and more difficult miracles; and unbiblical to distinguish between miracles belonging to the history of salvation, and other miracles. To grasp miracles by reason is the same as wanting to grasp sunlight or lightning with the hand. If you do not believe one of them, you are on the way to doubt all, and do not know what a miracle is.

Is faith in miracles the pith and center of Biblical faith? Yes; faith in the miracle of miracles, Christ, eternal God, incarnate, conceived without sin, crucified for our transgressions, raised again the third day. "Without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory." (1 Tim. iii, 16.)

But can not a man honor Christ, love Him, strive to follow Him, and call himself a Christian, without acknowledging His Deity? No; that is self-deception. Thus man "*maketh God a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of His Son.*" (1 John v, 10.) And

the end is terror. "If ye believe not that I am He, ye shall die in your sins." (John viii, 24.) Christ is the "King of æons;" "He upholds all things by the word of His power." (Heb. i, 3.) "*He came of the fathers as concerning the flesh, who is over all, God blessed forever.*" (Rom. ix, 5.) This or nothing.

But where does reason come in? Nowhere.

Then why did God give us reason? For planting and building, buying and selling, marrying and being given in marriage.

Did God not give us reason also for the purpose of judging His Word? No. To want to judge the Bible by reason is unreasonable, since the Bible rests upon miracles, which reason can not grasp. But if *my* reason is to be the criterion, and is able to tell me how much of the Bible I am to believe, then by equal right this must be true of every other man's reason; and if we listen to them all in succession, not a word of the Bible remains valid.

But must not human erudition and science prove valuable even in view of the Bible, and for Bible study? No. "I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things *from the wise and prudent.*" (Matt. xi, 25.)

What value are we to attach to historical, geographical, and archæological research in its relation to the Bible? Not much. For 1900 years God in His wisdom intentionally left the Christian world in ignorance concerning the history of ancient Egypt, Assyria, and Babylonia, and yet the Bible was sufficient for them unto salvation. When Christ was tempted, He did not defeat His opponent by historic and other proofs, of which there were more and better ones at His disposal than at ours,

but by "It is written." Thereby He points out the way in which we should meet all suggestions of unbelief.

But must we not read the Word of God understandingly; must we not search in it, compare, and examine? Yes. But not with our own understanding, but with that given us from above; for as the heavens are higher than the earth, so this Word is higher than human understanding. Luther writes: "We should lay aside our wisdom, and think thus concerning God's commands and affairs: If it seems foolish to me, there is in truth no other cause than that I am a great fool who can not comprehend or understand divine wisdom, for my foolishness and blindness hinder me." We must first believe in the Bible in order to understand it, and not want to understand it before we believe in it. Pascal says, "God wants to be loved (hence believed), before he manifests Himself as He is." But humanity, inasmuch as it knows the Bible, consists of many individuals, who for valid reasons do not want to believe it, and who would be sorry, if they were compelled to believe it, for it condemns them and their deeds; of some, who would like to believe it, and whom God grants the faith longed for, even though it be near the end of their life; and finally of such, as "bring into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ."

Is Biblical criticism not allowable at all? No. The very name is arrogance; for he who criticises, considers himself wiser than that which he criticises. "They desire to be teachers of the law, and understand neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm." (1 Tim. i, 7.) The wiser and more prudent a man considers himself to be in view of the Word of God, the more will God send him doubts and delusions. "Make the heart of this people



fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed." (Isa. vi, 10.) "Behold, saith the Lord God, I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord. And they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east, they shall run to and fro to seek the word of the Lord, *and shall not find it.*" (Amos viii, 11, 12.) It has come to pass. They seek it in Babylonia and in India, they turn over the leaves of their Bibles, and do not find the Word of God there.

But have not noted and pious Christians practiced Bible criticism? They will have to answer for it.

Ought the Christian not to familiarize himself with the objections of critics in order to refute them, as circumstances may require? No. (If it is not a part of his calling.) Shall we worry through thousands of vain contradictory human opinions? God forbid! "Avoid foolish questions, and genealogies, and contentions, and strivings about the law; for they are unprofitable and vain." (Titus iii, 9.)

But is not the Bible very hard to understand? Yes, it is so difficult, so high, so deep, that it has never been, and never will be, fully understood by any man; and yet so simple, so comprehensible and clear, that any child, or an ignorant old woman, or a beggar, finds in it all that is necessary unto salvation. And salvation, salvation, this is the one thing that is needful. "Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." (Matt. xviii, 3.)

But is the Bible not a gradual production, and were

its books not gradually collected? Yes, according to the knowledge and will and eternal decree of God.

Are there no other divine books except the canonical? No. The canon is not ordained of men, but of God through men. "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God."

How can I know the difference between the books of the Scriptures and other pious books, such as the Apocrypha, which have rightly been banished from the Bible by many Churches, the Reformed, the Anglican, and the Presbyterian, and of which Luther writes, "Books, which are not to be considered equal to the Holy Scriptures?" By the Spirit of God.

To whom does God give this Spirit? To every one who asks Him. "If ye, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?" (Luke xi, 13.)

Is the Bible therefore of heavenly origin? Yes; it is, as much as we understand of it, a copy of the heavenly "Scripture of truth" (Dan. x, 21), in which the angels read (Mal. iii, 16).

What shall the Christian answer the scoffer who wants to prove to him that the Bible contains all kinds of mistakes, and errors, and contradictions, and things that are untenable? Nothing. He is not concerned about the reason of the faith that is in you (1 Peter iii, 15), but about the expression of His own conceited wisdom in holy things. We are not to give that which is holy unto the dogs, and it does not pay to contend with a blind man concerning light and colors. On account of his faith in the Bible, the Christian must suffer to be considered a fool by the world.

What shall he say to the still doubting, honestly seeking questioner? "Take and read!" Ask God for enlightenment, and you will behold a great light; if the Spirit of God does not enlighten you, neither your own speculation nor the wisdom of other men will help you.

"That is going too far!" exclaim those who consider themselves wise, because they halt half way. No! not far enough. Christ says, "Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law till it all be fulfilled." I do not believe in mere figurative expressions or exaggerations from the mouth of Him who says, "I am the Truth." Hence every jot and tittle of the law has its meaning and value, not manifest to us, but to the angels.

Is not this a dead faith in the letter? That it is not, has at all times been proved by the life and works of those who have it.

But such faith in the Bible is not up to date, is unscientific, simple, childish, and contradicts the spirit of the age, as well as sound reason, and the interpretation and opinions of many learned and pious men. Yes.

Let us once for all abandon all hope of ever inventing a faith in the Bible that will find grace in the sight of the world, no matter whether it call itself Christian or godless. Just as "the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God," so the wisdom of God is and will remain foolishness with this world. If your faith in the Bible does not bring upon you the opposition, the more refined or the grosser mockery, the silent or the outspoken contempt and hatred of the world, the educated, and the scholars, you may know thereby that it is not the true faith. Or

do you claim to be greater than your Master? He spoke "words of eternal life," "and they mocked Him."

Whoever had such faith in the Bible? Those who overcame the world by faith, the prophets, the apostles, the martyrs.

But why must such be the only correct, true, and Christian faith in the Bible? Because it is and was the faith of Christ.

Does Christ know anything of Bible criticism, or of inexactness or contradictions in the Bible? Does He warn against "spurious passages" or wrong statements regarding dates and authors, or does He distinguish between a human and a divine word? No. He, the Word, which was in the beginning and was God, believes His Word. He, who spoke through Moses and the prophets, believes Moses and the prophets. He who performed miracles, believes in the miracles of the Bible. He, the one risen from the dead, believes in the resurrection of the dead. He says, "The Scripture can not be broken." "It is written."

Is such in our day not a forced faith, by which a Christian who believes in the Bible constantly endeavors against better knowledge to believe what to himself seems hardly credible? No. It is the exulting certainty of the soul that has at last found the rock amid the rolling and surging of the thoroughly uncertain opinions of men. Such a soul hungers and thirsts after firm faith in the Bible, for in such faith it finds strength and bliss.

Is such not an immature faith, that bespeaks ignorance in all branches of human knowledge, will not endure closer scrutiny and further instruction, and is a hindrance to study and research? No. God grants it immediately

to many simple and ignorant souls whom He loves; but with many great minds, too, such as Augustine, Calvin, Luther, Pascal, Newton, Leibnitz, and many others, it is the fruit and result of lifelong, earnest examining and studying of all human science and philosophy, prosecuted with prayer and enlightenment.

Can a man in his own power, and by personal study, attain to such simple faith in the Bible? No.

How can one attain to it? Through God's grace, and persistent prayer that He might open our eyes. Then the Holy Ghost through much strife and doubting destroys the inner man, and reveals to him the utter blindness and impotence of his reason and wisdom in such a manner as to let him perceive clearly: I am nothing; I have nothing; I can do nothing; I know nothing. Thereupon this Spirit shows him from the history of mankind, and from the present world, how vacillating, uncertain, contradictory, and erroneous are men's words, proofs, conclusions, opinions, and doctrines. Thus there is engendered in him contempt of human words and their vanity and impotence, inasmuch as they relate to that which is celestial, invisible, divine, and eternal, and he begins to loathe the "sweepings" of the wisdom of this world. And when a man has been cured and emptied of superstitious belief in himself and in others, in the knowledge and ability of mankind, then the Spirit can fill him with true, childlike, simple faith in God and His Word. If he first has become a fool, the "Spirit of truth can guide him into all truth."

Does God give His children such perfect faith in the Bible at one time? No! Through many conflicts he leads them to victory, through darkness to light. Just as

young trees root deeply, when shaken by storms, so faith through doubts and tribulations. It is more precious than gold and silver, should not it too be tried by fire?

What does the Spirit of God effect through such faith in the Bible? That the Word of God comes to be a living power in man, which saves him. This faith does not rest on proofs; for faith that needs proof is not faith. But to him who honors Him with such faith, God grants great and beautiful proofs, as, *e. g.*, in His answers to prayer. Then He shows him that this Word of God harmonizes with the entire creation, with the whole universe. The Bible alone explains nature, and nature in and about man harmonizes with the Bible. All other views of the world come forth out of the night of eternal nothingness, and eventually fall into uttermost darkness; they themselves, too, know no other end.

Further, from the history of the world the Spirit shows him who believes in the Bible, the justice, holiness, and love of God; and shows him how the prophecies of the Bible have clearly and literally been fulfilled.

Finally, the Spirit shows that this Word in the past and the present, among the high and the lowly, among all nations, is the only Word and Book that has power to change sinful men into children of God; the only one that teaches and enables men to live patiently and die happily. The Christian, whose soul is heartily tired of the incessant change of things, of phenomena that ever evade our grasp, of the monotonous and hollow song of human knowledge and ability, and of the falsehood of the world that is in him and about him, reaches out after this divine Word, and there finds absolute words, eternal rocks; and in him the word of Christ is verified: "Come unto Me,

all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

Then he whom God has given this faith in the Bible laughs at all human proofs, discussions, and investigations; at all ifs and buts of erudition and criticism, and praises God, who has thus manifested Himself unto men. "Thy Word, O Lord, restoreth my soul!"

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When I peruse this little book, I am seized with anxiety. I feel as though God said to me: Child of man and worm of the earth, why do you make bold to defend My Word, as if it were in need of your defense? Is not My Word a devouring fire, a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces; is it not quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, and will it not, even without your help, accomplish whereto I sent it? Have I not power to defeat opponents and scoffers, and will I not do it in due time, when this Word will appear, and the sword from His mouth will kill the third part of those who dwell on the earth? You who would instruct others, are you not yourself a shaking reed? Does not your faith in the Bible often waver, and does not fear of men and their word, their reproach, and their scorn ever and ever come over you, as if you were accountable to them, and not to Me alone; as if they could help you, when, having come forth alone from death, you stand before Me to be judged?

And I must reply: Yes, Lord! I know that Thy Word is not in need of being defended by my poor word. Yet Thou hast commanded us to confess our faith in Thee and Thy Word before men, and on the ground of this

command I have ventured to do so. Forgive me for having spoken of Thy Word with unclean lips; and if I have spoken wrongly, forgive me according to Thy great mercy. Yea, Lord, the word of men passeth away, but

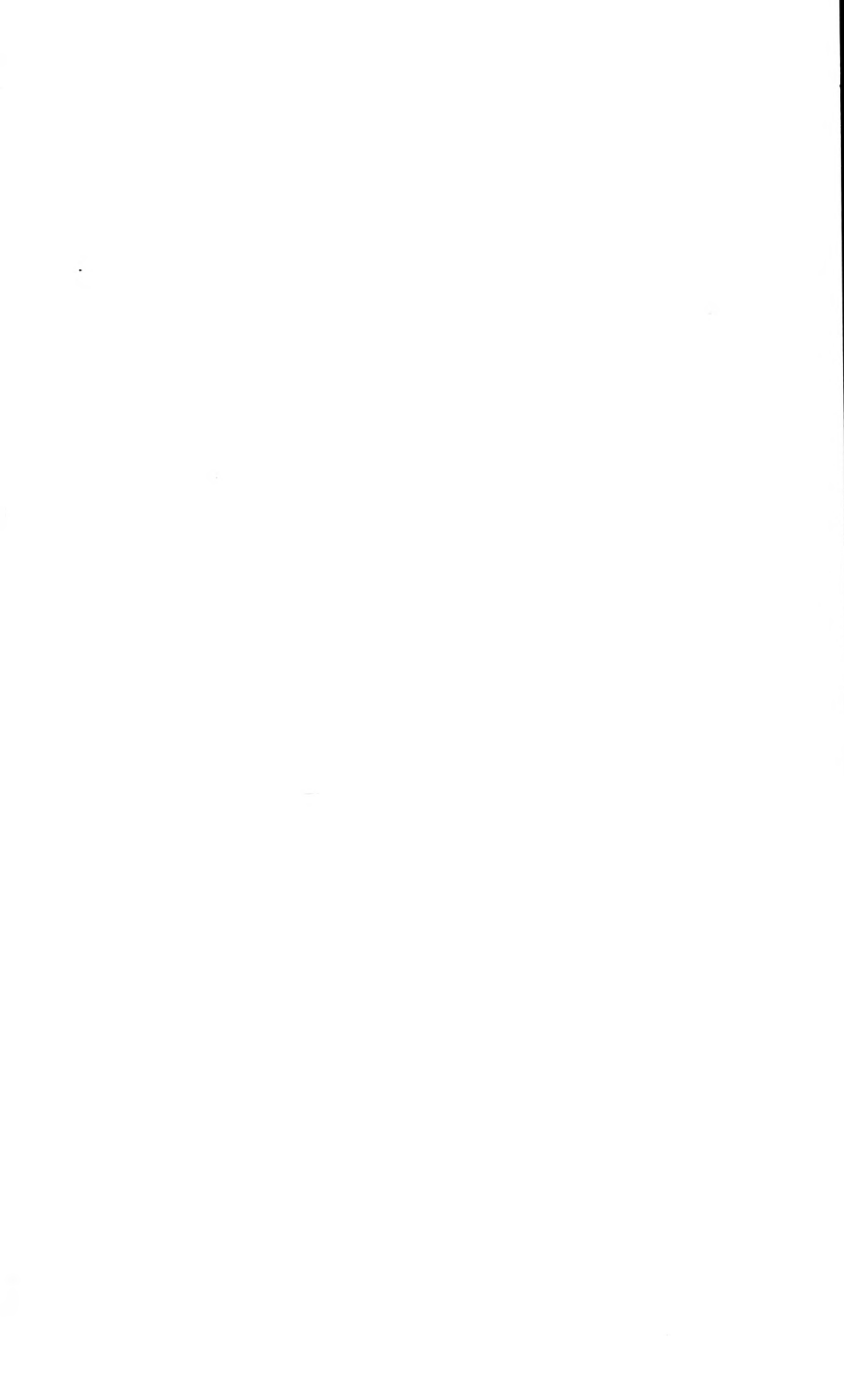
*Thy Word endureth forever.*

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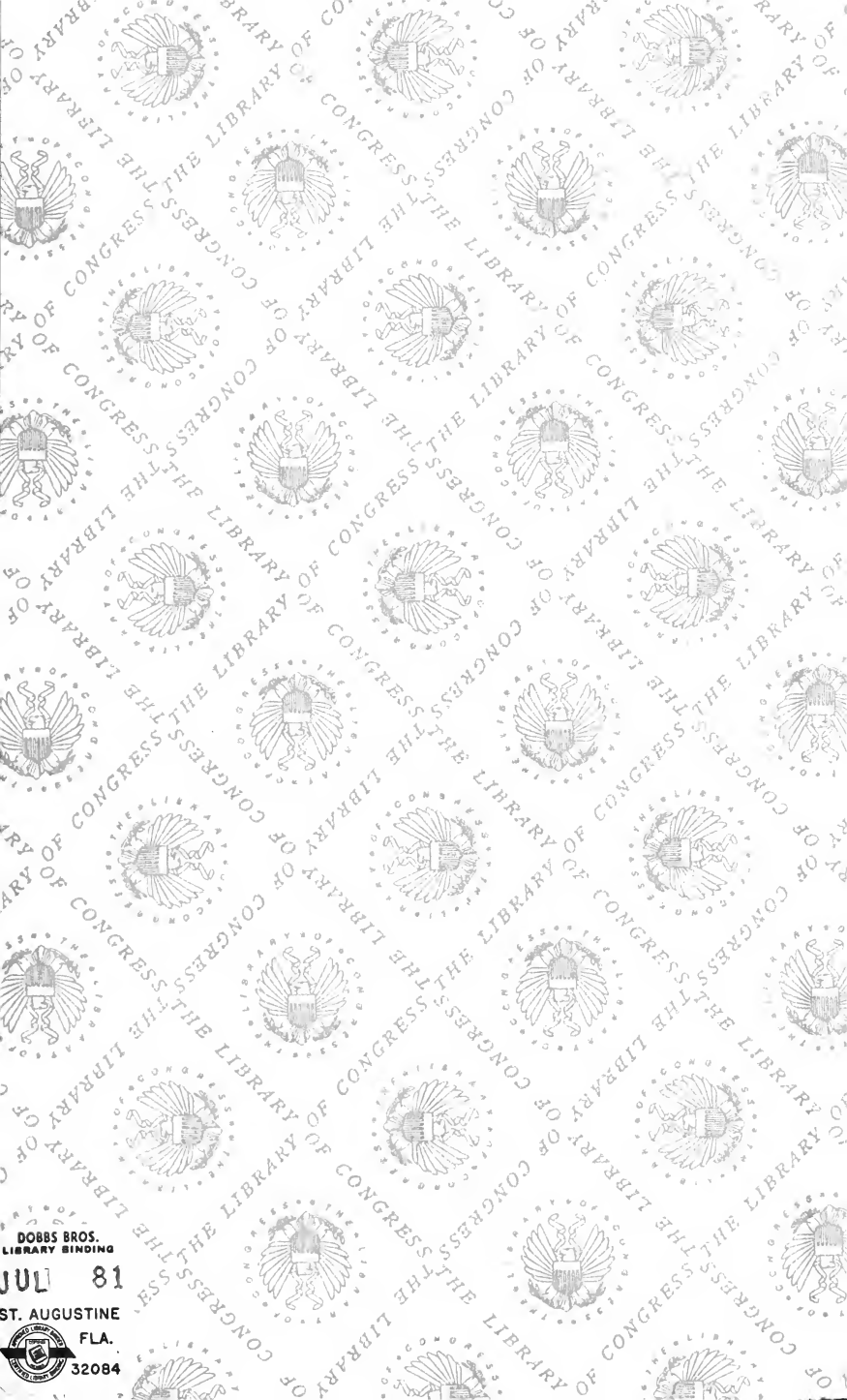




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