

The Higher  
Critic's Bible  
or God's Bible

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WILLIAM HENRY BURNS



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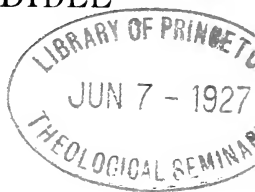
Section .E.18







THE HIGHER CRITIC'S BIBLE  
OR  
GOD'S BIBLE?



BY  
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INTRODUCTION

BY  
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TO  
THE MEMORY OF MY MOTHER,

*Mary Ann Burns,*

A WOMAN WHO LOVED AND BELIEVED  
GOD'S WORD;

MY RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTOR IN YOUTH;  
AN INSPIRATION DURING ALL MY LIFE;  
WHOSE GIFT OF A BIBLE IN BOYHOOD  
I STILL RETAIN AS A SACRED TREASURE,

THIS BOOK  
IS DEDICATED IN  
GRATEFUL AFFECTION



## Preface

THIS little book is not intended for technical scholars, but for busy pastors and inquiring laymen. It aims to give in a direct and familiar way a fair representation of what is popularly known as "Higher Criticism;" what it stands for among its adherents in our orthodox Churches; what it must logically lead to; and to help the reader to arrive at an independent judgment respecting its conclusions and respecting the Bible as a Divine Revelation.

The author agrees with Bishop C. H. Fowler when he says, speaking of "Higher Criticism:" "It must be treated like old German rationalism—as an enemy."\* While the book assumes this attitude toward the system, it seeks to avoid all acrimonious person-

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\*Terry, *Moses and the Prophets*, p. 6.

## Preface

alities, to be honest in its representations, and to be unbiased in its judgment.

It has little consideration for unsupported human opinions, for theories that do not account for the facts in the case, or for the many conceits of the "modern mind;" but attaches much importance to established facts, to sound reasoning, and especially to the authority of Jesus Christ.

The general plan of the book makes it necessary to refer frequently to different writers. In some cases the volume and page are given, but respecting most of these this is not supposed necessary or desirable, as the work is intended for popular use.

The earnest prayer of the author is that, as his book goes forth, He whose truth he seeks to honor and uphold may bless it and the Unknown Reader.

CHICAGO, March, 1904.

# Books

## LIST OF SOME OF THE BOOKS CHIEFLY CONSULTED.

- DRIVER, Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament.
- BRIGGS, The Study of Holy Scripture.
- PETERS, The Old Testament and the New Scholarship.
- GARDNER, A Historic View of the New Testament.
- ATKINSON, Christian Conference Essays.
- GLADDEN, How Much is Left of the Old Doctrines?
- RISHELL, The Higher Criticism.
- DUFFY, The Theology and Ethics of the Hebrews.
- DENNEY, Studies in Theology.
- NICOLL, The Church's One Foundation.
- ABBOTT, The Theology of an Evolutionist.
- IVERACH, Evolution and Christianity.
- DAWSON, Modern Science in Bible Lands.
- MARGOLIOUTH, Lines of Defense of the Biblical Revelation.
- GREEN, The Higher Criticism of the Pentateuch.
- HOMMEL, The Ancient Hebrew Tradition.
- ANDERSON, Daniel in the Critic's Den.
- SMITH, The Integrity of Scripture.
- JACOBUS, A Problem in New Testament Criticism.
- SAYCE, Fresh Light from the Ancient Monuments.
- SAYCE, Monument Facts and Higher Critical Fancies.
- HERVEY, The Books of Chronicles.





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“O holy, holy Book of God!  
There are no words like thine;  
The tones that angels bow to hear  
Breathe through these lines divine;  
And come, with love’s own melody,  
From the King’s heart to mine.”

## Introduction

INTRODUCTIONS should be brief, and mine shall be. The Bible is not in peril from destructive higher critics. It never was in peril; it never will be. "The foundation of God standeth sure." All flesh is as grass and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away; but the Word of the Lord endureth forever. (1 Peter i, 24, 25.)

Individual souls are in peril. Troubled truth seekers are in danger of being misled. I am glad to hear the voice of Dr. Burns ringing out the warning so clearly. I commend his book. He has stated their positions, exposed their sophistries, and answered their arguments. He is not alone. Men are rising up through all the Churches to become the champions of the Word of God.

## Introduction

Many of the findings of Higher Criticism are so absurd that it must be they will soon come to naught. Think of Abraham, the Father of the Faithful, the Friend of God, being spoken of by a theological professor as a mythical personage!

Such a statement is startling to a true believer in our Holy Christianity. It gives, however, an opportunity to try upon it that powerful weapon of logic known as "*reductio ad absurdum*." Apply the mythical theory to the New Testament Scriptures. Make Jesus say, "Your Father the Myth rejoiced to see my day; He saw it and was glad." "God is able of these stones to raise up children unto the myth." Or make Paul say: "The myth went out not knowing whither he went. The myth staggered not at the promises of God through unbelief."

How absurd it all is!

If such theories should get hold of the rank and file of the Church the ruin would be great. Do these men wish to destroy the

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Bible? to break its hold upon the hearts and consciences of men? Then let them be looking round for some other sacred book to take its place; some book whose ethical teachings will lift nations into power and grandeur, for no nation ever became great and enduring without the help of the Holy Bible.

There are some doctrines which are absolutely necessary to the spiritual life of the Church. Among these are: The Inspiration of the Holy Scripture, the Divinity of Christ, and the Vicarious Atonement of the Son of God.

Without faith in these the glory will depart from us, and we shall be utterly defeated in our efforts to bring the world to Christ.

“ Within the awful volume lies  
The mystery of mysteries.  
O happiest they of human race,  
To whom our God has given the grace  
To read, to think, to watch, to pray,  
To lift the latch and force the way.  
But better had he ne'er been born  
Who reads to doubt or reads to scorn.”

C. C. McCABE.



# Prologue

“ Hammer away, ye hostile bands ;  
Your hammers break, God’s anvil stands.”



## Prologue

THERE is an enlightened spiritual scholarship which comes to the Bible with bowed head, unshod feet, a trustful heart, a teachable mind, and an earnest desire to know what the Book is and what it contains. Such a scholarship is not seeking difficulties, but their removal. Its object is to confirm, and not to unsettle faith. It gladly welcomes light from all sources. It does not depend wholly upon taste, instinct, reason, science, or any form of human learning, but especially seeks the revealings of the Holy Spirit, whose function it is to lead into all truth.

The Christian Church has been singularly blest during the various stages of its history with scholarship of this character. Many of

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its closest students and most profound minds have been busy, especially during the later centuries, in examining the sacred writings, inquiring into the nature of the different documents—their authorship, dates, and literary and historical elements, as well as their doctrinal and ethical teachings, to the great advantage of true religion.

Up to this day these scholars have been able, with unshrinking confidence and marked ability, to repel the attacks of all the destructive critics who have sought to disprove either the genuineness, authenticity, or credibility of the Scriptures.

Within the last twenty-five years, however, there has arisen in all our evangelical denominations a class of scholars who, while claiming to be one with the Churches to which they belong as to fundamental doctrines, have been doing a large part of the destructive work which had hitherto been confined to the confessed enemies of evangelical Christianity. This has led the *Open Court*, a natural-

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istic publication, to say: "Infidels have only utilized for their own purposes the results of the higher criticism which they have usually obtained from second, or even third-hand sources. It is the believer that did the work." These so-called believers have adopted, with modifications, the form of Biblical criticism popularly known as higher criticism, which has had a long and varied history. Though the system had many pioneers, such as Carlstadt, Hobbes, Spinoza, Simon, Le Clerc, and Astruc, it is mainly based on Eichhorn's work, which was first published in 1780. He first gave it the name higher criticism, and is considered by such men as Driver and Briggs as the father of the system. Baur, the founder of the celebrated Tübingen school, is sometimes called the father of its more modern form. In its earlier stages it was largely literary in its nature, and dealt especially with the Pentateuch. During later years it has been applied to all portions of the Sacred Scriptures, and has become more historical

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than literary. It will not be necessary for us to trace its history from Astruc or Eichhorn down, as it is largely the chasing of shadows and the weaving of visionary theories which have been long ago exploded. So we "gladly avoid entering a realm full of mist and pitfalls of the wreck of decayed systems and the ghosts of the mighty dead."

It will be sufficient to state that the higher criticism of to-day is mainly the system shaped and enlarged by Eichhorn, together with Hegel's historical development theory, which was expanded by Baur, Vatke, and Graf; and by Kuenen, professor in Leyden University, who boldly cut loose from many unworkable critical theories and advocated "the order of legislation proposed by Graf."

About twenty-five years ago Professor Julius Wellhausen, of Göttingen University, a rationalist, following the lead of Kuenen, who was an atheist, adapted the development theory to the entire Old Testament, and presented the matter so ably and plausibly, that

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almost immediately it became popular in Germany and Holland. It still holds sway in those countries, and is accepted by almost all agnostic and rationalistic critics in England and this country, and by a large majority of the men in high and low standing in our various orthodox churches who consider themselves supernaturalistic higher critics. The latter have so modified their evangelical views as to enable them to adopt, with a few variations, this system which was devised by "apostates," as Sir Robt. Anderson properly calls them; and which is not only naturalistic in its origin, history, and methods, but whose most important results were anticipated or suggested by some of the most bitter enemies the Christian faith has ever known. Some divide these critics into three schools—Agnostic, Rationalistic, and Supernaturalistic. There are a few Eclectic critics who rank themselves as higher critics who do not accept the Wellhausen development theory, and who reach results of their own.

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Some claim that all investigation respecting the origin of the sacred documents—their dates, authority, or historic or literary character—is higher criticism. This is evidently using the term in a much broader sense than its history, its natural limitations, or popular use will justify. Driver, Briggs, Haupt, and other leaders apply the name higher criticism only to their own system. All Biblical criticism which combats their principles and results they designate as “anti-higher criticism,” or “traditionalism;” while scholars such as W. H. Green, Sayce, Bissell, and Hommel, who have the most boldly and successfully opened fire on the system, have used the term as its chief exponents have done.

*Higher Criticism* has well-established and generally-recognized dogmas, *a priori* assumptions, theories, principles, and methods, as well as its six well-known literary rules, and unless one accepts the system and works it, or adopts its results, no matter how critically he may examine the Holy Writ, he is

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no more, as the phrase is commonly used, a higher critic than a Regular physician because he understands and practices medicine is a Homeopathist, or a Christian scholar because he is a psychologist is a Christian Scientist. It certainly requires a great stretch of the imagination to speak of Luther, Calvin, Wesley, and Adam Clarke as higher critics, as some do, when these men knew nothing of the process as it now exists, never had any sympathy with its dominating principles or doubts, but held to the Bible in the broadest evangelical sense as the very Word of God, which no higher critic now does.

The critical examination of the text of Scripture is commonly called *Lower* or *Textual Criticism*. The *Newer Criticism* is really the Higher Criticism, and is used by the critics themselves as a less offensive term for the process which they are so drastically applying to the New Testament at the present time. It is substantially the same process, with some necessary modifications, to which

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they have subjected the Old Testament in the past with such destructive results.

Higher Criticism is only one phase of the broader term, modern Biblical Criticism, which may be applied to all forms of critical investigation of Scriptural phenomena. There are many Biblical critics of the highest scholarship who, though they use legitimate modern scientific methods in the study of Holy Writ, repudiate not only the results of higher criticism and the term itself, but its principal assumptions, principles, and criteria.

A few of these assumptions, principles, or criteria which are used, not exclusively by the radical leaders, but also by many of their professedly conservative and reverent followers, I will now give in an informal and popular way, thus:

1. The Bible is to be treated and judged as any other form of literature.
2. The Bible is not properly one book, but a library of separate and for the most part unconnected books.
3. The Biblical books must not be used to corroborate



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each other. Even the New Testament must not be used to confirm the Old.

4. The prophets, evangelists, and writers of the Holy Scriptures, and even Christ Himself, accommodated their teachings regarding angels and demons, the resurrection, vicarious sacrifice, miracles, prophecy, and the character of Scripture itself, to the prevailing false views of their times.
5. While Biblical miracles are not denied, the right to judge the trustworthiness of the record and the character of the miracle in every case, is reserved.
6. The Bible is a record of a religious evolution.
7. The Biblical books, as a record, are not inspired or are not so inspired as to make them truly reliable.
8. The Biblical historical statements are to be freely rejected, or corrected through other supposed sources of information.

I will not full discuss these points here; but will remark that no one who believes the Bible to be the Word of God can accept the first. To him it is unique; unlike any other form of literature, having a sacred character of its own. He will treat it as such. No one would criticise a loving mother's written message as he would faulty, common literature. The sane man who has had property left him, if he believes the will valid and the estate valuable will not go into court to point

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out defects in the document. He will leave all that to the contesting counsel. His relation to it will define his attitude.

The second he must also lay aside if he considers that God is in any real sense its author. It can not be a piece of patchwork and at the same time a connected Divine revelation.

He must reject the third, or renounce Christ as an absolute authority.

If he admits the fourth, he assumes at once that much of the teaching of the Bible was temporary and false—even that of the New Testament.

If he receives the fifth, he puts reason above inspired history and assumes that he has a perfect canon of credibility and the right to reject any or all the facts.

The sixth changes the Bible from being a peculiar supernatural form of inspiration into simply a peculiar product of an inspiration which God is willing to impart to all, as Abbott holds.

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When he adopts the first part of the seventh he assumes the very thing the critics must prove before they can advance a step. Should he believe the second part of the seventh, he believes an absurdity if inspiration retains its commonly-accepted Scriptural meaning.

The eighth supposes the Bible to be of no special historical value in itself, and outside data very reliable which we know is not true; and allows the critic to play fast and loose with all Biblical events, as he usually does.

To my mind the crucial question respecting those who adopt and use these assumptions, principles, or criteria and other similar ones or their modifications, is not as to whether they are constructive or destructive critics, or entertain conservative or extreme views; but as to whether they conduct their investigation of the phenomena and origin of the Holy Scriptures in a right or a wrong way, and as to whether their results are cor-

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rect or false. All else is so much dust for the eyes.

Men may call themselves constructive critics, and claim to be much less extreme than others, and be so, and yet do very much more damage to our evangelical faith than confessed rationalists or agnostics.

We have great regard for many of these because of their labors in the past in the interest of the Church of God; their intellectual gifts and their many attractive personal qualities. To oppose their views and methods is no pleasant duty, but a duty from which no one should shrink who professes to lay more store by truth than error, and by Christ than personal esteem or friendships.

They do not stand alone. They have men who strongly sympathize with them who are working on parallel lines in other fields of thought and learning.

They all evidently think that as prophets, reformers, and scholars they are called to a great mission—not only to tear down and

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then reconstruct the Bible, freeing us from all traditional and superstitious views of the Scriptures, but to broaden the life of their various denominations, to lower our standards and revolutionize our religious views and doctrines, giving us a new theology as well as a new Bible.

Seemingly they would like to do what the Gnostics and the Schoolmen sought to accomplish—to fuse faith and science, religion and philosophy, as well as critical learning and the Scriptures, by giving to the opposers of true Christianity nearly all they claim. As philosophers they largely ignore the supernatural, trace conscience to a natural origin, subject religious feelings to psychological analysis, and claim that ethical ideas are evolved and can have no permanent standard, and that the New Birth is not a distinct work of the Holy Spirit nor a religious crisis, but an educational process—a development or growth.

They usually take the fashionable theory

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of evolution into all the problems of life, even into the interpretation of the Bible and into religion itself as a working hypothesis, and by this account for and explain the various phenomena of Christianity. They seem to think that in it they have found a rational basis for orthodoxy, and thus a way through science to faith.

So we see philosophy, science, theology, and higher criticism now moving along on parallel lines like an electric-car on a track with three rails. The third rail, in this instance, is the great scientific fad of the times—evolution.

We are in a transition age. It is evident that a rapid change is going on in the minds of men as to their views of a Christian life and Divine truth. The men who stand for a new Biblical interpretation and a new theology think that it is a wave of progress. Dr. Edward Everett Hale, a clear-headed Unitarian, thinks that it is the converging of the Biblical and religious thought of the times to

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his standpoint. Multitudes, however, in our various evangelical bodies think that the movement is simply a drift from Christ and the old ethical and doctrinal standards towards anarchy in life and belief.

The constructive higher critics, by far the most important factors in the new movement, are doing a great deal of preparatory work. Whatever is their purpose, it is easily seen that they are sweeping the stage clear, as far as they can, of all the generally accepted views of Scripture, and are seeking to relegate to the attic large portions of Old Testament history, and much of the New, leaving the way clear for all the various speculative theories that may follow. They make a distinction, wholly unwarranted, between revelation and what they call the Biblical record, and appear to think that the record can be turned and twisted into almost any form to suit the purpose in hand.

One of them, in a recent book, opens up the heart and method of the higher criticism and

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the new theology—hits the bull's-eye straight when, answering the objection that "evolution contradicts the Biblical record of creation," he says: "These numerous theories show that it is much easier to adjust the Biblical record to a scientific hypothesis than it is to refute the hypothesis."\*

Men have all along been busy attempting to adjust records. Jacob adjusted his family record to suit his ambition; the party boss adjusts the polling record to suit his party or himself; a partial writer adjusts historical records to glorify his hero; and a sophistical theorist will accommodate almost any record to suit his favorite *hypothesis*.

A thoughtful, reasonable man, however, usually adjusts his theories to the facts. If in a moment of weakness he should seek to change a record written with pencil or in sand, he will hesitate to attempt to destroy a record such as we find in Holy Writ, which makes note of so many wonderful circum-

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\*Terry, *The New Apologetic*, p. 70.



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stances—such stupendous facts—so closely related to God's presence and revelations, especially if he is tempted to do it in favor of an hypothesis, such as the evolutionary theory which never has been verified, possibly never can be, and which may yet be overturned by some other scientific theory as the Ptolemaic astronomical theory was by the Copernican. He is afraid enough of facts to dread to attack them, even if they are as small as the point of a needle. Our higher critics, however, stand no more in awe of facts than they do in awe of traditions. They attack them with utter recklessness.

The facts, fundamental many of them, contained in the early part of the Biblical record, such as the story of creation, the creation of man and then the woman, their creation in the image of God, their fall and expulsion from the garden, and the implied promise of redemption, are not easily reconciled with scientific evolution theories. They are not easily reconciled, even if you adopt

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the modified theistic-creative process theory and any of the many interpretations of the record of alleged facts. Theorists have discovered this to be true, for notwithstanding they have rearranged the facts, turned them over and twisted them around, they continue to be as troublesome as a Chinese puzzle. Divested of all traditional interpretation, these recorded facts seem to defy adjustment. The higher critics, seeing this, cut the gordian knot. They adjust the record to the theory, by wiping out the facts altogether that stand in the way from the pages of reliable history. They do this, and at the same time establish a theory of inspiration that is to relieve them of any difficulty that may arise in connection with almost any hypothesis; namely, that the Bible is fallible, and is not in the commonly received sense inspired in anything that pertains to history, science, logic, or other elements of like nature.

So we find them almost unanimous in regarding Adam as a myth, the antediluvian

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worthies as eponymous heroes; and the fall, the institution of the Sabbath, and the flood as fictitious stories. They represent other historical portions in the same way.

Their great leader, Wellhausen, in his "Prolegomena to the History of Israel," says: "Abraham is not an historical person." "A whole series of stories about the patriarchs are cultus myths." He speaks of incidents in other historical books as "pious make-ups without a word of truth in them." "Is it (the Deluge) literal history?" Dr. Harper asks. He answers: "No. Nor is the Book of Job history, nor the Books of Chronicles, nor the Books of Kings, nor the Books of Samuel."\* "The primitive sources of Biblical history," says Dr. Briggs, "are mythologies, legends, poems, laws, whether inscribed, written, or traditional, historical documents, and the use of the historical imagination."† One of the most conservative of the critics, George

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\*Biblical World, vol. 4, p. 120.

†Study of Holy Scriptures, p. 555.

## Higher Critics and

Adam Smith, says: "In the pre-Abrahamic account we are not dealing with history. Some of these Old Testament characters were not real individuals, but were as fabulous as Prometheus. The first nine chapters of Genesis to a large extent were taken from the raw material of Babylonian myths and legends."\* How closely these follow in the footsteps of Tom Paine who wrote, "I look on everything in the first ten chapters of Genesis as fictitious." They certainly give us nothing new. They, however, will not allow even the New Testament to interfere with this evolution hypothesis. Professor Foster, of Chicago University, condemns Paul for referring to Adam as a fallen or as an historic man, saying: "If Paul had been a man of science or of history, he would not have said, 'As in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive.'"

Might it not be prudent for these revolutionists to pause and listen to Professor

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\* Yale Lectures, Stenographic Report, Zion's Herald.

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G. Macloskie, of the Department of Biology, Princeton University, as he calls attention to the fact that scientific evolution has not yet settled the question of man's origin, and then says: "Under these circumstances it would seem premature to be readjusting our Scriptural notions so as to accord with scientific theories, not yet even formulated. Scientific investigators themselves are calling a halt."

But these modes of adjusting are so "easy" that they are tempting—as easy as Columbus's way of making an egg stand. Marcus Dods claims that whosoever is afraid of facts does not believe in God. These critics are evidently not afraid of facts, and they profess to have much faith. But when you see their faith growing and reaching the gigantic strength that performs works greater than the Master wrought, you may be certain that they are preparing to cast some mighty mountain of difficulty altogether out of the Biblical record and into

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some mythical, legendary, fictitious, or poetic sea.

It is a very simple, but a very effective, manner of adjusting, and when one becomes accustomed to it he can do it in various ways and as easily as a player can change the men on a chess-board. And "of course it is easy to prove anything when you remove from the text whatever militates against your position;" but it is neither a reasonable nor a scientific method. That it is a very dangerous procedure we will attempt to show elsewhere. Professor Sayce's words will, however, be in place here. He says: "Nevertheless, between the recognition of the human element in the Old Testament, and the 'critical' contention that the Hebrew Scriptures are filled with myths and historical blunders, pious frauds, and ante-dated documents, the distance is great. Beyond a certain point the conclusions of 'criticism' come into conflict with the articles of the Christian faith. The New Testament not only presupposes, but

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also rests upon the Old Testament, and in addition to this the method and principles which have resolved the narratives of the Old Testament into myths, or the illusions of credulous Orientals, must have the same result when applied to the New Testament. From a 'critical' point of view the miraculous birth of our Lord rests upon no better evidence than the story of the exodus out of Egypt.'\*"

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\* Monument Facts and Higher Critical Fancies, p. 125.





# Deintegration and Reintegration

“The existence of the Bible as a book for the people is the greatest benefit which the human race has ever experienced. Every attempt to belittle it, or to do away with it entirely, is a crime against humanity.”  
—KANT.

## Deintegration and Reintegration

THE special feature of the higher criticism of to-day is not only the accommodation of the Bible to evolution in a general way, but the working out of the history of Israel on the hypothesis that that people and all that pertained to them, the sacred writings, laws, ethical ideas, and religion itself was an evolution—a steady progression; from the lowest Bedouin condition in Moses' time to its enlargement in Christ; each epochal period being the product of what preceded it, and Christ the "flower" of it all. To some He is a new moral creation, but to most the end of an evolution. It is also claimed that the beginning of the Christian Church was not cataclysmal, but a development, and that the history of Christianity since has been a continuous progression.

## Deintegration

This evolution hypothesis is now accepted as a basal idea by higher critics quite generally, though by some perhaps with variations. Some scarcely disclose it. The work "Moses and the Prophets" never reveals this naturalistic backbone by name, though it conforms in its framework throughout to this theory. Dr. Briggs occasionally discloses it. Professor A. Duff frankly announces it, saying, "Our exposition must prove to be a vision of a steady progress of religion through the ages." "Evolution," Dr. Peters assures us, "has become an axiom of modern thought." He shows us how useful it may be made in remaking Biblical history, and characterizes such as overlook this "basal idea" as mere "dabblers" in higher criticism.

Nothing could be more revolutionary than this hypothesis as it is applied by the critics to the history of Israel and all that relates to it, and no honest purpose can be served by hiding or ignoring it.

## Reintegration

Evolution is a world-view, and is axiomatic in higher critical thought; but it is really nothing more than a theory. That man descended from the animal finds no support in facts. "It has not been demonstrated by a single phenomenon."\* And what we know of his constitution and history goes to prove the contrary. Man's spiritual nature is not recognized as yet as within the realm of science, and consequently no principle like this can be postulated of it. Physically man is now, according to the teachings of science, what he has always been, so far as we know his history. He modifies his environments more than he is modified by them. Even should we see the principle of development in human thought, it would not necessarily follow that it must predominate in human history, for men now see clearly that thought is not the largest factor in human life. *Will* and *force* are much more influential in their nature, and being individual in their oper-

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\* Professor H. Bovinck, *Methodist Review* (1901), p. 859.

## Deintegration

ation they can not be continuous; and not being continuous they can not be evolutionary. Man, as a free-will agent, is a creative power. "Every action of human free-will," says Lord Kelvin, one of the leading scientists of the day, "is a miracle to physical and chemical and mathematical science." If this is true, then, in the eye of science, man's history, instead of being a progressive development, is a succession of human free-will, creative miracles. But historical facts show us that man, as man, has not progressed in intellectual power. What poets, artists, or philosophers have we that can compare with the Homers and Dantes, the Phidiases and Raphaels, or Aristotles and Bacons of the past? Does the student of history find any reason to suppose that human nature is any less cruel or more moral now than ages ago? or that religious ideas or practices are any more advanced among pagan peoples than in archaic times? or among Christians more than during the early days of the Church?

## Reintegration

Certainly not. Archæological research has proven that even primitive man must have been anything but the low brute men some years ago supposed he was. Indeed, the further the antiquary goes down into Egyptian, Assyrian, Syrian, Babylonian, Greek, and Etruscan excavations, the purer he usually finds the forms of art, architecture, literature, and even religion.

They do not prove but assume this working hypothesis to be true, and then proceed to adopt a long series of other suppositions or "tentative suggestions." They assume, for instance, that the making of the Bible did not begin until many centuries after Moses. Then they use the double-document theory, which is the supposition that the Hexateuch—i. e., the Pentateuch plus Joshua—originally consisted in part of two separate and distinct narratives, distinguished from each other as Jehovistic and Elohistic, through the use of the name Jehovah for God

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in the one, and the use of the word Elohim for God in the other.

To the fictitious writers of these documents, who it is imagined did not live earlier than 800 B. C., they give the invented names J and E, and to another of a later date, who is supposed to have combined these together, they attach the name JE. They conjecture that Deuteronomy was the book of the law discovered by Hilkiah in Josiah's time, and that Moses was not its author, but that it was written many centuries after him, and ascribed to him, many think, to add to its weight. They suppose that the Priests' Code, so fully given in Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers, was devised and framed during the Exilic period, mainly to advance the interests of the Sacerdotal class. A few years afterwards all these documents were woven or combined together by a redactor whom they call R. They establish other theories, to harmonize with these, respecting the dates, authorship, composition, and char-



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acter of the other books, and claim that thus the Bible grew. Almost all the books, according to their suppositions, are tainted with rank fraud, either as to their date, author, purpose, statement, real character, or claims, and yet these orthodox critics speak of them as the Holy Scriptures and a wonderful revelation of God.

One can not fail to see that the higher critical method consists largely in a succession of theories.

Science does not object to theories; but science is exacting, and it requires that each hypothesis shall demonstrate its own validity. It must account for all the facts in the case. It must do more. Dumas' theory of the man-in-the-iron-mask is a very satisfactory explanation of the facts in that strange mystery, but it does not prove that the prisoner was really the elder brother of Louis XIV.

If the higher critical theories should account for all the facts in Israel's history and

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in the Bible itself, that would not prove them true. It must be shown that they have a general application. During late years a very destructive disease called the "Yellows" has attacked the Michigan peach orchards, which has greatly puzzled the Washington government experts. They formed many theories as to the cause and the cure. One hypothesis seemed to meet the facts in the case in one or two orchards; but to the great disappointment of the farmers it failed when applied in other orchards. If it had met the case in a large number of orchards, men would have concluded that it was *probably* the correct hypothesis. A theory or any number of theories can not establish a theory; only facts can do that, and they must be facts outside of the special case, as Dr. John Smith in his masterly book, "The Integrity of Scripture," shows.

Now we have seen already that this naturalistic Graf-Wellhausen historical development hypothesis fails when applied to the

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history of mankind. It fails just as signally when applied to the history of any nation respecting whom we have any certain historical data. For progress, though a marked feature in the history of many peoples, is never the product of a steady evolutionary process, but is largely the result of the creative energy of one or more great personalities, such as King Alfred and Washington in government, Chaucer in literature, Bacon in science, and Luther and Wesley in religion.

What is true of this hypothesis is true of their other principal theories. You can find no facts outside of the case in hand to prove them correct. In the nature of things they can find no facts in contemporary Israelitish literature, for none is known to exist.

But not only do their theories fail to demonstrate their validity by facts outside of the Bible, but they fail utterly to account for the facts in the Bible. They consequently fall to the ground. Professor Adolf Jülicher, of Marburg, himself an advanced

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higher critic, storms against this “enormous traffic in hypotheses” and the “busy mill of conjecture” of the leading critics.

The system is obviously an air castle, consisting mainly in conjectures, assumptions, and theories, wholly unsupported by objective facts.

Their composite theories have no historical proof. The conjecture that two narratives were combined in one during the Exilic period is wholly without proof, and altogether improbable, for the Babylonian records of the Deluge as old as 1800 to 2000 years B. C., as Professor G. F. Wright shows, combine in one account both the Elo-histic and the Jehovistic documents in the same order as in Genesis. That the Deuter-omic document originated during Josiah’s reign, and the Priests’ Code during the Cap-tivity, is without foundation in fact from any source. It is just as absurd to suppose that these codes were imposed upon a credu-lous people as the critics claim, as it would

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be to suppose that the Napoleonic, Justinian, or the recently discovered Hammurabi Code of laws originated in the same way, especially when we remember how slow Orientals are to change their customs or religious usages, and how jealously they guard their sacred writings.

Taking the Biblical record as simply reasonably reliable, it can be easily seen that their working hypothesis and the subsidiary ones are at once utterly overthrown.

Moses, throughout the Old and New Testaments, is represented as a highly enlightened and great creative mind, who was inspired and commissioned directly by God not only to be a prophet and a deliverer to his people, but to crystallize them into a compact, theocratic commonwealth. It is clearly made to appear that he created a literature, poetry as well as history, and framed civil and religious codes of laws, not all necessarily new, but all made known as the will of God, for the time being, under extraor-

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dinary, supernatural circumstances. In thus composing songs, writing accounts of events, and in the codification of the laws, Moses was doing nothing new, but what intelligent men had been doing in various countries for ages. This is shown by the Hammurabi Code of laws and other forms of literature lately discovered. Yet in doing all this, and much more, he laid, under God's direction, a broad foundation for God's further wonderful written revelation of Himself, and gave a powerful moral and spiritual bias and impulse to his race.

No other people ever had such a Divine start, and no man can explain their Old Testament history and its culmination in Christ and Christianity, but in the light of just such a glorious beginning.

They were not uncivilized "Bedouins" at the time of the Exodus. It would be strange, indeed, if they could be shown to have lived as a race amid the civilizing influences of the Egyptians for over four hundred years in semi-savagism, and then to

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have passed centuries in Canaan as God's people with the lowest possible ethical and religious ideals, and without any written ceremonial or civil laws, or central place of worship, while their neighbors, the Hittites, Phœnicians, Greeks, Syrians, Assyrians, Egyptians, and Babylonians, were enjoying a degree of civilization that amazes the archæologist.

If the Biblical representations have any weight, many of their best ethical and religious ideas were their earliest, and the noblest of their heroes and the wisest of their sages were not the latest, but those who lived in the early or middle stages.

At various periods they are spoken of as a "backsliding" people. God, through Jeremiah, tells them that He "planted" them "a noble vine, wholly a right seed," and wonders why they are "turned into the degenerate plant of a strange vine."\* Long before Christ's time national decadence was a marked feature; prophecy had ceased; and the scattered and declining remnant had

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\*Jeremiah 11, 21.

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sunk into a cold, dead, spiritless, sterile formalism.

They can not deduce their hypothesis from such a history. They do not pretend to do so. Instead of a philosophical or logical deduction, they offer us an arbitrary assumption, and then take for granted that whatever in the Bible does not agree with it must be wrong. For instance, because the theistic, ethical, ceremonial, or civic ideas of the Pentateuch, the Psalms, Proverbs, portions of Isaiah, and other books are of an advanced, high, and noble character, these critics conclude that these writings belong, in accordance with the demands of their theory, to periods much later than those of their reputed authors or dates, in many cases numerous centuries later than that which Biblical history uniformly assigns to them; and consequently these out-of-date authors could not have written them. The low condition of their age would not permit it. Under any consideration they were not capable of doing it—



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David and Solomon notably so. The savagism of Moses' time made it impossible for him to frame the civic or priestly code, or to compose the Pentateuch.

The inconsistency of such procedure makes one wonder whether he is dealing with sober criticism or not; for if the history of the Bible is wholly unreliable as they assume, how can they form a correct estimate, through it, of the character of such men or of their times?

In forming our estimate of reputed authors, do we wholly ignore their writings? From what we know of the lives of such men as Bacon, Shakespeare, Byron, or Burns, outside of their writings, would we naturally suppose them capable of producing the splendid moral and spiritual sentiments which their reputed writings contain?

What a strange aspect modern literature would have if judged in this higher critical way! The Elizabethan writings would have to be shoved up to this wonderful modern

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Maccabean age, and the higher critics themselves back to the days of the Gnostics.

It is certainly very absurd, to say the least, for these critics as orthodox Christians to adopt this naturalistic evolution theory, which Kuenen himself admitted was not proven, and then proceed to break up the Scripture which Christ said "can not be broken," and cut off, stretch out, add to, or in some other way adjust, the entire Bible to this Procrustean bed.

They nevertheless do this, as one of their leaders, Dr. J. P. Peters, points out in these words: "Viewing history, then, as an evolution, we have a working hypothesis which helps to fit events, institutions, laws, thoughts, beliefs, customs, rites, and ceremonies into their place in a great progressive series." He says that this is done on the theory that "Each rite, each opinion, each belief is developed out of something which preceded it."\*

In adjusting the entire Bible to this hy-

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\*The Old Testament and the New Scholarship, p. 94.

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pothesis, in this way, these critics do not by any means confine themselves to original research or new material. They use stock arguments, phrases, and theories, borrow liberally from each other and all others who have preceded them in Biblical study, but especially of such men as Porphyry, Spinoza, Voltaire, Paine, Strauss, and Rénan. Before many of their present popular theories were thought of, men had used, with much freedom, in their attacks on the Bible critical rules and principles. Ewald had attempted to reconstruct the history of Israel on the basis of its literature; Tom Paine had anticipated three-fourths of what they call their assured results in his "Age of Reason" and other works.

Furnished with these helps, they claim to be able to reintegrate the entire Bible, re-adjusting all its parts to this hypothesis. In doing this they make new historical dates; place the events, persons, and books in the new dates; find new authors for the old

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books; dissolve what they call composite books into their original documents, and confer on them new names, and then reconstruct the books; separate other books like Isaiah into fragments, and make the fragments fit into their proper places, though scattered over centuries of history; give words like inspiration, prophecy, or miracle a new unscriptural meaning, and tell what in a book is inspired and in what sense, and what is inspired in part, and what is not inspired at all. They reveal what is miraculous, and what is not; distinguish what is false, and what is true; what is fiction, and what is fact; what is mythical, and what is legendary; and what is a fairy tale, and what is real history. They point out mistakes or errors in regard to logic, grammar, historical facts, and Biblical interpretation on the part of priests, prophets, evangelists, apostles, and even our Lord Himself.

To do all this and much more must evidently tax to the utmost all the logical, philo-

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sophical, linguistic, archæological, ethnological, mathematical, and scientific powers of these extraordinary scholars, to say nothing of the heavy draft it must make on their seemingly inexhaustible literary and historical imaginative resources. They would never dare to attempt all this, but for the fact that they seem to think subjective criteria more valuable than objective facts, and with Schleiermacher that the principles of feeling are better judges than the reason.

But they seem to think they have an infallibility of their own, especially in their subjective cogitations, which enables them to know history better than the men who made it or narrated it, and to arrange its facts as they ought to be, rather than as they are; the aim and character of a book better than the one who wrote it, and its authorship than the people to whom it was first made known, or those who have been its custodians from then until now; the nature of a document by their feelings, and its age by its lit-

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erary odor; all its myths and legends, facts and fables, poetry and prose, as a tailor knows cloth; in fact, to pass on all that is in the Bible and all that can be known or imagined about the Bible from Genesis to Revelation with scientific exactness. One imagines their infallibility enabling them to hear the dew falling on Gideon's dry as well as on his wet fleece, and the "grass growing" under Elijah's feet during the drought.

However, considering how liable most men are to fall into sophistries, to follow false theories, as well as false traditions, to make mistakes in distinguishing literary qualities and colorings, and to blunder even in the use of proper scientific methods, one would be prepared to make some allowance for faulty results; but it seems that mistakes are *impossible!* Their "results" are "assured," and the one who thinks differently is an ignoramus!

By their infallible use of their perfect critical scientific system they can weave to-

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gether a long string of suppositions, conjectures, contingencies, tentative suggestions, and probabilities, and actually produce *certainties!* which “reconstruct the history of a nation, in square contradiction of its own immemorial traditions,” and which transform into romance facts that have been held as bed-rock by the entire Christian Church from the beginning.

Wonderful, indeed, is critical science in the hands of these modern scholars! It is evidently an amazing Biblical touchstone, to which you must bring all your creeds and prove them if you want them to pass current among the scholarly upper-ten. It is the mill also to which you must bring your Scriptural grist if you want it to be ground out as bran and shorts and fine flour. If you will do this, you will then be sure you have the finest of the wheat!





# Reducing the Supernatural to a Minimum

“Prove all things: hold fast that which is good.”—  
PAUL.

## Reducing the Supernatural to a Minimum

WHEN confronted with a theory or a system, a practical man will seek to discern what it rests upon and where it will lead him if he accepts it. If men who profess to believe in a supernatural religion would pursue this course, there would be a much smaller number dabbling nowadays with higher criticism, as no system ever devised was better fitted to exclude the supernatural from the Bible than this.

Its ablest exponents have usually utterly repudiated the supernatural. "The exclusion of the supernatural," wrote Rénan, "is the first postulate of higher criticism." Its whole tendency, to say the least, is "to bring the supernatural," as Baur confessed it was in his hands, "to an absolute minimum." It

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does this under the guise of a rigid search after truth, and without exciting the suspicions of the superficial student. It does this in various ways.

The evolutionary theory is very masterful, and when accepted as the explanation of religious life and thought we must assume that whatever was essential in connection with religion in Old and New Testament times, has been continuous, and exists to-day, only in an enlarged degree, whether it be inspiration, prophecy, or miracles. If the higher critics believed that the early Church possessed these in an unusual way and were consistent, they might see in the Roman Catholic Church, the true Church, as she claims, this very thing—the supernatural as a continuous gift, even to the sacrifice in the mass and the infallibility of the pope. They, however, claim nothing for the Church as an organization in this relation, but accommodate their views regarding the inspiration of the Bible and its prophecies and miracles, to

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what they think they see in the Church now and what their system demands.

They use the old terms, but attach new meanings to them, which almost, if not wholly, eliminate the supernatural.

Revelation as represented by these evolutionary critics is only the unveiling of a truth, not of a fact, hitherto unknown.\* This is Tom Paine's old definition rejuvenated.

“Inspiration is no miracle,” they say, “but a regular mode of God's action on conscious spirit.” Under this view there was no supernatural revelation of truths or facts made to the intellect of the Biblical writer, nor was there any special guiding or controlling influence of the Spirit of God on his spirit differing in character from that which acts upon spiritual minds to-day. He wrote what he thought or felt God had done. So the Bible is simply the story of man's “spiritual aspirations, his dim, half-seen visions of truth, his fragments of knowledge, his blun-

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\* Abbott's *Theology of an Evolutionist*, p. 54.

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ders, his struggles with the errors of others and with his own prejudices.’’\*’

Such a Bible is necessarily fallible, not simply because it contains defective, ethical, or doctrinal views, or false history, or discrepancies, or contradictions, but rather because of its essential character and origin. *It is man's very fallible record* of his own imperfect religious experiences and of truths and facts and imaginations very inadequately and falsely apprehended and expressed, or, as Tom Paine would put it, a record “made up chiefly of manism with but little deism.” Higher critical authorities—such as Driver, Sanday, and Briggs—hold that the sacred historians had no aid from God in gathering the material, or in composing their narratives. This banishes the supernatural in inspiration from the three-fourths of the Bible, for fully as much as that is historical. The inspiration of its own contents differs in degree only, not in kind from

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\*Abbott's *Theology of an Evolutionist*, p. 56.

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that of other religious books, Christian or pagan, and has no authoritative character.

Under these views the supernatural in inspiration shrivels to almost nothing. We will show further on how they, by the use of these views in connection with their other theories, principles, assumptions, and adjustments, pave the way for the elimination of the supernatural from the Bible almost wholly.

Such views are, however, essential to the higher critical system.

They are nevertheless thoroughly revolutionary, and must, should they prevail, radically change our whole conception and treatment of the Holy Scriptures and our most fundamental beliefs.

I hold that they are without Scriptural support, and are wholly unwarranted by reason.

The key to a correct interpretation of the Bible is not to be found in philosophical principles, such as the newer criticism offers,

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but in the Book itself. Any one studying the Book unbiased by such theories must see that it purports to be something much more than the "peculiar product of inspiration of an ordinary character." And if we can judge any cause by what it produces, the Bible is the product of a special, particular, unique, and extraordinary inspiration and revelation.

Its history is sacred narrative of which the story of the incarnation of God becomes a part. It "professes to be God's own record of the leading facts in the course and progress of the moral government of our world through successive ages." The Book nowhere limits its inspiration to its doctrinal parts. In the nature of things there can be no more evidence to establish the claim of inspiration in regard to doctrines, than in regard to facts. "Scripture is not only the record," as Adolf Saphir shows, "but it is the inspired record of revelation." And being inspired it must give us a faithful ac-



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count, for the supernatural inspiration of falsehood is unthinkable. "None but the stupid would believe in a God who made mistakes" or inspired misrepresentations.

If it is not an inspired record of facts, and of a miraculous revelation of truth, it is certainly a most stupendous imposture.

It makes one very important distinction. While it asserts, "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God," it does not claim that all Scripture is revelation.

It is a revelation, so far as it is a disclosure of such things as truths or events or of persons, as of Christ after His resurrection, made by God through supernatural agencies. Paul evidently looked upon the revelation of the Gospel that came to him in that way, for he certified to the Galatians that he had not received it of man, nor was he taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ. His Gospel was not to him in any sense a "Pauline development." If evolution is God's invariable manner of revelation, Paul was griev-

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ously mistaken. If George Adam Smith, as an evolution critic, is correct when he claims that Revelation is always progressive—i. e., a gradual, continuous unveiling of truth—Paul was wrong again, for the context shows that he thought the Gospel as a revelation was complete.

Indeed, to-day's Gospel must be a new Gospel, being the product of a development process covering almost twenty centuries. If so, what meaning is there in the present-time cry, "Back to Christ?"

But Christian truth, in a very essential sense, is not, and can not now be, a progressive revelation. As a revelation, it is full and finished.

The fundamental principles and truths of religion are as unchangeable and permanent as the forces of nature. The Gospel of Christ contains all these permanents. He revealed not only truths, but the TRUTH. Men may advance in their conceptions of truth, but whatever progress they make must necessarily be

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within the bounds of the all-comprehensive written Gospel record. *Whatever goes beyond it or is added to it is error.* Though Paul himself, or an angel from heaven, or even a higher critic, should profess to give me a further revelation of the Gospel, I would not receive it, but would be compelled by Scripture to consider him "accursed."

All Scripture, however, is not a revelation, but is all "given by inspiration of God." God inspired the writers. "Holy men of God spake," Peter tells us, "as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." They realized something more than the "breath of God in their souls." The Divine voice that spoke to Jeremiah was mandatory. It said, "Write thee all the words that I have spoken unto thee in a book." They were evidently not only animated, illuminated, and guided by God, but also controlled, so that whether they were giving an account of a revelation or other matters, the narratives they penned are really trustworthy, even when they record

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the false views or bad deeds of evil men or spirits, as well as the words and deeds of Jesus Christ.

It is this special controlling influence of God, who is the real author of the Bible, upon the sacred penman that makes the documentary evidence of His supreme revelation so sufficient and accurate, and consequently such a firm historical foundation for Christian faith.

It is very evident from Christ's own words that the writers of the New Testament were inspired, and Divinely informed regarding things past, present, and future. He instructed His disciples not to prepare their defenses when arraigned before rulers as to the matter or manner. He promised that what they should say, and how they should say it, would be given them, and that the one that should really "speak" would not be themselves, but the Spirit of their "Father." We have the record of several of their forsenic efforts, and they are largely

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historical and argumentative. So we see that according to the promise God aided them as to historical facts—their arrangement and delivery. He assured them that the same Spirit would bring all things to their remembrance “whatsoever” He had “said” unto them, which included reasonings, facts, and truths. Why? So that an accurate record might be made. Such could not have been made after the lapse of so many years by men entirely dependent upon their own mental powers. It is because we believe that that promise was fulfilled, that we have absolute confidence in the reports they made of what He said and did. He clearly promised them the gift of prescience. He said, “He will show you things to come.”\* It is very plain that the inspiring Spirit was to reveal facts to them, and help them in arranging facts in their minds, their reasonings, and delivery, and in recalling the past, the understanding of the present, and in looking into the future.

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\*John xvi, 13.

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If there were no other Scriptural proofs than these, the theories of the critics respecting inspiration and revelation, as well as prophecy, would fall to the ground.

But the voice of God, through His Son and the holy writers of the Sacred Oracles, was and is a distinctive voice of authority, such as no man can now claim, any more than he can claim the power of healing, raising the dead, casting out devils, the gift of tongues or the authority of an apostle. "The things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord," says Paul. Does any reputable teacher make any such claim nowadays? Truth requires something more than its own intrinsic worth or sweet reasonableness to

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men. A parent's or a teacher's or a government's communications often need and have a force beyond what they may have in themselves. The Bible is authoritative in itself, and has an influence over the minds of men

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because of their belief in its Divine authorship, which it could not have if it were such as the higher critics represent it to be.

Let us now see what the results are on the supernatural phenomena of the Bible when the critics use their *peculiar theories of inspiration in connection with their destructive methods*.

The compiler of the Pentateuch, living, as they claim, about ten centuries after Moses, had as his only material "four documents dated respectively six, eight, and ten centuries after the exodus," together with perhaps some traditions and written scraps; and neither he nor the authors of the original documents, it is claimed, had any aid from God as to the accumulation of the data or its use, but had to depend wholly upon human sources of knowledge, including, of course, their well-developed "historical imagination" in writing all this history, which covers all the centuries from "In the beginning" until the close of Moses' life.

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The history includes civil and religious laws, the marvelous doings of God in nature, and His manifestations of Himself to men, as well as wonderful deliverances, revelations, prophecies, and miracles. The supernatural is everywhere apparent, and is not only perceived, but received by the reader as real as long as he believes that Moses, who was an observer of many of its miraculous scenes, wrote it, and that he was aided and guided by God in all he did; but the moment he takes it as uninspired narrative, written ages after the scenes are supposed to have occurred, and by unknown men who had no reliable historical matter whatever, nor any revelation of facts, the prophecies, miracles, deliverances, and theophanies all fade out as objective facts, as they would out of any other form of saga or a modern work of the imagination. The same thing is true of the Books of Joshua, Job, Esther, Kings, Chronicles, and even the Gospels, as well as other



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narratives to a large extent. They think they eliminate the supernatural from Isaiah largely, by simply changing prophecy into history; from Daniel, by transforming history and prophecy into fiction; and from Jonah, by resolving the whole book into an allegory.

No reasonable person would believe in miraculous events related in a record which they have re-made in that way. Professor H. C. Sheldon, of Boston University School of Theology, sees this, and uses it to get rid of the miracles. He says: "As to the testimony for the miracles which led up to and accompanied the Exodus, the uncertain date of various portions of the Pentateuch hinders a confident appeal to eye-witnesses. . . . For the later miracles of the Old Testament somewhat less can be said. . . . Instead, therefore, of rendering any positive support to Biblical authority, they need rather to be supported by that authority, if

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they are to hold an indubitable place in the category of facts.’’\* Yet he and others seek to impress us with their great respect for these books, as containing a wonderful body of “Divine Revelation.” Joseph Parker said: “The greater havoc some of the higher critics make in the structural parts of the Bible, the more vehemently they exalt the supernatural.” But they can not throw the miraculous out of any of these books in their way, and still in any true sense hold it to be inspired or reasonable fiction; for if the supposed incidents are too “grotesque” or “stupendous” to be probable in actual history, as they claim in many instances, they can have no place in a sober work of the imagination. It is fully as immoral to be false to reality in serious fiction, as to fact in history.

The objection to much of this is not that inspired Scripture can not be in the form of fiction, but that it is an attempt to do away with the supernatural; that it represents as

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\*System of Christian Doctrine, p. 112.

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fiction what purports to be historical; and that it represents as inspired fiction what is too unusual, too extravagant, or too grotesque to be probable narrative.

To make the matter doubly sure, they speak of a Scriptural miracle as an unusual event occurring through an unknown law; and of the miracles wrought in modern hospitals as greater than Christ's cures. Each miracle, they say, is to be judged in the light of its own character and historical setting, and not to be accepted because of its place in the Sacred Record. Professor William North Rice, of Wesleyan University, is generous enough to admit that "Some miracles can be very confidently accepted." He adds, however, "A critical examination of others seems to require their rejection as unhistorical."\* One is naturally anxious to know what inerrant canons of credibility he uses in his examinations. Further on he says: "The supernatural can mean no more than

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\*The Christian Religion in an Age of Science, p. 379.

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the uncommon or unusual in a universe which is all Divine. The truth of the Divine immanence well-nigh makes void the distinction of natural and supernatural in the activities of God in the physical universe.”\* If the doctrine of the latter quotation is not pantheism, it is certainly its next-door neighbor. It is all the teaching of so-called conservative criticism, and is an attempt to throw out of the Holy Scriptures the miraculous and the other supernatural phenomena by destroying the distinction that exists between God’s mediate and immediate modes of operation in the external and the subjective world. The expression, “Divine Immanence,” so often used, is supposed to have a dazzling effect on immature minds.

They represent the prophet as if he were a politico-religious preacher of our day who had a special message for his own times—merely a forthteller, not a foreteller, as his

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\*The Christian Religion in an Age of Science, p. 388.

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predictions did not refer to future events, but to tendencies and the ideal world.

We readily see that these so-called supernaturalistic critics, while not openly attacking miracles, prophecies, or theophanies, nevertheless provide for their disappearance. They simply put the Bible into their critical sieve, and then what is supernatural drops out of its own weight.

“I affirm that any man who can juggle these facts (miracles) out of the Bible,” says Bishop H. W. Warren, “can juggle all facts and truths out of the Bible.” The critics do not call it “juggling.” They call it “scholarly research,” or “scientific criticism.”

It is very evident, however, that under their Scriptural manipulations supernatural things disappear, or wholly change their character. The ark of the covenant, for instance, becomes simply a superstition—an unsanctified adaptation of the Egyptian itinerant river ship box; the tabernacle with its

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sacrifices and ceremonies, a priestly invention patterned after that of the temple; the brazen serpent a relic of "totem worship;" the laws respecting the clean and unclean "taboo customs" and Jonah's gourd "a magic tree." The translation of Enoch and Elijah, the call of Abraham, Jacob's dream, and his wrestling at the brook, Moses' burning bush and his awful interviews with God at Sinai; the descending fire at Carmel and at the dedication of Solomon's Temple; and scores of other such events are resolved into myths, and the stories relating to Gideon, Samson, Goliath, the battle of Bethhoron, and hosts of others into legends. The story of Joseph, with its account of his supernatural resolving of dreams and his foretellings becomes simply an imitation of the old Egyptian tale of the "Two Brothers." The fulfillment of prophecy claimed in the New Testament proves not to have been such at all, but utterances from the Old Testament read into the New by Christ and His follow-

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ers through a misapprehension (or, to bolster up their claims,) which existed then and until these days in the minds of all since then, but infidels and our up-to-date critics, as to the real character of the sayings of the old prophets, singers, and sages. It turns out, according to Dr. Peters, that "the British belief in the return of an Arthur, or the German hope of the reappearance of a Charlemagne or a Frederick Barbarossa, was in origin the same as the Israelitish expectation of the second David,"\* and consequently those delusive hopes were as much inspired as the Messianic hope of Israel.

So we see that, instead of accepting what the Bible claims as to its own inspiration and the supernatural character of its truths, events, and institutions, these professedly supernaturalistic critics assume theories and accept results which substantially harmonize with the rationalistic theories and principles of their system, all of which reduce the Bible

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\*The Old Testament and the New Scholarship, p. 137.

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almost, if not altogether, to a naturalistic basis. The late Professor W. H. Green, of Princeton, saw this, and held that the most effective mode of banishing the supernatural from the Bible is by subjecting it to processes of the higher criticism.\* Is it any wonder that so many look upon the system as Satan's masterpiece?

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In addition to subjecting the Bible to these drastic processes, these critics, in order to destroy the force of Christ's indorsement of the Old Testament and for other reasons, diminish the Divine in Him, with respect to His attributes, away beyond what many Unitarians claim.

These theorists are well aware that when Christ confirmed what they call the traditional view of the Old Testament He flatly contradicted their view of the same, and in casting about for some way of destroying His authority as a teacher in this respect

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\*The Higher Criticism of the Pentateuch, p. 82.



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they have plunged into the depths of the Kenotic theory, which is a bottomless German Christological speculation. According to this metaphysical subtlety Christ so completely emptied Himself of His Divine nature as to become as ignorant of common matters, such as science, history, and Scripture, as His contemporaries.

In the Appendix of a book\* published a short time ago we find statements made on this subject by the presidents of various Methodist educational institutions, some of which show us how far men of intelligence and ability may be drawn away from their rational and doctrinal moorings by committing themselves to this subtle, complex, critical system of error. One of them says: "It is evident that there must have been such a limitation of knowledge on Christ's part as put Him essentially under the conditions of ordinary men;" and "It is not necessary to suppose that He knew aught of the chemistry of fer-

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\*Terry, *Moses and the Prophets*.

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mentation.” Another doubts as to “whether Christ’s knowledge extended to exact scientific and historical detail,” and “whether He knew the historical process of the composition of the Biblical writings.” A third, evidently failing to see that Christ was referring to ceremonial and spiritual, and not to physical defilement, after quoting Christ’s words, “Not that which goeth into a man defileth him,” boldly remarks, “This is not true; it may and often does poison the blood.”

One seeks to justify all this by saying, “Philosophy teaches that self-limitation does not destroy God.”

Philosophy is not a very safe teacher when dealing with the being or revelation of God; but does it teach that? By no means, in the sense the writer intends. Philosophy teaches us that God can not limit His being or powers. To do so would be self-mutilation—suicide. He can not limit His omnipotence or knowledge, *but His use of these at-*

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*tributes*; and He can no more limit His omniscience than His omnipotence or immanence. While Christ was human He was God. He evidently set up His claim to be such when He said, "I and the Father are one."\* The Jews so understood Him, for they took up stones to stone Him, and in wrath said, "Thou being a man makest Thyself God." But the Divine in Him did not lessen or paralyze the human, nor did the human lessen or paralyze the Divine. We have no reason to believe that He emptied Himself any more of His Divine resources than He did of His human resources. Men get themselves into endless confusion by attempting to distinguish between the human and the Divine in His personality. We know the "Word was made flesh," but who can tell where the one nature ends or the other begins? And why should we in forming a conception of Christ try to diminish the Divine any more than the human nature?

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\*John x, 30.

## Reducing the Supernatural

Like men and God He did not always *use* all His resources. He limited Himself in speech to what His Father wished Him to say; but He no more reduced His intelligence thereby, than He reduced His omnipotence when He refused to change a stone into a loaf of bread. Infinite love welled up constantly in His soul; infinite power attended His every word and touch; infinite intelligence lay behind all His thought and speech. To the Jews who wondered at His untutored knowledge He said in explanation, "My teaching is not Mine, but His that sent Me."\*

If He made mistakes they were not His own. It would be strange if it should appear that He had the mind of God, and yet a mind cabined and confined within the bounds of human ignorance and illiteracy; that He could make a few loaves feed a multitude, and change water into wine, but did not know "the chemistry of fermentation;" that He could send the warm blood pulsating through

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\*John vii, 16 (R. V.).

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a dead man's veins and arteries, but did not know that the blood circulated, or that certain foods or drinks "poison the blood;" that He could cure all manner of diseases, but did not know His own physiology; that He could walk on water, but did not know the force of gravitation He overcame; that He should make the world, and not know its science; that He was conscious of living before Abraham, and could recognize Moses and Elijah on the Mount, and not know the history of which they formed a part; and that He could reveal the new Scriptures, yet did not know the true character or the manner of the composition of the old Scriptures which He Himself inspired, taught, and confirmed. If He was mistaken through ignorance in ascribing the 110th Psalm to David, what will we do with His statement that David wrote it "by the Holy Ghost," and with His claim that it contained a prophecy of His own dual nature? If He was mistaken in regard to the authorship of the psalm and

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its prophecy, may He not have been mistaken in regard to His own Sonship and His views of truth in general? And if these modern scholars are able to correct His views of nature, history, and the Old Testament by their scientific and critical methods, may they not be able by the same means to correct His ethical code and His theology?

It is difficult to know what these critics want us to think He was, or how far they count Him their Master. Surely they do not wish us to regard Him as a Divine, walking somnambulist, clairvoyant, soothsayer, or prestidigitator! or to think that if He were on earth to-day, as He was then, that it would be necessary for Him to go to them to school!

If not these things, then what? It is surprising that intelligent men professing to be Christians should raise such questions. Sir William Dawson said: "To me, as a student for fifty years of nature, of man, and of the Bible, such discussions seem most frivolous, since our Lord's knowledge, as we have it in

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His reported discourses, is altogether above and beyond our science and philosophy; transcending them as much as the vision of an astronomer armed with one of the great telescopes of our times transcends the unaided vision of a gnat." But I wish to suggest here that none of us knows how much a gnat thinks he knows. "Any theory which assumes that God lays aside His omnipotence, omniscience, and omnipresence, and becomes feeble, ignorant, and circumscribed as an infant," said Dr. Hodge, of Princeton, "contradicts the first principles of all religion, and, if it be pardonable to say so, shocks the common sense of men." Dr. H. W. Peck expresses the views of many when he says: "To write about the Infinite One being 'potentially' possessed of all His attributes, and not 'actually' so, is the veriest nonsense."

"A sincere and intelligent belief in the Divinity of Jesus Christ," said the late Canon Liddon, "obliges us to believe that Jesus Christ, as a teacher is infallible. . . .

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The man who sincerely believes that Jesus Christ is God will not doubt that His every word standeth sure, and that whatever has been sealed by His supreme authority is independent of and unassailable by the judgment of His creatures respecting it." Principal Sheraton asks: "Are we not 'bound' as Bishop Stubbs has said 'to accept the language of our Lord in reference to the Old Testament Scriptures as beyond appeal?'"

We certainly are, and only feeble souls can be satisfied with these modern teachings concerning our Lord's Kenosis. The true Christian soul wants a Christ who embodies, even in the days of His humiliation, not only two or three of God's attributes, or all of them in a limited degree, but a Christ in whom the whole circle of Divine perfections shines. It is not to be supposed that these critics themselves would for a moment indulge these views if it were not that they are logically forced either to allow that Christ knowingly



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misled His hearers in respect to the nature of the Old Testament, or to renounce their boasted scientific method.

They hold fast to their method, and as we have seen have been led to reduce the supernatural to a minimum in inspiration, revelation, miracle, and prophecy; and as a last step to be willing to take away much of the supernatural from the life of our Lord, and even to limit or diminish in Him the very attributes of Deity.



# Destroying the Foundations

“If the foundations be destroyed what can the righteous do?”—DAVID.

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THERE are two methods of attack which men principally employ. The one is to strike at the conclusion of an argument, the other at the reasoning; the one to seek to break down the testimony of a witness, the other to break down the witness himself; the one to destroy the crew and cargo, the other to scuttle the ship; the one to fight the garrison, the other to batter down or undermine the walls; the one to attack the substance of revealed truth in the Bible, the other to attack the Bible itself as a record and a book containing that substance of revealed truth.

Tom Paine, Voltaire, and other infidels sought by both methods to destroy the Holy Scriptures. Porphyry of the third century, a neo-Platonist, a very adroit and able an-

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tagonist of Christianity, did not deny the truth in the Bible, but the reliability of the record. The early Socinians, who like these evangelical higher critics claimed to be supernaturalists, and professed to believe that the body of truth in the Holy Scriptures was in a way inspired, but that the record was not trustworthy, like Porphyry sought to weaken, disparage, and discredit the human that is interwoven with the Divine in the Bible, just as Satan tried in the wilderness to overcome the Divine nature in Christ through His human nature.

This seems to be the popular method of unbelief at the present time. It praises the ethical teachings of the Bible, makes no bold denial of its doctrines, and goes often in raptures over the "Divine Library" and the "remarkable revelation" it contains, but at the same time through higher criticism it is making a most vigorous effort to break the vessel that holds the Divine treasure; to spoil the logical force; to discredit the witness; to

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scuttle the ship; to undermine the walls; in other words, to destroy men's faith in the trustworthiness of the Biblical record, which is the only historical foundation we have for our belief in Christ and Christianity.

The men who have been busy hammering, scuttling, sapping and mining, and discrediting seem well pleased with the damage they have wrought, and point with evident pride to what they think are great rents and cleavages in the structural portions of the Bible, even holding with Tom Paine that much of it was "manufactured." Professor H. G. Mitchell, of Boston University School of Theology, is bold enough to say: "They," referring to his reasonings, "make it impossible for an intelligent student to accept the Biblical account as a correct record." Certainly orthodox students must fully realize their want of intelligence in his classes. Professor C. W. Rishell, of the same Methodist school, is so impressed with the Bible's errant character that he says, "So far from

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asserting the infallibility of the Old Testament we should strongly emphasize the contrary.”\* According to this we should reverse our pulpit utterances, and instead of claiming “we have a sure word of prophecy” and “have not followed cunningly devised fables,” we should assert the “fallibility of the Old Testament,” and make our assertion not only emphatic, but “strongly emphatic.” He is not so sure about the fallibility of the New Testament, but suggests: “We need not assert nor need we deny error in the New Testament.”† One would suppose from this that the errancy or inerrancy of the Scriptures is a matter of little importance. The errancy to which critics refer is far otherwise. It is that which naturally inheres in works written by men without Divine revelation of facts or any really reliable historical data. According to the higher critics, the Bible, as we have already shown, is made up largely of myths and legends and traditions and of

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\* Foundations of the Christian Faith, p. 476. † *Ibid*, 483.



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speeches and various utterances attributed to Moses, Joshua, David, Mary, Elizabeth, or others, which were in fact composed by persons far removed from the supposed authors, often by many centuries—much as “Spartacus to the Gladiators” was written by our versatile American. The fallibility of such a book is very similar to the fallibility of Dumas’ “Four Musketeers.”

Now I maintain that you can not permanently rest a system of religion, such as Christianity, on such historical sand or ooze. The mass of mankind will never believe that a pure morality or a sane theology can accompany or be the fruitage of such worthless and deceptive narrative. If our Bible is not “a correct record” of persons, incidents, doctrines, and revelations, we are building our faith on what Christ warned us against—sand. God never fully imbedded Himself in human thought and life until the Divine Word became “flesh and bones,” and that Word must still be imbedded in real substantial

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facts and events, and the Divine must still pervade, glorify, and give power to the human. As long as Antæus held firmly to mother earth, Hercules could not throw him. When he lost his foothold the giant could hurl him anywhere. As long as the Biblical body of truth is imbedded in real facts, interwoven with thoroughly reliable historic events which the reason can touch and handle, it is as immovable as Gibraltar; once in the air, lifted from its old foundations, it would be as easily moved about and tossed as was Antæus.

Professor Rishell, wishing to establish a foundation for faith that is not historical, gives us the following higher critical dogma: "The infallibility of the New Testament is not essential to faith in the truth it contains."

This is a very deceptive statement for a sane man can not have faith in the statements of a history which he knows to be unreliable. There are truths, however, such as God is

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a Spirit or the Golden Rule, which to some minds may need no trustworthy historic setting. They are self-evident. But many of the doctrines of our religion, such as the miraculous conception and resurrection of Jesus Christ and the Atonement, are neither abstract nor intuitive truths; and no matter how much they may commend themselves to our minds or excite our religious emotions, they are not self-evident, and must be supported by historical proof. These doctrines are inseparably interwoven with the whole body of Biblical narrative. They are not only connected with the facts of the history, but rest upon the facts and in many cases grow out of them.

Can you disconnect the doctrine of the Atonement from the facts of the fall, of sin, and Christ's death and resurrection? Is it not plain that if Adam was a *myth* and there was no *fall*, there was no *sin* and no *redemption*? If you shake the facts you shake the doctrines, and you destroy the force of all

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Christ's teachings and blur the picture of His ideal life.

So we see that if the Biblical record is uncertain and incorrect, we do not know that we have a proper report of His words, or a truthful or uncolored description of His life.

But says one, "Faith is not belief in a book, but in the living Christ." Well, if that should be admitted, upon what does that belief in the living Christ first rest but in the record God has given us of His Son? If we had not that record, all our knowledge of Him as an incarnation would be traditional and worthless, and nothing is more certain than that if that written record which we have is not trustworthy "there is no living Christ to trust to, and Christianity passes into mist and goes down the wind."

Even Briggs, though he substantially impeaches these truths elsewhere, recognizes this, and says: "To impeach the historicity of the incarnation and the resurrection of our Lord destroys the Christian religion."

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That is precisely what liberal orthodox higher criticism under the less offensive term of newer criticism is doing at the present time—impeaching the historicity of the New Testament.

While higher criticism has been busy undermining men's faith in the Old Testament, it has until within a few years, as a general thing, in this country and England hesitated to enter the domain of the New, and has been quieting pious fears with the assurance that the methods used in the one should not be applied to the other. One can not understand why, if they are legitimate. It has, however, thrown off all reserve, and having examined the historical framework of the New Testament, it reports that the structural portions are weak and comparatively unstable, and that the book is emphatically fallible.

We are told that the origin of the Gospels and other portions is very obscure, and that time enough elapsed after Christ's death and other events to give rise to many myths,

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legends, and false traditions before they were written.

Canon Cheyne, a most distinguished critical authority and an orthodox Christian, having demolished the historical foundations of the Old Testament, has entered the New Testament field and applied the same methods. To the great dismay of those who think that higher criticism is reverent toward Christ he, in the *Encyclopædia Biblica*, of which he is an editor, some time ago attempted to show Christ to be merely a prophet and teacher and such stories as those of the nativity to be "edifying tales." Dr. John P. Peters throws grave doubts not only over the "miraculous conception," but the trustworthiness of large portions of the entire Bible.

"It is altogether probable," writes the supposedly orthodox Professor William North Rice, of Wesleyan University, Middletown, "that legendary elements, in considerably large degree, are mingled in the

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Old Testament history, and in less degree even in the New Testament history.’’\*

The late Professor L. L. Paine, of Bangor Theological Seminary, also supposedly orthodox, in his book, “A Critical History of the Evolution of Trinitarianism,” sets forth Jesus as “born (as to father as well as mother) in the line of a human genealogy.” In speaking of the Book of Acts, he says: “It evidently contains quite a large element of legend.”

However satisfactory such a historical foundation—composed of truth and lies—may be for the Christian faith of these critics, who seem to be full of philosophical subtilities and to be steeped in “German Idealism,” or for their unthinking, credulous followers, it can never be such to the average, intelligent, practical man of sound mind. He will either repudiate their view of the Bible, or repudiate the Bible itself.

Dr. Percy Gardner, of Oxford, however,

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\* Christian Faith in an Age of Science, p. 374.

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tells us that while he finds no safe foundation for his orthodox faith in the “*historic facts*” of the New Testament, he thinks he has, after a close search, covering over “thirty years,” discovered a bed-rock base for that faith in “*psychological facts.*”<sup>\*</sup> It is a “source of unmeasured satisfaction” to him that great thinkers, such as A. Sabatier of Paris, Lipsius of Jena, and William James of Harvard, as well as himself, have made practically the same discovery, and have been able to shift safely their Christian faith from its old resting-place unto this new psychological foundation.

Higher Criticism and Christian Science seem to be in close sympathy. The one is becoming as independent of historic facts as the other is of all material facts. I am afraid, however, that these great discoverers will find these psychologic facts very unsubstantial. If so, as an old Puritan writer asks, “What shall a *poore, unlearned Christian* do

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<sup>\*</sup>A Historic View of the New Testament, pp. 8, 29, 36.



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if he has *nothing* to rest his poore soul on?" Even Professor C. W. Pearson, of Evanston, though a learned higher critic, could not rest his "poore soul" on this *psychologic base*. When to his mind the basal facts went, his faith went; and he is free to express his amazement that his associates who, he supposed, had lost faith in the historic facts of the Bible should continue to profess faith in evangelical religion. It happened to him as to most men. When the historical foundations of their beliefs give way their doctrinal views collapse completely, and often suddenly like St. Mark's Campanile. Our evil natural inclination to doubt God and His Word is sure, unless resisted, to rush us ultimately into utter unbelief. And the whole tendency of higher criticism is in that direction. It is like a very rapid river. You must either keep out of the current, or go with it. Indeed, it is a kind of a skeptical Biblical toboggan slide, which is landing thousands in agnosticism, or at best rationalism.

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There are, however, theologians preaching in orthodox pulpits or teaching dogmatic theology in orthodox theological schools, whose doctrinal views are so very airy and buoyant that they seem to rest in the mazy philosophic atmosphere of our day without any apparent need of infallible documentary support, or even Gardner's "psychologic base." One of these says: "Easter is not an event confidence in which must rest upon a written witness in venerable documents." Internal experimental evidence is all he needs. Others are like Professor C. R. Henderson, Chaplain of Chicago University, whose faith requires nothing in particular as a foundation. He says that it does not matter what becomes of any particular statement of historical facts in the Bible; that that does not affect his faith a particle. His is surely *uberrima fides*. Professor Borden P. Bowne, of Boston University, appears, however, to have a more remarkable "spiritual conception of Christianity" than any of

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these. He sees not only no need of historical facts or a psychologic base, but even of *belief in anything*, "in order to be saved." Here are his words: "Finally the desire for an absolute standard and authority sometimes rests on the fancy that there is something which we must believe or do, in order to be saved. But such a notion is non-existent for one who has reached a spiritual conception of Christianity."

According to this, Jesus Christ had a very low "spiritual conception of Christianity," for He said: "He that believeth not is condemned already, because he believeth not in the name of the only begotten Son of God."\*

These philosophical critics, advertised as "defenders of the faith," are now endeavoring to show "the compatibility of a theoretical skepticism with a practical faith." If common sense had not parted company with such theorists some time ago, they would drop that attempt, and prove instead "the

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\*John 11, 18.

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compatibility of a *theoretical faith* with a *practical skepticism*." Some people think they could find proof of that proposition close at hand.

These and other kindred *transcendental vagaries* seem to be very popular these times. Are they not the echoes of Strauss's dictum, in which he explained "the essence of the Christian faith to be perfectly independent of his criticism?" He said: "The supernatural birth of Christ, His miracles, His resurrection and ascension remain eternal truths, whatever doubts may be cast on their reality as historical facts."

All this is obviously absurd, and makes one wonder as to what kind of an idealistic world such men live in. The position, however, of those who discredit the testimony of the Holy Scriptures by denying the revelation of facts or persons, the inspiration of the narratives and their trustworthiness, and who yet, like the late Dean Farrar and Harnack and Lyman Abbott and William North

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Rice, profess to believe in the resurrection of Christ on the strength of such unreliable human evidence alone, is fully as illogical. Such faith is manifest *credulity*. Indeed, there is no evidence whatever to either the miraculous conception or the resurrection of Christ, if there was no revelation of facts. The evidence of the one rests upon the revelation made to Mary and Joseph, the evidence of the other on the personal revelation of Jesus Christ—a very palpable fact—made known to His disciples.

Furthermore, nothing can be more preposterous than for our evangelical higher critics to deny the inspiration and trustworthiness of the New Testament record, and that of the Old Testament, upon which it rests; and the worth of Christ's unquestioned affirmation of the Divine authority of the Old Testament, and yet admit and affirm the Divine authority of His doctrinal teachings which are contained in the records which they count so much historic quicksand.

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Indeed, the whole situation is absurd in the extreme, and is without parallel in the history of the Christian Church. And certainly the human mind must be very elastic in its workings, when it will allow intelligent men practically to maintain doctrines which they theoretically reject; to eulogize eponymous heroes as if they considered them actually old saints; to use fictitious history as if they thought it real narrative; to quote comforting promises, as if they supposed God made them; to use suspicious texts to prove new dogmas; and, what is more, to hold publicly to faith in Jesus Christ when faith in the historic foundation is gone.

How men can thus act a double part and remain sincere is a puzzle to many. I leave that matter to the reader, but wish to say that if it is possible for some who have the iron of several generations of pious ancestors in their blood, and who have had a knowledge of the living Christ in the soul, to stand in the faith fast and strong when the Bible is no

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longer a reliable record to them, their numbers are not large nor their faith very infectious. The present condition is not likely to last long. It once existed in ancient Rome, but it was just before the complete collapse of faith. Religion, like other things, must not only soon cease to bear fruit, but even blossoms and leaves, when fully severed from its roots.

The utter folly and falsity of the claim that Christianity, an historic religion, can not be unfavorably affected by the weakening of her historical foundation is seen the moment one observes the changes that are taking place wherever these false Scriptural views prevail. The Bible itself is being lowered down in the estimation of thousands, and, being no longer regarded as a reliable source of information by them, is fast finding its place on the high shelf or in the garret. Goldwin Smith says: "Science and criticism combined appear to be undermining the foundations of religious belief, by which in the

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mass of men conscience has hitherto been so largely supported.”

The evil effects of this is especially felt by the Church. She is suffering now from a severe spiritual chill. Her old-time enthusiasm for individual soul-saving has largely given way to a spasmodic effort for the betterment of the community. With the new views has come a demand for a “new religious experience,” which is religion without regeneration, the religious experience which Nicodemus “enjoyed” before Christ saved him.

The Christian Church has never known in all her history such a successful revival extinguisher as this fire-damp of higher criticism.

The most marked change, however, is seen in the new theology it is producing. While these so-called conservative critics have been soothing our fears with soft assurances of safety, they have been busy evolving their new theology, which for a time was in a very



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nebulous state, but which stands out now sufficiently clear to enable us to distinguish many of its main features. It is not barely the old orthodox theology viewed from a new standpoint or a simple restatement, but a system radically different in permanents, fundamentals, and spirit. It is largely Ritschlian. *If it is not modern paganism, it is certainly not historic Christianity.* It is not alone a break with the evangelical views of to-day, but with the patristic and apostolic teachings. It is not only heretical, but, *en bloc*, a nest of heresies. They wish to make it the creed of Christendom; but I can not understand how any one who claims to be a Christian can have any sympathy with it whatever. It fails to see any close connection between faith and reason; to believe in the resurrection of the body; to be sure of the immortality of the soul; or to put an emphasis on the sinfulness of sin, or to regard it as hereditary, or as liable to retributive justice. No vicarious atonement is provided,

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because none is needed. The Apostles' Creed has lost its old significance, and the Athanasian is useful merely as an "antiquarian study."

God is the ever-immanent Spirit; but the Holy Spirit is not a person, and is little more than a phrase. As Christ is to them the historic rather than the living Lord, their cry is, "Back to Christ." He had no real pre-existence; was the Son of God, as we are all sons of God; and may have been the son of Joseph. His Godhead is a *moral*, rather than an *actual fact*. He is the "religious value of God" to us; but not Deity. He was Divine, but we are all Divine, and differ from Him not in kind, but degree. This is Mother Mary Baker Eddy's idea of Him also. From this it would appear that He is merely the supreme man, and that men are little Christs.

In the heart of this new theology, which the critics are seeking to form out of false philosophical principles, instead of out of the supernatural doctrines of revelation,

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there is evidently bitter opposition to Jesus Christ as the Eternal Son of God. Although "the storm has moved round the whole horizon," as Dale said, "it is rapidly concentrating its strength and fury above one Sacred Head." Many men, who in these days, when reverent phrases mean so little, compliment Him highly, are really among those who "crucify Him afresh and put Him to an open shame." Rénan could say, "Even to-day rationalism does not look at Him closely, except on its knees;" but we now see men who class themselves as evangelical who not only scrutinize him closely with unbent knees, but, as we have seen, claim a Divine nature like His own, and who write about His "shortcomings," and look down upon Him as their inferior in science and Biblical critical knowledge.

Probably there was never a time when men were better informed respecting the circumstances connected with the life of the historic Christ, or a time when their teaching

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regarding Him was less satisfactory. The *vagueness* which characterizes the thought of our day, relating to Him, is most deplorable. One is greatly impressed with this when he reads the works of such men as John Watson, G. A. Gordon, or Principal Fairbairn, or listens to an average sermon.

The critics are loudly claiming that the religious opinions of the Christian public are being largely influenced by the "modern view," even among those who do not as yet accept fully the new theology. Men prominent as leaders in different evangelical bodies in Great Britain say that a rapid change is going on among their people as to doctrinal beliefs; that, for instance, the idea of conditional immortality or ultimate restoration is taking the place of the old doctrine of future punishment. The continuance by the Wesleyans of Dr. Beet as an instructor in theology gives color to that claim. It is said that the drift is in the same direction in this country. H. C. Sheldon, an "advanced

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thinker," seems to think that Methodists have changed in their views within recent years respecting their conception of the Bible, the subject of original sin, the person and work of Christ, and the doctrine of Christian perfection.

This surely can not be true with regard to the rank and file of that Church. Professor William James, of Harvard University, a Unitarian, seems, however, to think that view correct. "See," he says, "how the ancient spirit of Methodism evaporates under those wonderfully able rationalistic booklets of a philosopher like Professor Bowne." It is to be supposed that what will be left of Methodism, after that process of evaporation will have been completed, will be as dry as dust and as spiritless as an Egyptian mummy.

It is claimed that the trend in the Protestant Episcopal and Congregational bodies is clearly away from the old orthodox forms of belief.

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Let us keep in mind that the new theology, or the drift which is seen in that direction as to doctrinal views generally, which is so hostile to Christ and so foreign to the historic faith of the Christian Church, is largely the natural product of the false system of which we speak.

Dr. Washington Gladden acknowledges that the new Bible makes a new theology necessary. He writes: "We do not take the same view of the Bible itself that once we took, . . . and, therefore, because our view of the book has changed, and our methods of interpreting it have changed our doctrines even in their Biblical elements must have undergone a change." "We still speak," says Dr. Sabatier, "of the inspiration of the prophets and of the apostles, of atonement, of the Trinity, of the divinity of Christ, of miracles; but whether in a greater, or less degree, we understand them differently from our fathers." Evidently the old doctrines would break the new Scriptural

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bottles. New wine, well-diluted, must be put in the weak, new wine-skins.

When our Government was building the Washington monument it was discovered, when about one-third of the intended height was reached, that the foundations would not support any further weight. Consequently General Casey, who after a generation had passed had been placed in charge, was compelled, before he could complete it, to replace the first with a foundation broad and strong and capable of supporting a shaft three times as high. So the critics find that an *unreliable* record will not support a *reliable* Divine revelation, or the theology that is naturally its outgrowth. They are compelled either to replace their uninspired, almost worthless Biblical record with a broad, strong, supernatural, trustworthy one to sustain the supernatural doctrines of the old orthodox theology, or construct their new dogmatic theology to correspond with the weak and sinking foundations. They have chosen to do the latter,

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and, so far as one can judge, the light, airy and low shaft harmonizes fully with the insecure and insufficient base. They are evidently building of wood, hay, and stubble, instead of gold, silver, and precious stones.

My contention and conclusion is, that these historic critics in destroying people's confidence in the Bible as a reliable record by their teachings, whether they intend it or not, are really destroying men's confidence in Christ and the Christian religion. Christianity as a religion is historic, and rests on the historic Christ, and not on cunningly devised fables; and faith, which, though it is in a sense above reason, is never contrary to or divorced from reason, is just as necessary in this twentieth century as in the first, when men heard the oral testimonies of the living witnesses of the facts involved; and an intelligent and certain knowledge of these facts is just as much needed in these days of doubt as when Luke wrote his Gospel in order that Theophilus might "know the certainty of



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those things” wherein he had “been instructed,” and when John penned his record of facts in his Epistle, so that those to whom he wrote might “believe on the name of the Son of God.”

If these Old and New Testament records are not credible, the facts are not certain; and ours is not a reasonable faith, but sheer credulity; and the men who teach that these Scriptures are untrustworthy, whatever be their standing in the Church, are as certainly destroying the Christian faith as if they boldly attacked the body of truth the Scriptures contain, as did Voltaire and Paine and Ingersoll.

But the records are credible, and the facts are certain; and the established Christian still calmly exclaims:

“Let all the forms that men devise  
Assault my faith with treacherous art,  
I'll call them vanity and lies,  
And bind Thy Gospel to my heart.”



The Higher Critic's Bible  
or the Residuum

“And it came to pass when Jehudi had read three or four leaves that the king cut it with the pen-knife and cast it into the fire.” (R. V.)—JEREMIAH.

## The Higher Critic's Bible or the Residuum

ONE would naturally suppose, from what these so-called constructive critics report, that as a school they have been making very rapid progress in the destruction and reconstruction of the Bible. "In the providence of God," they tell us through Briggs, "some great doubter like Voltaire, or Hume, or Strauss . . . arises to lay violent hands upon the systems in which truth and error are combined, raze them to the ground, and trample them in the dust, that from the ruins the imperishable truth may be gathered up and arranged in its proper order and harmony."\* Some of them think that the Word of God has been in this way sufficiently reduced to ruins and pulverized, and that the

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\* *The Study of Holy Scriptures*, p. 80.

## The Higher Critic's Bible

time for reconstruction has arrived. D. S. Muzzey postpones the constructive work to another age, but rejoices in the exhibition of so much Biblical "brick-dust and tumbling mortar." Others claim that already the Bible has become a "new book to the modern scholar." "The material," we are told, "has in a large part been sifted and scientifically arranged." We have not yet seen this new Scholar's Bible, unless they mean by it the many-colored, rainbow-like Polychrome edition, which they seem to be ashamed to finish. These wreckers and Bible builders, however, greatly excite our hopes by assuring us as competent Scriptural architects, master mechanics, and artisans, that as the "temple of Herod and the city of the Asmoneans arose from the ruins of the former temples and cities, just so surely will the old Bible rise in the reconstruction of Biblical criticism into a splendor and glory greater than ever before."\* That must be very disappointing to

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\* Briggs, *The Study of the Holy Scripture*, p. 532.

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the agnostics, but a source of great encouragement to the fearful Christian who has begun to look upon the inspired temple of truth as a picturesque ruin. One can not somehow help wondering as to whether all this splendor is to come out of the old ruins, or be simply a reflection of the splendor of their own scholarship.

It would appear that if they do not expect to "out-Herod Herod," they at least hope to equal him in their achievements; and if they do may we not expect that the same curse that rested upon the work of that wretched sacrilegious temple-builder will rest upon the no less profane labors of these Bible builders, to say nothing of the plagues which John assures us are certain to come to those who "take from" or "add to" "the words of this Book?" It would have surprised our fathers and mothers to hear Voltaire, Hume, and Strauss, or other critics spoken of as providential men, or Divine truth represented as "razed" or turned into a "dust

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heap." They looked upon all such men as "infidels," and thought of the Bible as a splendid temple of revelation, which was unshaken and full of God's presence and glory. They were, as Joseph Parker says, "gigantic believers." Well, there are some of us who still believe that the Word of God is not as yet "rubbish" that needs to be "sifted," nor a building taken to pieces that needs to be "reconstructed," but a thoroughly well constructed Book—an organic whole; that each part fits perfectly into the others; that the evidence of the presence of its Author, God, is everywhere throughout it; and that however much we may be aided in understanding its origin and meaning by reverent and scholarly treatment, it certainly needs neither the "destructive" nor the "constructive" labors of these hyper-critics. And, I think, we may all rest assured that whatever success they may have in tearing down, whatever they attempt to build will not last many decades or be anything but a literary botch; and a Scriptural



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deformity and a curiosity to future generations.

Indeed, iconoclasts are usually miserable constructors. Any rude, rough Goth or Vandal soldier could have defaced or destroyed all the most precious sculptured gems in Rome; but all of those barbarian hordes combined could not have restored a broken finger of the "Dying Gladiator." Neither can all these scholars together reproduce a book, chapter, or verse of the Bible, or add an idea. If it were solely man-made, it might possibly be man-mended; but God is the joint Author, and they do not claim to need His help. In the nature of things their efforts must prove abortive, and be like that of the art-critics, who added each a touch of the brush to the picture that was hung in the market for their correction—nothing but a universal blot.

Let us look, however at the work these Biblical savants are attempting to do. While we do so we may, for the sake of grouping

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the matter here, refer at times to what appears in other chapters.

Having by their divisive, dissecting, disturbing, and destructive methods torn the Holy Scriptures to pieces, and having broken up their whole thought, meaning, plan, order, and history, they proceed to rearrange the several books and the divided parts chronologically and otherwise, and thus change the entire character of the Book, so that as a whole it may be made to conform to their pet evolutionary, historical theory, which Professor Horswell calls a "steady stream." Some modify this theory; others have other theories to which they adjust the Bible, which are not a whit more to be commended.

This imaginary, steady, progressive hypothesis they stretch all along Biblical history; and on it, as on an iron girder, they hang all the Holy Scriptures according to what they think the history ought to have been. They place the prophets for the most part before the Pentateuch, and the Psalms after

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the Pentateuch. All was tradition, as there was no writing among the Hebrews before Hosea's or at farthest Samuel's time; so they hang far back on the line the books of Amos, Hosea, and a part of Isaiah, and perhaps a very few of the Psalms. Isaiah they bisect, dissect, and segregate until only a few excerpts are left to the greatly diminished old prophet; and the remaining tatters, from two to twenty or more, are stretched along over the centuries, and ascribed to various unknown writers, so unworthy or so obscure that their contemporaries withheld their names from the record. Having worked out their composite theories of the Pentateuch, they eliminate Moses as a writer and place their five new invented authors—J, and E, D, P, and R,—on their historical progressive girder, dating their writings respectively about 850, 634, 450, 444 B. C. The Book of Joshua is so closely related and so full of allusions to the books of Moses, and so fully confirms their historical character,

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that the critics feel compelled, as redactors, to deny its historicity, and to link it to the Pentateuch with a corresponding date, and give them all the high-sounding title, Hexateuch. In the old Bible the Books of Judges, Ruth, the first and second Samuel form a continuous history after the Pentateuch and Joshua, and there is nothing anywhere to show that Samuel, as Jewish tradition claims, did not write them; but, as these books by their testimony seriously affect their Josiah date of Deuteronomy, the critics have concluded to consider them tradition or folklore, and place them in their own series after the Exile.

The Books of Kings and Chronicles continue the history of Israel, and because they confirm in a remarkable way the present order and reliable character of the Bible, the "modern view" compels the critics to deny the historicity of these, and to put their dates far in advance of their proper places. They do the same with Ezra and Nehemiah. The

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Song of Solomon, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Lamentations are all severed from their reputed authors and shoved forward many centuries. Professor H. C. Sheldon assures us that "Ecclesiastes has a pessimistic trend;" that the "Song of Solomon is plainly a poem of human loves;" and that "some of the items in the Book of Esther border upon the incredible."\* The critics generally represent Esther, Job, Daniel, and Jonah as imaginative creations largely, and as belonging to that newly-discovered classic Hebrew period—the MACCABEAN. They tell us that Daniel was written about 167 B. C. by some unknown moralist. Almost, if not all, the Psalms they tear away from David. They string them on the line from his age or after to about 150 B. C. "There are sentences in the Psalms," Sheldon says, "which are manifestly the expression of hot human passion."† They arrange and characterize the remaining books after the same manner.

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\*System of Christian Doctrine, pp. 122, 123. †*Ibid.* p. 142

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In the reconstruction of the New Testament they find themselves within much narrower chronological limits than in that of the Old; and the tendency lately has been, being forced by documentary evidence, to place the origin of the books at dates much more remote than formerly; but they give to each a very uncertain character. They rank the Gospel of Mark as the oldest and most trustworthy, but a recension from an earlier one. The Gospels of Matthew and Luke come later, and are compilations, with expansions and interpolations, and are more or less legendary. The basal source of these is the "Sayings of Jesus," termed "Matthew's Logia." They assume this but are unable to offer any satisfactory proof that that hypothetical collection ever existed. They are still hunting for it amid the mazes of their critical science. The Gospel of John is located towards the close of the first century, or later. They say that it is not the composition of the beloved disciple, but that it represents his teachings and tradi-

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tions. None of the Gospels is looked upon, by them, as genuine or strictly authentic. They date the Books of Acts and Revelation anywhere between 80 and 110 A. D. Holtzman ranks the first with the Acts of Paul and Thecla, but Ramsay, himself a higher critic, before his eyes were opened by personal observations in Asia Minor, looks upon Luke as an historian of a high order. The Book of Revelation, they tell us, is not predictive prophecy, but expresses the simple longings and hopes of the early Church, notwithstanding its author's claim that it is a "revelation" of "things that must shortly come to pass" given by God to Christ, and by Christ to John. Paul's Epistles to the Romans, Corinthians, Galatians, Philippians, and Philémon, and the first Epistle of Peter are accepted by almost all modern scholars as genuine, and the most of them as bearing their proper dates. The critics tell us that the earliest documents are the Epistles of Paul to the Thessalonians, which were written 54,

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55 A. D.; that the most recent is the second Epistle of Peter, or the Epistle of Jude, which originated as late as A. D. 140, or later; and that the others are scattered through an intervening period of well-nigh a century. The most of them reject the Pauline authorship of the Epistle to the Hebrews, but have not yet determined as to whether Barnabas, or Apollos, or Mark, or Aquila, or Luke, or a woman named Priscilla, as Harnack suggests, was the writer. The second Epistle of Peter has not much canonical force according to Professor H. C. Sheldon. He says: "Until its claims are more clearly established it can not prudently be treated as an apostolic writing."\*

It is easily seen, even by a hasty examination, that this new, artificial, arbitrarily arranged book is the true Bible, especially the Old Testament, thrown into utter confusion, turned topsy turvy, filled with endless contradictions and falsehoods, and that as a literary

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\*System of Christian Doctrine, p. 128.



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production it is very incoherent, clumsy, and seamy. When we consider how they solve its various literary problems, determine the age and character of each document, and dilute the meaning of inspiration, and then take an inventory of what they force into the book which is new, idealistic, and false; and what they force out of it which is old, fundamental, and true, we can not fail to see that there is not much left to us of our mother's Bible.

The change which has occurred in their own minds with respect to its character and worth, is to themselves much more serious than any transformation that can be made in its external form. It is to them now the product of man rather than God, and as a compilation solely the work of the rabbis of the synagogue and of the leaders of the primitive Christian Church; it is literature, rather than revelation; it is a book of fiction, rather than of facts; and a grouping of ideas, rather than of supernatural doctrines.

One is at a loss to conceive how any one

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can value the book or their new view of it very highly. It contains so many confessed mistakes and marks of fraud, and so much of its sacred history has dispersed itself in floating clouds, that it is impossible, it seems to us, for ordinary people to receive it as real or in a general way reliable.

They do not give us simply a book with one-half or more of its facts destroyed, but something worse; a book consisting largely of modern fiction, without any basis of facts whatever. The most of us would prefer the old Book, even in ruins, to their reconstructed, imaginative new one; the old Bible, even as they view it with its myths and legends and fables and old traditions, to their new Bible with its new mythical authors, its new fancied meanings, its newly-invented history, and its new traditions.

Men usually value lightly books, or anything else that is not to be depended upon, like an unbelieving Chicago druggist, who said, in answer to a question of one seeking

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information: "That City Directory is no good; it is full of mistakes like the Bible, and is not to be depended upon." But they tell us that it is more precious, with its mistakes and deceptions and without its historic characters and facts, than it was before. Some assure us also that it is an inspired Book, which makes us wonder and ask: "Is it inspired to create right impressions or wrong impressions? To represent history or misrepresent history?"

One manifest defect in their Bible is that it does not impress us with the reality of the spiritual world; the spiritual notions and phenomena have faded into mist. God is *immanent*, but He does not directly manifest Himself to men. The Bethlehem skies are voiceless on Advent night, and there is not a flutter of an angel's wing in or around the sepulcher on Easter morning. Heaven is only a state, and Christ's ascension is no longer an objective fact. Satan does not tempt men, nor do demons possess them, nor

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do angels minister to them. Pentecost is forgotten; the Church as the temple of God is ignored; even the personality and presence of the Holy Spirit are passed over in silence.

It is heterogeneous and incoherent, with its several books independent of each other, and the volume itself cut in two; whereas the later books of the real Bible presuppose the earlier, and even the Old and New Testaments are indissolubly connected as the roots and trunk of a tree, as Christ intimated when He declared, "The Scripture can not be broken."\*

"The New Testament is hidden in the Old, the Old is revealed in the New." These scholastic virtuosos, with their defective modern vision, fail to discern this connection.

They consequently fail to find Jesus Christ in any real, vital relation in Old Testament history, teachings, ceremonies, sacrificial rites, types, promises, or even its more than two hundred Messianic prophecies that

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\*John x, 34.

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were eventually fulfilled in Him. To them He belongs, except in a vague, idealistic, or evolutionary sense only, to the New Testament, as He did to the Sunday-school boy of whom F. B. Meyer speaks, who, when asked if his teacher in the Old Testament lessons had spoken of Christ, replied, "O no; that 's at the other end of the book."

The Christian Church, however, from the beginning until now has held that the theme of the Old Testament throughout is the Messiah. If that were not so, what meaning could the Epistle to the Hebrews have? and how could Paul, referring to the Old Testament, say that it was able to make men wise unto salvation through faith in Jesus Christ? Jesus Christ evidently thought Himself to be the subject of the Old Testament teaching and prophecy, and sought frequently to impress that fact upon the minds of His disciples and the people generally. Luke tells us that after His resurrection, when He could not have been subject to human limitations

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such as Kenotism claims, as all power was given to Him then in heaven and in earth, beginning at Moses and all the prophets, He expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself. It is very obvious that if the Old Testament is as they construe it, Christ created a wrong impression, which we can not allow, and that we have no historic basis in the Old for Christ, or His teachings in the New.

But even in their New Testament Jesus Christ has a very uncertain and indefinite place. If as the critics away to the front hold the four Gospels come to us second or third-hand; and if the writers reported Him inadequately; and if they, especially Matthew, often interpolated their own sayings for His; and if they gave us suspicious incidents; in short, if they were faulty and uninspired historians, then their books are historically dubious, to say the least, and we have nothing sure regarding Him, because you can make nothing certain by what is doubtful or dubi-

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ous. Then the views which we have of Him in the Gospels are not exact photographs, but pictures quite idealistic like His face in art, or the modern portraits of the archaic Scottish kings that adorn the walls of Holyrood Palace.

Their New Testament is almost as dishonoring to Christ as their Old, and as worthless.

The real, inspired New Testament, on the other hand, not only honors Him as God, but represents Him truly and fully, and we have no other ancient documents of any kind that have been so completely and absolutely vindicated, as to their authorship and accuracy in narrative and teaching as have been these inspired apostolic records after long and thorough scrutiny.

Their genuineness and veraciousness have been proven beyond a doubt by many of the ripest and best modern scholars.

As the more conservative of these pundits give the larger number of Paul's Epistles and

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some other New Testament writings a place as genuine in their canon, one would naturally conclude that they thus leave us something firm and substantial to build our faith upon; but they do not. Men like Harnack, Sabatier, and Fremantle, and their evangelical followers in Europe and America, though they admit the genuineness of these writings, hold that the sayings of Christ in the Gospels alone give us the Gospel, and that in the Pauline, Petrine, and Johannine documents we have simply the personal ideas and opinions of the writers, as they had no "special kind of inspiration in the act of writing, or to qualify them for writing." Horton discounts Paul's authority enough to say, "To quote him as an exegete of the ancient Scriptures would be obviously absurd." But as Dale, Cremer, and others have conclusively shown, Christ came not so much to preach the Gospel, as that after His death, resurrection, and ascension, the Gospel, having been specially and fully revealed by the Holy Spirit to



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men such as Paul, Peter, and John, might be preached.

Paul's representation of Christ and His Gospel, though differing in development, was in essential harmony with the teachings of his Master, and decisive documentary testimony is not wanting to show that it was in essential harmony with that of the other witnessing followers of Christ. In fact, there was but one representation made of the Gospel for several generations, as may be proven by the Scriptures themselves and by the patristic, heathen, and Jewish writings of those times; and that representation is the modern evangelical conception of the Gospel.

At a glance one can see that the Gospel, as the Christian Church has understood it from the first, could not have come from the higher critic's Bible. "Fifty years of study, thought, and reading, given largely to the Bible and to the literature which peculiarly relates to it, have brought me to the conclusion," says Dr. George E. Ellis, a leading

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Boston Unitarian minister, "that the Book—taken with the special Divine quality and character claimed for it, and so extensively assigned to it as inspired and infallible, as a whole and in all its contents—is an orthodox Book. It yields what is called the orthodox Creed." This evidently is true, and no treatment, no matter how forced on the part of the so-called evangelical higher critics, can make their Bible yield anything else than a heterodox Creed.

If "inspiration is not infallibility, and the claim that it guarantees infallibility of any kind must be distinctly denied," as Professor Ladd, of Yale University, announces, then we are not sure that the old orthodoxy is right, or the liberal orthodoxy so far as it has emerged from chaos is wrong; nor need we wonder that the critics are at sea theologically, and that Dr. George A. Gordon, prominent among them, heads a chapter in his recent book with "The Quest for a Theology;" or that the study of theology has fallen into

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decay in all their theological schools, because the theology taught out of a Bible whose “inspiration” fails to “guarantee infallibility of any kind” can have no solid foundation or settled limits or weight. Neither can it have any special authority. Indeed, none is claimed for it. “Since inerrancy or infallibility can be predicated,” writes Professor William North Rice, “neither of the Bible as a whole nor any particular part of the Bible, no single sentence of the Bible can be of itself authoritative.”\*

Tom Paine, assuming the Bible to be uninspired, fallible, and unauthoritative, and as to its origin much as the critical scholars of this school now claim it to be, very fairly characterized the study of theology out of their book when he said: “The study of theology is the study of nothing; it is founded on nothing; it rests on no authorities; it has no dates; it can demonstrate nothing, and it admits of no conclusions.” And it is difficult

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\*The Christian Religion in an Age of Science, p. 390.

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to see how they can refuse to accept his conclusion: "Instead, then, of studying theology, as is now done out of the Bible and Testament, the meanings of which books are always controverted, and the authenticity of which is disproved, it is necessary that we refer to the Bible of the creation."

That many of them agree with him is evident, for they are seeking to rest their new theology on philosophical principles, rather than upon Revelation.

That they recognize the nondescript and unauthoritative character of their production is seen also in that each reader is supposed to accept such portions as are approved by his reason only.

Now I hold that a Bible whose books have no canonical force and are not held to be directly, divinely inspired, and which is not authoritative as a Book, can never have the commanding, decisive, and helpful influence upon men that the Word of God has had.

A Bible which is not the Word of God,

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but which only contains the Word of God as higher criticism teaches, must and is supposed to teach both what is false and what is true. Such a book must be necessarily not only a source of perplexity to the truth-seeker, but also a menace. Error is never more dangerous than when admixed with truth.

One unfamiliar with pharmacy could with as much safety select remedies from the unlabeled bottles on the shelves of a drugstore, as the average reader could discriminate with regard to truth in such a book. An East Indian Mohammedan reasons this way: "But if the Bible is erroneous in certain parts, while other parts of it contain some truth, what tests do Christians have in their hands for distinguishing truth from error? If it is reason, then the Christian faith must openly avow itself to be based on reason and not on revelation. . . . The truth of the higher criticism and the error of the Bible being once recognized, it is difficult to see how the Chris-

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tian religion can stand for a moment." Indeed to make the human reason the criterion of revelation is plainly the very essence of rationalism, and must inevitably, as *confessed rationalists claim, invalidate the whole Book*. Sane reason may take cognizance of the evidence upon which revelation rests, but the contents of revelation may be above, or paradoxical to reason. From an evangelical standpoint man is viewed as a fallen being. His reason, like all his other faculties, has been injured, and is not and never has been since the fall an infallible or sufficient guide. To subject the Bible to each man's judgment, regarding each portion, is to assume the very opposite of this; namely, that he is competent to decide as to all the matters involved, which is very absurd.

Multitudes of people realize their own incompetency, and need and must have something more than their own judgment to lean on—something outside of themselves. They may throw off the control of the Church, and

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emancipate themselves from the authority of the Bible; but it will be only to cast aside all restraint, or to accept the authority of a Dowie, or a Mother Eddy, or the Book of Mormon, or higher critical scholarship, or some other modern or ancient delusion.

It is not sufficient to answer that whatever truth the Bible contains is authoritative, as it appeals to the religious feelings, the intuitions, or reason of each man, because in this way you make these fallible faculties the judges rather than the servants of truth, and we all know that all these endowments in men are very variable and unreliable. They differ in persons, and in the same persons at different times, as their literary or other tastes differ; and consequently if we had no other than this very fallible Bible which the historical critics offer us, which is subject to the fallible, ever-differing feelings, intuitions, and reason of men, we would be without any general, permanent, ethical, or doctrinal standard; and the Christian public would be

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at once in a state of moral and religious anarchy. The drift of society is to-day strongly in that direction. Individualism is becoming rampant. "Every man his own pope," is the motto of many. Men are now in an unusual manner manifesting their utter lack of respect for the authority of society's unwritten laws by their sodden vices; for the authority of civil government by their many crimes and the establishing of mob rule and lynch law; for the authority of the Church by ignoring her rules and regulations, and their open denial of her right to interfere with the practices or beliefs of her membership, or even her ministry. Probably it will be difficult for many to determine whether the modern views which men entertain regarding the Bible and its authority are the cause or the effect of this present unhappy condition of affairs.

According to Professor H. C. Sheldon, of Boston University School of Theology, even the Church must no longer take the Bible as



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its standard of faith, but rather “Christian consciousness.” To do otherwise would be a “species of tyranny and usurpation.” He uses these words: “To impose as matter of belief what is not demanded by the educated reason and feeling of the Christian community is a species of tyranny and usurpation. Legitimate Church authority must follow in the wake of Christian consciousness.”\* It is difficult to conceive of a suggestion better calculated to introduce error and anarchy into the Church of God than this. It was in following “in the wake of the so-called educated reason and feeling of the Christian community,” or “Christian consciousness,” that the Roman, Greek, and Liberal Churches were led to adopt their distinctive, false, and unbiblical forms of belief, and which still leads them to retain them. It is only by holding fast to the Bible as containing in fixed and stereotyped terms the permanent truths of religion, that an individual or a Church can

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\*Sheldon, System of Christian Doctrine, p. 151.

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have any safe anchorage. But the modern mind resents this.

It would seem that the "modern mind" is diseased; that it is suffering from a severe attack of ego-mania.

"It [the modern mind] can not make itself the slave of men," Dr. Denney, a mild higher critic, tells us, "not even though the men are Peter and Paul and John; no, not even though it were the Son of man Himself. It resents dictation, not willfully nor wantonly, but because it must; and it resents it all the more when it claims to be inspired." All of this shows that the modern mind is in a bad way—irrational, afflicted with an inherited malady which Paul properly diagnosed when he said "the carnal mind [modern mind] is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be."\* It is very observable that these men who "resent dictation" on the part of man or God assume much authority for

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\* Romans viii, 7.

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their own opinions, and substitute the inerrancy of their own feelings, conscience, or reason for the inerrancy of the precious Word of God.

The Bible has much weight of authority with men who view it properly, because many of its truths not only appeal powerfully to their reason and conscience, but because they are all proven by the inspiration of the writers; and the Book as a Book is authoritative as the voice of God through them. "There is a world of difference," President Cyrus Northrop says, "between saying this thing is true because God said it, and God said this because it is true. The former carries with it the certainty of 'Thus saith the Lord.' The latter is of no validity, because many things may be true which God never said."

How often we need a "Thus saith the Lord" to settle our faith and quiet our fears! Our souls find repose in the promises of the Bible, not because the promises are au-

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thoritative in themselves, but because we believe

“The voice that rolls the stars along  
Speaks all the promises.”

We accept the two hundred or more precepts of Jesus, not because all of them appeal generally to the reason or conscience, for they do not, but because they come to us not as the voice of fallible man, but the voice of the infallible God.

If we put aside the Holy Scriptures as the authoritative Word of God, we shall have remaining no test of morals, no criterion of truth, no standard of appeal, no certain voice of authority, and no sure foundation for our faith.

Unlike the real Bible, this one makes very light demands on our faith. It is not necessary that we should believe in the first eleven chapters of Genesis, the history presented in the Hexateuch, the virgin birth of Jesus, many of His miracles, or even His infallibility. We seem to be required to believe

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mainly in two things; first, the German Idealism that has been forced into it; and, second, the infallibility of the scholarship that has remade it.

These scholars appear to think that, if their book suffers any loss in these ways, it is still very valuable because of its SCIENTIFIC CHARACTER. They inform us that our old Bible is not scientific, and that it was not given for "instruction in any science, even psychology and the science of religion."\* This, of course, is news to some of us who have supposed that it contained in some sense God's science if not man's, and that if it reserved a *piéd à terre* for anything, it did so for instruction in the science of religion, containing as it does not only a Divine revelation of religion, but a vast accumulation of observations and deductions on that subject covering many centuries. If, however, they are correct, why do they attempt to put into scientific form what is wholly unscientific?

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\* Coe, *Spiritual Life*, p. 15.

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Would any one seek to do that with "Pilgrim's Progress?" and will it not be time enough for them to give us a scientifically reconstructed Bible when science shall have reconstructed a Raphael's Transfiguration, an Apollo Belvedere, or an Iliad?

But can they ever produce such a Bible? Never. Science is ordered knowledge. Has the Bible, with its phenomena of revelation, inspiration, prophecies, miracles, and theophanies, become ordered knowledge to them? True science never goes beyond its own sphere, and never attempts to subject spiritual phenomena to material principles. Scriptural, spiritual phenomena are admittedly out of the domain of science. Briggs confesses that it is "difficult to adjust these Divine influences to the principles of scientific study. The purely personal relations of Yahweh to His people are matters into which the scientific historian does not venture."\*

If that is true, then the scientific historian

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\*The Study of Holy Scriptures, p. 536.

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and critic should not attempt to reconstruct the Bible until these Divine influences can be scientifically dealt with. What Drummond asserts when referring to another matter is true here: "You can not describe the life of kings or arrange their kingdoms from the cellar beneath the palace. 'Art,' as Browning reminds us,

'Must fumble for the whole, once fixing on a part  
However poor surpass the fragment and aspire  
To reconstruct thereby the ultimate entire.' "

They claim to give us a reconstructed Bible, and yet are not able to build higher than the cellar walls.

They pretend to solve the Biblical problem, and yet leave out the main factors. Whatever they produce will be necessarily a miserable substitute for the truly inspired Word of God, a book the common people could neither read, understand, nor depend upon. It would be as varied in its meanings as the opinions of the critics themselves; a

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real polychrome book, with its colors changing constantly with the changing complexion of their minds. Like all scientific works, it would become antiquated at least every decade; for we all know that the ordered knowledge of one age becomes the ordered ignorance of the next, and that the critics of one generation annihilate the results of the preceding.

President Woodrow Wilson, of Princeton University, holds that the achievements of the physical scientists have "been so stupendous that all other studies have been set staring at their methods, imitating their ways of thought, ogling their results." This folly, which comes in so many forms of study and investigation, he further shows is the work of the "noxious, intoxicating gas which has somehow got into the lungs of the rest of us from out the crevices of his (the scientist's) workshop."\* I imagine that the modern Biblical critic has built his study a little too close

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\*Forum, December, 1896.



## or the Residuum

to the physical scientist's workshop, or that his lungs are too weak to repel the evil effects of the "noxious, intoxicating gas."

But is it God's plan for us to have such a book? I think not, on account of things I have elsewhere mentioned, and because it is not reasonable to suppose that He would have given us our Bible by *inspired* men, and then give us another by *uninspired* men, such as the new one, which is said to be so much superior to the first; and chiefly because of the *nature* of the one He has blest us with so long, which was clearly never intended to be subjected to scientific analysis, or to be mechanically reconstructed.

There are things that are evidently intended to be appreciated, revered, and enjoyed, but not to be roughly handled or too closely scrutinized; a dewdrop searched by a sunbeam passes into mist; a rose dissected loses its beauty of color and form; a tree fades if one digs much about its roots; a man dies if the surgeon feels too freely about his

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heart; and what is best in a poem evades the exact scientific critic. The life of anything is a secret. "He who analyzes it kills it." The Bible is something more than an inanimate body of truth; it is a living Book which pulses with life. Its words are "spirit and life." What is most essential and best disappears the moment it is improperly approached and handled. And what is left of the Bible after these hyper-critics have gone through their grinding and sifting, or dissecting and dissolving processes, is no more the real living Word of God than bran and shorts and tailings are the living grain that went in at the hopper; or the ashes and gases which the surgeon or chemist has preserved in jars on his shelf and labeled "A Man of 150 Pounds" is the living man. The Jehoiakim knife has cut it to pieces; it has gone through the critic's retort; it is a dead book—to *him*. It is no more the real Bible than Thomas Jefferson's "wee little Bible," which he produced by cutting out with his penknife what

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his reason and conscience did not approve. Jefferson's Bible closes with the verse, "There laid they Jesus and rolled a great stone to the door of the sepulcher and departed." Jefferson's book leaves the stone there; and there the newer criticism (when logical), with which our so-called evangelical critics are in close sympathy, leaves the stone.

We are given to understand that their new book, as it lies in their mind or is being constructed, is a metamorphosed Bible, or rather

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or what is left of the old out-of-date Bible after it has passed through their critical crucible. When one examines closely "The Positive Basis of the Theology of the Future," by Dean Fremantle; "Christian Dogma and the Christian Life," by Professor A. Sabatier; "How Much is Left of the Old Doctrines," by Washington Gladden; "The Study of Holy Scripture," by Briggs—all evangelicals; to say nothing

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of extensive and more radical works such as "The Dictionary of the Bible," edited by James Hastings; and the "Encyclopædia Biblica," edited by Cheyne and Black, he will be convinced that what is left, after they have put the Holy Scriptures through their critical sifting process, which is called by Briggs the "substance," is of very little account. "What is left" is a very empty, much mutilated, emasculated book, whose prophets are mostly false, some of whom, like the second Isaiah, have forged their credentials; whose priests are superstitious tricksters; whose apostles accommodate themselves to a low public opinion; whose authors often rival Chatterton in the boldness of their forgeries, and the author of Gulliver's Travels in the extravagance of their fabrications; and whose documents, frequently simulated, and though supposed to be archaic, are found to be comparatively modern. "What is left" is a book which has lost, for the most part, its historicity, its intellectual security, its moral per-

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fectness, its spiritual vividness, its doctrinal worth, its supernatural quality, and its Divine authoritative character. What is more than all, the book has lost out of it, except in a very uncertain and illusory way, the heart of it all—Jesus the Christ, the Eternal Son of God. And His true followers say in sorrow with Mary, “They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid Him.” The book has lost its chief characteristics; it is no longer God’s Bible; it is a comparatively worthless modern makeshift.

The higher critics, away to the front, look upon their Bible much in this way; but their professedly evangelical followers, while using the principles and the methods of the former pooh-pooh at their conclusions, though they are vastly inferior to their leaders as to logical consistency and scholarship.

They started out to purify and rectify the Bible; to expose its errors and to label its mistakes; and they have so much confidence in their own splendid scientific scholarship and

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the exact working of their methods, that no matter how much of the Holy Scriptures they throw away as refuse, they are very sure that what remains is a "residuum" of very great worth, and that by some hocus-pocus the New Bible is very much more valuable than the Old. "The smaller Bible has gone," Dr. George A. Gordon declares with apparently a grateful heart, "and the immeasurably greater Bible has come." They do not tell us where they got the material which they have put into it to swell it to such large proportions, and they mystify us by saying that it is less Divine than the Old, but more human; less actual, but more imaginative; less miraculous, but more scientific, and therefore more valuable. It would seem that their wonderful process has condensed all that is essential and best in the out-of-date Bible into a Scriptural tincture, which is to them much more valuable than it was in its primitive, raw condition, as it came from the hand of God and His inspired penmen.

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They remind me of the original homeopaths, who held that the more attenuated a remedy became, the more powerful it would be as a cure.

Senator Hoar, being a Unitarian, does not rate the new Bible so highly, though he seems to be contented with it. "Higher Criticism," he is reported as saying, "has eliminated from the Bible all that is of any importance except the Lord's Prayer; but that being left untouched, is sufficient for the wants of Christendom." What a small portion of the Bible seems to be "sufficient" for the "wants" of these critics! Any way, I am glad that they have left Christendom even that morsel to bless itself with.

It is wonderful that they should all be so happy over what is left, when there is so little there of what their godly fathers and mothers prized so highly, and of what supported them in life and comforted them in death. But Mark Tapley was never better pleased with things than they are over the

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residuum, or than they will be should it really be reduced to the dimensions of the Lord's Prayer; and should even that escape them, and they should have only the covers and their "dearly bought scientific method" left, it is not unfair to assume they would still be light-hearted, as the optimistic householder was who, when asked in court if the fire had totally destroyed his house, replied in a cheerful way, "No, we have the cellar left."

They seem pleased with their destructive and reconstructive work; but if the "Bible is the greatest benefit," as Kant says, "the race has ever experienced," and "every attempt to belittle it or to do away with it entirely is a crime against humanity," then they have occasion to be sad-hearted, and not light-hearted.

How far they may be able to popularize their rabbinical production, and thus further complete this "crime against humanity," no one can tell. But should they ever succeed in climbing up into Moses' seat, holding the



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key of knowledge, and be permitted to thrust their new Biblical, Critical Talmud between the common people and the true Bible, it would be the darkest day the Christian world has even seen. They would make the Word of God of none effect by their new traditions, as Christ claimed the scribes and the Pharisees did by their old traditions. They would give those who ask for bread a stone, and those who ask for fish a serpent.



# A Defective Method Unassured Results

“ Science falsely so called.”—PAUL.

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THE term "scientific method" is very frequently used these days by an affected scholarship to designate the mode of procedure of the higher criticism in dealing with the Bible. They speak of it as something very new, mysterious, and magical. It is, however, nothing but the old, familiar inductive method, and stands for the collecting and arranging of facts and the reaching of valid conclusions through them. The value of these conclusions will depend largely upon the care exercised in gathering and comparing the facts, and the exactness with which each is weighed and measured.

This scientific or inductive method does not rest in scientific theories or guesses or

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opinions. It reaches verified knowledge. "Science is ascertained facts."

Christian scholars have no objection to the use of a true scientific method in Biblical study, no matter how modern the appliances may be. They use it themselves, and claim that when employed thoroughly the absolute integrity of the Holy Scriptures is fully vindicated.

Their great objection to the higher critical method is that it is clearly unscientific; that it is worked out in an illogical and inconclusive manner; and that the results are uncertain and unsatisfactory. Yet the impression is being made constantly that it simply applies intelligent and correct processes which have been successfully used in other fields of literature, into a careful, unbiased examination of the Holy Scriptures, as to their sources, dates, authorship, literary and historical character, and other important matters. But a close and honest investigation of its theories, assumptions, dogmas, and funda-

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mental principles and workings will manifest the system in a very different light. It will be seen that these followers of Eichhorn and students of Spinoza, Ewald, Hegel, Vatke, Baur, Graf, Kuenen, and Wellhausen are really working out speculative, philosophic, and scientific theories and principles. In doing this they adopt new views respecting inspiration, miracles, prophecy, and various doctrines. All these theories and principles and ideas they arrange and adjust to each other, so as to work in harmony and to produce results which they claim are as exact and certain as that of a chemical formula or a mechanical device. Indeed, we may look upon the system as a machine which, from its first invention by Astruc or Eichhorn, has been gradually developed and improved until it has been brought to its present condition of marvelous efficiency. They say it does its work with as much ease and efficiency as a McCormick harvester; and that it has cut down much grain in Old Testament fields al-

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ready. It promises, judging from the work so far accomplished, to do just as effective work on New Testament ground, where at one time it was supposed it could do nothing, because of the sacred nature of the soil, and the more rugged character of the rocky facts that covered it. It is doing what it was intended to do. What surprises one is that it should be so destructive in its results under the manipulations of men who make a great show of orthodoxy.

Considered as a process and worked by these, its deceptiveness and dangerousness lie somewhat in the esoteric meanings it gives to words, the evangelical phrases with which it garbs its naturalistic speculations, its many half truths, its professed respect for the supernatural as such, and the cardinal doctrines, its obtrusive display of human opinions, and the seeming opportunity it offers for independent and intelligent research. Its promoters and advocates decorate each other's brows with an aureole of erudition;



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and they all seem to agree with Napoleon in thinking that great success lies in a constant great *noise*.

The honest truth-seeker, however, who, charmed by its enchantments, enters its labyrinthine ways, soon finds himself under the control of a masterful system, and treading paths he never expected to follow. The road opens before him, and if he would return he feels something pushing him from behind. It is not long usually till he reaches the end of the way, and he finds himself facing an abyss—agnosticism, or at best naturalism. A system that deceives those who trust themselves to its guidance, or leads its votaries to deceive others, can not be a superior one. This acts both ways. It not only entraps unwary truth-seekers in its cobwebs, but many of its exponents advise their students to accept its results, but not to preach them. Honest teachers are not afraid to have their views made public.

Any one who will trace the history of lit-

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erary and historical criticisms for the last century must conclude with W. Robertson Nicoll, a distinguished writer who starts out as a higher critic, but fails to follow on to logical conclusions, when he says, "There are very few real principles in criticism, principles that can be depended upon."\* This is certainly true in regard to English literature where the exploits of the critics have for the most part been absolute failures, when the real worth of their principles and methods could be fairly tested.

It is just as true respecting Biblical criticism. The critics themselves, especially in Germany, are beginning to see this. Professor Eduard König, of Bonn, a critic of great eminence, in a book recently published, entitled "The Most Recent Principles of Old Testament Criticism," attacks vigorously and ridicules the famous nine criteria by which so many critics are judging the text, literary form, and contents of the Old Testament.

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\*The Church's One Foundation, p. 78.

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“But what is practice in interpretation,” he asks, among other things, “if that interpretation is not practiced in accordance with correct laws?” The theories and principles of Wellhausen are exposed as vicious by Professor Klostermann, of the University of Kiel; and Harnack, a critic *sui-generis*, makes war against the methods and many of the most important results of the other scholars.

Professor W. H. Green, of Princeton, an anti-higher critic, who has never been answered, applied the same criteria by which the higher critics attempted to prove the composite character of the Pentateuch to the parables of the Prodigal Son and the Good Samaritan, and demonstrated their compound character with equal success. Another scholar applied the same principle to Burns’s poem, “To a Mountain Daisy,” and showed that Burns could not have composed the greater part of it.

The unscholarly and unscientific character of the higher critics themselves was recently

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made manifest in the case of the Cairene Ecclesiasticus document, to which Professor D. S. Margoliouth,\* of Oxford University, calls special attention. All the leading Hebrew scholars claimed that this document, which was found a little before the year 1900, belonged to the second century B. C., and that it was the one from which “the existing Greek and Syriac translations were derived.” In their dissecting and dating of the document they used the same line of principles and theories that they use in dealing with the Bible. To their utter disgust and confusion it was soon proven that they were all wrong, and that it was a forged document, and that it belonged to the eleventh century A. D., and had been compiled out of the existing translations.

History tells us that in the days when Neander, Strauss, and Baur were at their best a humble German pastor named Meinhold retired to a quiet monastery, and while there

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\*Lines of Defense of the Biblical Revelation, p. 288.

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wrote out a story of the burning of a witch just after the time of Luther, and then passed it off as an old manuscript which he had found among some old papers. It kept the German scholars busy for a year or more examining and analyzing the document. Then Meinhold wrote: "Reliable critics you are of the Greek of the New Testament books. The book you have been reading and praising is the production of my own brain in my own study in the last five years. You were not able to discover the deception and detect the forgery in your own language. You may be dismissed as critics of the books of the New Testament."

The critics have bankrupted their resources in trying to maintain their early destructive work on the literature and history of the Romans, Greeks, Persians, and East Indians. Recent archaeological discoveries, however, have compelled them to change their views regarding the facts, dates, and composition of the various forms of literature in al-

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most all fields, and to go back to the older and more conservative and traditional opinions. Late discoveries in Greece have led them to surrender their pet theories regarding the composite nature of the Homeric poems, which Tennyson combated with so much success, and the mythical and fictitious character of early Greek history. Roman history, which their false methods led them to regard as a fairy tale, they now conclude for the most part to be quite reliable. For many years Oriental scholars supposed Buddha to be a Sun-myth. Two monuments, however, as old as 300 years B. C., discovered recently, fully restore his historical character. Even as prominent a higher critic as Peters acknowledges that recent archæological discoveries have led the leading scholars of to-day to push back the dates of the sacred books, to accept the traditional view in a modified form, and to maintain unity of authorship. These finds have been more damaging to the conclusions of Biblical critics, than to those working in

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any other field; but external evidence seems to have little or no influence on their minds. They are almost wholly led by subjective criteria. Diction and style and the historical imagination have more weight with them than the oft-repeated statements of Scripture or the many facts brought to light by the spade of the antiquarian.

Notwithstanding those amenable to reason have been compelled to admit that many of their former claims against the historicity of the Bible have no foundation whatever. They reported years ago that the flood was a legend; that Abraham was a tribal nebulousity; that his battle with the kings was a fable; that Melchizedek, Chedor-laomer, Amraphel, Sargon, and Belshazzar were fictions; that the Hittites never existed as a civilized people; that the Babylonians of Abraham's day were barbarians; and the Egyptians of Moses' day illiterate. Even George Adam Smith said in his Yale lectures, "Archæology contributes the results that

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Moses did not know how to read or write.”\* But scholarly men who have used the best appliances for reaching “assured results” have proven that these and multitudes of other claims are utterly false.

Professor F. Hommel, the eminent philologist, of Munich University, after showing in a masterly manner that the Pentateuch must have been written as the Bible assumes, because of the many archæological and philological confirmations, refers to lists of names in Numbers, saying: “These lists have been shown by the external evidence of tradition preserved in inscriptions of the second millennium B. C. to be genuine and trustworthy documents, before which historical theories built up by modern critics of the Pentateuch must collapse irretrievably.”† “Once more, therefore,” to use the words of Professor A. H. Sayce, of Oxford, “the light that has come from the monuments of the past has

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\*Stenographic Report, *Zion's Herald*.

†*The Ancient Hebrew Tradition*, p. 301.



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been fatal to the pretensions of critical skepticism. It is not the discoveries of the higher criticism, but the old traditions that have been confirmed by archæological research.”

Professor D. G. Lyon, of Harvard University, an Assyriologist of much repute, referring to Delitzsch’s late extravagant and false representation of Babylonian discoveries, claims that one of the delights of Assyrian study is its many incidental confirmations of Biblical history.

“If any one has lost faith in the Bible,” to use the words of Professor Hilprecht, of Pennsylvania University, one of the most distinguished archæologists of to-day, “let him go to Babylon, and he will find it again.”

Dr. Albert T. Clay, Curator of the Babylonian department of the same university, holds that the events took place at Babylon as the Bible records, and not as the critics have contended; that the lowest excavations show civilization in advanced stages, and that there is every reason to believe that future

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excavations will bring to light the most, if not all of the history recorded in the Old Testament.

Many of the leading New Testament critics contended for a long time that none of the four Gospels had any existence, except as oral tradition, prior to the third, or at the earliest the second century. The evidence which has been produced of late years to the contrary has, however, forced most of them to recede from that position; and now the question is put beyond dispute by the positive testimony of the famous Sinaitic palimpsest manuscript discovered in 1896, and dated 150 A. D., or earlier, and containing the four Gospels in Syriac, which proves that their contention was wholly wrong, and that they are in error in claiming that the Gospel of John was not held by the early Church of equal rank with Matthew, Mark, and Luke. Some are wondering what the critics would do should an antiquarian's spade turn over the books of the entire New Testament, with dates about 80

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A. D. But we may be sure that, being like the Antediluvians, full of "every imagination," they would pass their defeat in silence and proceed to evolve new theories to distract the Church for another generation. One who has taken the pains to count up their exploded theories, claims that they number, within a limited period, over four hundred.

Camille Flammarion, the eminent French astronomer, was for many years a pronounced Spiritualist, and believed that the spirit of Galileo was his guide and informer. Some time ago, as reported by the press, he turned his back on Spiritualism and the spirit of Galileo, because the latter told him that Jupiter had four satellites and Saturn eight, while really Jupiter has five and Saturn nine. Flammarion looked through a modern telescope with his own eyes and saw things as they are, and concluded that the alleged spirit of Galileo was a champion liar. Many students are beginning to detect the false representation of higher criticism, and not a few

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have openly renounced the system. Professor A. H. Sayce, the famous archæologist, once an ardent higher critic, gives a long list of reasons which he says "preclude me from offering any longer the same welcome to the method and conclusions of the Higher Criticism that I was prepared to accord to them fifteen years ago." Principal Cave also ventures to question the higher critical authorities, which he tells us he "some years ago cordially, nay, enthusiastically, believed in." "But maturer," he adds, "and more protracted examination has led me utterly to distrust the more serious results announced by these authorities." One only wonders that more scholars do not renounce a system whose "assured results" in so many cases have been proven worthless.

But surely they have some vigorous and substantial facts to support the conclusions they have reached. This is serious work, being done by professedly great scholars; work that is not only to turn Israel's history

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on its head, but, if proved correct, to upset all our Christian creeds, revolutionize our Churches, and rewrite our Bible.

One waits with much interest to see what new rugged facts they have found, what new documents they have unearthed, or what Scriptural cryptogram they have deciphered; but he waits in vain. He wades through the writings of Driver, George Adam Smith, Duff, Wellhausen, Kuenen, Harper, Toy, Briggs, and Haupt and others for anything in the form of evidence against the genuineness, authenticity, or general credibility of the Bible, which is, even by their own claim, stronger than a probability. Gardner complains because "Church men" ask for anything more than "probable evidence." "They set us," he groans out, "an impossible task." His explanation is: "In ancient history everything rests on comparison of probabilities."

Is there a judge in this Republic but "Judge Lynch," that would hang a worthless

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Negro tramp on simply “probable evidence” —the evidence upon which the weather man rests his prognostications?

Yet on such evidence they would change the entire order and character of the Holy Scriptures, and ask us to surrender our confidence in their integrity, when we believe them to be supernaturally inspired, and are resting our hope of eternal life on the infallible character of the promises, truths, and facts which they record. They transform the Book of Jonah into an allegory; the Book of Ruth into an idyl; the Book of Daniel into fiction, and the writer into a forger; the Books of Chronicles into manufactured history; and other books of the Bible in a similar way; and give us all kinds of reasons—tentative suggestions, conjectures, suppositions, *a priori* assumptions, tendencies, theories, and possibilities, but *no facts; nothing stronger than probabilities.*

They have hunted everywhere for evidence—especially among their “feelings”

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and “intuitions;” have dug about the roots and examined the stems of the Aramaic, Hebrew, Arabic, Assyrian, Babylonian, Egyptian, Greek, and Roman languages; have scrutinized old documents; have studied clay tablets; have deciphered hieroglyphics; have explored tombs; have unearthed ruins; have searched dust heaps, and have even looked into the Bible itself with their microscopes; and though they have furnished us with human opinions many yards long, which are not worth a straw as *evidence*, they have not furnished us with even one well established fact against the integrity of the Word of God; nothing, according to their own confession, stronger than probabilities, which at the best can prove nothing with any certainty.

Their claim that such evidence is cumulative has no force. No one can make up a total probability by advancing arguments “each of which is improbable in itself,” no matter how much he may increase their number. The probabilities they offer are to the

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most sane and reverent investigators *palpable improbabilities*. These are very numerous and unsatisfactory, and weary the average student, who wants certainties on which to rest his faith. If some profound scholars and expert reasoners can repose their souls on a revelation which is determined by a "balance of probabilities," the common people are utterly unable to do so.

Scarcely any of the questions raised now are new to the intelligent student, whose memory goes back twenty-five or thirty years, or who informs himself through books published as far back as those times, excepting the application of the historical development hypotheses to the *entire Bible*. Matthew Arnold's "Literature and Dogma," published in 1873, would be a fresh and interesting book to any youthful higher critic of today, but for the fact that he would see from the title-page that it was in circulation before he was born. To the men well along in life who have been more or less familiar with the



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skepticism of the past—with the philosophical principles of Hegel, the development ideas of Baur, the mythical views of Strauss, and the legendary theories of Rénan, almost all that is thought to be fresh and up-to-date appears very stale, moldy, and heavy with age—a simple rehash. And they claim that these critics who are seeking to carry their unhallowed end, under the disguise of science, and even in “official religious robes to pare away the carved work of the Temple of Revelation and undermine its claim to Divine origin,” are by no means original as to their work or their material; that they have ransacked all the infidel graveyards of the ages for arguments; and that with them the very bones of Porphyry and his successors are sacred relics, with power to transform history into romance, prophecy into past history, and facts into fables. They insist that almost all this disbelief of the Bible, together with much unconfessed Universalism and Unitarianism which is inside the orthodox

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Churches of to-day was outside thirty years ago; and that what was rank *unbelief* then, is now *evangelical Biblical criticism* thrashing over heretical, musty old straw with an improved modern evolution machine, which produces more dust for our eyes than good grain for our sacks.

As one seeing superstitious Christians worshipping the bronze statues of St. Peter and the Virgin at Rome, once the images of Jupiter and Venus, naturally exclaims, "This is Christianized paganism," these scholars, viewing all this, cry out, "This is *orthodoxized unbelief*."

Scientific scholars, however, object to higher criticism, not simply because it is old, or new, or heretical, but on account of its unscientific character and its utter failure to sustain its contentions. After subjecting the results of the critical school to searching scientific tests, Professor Sayce, in his new book, concludes: "It follows from all this that the 'critical' method is scientifically un-

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sound, and its results, accordingly, will not stand the application of a scientific test. It is quite as much an artificial creation as was the Ptolemaic System. . . . And the increase of knowledge has not been favorable to results of 'criticism.' It has proved them to be nothing but the baseless fabric of subjective imagination."

Dr. John Smith is of the same mind. He claims that, though higher criticism has sacrificed everything to the so-called scientific evolution theory, "she has been deserted by the science for which she has sacrificed so much. At least she can not allege to-day the support of an undisputed scientific belief."



The New Scholarship  
and the Pretentious  
Critics

“I beseech you, brethren, by the bowels of Christ,  
to think that you may be wrong.—CROMWELL.

## The New Scholarship and the Pretentious Critics

THE unbelief of a century ago had usually rough words as well as rough treatment for Holy Writ; but it is now somewhat changed in its manner, if not in its methods. As represented by the "New Scholarship," it has now often fair words and complimentary and even patronizing speech for what it refers to in high-sounding terms as the "Sacred Oracles," the "Divine Revelation," or the "Divine Library;" but when it comes to dealing closely with the Bible there is the same old, rough, rude, and ruthless usage, and free-lance style of attack. Its reverence for the Scriptures is to be judged, I think, by its treatment of them, rather than by its professions of respect. When a critic writes in his Preface, "The following pages will be found

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to be reverent and well-considered statement of the views presented,"\* and then proceeds to present views which utterly destroy the historicity of most of the Old Testament, sifts it of so much that is prophetic and miraculous and substantially represents many of its authors as forgers and deceivers, can the reader be blamed if all this suggests to him General Joab's kindly greeting, while the daggered hand of the fierce warrior was feeling for General Abner's fifth rib? Indeed, the real higher critic, whatever he may say in praise of the "sublime Revelation," takes it as an essential principle that he must lay aside all awe and treat the Bible as any other form of literature; and when he gets down to work he has seemingly no more respect for God's Word than a French Revolutionist would have for a discrowned king, or an antiquary for a heap of rubbish. And he has still less respect for those who call attention to the sacred character of the Holy Scriptures, or

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\*Terry, *Moses and the Prophets*, p. 7.



## Pretentious Critics

who attempt to defend them. He always fights such in swashbuckler style, and woe to the ignoramus who comes within reach of his scholarly battleax! He is very sensitive to *criticism* himself, but takes great liberties with dead heroes. He cuts up and quarters Moses and robs him of most of his glory, and hews Isaiah into pieces as if he were another Agag; but woe to the man that would question his rights, or circumscribe his liberties, or dare rob him of one beam of his higher critical glory! He evidently imagines that all should think as he thinks, and in the boldest manner asserts that all who do not are un-scholarly or defenders of "illiteracy." He mocks at "Bibliolatry," forgetting seemingly that it may be better to worship a book than to worship one's self or to make a fetich of scholarship.

A true scholar no doubt belongs to the world's best aristocracy; but he is usually modest, and keeps in mind Voltaire's thought that an educated man should be unwilling to

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view the world from the spire of his own particular steeple.

It may not be out of place for me to suggest to you, dear critics, that if you can not admit those who reject your dictum into your scholarly "Four Hundred," you should at least deal gently with them, and not answer their arguments with opprobrious epithets. "Ye suffer fools, gladly seeing ye yourselves are wise." Why not suffer these also? Many of them studied with you in the same universities, and received their honors from the same institutions of learning. You may have climbed away up as critics far above them; but why claim that you can see the moss growing on their bare, bent, Biblical backs? They are presumptuous enough to think that they can see as far into the millstone of higher criticism as the men who pick it. They think that their heads are even-balanced, though they may not be as high up or as luminous with the light of the new scholarship as some of our youthful critics of threescore

## Pretentious Critics

years or more might desire. They claim also that great critics are not always great scholars; that Tom Paine was a great critic, and anticipated more than three-fourths of the "assured results" of higher criticism, and yet did not even possess a Bible when he wrote his "Age of Reason." It may be, as they say, that there is a shade of affectation in all these loud claims of great scholarship, for why should you imagine that the scholars of this day are so very distinguished? Is there one in your list of living scholars that can be compared with a Rénan or a Strauss as to genius, or to a Tom Paine as to clear logic, or to a Voltaire as to wit? What thing of importance has any of you discovered? What new truth have you revealed? What old important error have you newly called attention to? What do you give us that you do not get from each other, and what do any of you have which did not come from men who were living forty years ago or more, besides your thorough working pet evolution theory?

## The New Scholarship and

There are hundreds of men of the most distinguished scholarship who are recognized as experts in their various departments of learning or research who have no sympathy with you in your Biblical views, and yet are your equals in every regard, if not your superiors. You ignore them, and claim everything in regard to scholarship. Your exaggerated boastings remind us of the Boston patriot who, when asked how far his Nation's boundaries extended into the Atlantic, replied, "All the way across." But nothing is proven by an array of learning on either side. If all the scholars of the world were shown to be disbelievers in the Christian religion, it would not prove it to be untrue. It would simply prove that the scholarship of the world was opposed to Christianity.

If you could demonstrate beyond a doubt that all the scholars in the world were higher critics, that would not prove the rest of the world wrong. Things have stood in such relations before. The "best scholarship" stood

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against Christ at Jerusalem; against Paul on Mars' Hill; against Wyclif and his peasant priests all over England; and against Wesley at Oxford. It stands to-day for the superstitions of the Greek Church in Russia; for papal infallibility and Romish mummeries throughout Italy and over half of Christendom; for ritualism in England; for infidelity in France; and for rationalism in Germany and Holland. History teaches us that reason and argument and revelation prove what pertains to religion, rather than any array of scholarship. The Christian believer has no fear, even if the world's learning should be against him; but he covets the service of the scholar for His Master, and consequently he will pray for an enlightened and sanctified scholarship to lead the Church to fresh victories.

These pretentious critics not only claim, in the most arrogant manner, to monopolize the scholarship of the world; but assume an authority for scholarship beyond that of any

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Church council or the most infallible of the popes. They seem not only to seek to do what the schoolmen tried to accomplish in the Middle Ages, namely, to rationalize dogma; but to create a new dogmatism, and to transfer, as the schoolmen did for three centuries or more, authority from the Church to the

### UNIVERSITY.

A few years ago it was urged that the Christian Churches should have their own colleges and theological schools, so as to impart a Christian character to education. Now Dr. Harper, voicing the aspirations of certain "liberal" educators, announces that neither the State nor the Church has any right to control a professor's investigations or conclusions. President Hyde, at a notable gathering at Northwestern University recently, said: "For a bishop, minister, trustee, or pious layman to interfere with the teaching of a competent university professor on theological grounds, is as wanton and brutal an

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act as it would be for a prize fighter to step into the pulpit and knock down the minister because he happened to have a bigger fist." Our educators and Biblical scholars want large liberty, but they are not satisfied to be left alone; they seem to think that all authority in all denominational matters that pertain to education inheres in them, for they have organized themselves into a "Religious Educational Association," with Dr. Harper as the inspiring spirit, whose object, as it is generally understood, is to control our institutions of learning, and leaven them, and even our Sunday-schools and our religious literature, with their peculiar Biblical and liberal views. Is it possible that in these days of merging and gigantic combinations we are to have a great

EDUCATIONAL AND BIBLICAL TRUST,  
with the trade-mark SCHOLARSHIP? If so, it will be the most dangerous monopoly ever devised; a greater menace to religion than the

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Steel, Sugar, Steamship, or Standard Oil Trusts can possibly be to trade or commerce. It would be the merging of all things intellectual and spiritual into the grip of a close corporation, which would attempt to furnish the public with the results of their wonderful Cabinet labors from time to time. And woe to the land whose educational leaders form a "Guild!" "It means religious stagnation and hypocrisy, ecclesiastical mummery and shameless nepotism; it means theological craft and quibble, spiritual desolation and death; it means Judaism again, or the dreary scholasticism of the Middle Ages." But the times seem ripe for such a movement. Our little scholars appear to be paralyzed in the presence of so much pretentious critical learning, and hesitate to quote Scripture or repeat the Creed until they learn what portions of the Divine Word these Biblical master mechanics who take it to pieces and then reconstruct it shall stamp with their approval or disapproval. They hesitate even to say



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their prayers until they find out through these experts, who appear to be a self-constituted BIBLICAL CLEARING-HOUSE as to what promises will be honored and what protested at the Bank of Heaven, and as to the nature and amount of their deposits. Why not regard these Rabbinical teachers as literary and critical deities? Possibly some of them would object, but the authority which most of them assume would seem to require it. Dr. Briggs says: "That portion of the Bible that they [scholars] decide is the Word of God is inspired; the rest is not." Having brushed aside as so many cobwebs all the traditions of men and the authority of the Church, and having punctured that bubble, the infallibility of the Bible, the bulk of them claim to have reached infallible results, and are prepared not only to accept perfect freedom for themselves, but to demand universal submission to their decrees. The odor of modern scholarship is about them, and men must submit to them, or be *academically ostracized*.

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Even Holy Scripture must not stand in the way of their magisterial utterances. Professor H. G. Mitchell evidently thinks so, for he tells us that the "outcome of the investigation" as to the authorship of the Pentateuch which he has made, "is that although in parts of the Bible the Pentateuch is attributed to Moses, and such was for centuries the teaching of the Christian as well as the Jewish Church, the doctrine is based upon a mistaken tradition," and that "this conclusion" will have to be accepted, however it may affect the authority of the Pentateuch."\* Dr. Briggs is of the same mind. Referring to such of us as have the temerity to reject this new "science" and its results, he uses these words: "If these persons are unwilling to make investigations themselves, they must be content to abide the decisions that may be reached by scholars." So now we have the final decision of the Supreme Court of learning; submit yourselves to your masters;

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\* World Before Abraham, p. 66.

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enter their school; work their system; or humbly accept their dogmas.

We are without question, if they are correct, in a very awkward situation; between Charybdis and Scylla; between an investigation of the whole subject and the acceptance of their false conclusions. The investigation, according to their representations, is a whirlpool, very deep, almost bottomless. Dr. Warren, ex-president of Boston University, informs us that the questions involved are so profound and difficult that "not one in a thousand among mature Christian ministers in any country is equipped with the learning desirable, if not necessary, for their discussion." If that is true, the ordinary scholar should not attempt to sound the depths of such deeps; for though he might wish to be steeped to the lips in learning, he would not wish to be drowned. There are probably some, however, who would esteem it a luxury to perish in scholastic waters, like Prince Clarence in his tub of Malmsey wine.

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Then there is the Scylla horn of the dilemma. The people who allow others to do their thinking, will no doubt eagerly accept of the "assured results" of higher criticism without any investigation, and be at once numbered among the scholarly "Four Hundred;" but others will hesitate to follow them, remembering that if the blind lead the blind both are likely to fall into the ditch. Men who wish to be neither scholastically drowned nor to be Scripturally ditched, will look to see if they can not avoid both horns of this dilemma. I am sure they can. They need neither plunge into Charybdis nor perish in Scylla. If they wish, they can make use of the investigations made by the truly learned, and judge regarding these questions for themselves. Or if they do not seek to be wise above what is written in the Book itself, and are willing to accept of Jesus Christ as absolute authority respecting Scripture as well as other things, they will find themselves at the end of all perplexity, for upon nothing did

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He teach more plainly than upon that matter. Professor Howard Osgood holds that Christ settled these questions, and that all Christian scholars must abide by His decisions. I shall refer to this phase of the question further on; but I do not hesitate to say here, for myself, that while I have profound respect for true scholarship, I account the opinions of the most learned of all the ages as but the small dust of the balances when weighed against the teachings of Jesus Christ regarding any matter great or small, Scriptural or otherwise. "THAT EVERY TONGUE SHOULD CONFESS THAT JESUS CHRIST IS LORD."



# Truer Scholarship and Better Critics

“Thy sons, O Zion, against thy sons, O Greece!”—  
ZECHARIAH IX, 13.



## Truer Scholarship and Better Critics

It is never wise to sneer at anything because it has had a long history, or to attempt to stigmatize a view as traditional for the reason that it has long held sway in the minds of men generally. To be wise to-day, one has not necessarily to turn away from the wisdom of yesterday. To walk in the best path does not always mean to find a new road. In art the old masters are better teachers than the new Impressionists.

There is no reason why all this should not be as applicable to Biblical study as anything else; nor is there any ground for branding any one as a "traditionalist," as higher critics do, because he shares with the Church in all its history a belief in the Holy Scriptures as the inspired and authoritative Word of God.

Many of the most important beliefs we

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have are as old, so far as we know, as our race; and an ardent seeker after truth may entertain such beliefs as intelligently, and may account for them as scientifically, as if they were entirely new.

Conservative evangelical Christian scholars of to-day take the Bible to be what it claims to be, and what God's people from the first believed it to be, not merely because that view is traditional, though that is strong presumptive proof in its favor, but for the reason also that they find that view proven and confirmed by the most sane and scientific ancient and modern methods of criticism. No one should lose sight of the fact that Biblical criticism is not the creation of this much over-rated age, and that it should not be measured by the history of the much vaunted higher criticism; but that so far as it is valuable and really scientific it is an aggregation of exact observations and verified deductions, built up by Biblical scholars during all the centuries.

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The number of eminent men of deep learning and sound judgment who take this view, and who hold closely to the principle that nothing can be added to the sum of Biblical criticism which is not supported by evidential facts, is large and at present growing. They may differ in minor matters, but they agree in this as well, that the "results" of higher criticism, which fill such a large place in its showcase, are not "assured;" consisting mainly of guesses, opinions, and theories, and that the integrity of the Holy Scriptures is unaffected by its many destructive attacks.

Professor Howard Osgood, of Rochester Baptist Theological Seminary, thinks the boast of the higher critics, that their views concerning the Bible are supported by the bulk of the Christian scholarship of to-day, is wholly unwarranted. While not denying the scholarship of the leaders, he seriously questions their right even to the name Christian. "Can that be called Christian," he asks,

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“which contradicts Christ either point blank or by necessary inference? Is the most learned man a Christian simply by reason of eating the bread supplied by Christians, and occupying a chair founded and supported by Christians?” As to the comparative numbers *pro et con.* he inquires: “Say there are one hundred critical scholars in the world; how many just as good scholars faithful to Christ are there in the 140,000 ministers in the pulpit in the United States?”

It is well to keep in mind in this connection that the scholars of the Roman Catholic, the Lutheran, the Dutch Reformed, and the Presbyterian Churches in this country are almost a unit in their opposition to the theories and conclusions of higher criticism. The Presbyterian Church (North) is not inferior, in point of scholarship, to any other Christian body, yet its General Assembly, composed of the flower of its learning and wisdom, at its session in Minneapolis adopted unanimously the following unequivocal utter-

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ance: "It is a fundamental doctrine of the Word of God and the Confession of Faith, that the Holy Spirit did so control the inspired writers in their composition of the Holy Scriptures as to make their statements absolutely truthful," and much more of the same character.

A large majority of the scholars in all the other evangelical bodies maintain substantially the same attitude.

I mention now the names of a few such who are known as critical writers in Europe or this country, selecting, perhaps, as some may think, with insufficient discrimination: Dr. Edersheim, Dr. A. Zahn, Mr. John Kennedy, Dr. John Smith, Dr. D. S. Gregory, Sir Robert Anderson, Dr. Fritz Hommel, Professors D. S. Margoliouth, A. H. Sayce, Howard Osgood, J. R. Sampey, R. W. Rogers, James Robertson, W. W. Moore, R. D. Wilson, H. Hilprecht, A. T. Clay, A. von Hoonacker, Willis J. Beecher, W. M. McPheeters, J. D. Davis, A. C. Zenos, G. Vos,

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G. F. Wright, Eduard König, L. T. Townsend, G. C. M. Douglas, F. Bettex, and F. L. Patton.

These Biblical questions, however, will not be finally determined by the opinions or vote of the scholars, but by the plebiscite of the Christian public.

The scholars are usually partisans battling for their own views or that of their schools, and are not qualified to act as jurors or judges, but are helpful in reaching right conclusions, as far as they furnish correct information or right criteria as experts are in our law courts, but no farther. Christian people, in general, are simply seekers after truth, and are supposed to be without bias. Why should they not be better judges than the specialists? There is really no reason why such as have spiritual and sound discriminating sense, and who are sufficiently intelligent to use the critical and exegetical results of the work of the professional scholars should not be competent to decide these

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matters, especially if they keep their mental atmosphere free from theoretical mist and their vision free from the "glamour of great names." Joseph Parker was free to express his distrust of the "pedants" regarding Biblical criticism. His hope lay in the common people. Was he not right? The faith was delivered originally to the *saints*, and not to the *scholars*. The saints have saved the Church more than once, or twice, or thrice from the delusions which have taken possession of its intellectually proud and skeptically inclined scholars. When the university men sneered at Paul and Wyclif and Wesley and the Master Himself, the people heard them gladly.

They are to be trusted to-day. They want neither a priestly hierarchy nor a scholarly oligarchy to take charge of Biblical interpretation; nor will they be content to wait until German experts shall have decided as to the origin of the Pentateuch before they repeat the Ten Commandments; or wait to hear the

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latest views of the German Kaiser before they accept the Bible as a Divine Revelation.

The higher critics themselves can not reasonably object to these as judges. They are very lofty usually in their pretensions, but they know how to humble their intellectual pride when it suits their purpose.

I have before me a book entitled "The Bible and the Child," containing the views of eight prominent higher critics, representing various evangelical denominations in England and America. The writers are: Farrar, Horton, Peake, Adeney, Fremantle, Gladden, Porter, and Abbott. They all attempt to show "the right way of presenting the Bible to the young in the light of the higher criticism." "The first thing to be done," they tell us, "is to destroy their [boys' and girls'] illusions." They caution us thus: "No word should be said about the Bible being infallible;" and urge us to "vaccinate them with doubt to save them from the small-pox of skepticism."



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To prove that even callow youths may become higher critics they say: "The difficulties of the historical process are exaggerated. The main conclusions of the critical school rest not on matters of philological or archaeological detail, but upon considerations which appeal to the common sense of men." What a step downward from the highest pinnacle of scholarship to "common sense"—even the common sense of boys and girls! But the book emphasizes this in another place, saying: "Of the works of Lachmann or Tischendorf or of Westcott and Hort on the New Testament, only a few scholars can judge; but of the questions raised by Ewald or Kuenen we can all judge."

That is what we claim "we can all judge;" but listen to this book further: "As a rule, critical questions should be let alone in the pulpit." Why? "They," says this critical oracle, "may unsettle the faith of older Christians who are unable to distinguish between form and substance." What

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a brilliant jewel consistency would be even in a scholar's diadem! Can children distinguish between shadow and substance better than their parents? If higher criticism is the truth, why should it *lie* at the bottom of the preacher's theological well, or be hidden within the walls of a theological or Sunday-school room? Why should it not stand as open-faced in the pulpit?

The *truth* is never *dangerous*. It never unsettles the faith of the young or old, though it might "unsettle" heretical professors and preachers. Truth never "vaccinates with DOUBT," but with FAITH to save from the smallpox of skepticism. "All truth is safe," Max Müller said, "and nothing else is safe; and he who keeps back the truth or withholds it from men, from motives of expediency, is either a coward or a criminal, or both." And I am free to say that any interpretation of Scripture which can not be preached must be false.

It is held by many that the plan of the

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higher critical propaganda is to change the Scriptural views of the children without alarming the fears of older persons; and thus raise up a new crop of higher critics, or at least of Scriptural prigs.

This is not, however, a matter for the consideration of boys and girls, but of those of mature years, if at all; and all before they accept its conclusion ought to give it close and earnest attention. There will always be those who will be weak enough to accept new views on the authority of others. As intelligent a man as Dr. Lyman Abbott acknowledges himself to be a "radical evolutionist," not because he has made an investigation of the subject, but because he thinks "scientists are evolutionists," and he "assumes the correctness of their conclusions."\* I am afraid many are changing their Scriptural views in the same way. Let us not do so, but judge for ourselves.

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\*The Theology of an Evolutionist, p. 7.

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### THE CONTENTION STATED, AND SOME LINES OF DEFENSE NOTICED.

It will be in place now to show very briefly the contention of these scholars, and notice a few of the lines which they set up in defense of the integrity of the Word of God. In doing this, I will make use of a very interesting discovery made by a Canadian geologist in a coal-bed, and which is referred to by an eminent writer for another purpose.

Before the geologist made the discovery scientists had observed a beautiful stem-like fossil, quite abundant in coal in general, which they called *Sigillaria*; and also another fossil in the clay which usually lies under the veins of coal, to which they gave the name *Stigmaria*. They supposed that the *Sigillaria* and *Stigmaria* fossils had no organic connection, and that the latter were gigantic seaweeds. But this scientist, seeing a perpendicular trunk of *Sigillaria*, followed it down, and found that as it reached the clay

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it ended in Stigmalaria. "This branching fossil in the clay was no longer a seaweed. It was the stem, and the clay was the soil, in which the great coal-plant grew."

Like the scientists who investigated the Sigillaria and Stigmalaria in their *coal-bins* until the Canadian discoverer took them out into the *coal-fields*, the literary and historical higher critics have confined their Biblical studies mainly to hair-splitting philological inquiries and historical speculations respecting the sacred literature only, paying little or no attention to external evidence, except to bolster up their subjective criteria and their pet theories. As a result of their inadequate and unscientific investigations, they claim to find in the Holy Scriptures not only that which is historically and otherwise reliable and valuable, which for the sake of illustration I will call Scriptural Sigillaria; but in many portions of the Bible other inferior forms of literature, such as myths, legends, tradition, folklore, and imaginative or poetic

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history, which I will call Scriptural Stigmata. As scientists for a long time saw no relation between the two parts of the coal-plant, these critics see no likeness or structural or organic relation between the book as a whole and the parts of each of its books. To them Scriptural Stigmata is nothing but sacred seaweed. Looking upon large portions of the Bible in this way, they seem to feel at liberty to adjust its form and meaning to their steady progression theory or any other hypothesis.

The scholars who accept what is termed in derision "traditionalism," on the contrary hold that what the higher critics say is myth, legend, tradition, folklore, or imaginative or poetic history, is really the roots of what follows, and is like the rest, history in fact; and that the whole Bible is a structural, living, organic *unit*.

It is easy for any one who is not blinded by a theory to see that their contention is right as to the New Testament text, for the

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actual text itself has been “substantially restored.” Respecting it, that eminent scholar, Dr. Hort, says: “In the variety and fullness of evidence on which it rests, the text of the New Testament stands absolutely alone among ancient prose writings.” The “lower critics,” or textual scholars, to whom the Christian world owes a great debt of gratitude, in producing this text collated more than two thousand manuscripts. Among these are the valuable Vatican and Sinaitic manuscripts, which go back in date to the fourth century, a time previous to which some critics claimed the written New Testament did not exist. By studying these and various translations, including the recently discovered Sinaitic first or second-century palimpsest, and Tatian’s Diatessaron, together with quotations and references found in the works of early Christians such as Justin Martyr, Irenæus, Clement of Alexandria, and Tertullian, whose united lives alone cover the second century, they have found and traced

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down the textual trunk into the first century and identified its roots as they lie imbedded in the sacred soil of the apostolic age, out of which the Scriptural plant grew. Why is not this textual identification just as conclusive as that which science accepts as final respecting the older coal-bed formations?

The external evidence of the trustworthiness of the documents, as well as that of their genuineness, is growing each day. Professor W. M. Ramsay, Mr. J. T. Wood, M. Waddington, Bishop Lightfoot, and Professor Mommson have been particularly successful either in the discovery of important decisive evidence through the monuments of Eastern Asia, or in extracting it from Roman history, or Latin literature.

The evidence which is to be had at this time respecting the Old Testament, though very valuable and satisfactory, is not all of the same nature, as there are no known ancient manuscripts, or clay tablets, or engraved stones, or translations of these Scrip-



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tures that date back to, or near to, the times when the documents originated, nor any contemporaneous Israelitish literature.

The book itself purports to be a history of God's people from Abraham's time until after the Captivity, with an important introductory narrative.

Regarding that part of the sacred history which intervenes between the crossing of the Jordan and the end of Solomon's reign not very much external evidence has as yet been obtained, as neither Palestine nor Phœnicia has been extensively explored; but all that exists helps to corroborate the Scriptural historical statements.

A flood of light has, however, been thrown, especially within the last sixty years, upon the other and more important portions by the discovery of the Moabite stone, the Siloam tablet, and the revelations made through the many excavations in Egypt, Assyria, and Babylonia, and the decipherment of the Cuneiform inscriptions.

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The scholars which I have mentioned, and hosts of others, have used the knowledge gained from these and other sources to prove their contention true regarding all the sacred books. They prove the Book of Isaiah to be not an aggregation of fragments, but an unbroken whole—a true historic, prophetic, literary UNITY. Professor D. S. Margoliouth,\* of Oxford, for instance, presents a wonderful array of facts in scientific form in support of this, showing: that the external evidence so far as it can be traced is unani- mously in its favor; that the theory that bisects the book leads to absurd results; that the crimes and idolatrous practices rebuked and the geography described belong to the age of the first Isaiah; that personal details given in the latter part of the book identify the author with the writer of the first part; that if there is a second Isaiah he advertises himself as a false prophet; that he uses words such as NASHATH, SHACHAR, and NŌSĒS, only

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\*Lines of Defense of the Biblical Revelation, p. 72.

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known to the first Isaiah, the meaning of which was lost by Jeremiah's time, and that there runs throughout the book a scientific and technical vocabulary, which is found nowhere else, and which shows the book to be not only a unity, but a unique unity.

Many maintain the genuineness and trustworthiness of the Book of Daniel through evidence drawn from philological and archæological sources. Sir Robert Anderson, however, tells us that he is prepared to stake the whole case on two issues; namely, "the inclusion of the book in the Canon, and the fulfillment of its great central vision in Messianic times."

Lord A. C. Hervey, Bishop of Bath and Wells, proves the Books of the Chronicles to be thoroughly historical. He does this by showing the genealogical lists to be correct; their most important statements to be confirmed by external evidence; their sources of information to be reliable; and by a comparison with the Books of Samuel and Kings,

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their contents to be both independent and trustworthy history. He makes plain also that these books are discredited because they bear direct witness to the existence of the Pentateuch in the days of the judges and the kings of Israel and Judah, just as the character of a witness whose testimony is valuable is sure to be attacked in a lawsuit by the opposing counsel.

Upon no portion of the Bible has more light been thrown from external sources, than upon that which is covered by the early books. This seems providential, for the remainder of the Book is built on, or rather grows out of, the Pentateuch, as *Sigillaria* grows out of *Stigmaria*. *The roots of Christianity itself lie in these early portions*, and it is against their historical character that the learning of the critics has especially been arrayed. The contentions, on critical lines, of Green, Bissell, Douglas, John Smith, the writers of *Lex Mosaica*, and others, in defense of their Mosaic authorship have never

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been refuted. As the critics, however, seem to shut their eyes and ears to all arguments of this nature, numerous scholars such as Rawlinson, Smith, Sayce, Hommel, Pinches, and Hilprecht, have been searching for archæological and philological facts confirmatory of this history. As scientists seeking *Stigmara* look first for the clay-bed in which the coal-plant alone grew, these scientific scholars have looked for conditions which would make the history both possible and probable. In doing this, they have examined the Tel-el-Amarna, the Assur-bani-pal, the Mugheir (Ur of the Chaldees), and Nippur tablets; the rock and wall inscriptions; the funeral tablets and mummies at Deir-el-Bahare; and the many other sources of evidence which touch on that part of Israel's history, and have found that it did not begin in obscurity nor under conditions favorable to the growth of myths or legends, as higher criticism teaches; but such as furnish a reasonable background or basis for authentic his-

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tory. They make several things certain: that Hebrew was the language of the Canaanites; that it, or a language "closely allied to that of the Old Testament," was used by the Semitic populations of Babylonia and Southern Arabia in patriarchal times; that the art of writing was known and practiced centuries before the call of Abraham; that an abundance of material for reliable history existed in Moses' time; and that the editor of the Pentateuch was a thorough Egyptian scholar, and was better qualified to describe natural phenomena than his modern critics. They show that the names of Mosaic type, such as Abram, Jacob, and Joseph, were not simply invented titles of eponymous heroes or mythical characters, but were the names of individuals in Babylonia and Arabia in Abraham's day and later, and that the Biblical references to the Hittites and Amorites are fully justified. They confirm many very important portions of the books, such as "a whole host of records" con-

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tained in the Priestly Code, as ancient and genuine, including the lists of names in the Book of Numbers; a description of the geography of the Oriental world in the tenth chapter of Genesis, which would not have been correct later than the time of the nineteenth Egyptian dynasty; and the entire fourteenth chapter of Genesis, containing an account of Chedor-laomer's campaign against the Canaanites,—all of which higher criticism claims to be a "post-exilic forgery."

Dr. Brugsch Bey holds that the story of Joseph is clearly proven to be historical by the monuments. He identifies names and places, and finds mention made of the seven years of want, and the name of the wise economist who provided against it. Recent discoveries on the sites of the Amorite cities of Lachish and Gezer, together with the tablets found at Tel-el-Amarna, wonderfully confirm the history of the Pentateuch and later books. They have identified Apepi as the Pharaoh of Joseph's time, Rameses II as that of the op-

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pression, and even his mummy; and Menephtah as that of the Exodus; and have located the land of Goshen and the site of Pithom with its bricks, with and without straw.

Perhaps no history has been more fully verified than the Mosaic narrative of the Exodus; for a scientific survey, with theodolite and land chain, altitude and azimuth, compasses and photographic camera, has been made of the entire route by distinguished engineers and scientists. They all agree in their report that from all they could ascertain by a close examination of the geography, topography, geology, climate, and natural history of the desert, the Bible account of the long march, in place of being a post-exilic invention, is a narrative of real photographic truthfulness.

The Biblical account of the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, and the crossing of the Jordan has, to a large extent, been established by a close study of the Jordan Valley



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by Sir J. W. Dawson and others, as truthful descriptions by eye-witnesses.

Geology, according to scientists like Wright and Winchell, not only makes the story of the Flood possible and probable, but, in connection with the universal testimony which archæology bears in its favor, fully confirms it. An Akkadian record of that event which originated at least five hundred years before Moses, recently discovered, harmonizes in a remarkable manner with that of Genesis, and is as much a double narrative as the other. It is evident that the writer confined himself to a statement of facts; for he, unlike all the other historians of that event, represents the dimensions of the ark as being as scientific in its proportions as an ocean greyhound.

The scheme of creation presented in Genesis so fully accords with the ascertained facts of modern science, that distinguished geologists, such as Dawson, Winchell, Guyot, Dana, and Wright, not only refuse to regard

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it as the product of a lively imagination, as the critics assert, but look upon it as a standing miracle in literature.

It is evident that while Biblical history does not anticipate directly scientific discovery, its language is so Divinely elastic and wise that established scientific facts only serve to confirm its correctness.

I wish now to say, as my plan will not admit of anything further of this nature, as specimens, that I have carefully considered much of the evidence which these scholars and scientists have offered, and that I am fully convinced that they have shown conclusively, as much so as the Canadian geologist did the identity of *Sigillaria* and *Stigmaria*, that the Bible is one Book; that no part is historical seaweed, but that as a record it is all true in history and in fact. It is quite evident, to my mind, that this wonderful supernatural story can be clearly and easily traced down from Revelation to Genesis; that the unity of each part is seen by its literary and

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historical elements; that the identity of the Book, as a whole, is shown by the religious purpose that runs through it, and the Divine stamp of inspiration which is everywhere upon it; and that it is all confirmed by strong evidence found on manuscript, papyrus rolls, tablets, cylinders, and even the records of the rocks.

It is not necessary that all the events of the Bible should be proved by external testimony for it to be considered confirmed as an historical book, as any history is supposed to be such, if enough is known to show that the author was well informed and wrote clearly and honestly. In the case of the Pentateuch, the results of the linguistic labors of the critics became so much literary rubbish the moment many important portions were shown to be historic, for the contention of higher criticism is that none of the books of Moses originated earlier than six hundred years after Moses. No further evidence seems needed to confirm these books, and

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even should the ark of the covenant be discovered, which is said in the fifth verse of the second chapter of second Maccabees to have been hidden by Jeremiah in a cave in Mt. Nebo, and the Books of the Law be found, they would simply be additional evidence of what we are already certain.

I will now offer a few

### CONSIDERATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS,

which I hope may help the truth-seeking student in arriving at wise and correct conclusions regarding these matters.

1. Sound criticism acquiesces in this, that the burden of proof rests on those who deny the genuineness or authenticity of a book, and not on those who accept it on its own declaration. This is a very important point, and should have more weight than is usually given it, for it raises a strong presumption in favor of the integrity of the Bible, which can only be overcome by forcible evidence; and such evidence should be adduced before any

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formal defense should be expected. Evidence of that character has not yet been presented.

2. To maintain the integrity of the Holy Scriptures, it is necessary to hold firmly to the claim that the sacred writers were supernaturally inspired.

If they were not thus inspired, the Bible not only makes false claims, but portions of it are of little value, in the estimation of many thoughtful students, and necessarily unreliable, unless guaranteed by the Holy Spirit, as for instance the account of Christ's temptation and His agony in the garden.

If they were Divinely inspired, and we have no reason to doubt this, as it has been made manifest, by miracles and prophecy, by the character of the writers, as well as by that of their writings, then what they wrote must be trustworthy.

If it should be shown that the writers made serious mistakes, that would certainly prove that they were not inspired.

But should mistakes appear in Sacred

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Writ, as it is claimed exist, such as discrepancies and contradictions, that would not prove that the original writers were uninspired; because such might occur through the defective work of the numerous copyists or translators, who were not inspired.

Should the monuments contradict their statements, that would not show them to be uninspired, as the inspired penmen, no doubt, used their correct information and historic sense in discriminating between what was true and false; and were thus able, being aided by God, to write down the real facts in each case. There is no reason why Moses should not have been able, furnished in this way, to select from Babylonian or other sources what was actual; and Paul and Peter and Jude from the Apocryphal or other writings or tradition.

In any case, modern scholars are not qualified to correct mistakes, if there should be such, or even to modify the Canon of Scripture, as the greater part of the histor-

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ical data that were in existence then are lost to us; and the people who accepted their writings as inspired knew the writers and their credentials, and had a knowledge of the facts in each case such as is not possible for this age to have, to say nothing of the inspiration which the people of God then may have shared, in some degree, with the writers.

If it should appear that Moses incorporated modifications of Hammurabi's laws or that of the Egyptians into his own code, or that he worked over old documents in writing his history, and that Ezra revised Moses' laws; or that he added to the latter's writings his address, or an account of his death and burial, that would not interfere with the inspiration or authority of the laws or the writings as long as it is conceded that they were under God's guidance in doing so, and were doing honest work.

3. Notwithstanding all the pressing need that the critics claim to see for the adjusting

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of the Bible to science, no adjustment seems to be required.

One of the marvels of the times is the harmony that is seen to prevail between an intelligent and common-sense interpretation of Scripture and the ascertained facts—facts, not theories or opinions—which science presents.

If we keep in mind that the Bible views physical things as men see them; that it uses popular and not scientific terms; that day in Genesis may mean age or period; that the length of the day is not given; and then consult the facts which geology gives us, we will find that the testimony of the rocks, as we have already noticed, confirms the revelation of the history of creation in a wonderful way. The same is true of astronomy, biology, and all the sciences so far as they have arrived at certain and well assured results. Moses' story of the Flood and many other references to physical things, as we have already seen, agree also with the established facts of sci-



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ence. "I agree in all essential points with Mr. Gladstone," writes Professor Dana, "and believe that the first chapter of Genesis and science are in accord." "All human discoveries," wrote Sir John Herschel, "seem to be made only for the purpose of confirming more and more strongly the truths contained in the Sacred Scriptures." No wonder Dr. Faunce exclaims: "The settled facts (of science) are so many illustrations of Scripture truth." Is it not amazing, however, that these critics who boast of their vast learning should be so ignorant of the latest results of science as not to know these important familiar facts?

4. Assuming that the Bible is defective as to logic, grammar, etc., as the higher critics say, which we otherwise do not admit, it can be easily shown that they are not competent censors.

Each age has its own idea of logic, and what may seem a logical deduction to an Occidental may seem very different to an Ori-

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ental mind. Experience teaches us also that while logic may appear to be certain in its principles, these principles are seldom, if ever, infallibly applied. This is especially true of the critics themselves, who have evidently abnormally developed the imaginative and speculative powers at the expense of the logical. Anyway, should not one be sure of the infallibility of his own logic before he attempts to correct the logic of inspired writers, and that of the Master Himself?

Is it not true as well, that the most perfect Hebrew scholars of our day can have at the best but a very limited knowledge of a language of such remote antiquity, a knowledge possibly inferior to that of a shepherd or milkmaid of Solomon's day?

5. Though a student of the Bible should not look for difficulties, such as, for instance, seeming discrepancies or contradictions, but for the beautiful harmonies and correspondencies that exist, he should not be surprised when he finds them. If the Bible did not con-

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tain such, one would naturally doubt its Divine character. They belong to the Bible in the nature of things. They do not, however, necessarily interfere with the orthodox conception of inspiration, and are not half so numerous or so serious as the critics would have us believe, though they have raked up all matters of that kind that have been pointed out and thumbed over by the different infidels of the past, and have put them before us in the worst possible form, and often in a false light. They try to show them to be errors. So far, however, though challenged frequently to do so, they have not been able to establish a single serious error. If they should prove such to exist, that would not invalidate the Bible, or show that it was not inerrant when the Spirit gave it to mankind.

Most, if not all, of the difficulties arise through faulty manuscripts, wrong translations, mistaken interpretation of Scripture, false representations of what history, science, philosophy, etc., record or teach; our failure

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carefully to compare the different portions of each book with each other, and with that of the other books; our unavoidable ignorance of the condition of things at the time when each book was written, and the changes that must have occurred in the use and meaning of words, phrases, and terms, and in customs, laws, usages, and other things, between the different periods at which the several writers lived; and because we often ignore the fact that these writers lived in various lands, as well as different ages, spoke different languages and dialects, used different weight and measure systems, and computed time by different methods — Jewish, Roman, and probably Greek and Assyrian. Many hundreds of these have already disappeared through scholarly treatment and the discovery of missing facts. Let us mix a little humility, however, with our knowledge, and remember that our information is not so extensive that all that does not agree with it must be wrong.

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6. It is well to keep in mind that higher criticism produces very many more difficulties than it removes.

The historical, ethical, and doctrinal contradictions which it creates are innumerable.

In order to get rid of not more than twenty supposed *anachronisms*, which can easily be accounted for, without its manipulations, as explanations inserted by Ezra or other inspired redactors, it introduces *archaisms* many times more numerous and much more serious, which seem to defy explanation.

It claims to relieve the Bible of much embarrassment on account of its historical inaccuracies, by denying that the historians were supernaturally informed or any way aided by God as to facts, and yet in doing this it throws the whole book in doubt, even revealed truth, until each statement is confirmed by external evidence, and utterly fails to account for history such as Moses gives us of the Creation, which he could not have had from human sources.

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The *crux criticorum*, who pose as evangelicals, however, is to reconcile their confidence in the Bible as a revelation with their view of it as a literary production.

7. The date or name of the author which a book or a portion of a book, such as a psalm bears or the circumstances under which it was written, is of vital importance, notwithstanding all the assurances which the critics give us to the contrary. The desperate and continuous efforts which they have been making for so many decades, through their various divisive and composite and other theories, to show that Moses was not the author of the Pentateuch, contradict all their assurances. The fact is, that the value of any book, but especially an historical or prophetic one, depends largely upon such things.

If neither Moses nor any one under his direction wrote the Pentateuch, then as a simple human document much of it loses all the weight that a man of character such as he was carries—when relating such as passes

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under his own observation, as Cæsar's Commentaries would if not genuine.

If these five books were not written, as higher critics all claim, until from six to ten centuries after Moses' time, and then by un-inspired men, then they become of no more historical value than the chronicles of the Cid, or the literature of King Arthur. The same, in a degree, is true of the Books of Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, and Acts and other writings.

Not only so, but the whole question of prophecy and miracle rests very largely on the date and authorship of the books. If it were not for the predictive element in Isaiah and the predictive and miraculous elements in Daniel, there would be no need of making a piece of patchwork of the one, or of redating the other. The date and the author determine the character of these books, and of many others as well.

Tom Paine saw this, and said: "Take away from Genesis the belief that Moses was

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its author, on which only the strange belief that it is the Word of God has stood, and there remains nothing in Genesis but an anonymous book of stories, fables, and traditionary or invented absurdities or of downright lies." It is very obvious that some of the higher critics themselves see this, for though they claim that the worth of the Pentateuch or Isaiah is not impaired by regarding them as compilations of a late date, they denounce those who hold that the Book of Acts or of Galatians is a composite work, and of late date. They attack Professor W. C. Van Manen furiously because of his "vagaries" and his "outrageous allegation" in representing "the Epistle to the Romans as a composite production of unknown authorship." Yet no sane, unbiased person will be able to see why a book of the New Testament should be any more unfavorably affected by a change of date or authorship than one of the Old.

Eduard Meyer, of Halle, a renowned critic,



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acknowledges that the value of any book depends largely on its genuineness, for he says: "For a document is, *if genuine, a witness which defies contradiction.*"

8. The Biblical authors must be considered men of real piety and honesty.

It is not reasonable to suppose that men should be inspired by God, called "holy men," and their writings termed "sacred oracles," who were capable, no matter how low their ethical standards were, of framing civic and priestly codes for ambitious purposes, and inventing false prophecies, miraculous and other historical events, and then to give standing and authority to their documents, date them back, and assume for them the names of venerated and ancient personages, such as Moses, Daniel, Isaiah, and Jonah, as the writers newly named J, E, D, P, and R, and the supposed unknown authors of much of Isaiah and all of Daniel and Jonah must have done, if the higher critics are right in their conclusions.

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The morality of such transactions reminds us forcibly of the commercial honesty of the liquor dealer who doctors his wine; fills his cellar with sealed bottles labeled back many years; and trains spiders to weave cobwebs about and over them, so that his merchandise may have the appearance of age, as well as the flavor of antiquity.

Briggs and others do not relieve the seriousness of the matter by claiming that the holiest of the Old Testament worthies did not know the evil of lying or defrauding until they were taught better by Persian ethics during the Exile for the real gravity of the question lies not so much in the falsehoods and fraudulent actions of the supposed authors, as in God's imagined relations to them. How could God, who never condones evil, employ and inspire liars and deceivers to produce forged documents that might contain wonderful revelations of Divine truth? Deists like Thomas Jefferson and Tom Paine could not conceive of God being a party to

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any such evil doings. Wellhausen is said to have remarked: "I knew the Old Testament was a fraud, but I never dreamt, as these Scotch fellows do, of making God a party to the fraud."

9. The following is no doubt a just canon of criticism; viz., whatever source of evidence or manner of procedure is inadmissible in defense of the integrity of the Bible, is inadmissible against it. The critics overlook this. They frequently repudiate or pass over as worthless what is contained in the Bible itself, the Apocryphal Books, the Talmud, Josephus, and other such writings, as evidence, and resent their use as grossly uncritical when they contradict their theories; but when they seem to favor them they bring them forward as wonderfully competent witnesses. For instance, the author of "Moses and the Prophets" quotes the Word of God often, as if its testimony were unimpeachable, and then though it is stated again and again regarding the giving of the "Priestly

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Code" in Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers in the most solemn manner, "The Lord spake unto Moses saying;" and although these asseverations are corroborated by the most unmistakable references in the Books of Joshua, Judges, Samuel, Kings, Chronicles, Hebrews, and others, he ignores all this evidence as if it were so much chaff. "There is no evidence," he boldly asserts, "that the great body of these ritual laws were either observed or known before the Babylonian exile."\* They quite generally seek to establish their Kenotic theory on one or two passages of Paul's writings, which they misconstrue, as if his statements were not to be questioned, and then when his teachings respecting inspiration, the resurrection of the body, the doctrine of the atonement, or the true character of the Old Testament are produced against them, they deny vigorously that he had any special authority as a Biblical exegete or a theologian. They do not

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\*Terry, *Moses and the Prophets*, p. 34.

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seem to see that by doing this they dig the supposed ground from under their absurd Kenotic theory.

Christ's comparison of His own burial to that of Jonah "in the whale's belly" fully authenticates the incident, and is an insurmountable obstacle in the way of their interpretation of the prophet's book. They seek to remove it by calling it an interpolation, as they get rid of other difficulties. "Use a modern device," says the inventive Dr. Peters, "bracket the verse, and the difficulty vanishes at once." Certainly, the brackets are a very handy device; but why, if they are honest truth-seekers, and not partisans, trying to make out a case, do not they use this same modern device in connection with all the discrepancies and contradictions they claim to see in the Bible, and thus do away with all the difficulties in the way of its infallibility? There are minor difficulties which might, without violence to a true interpretation, be accounted for by considering them

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mistakes or interpolations made by copyists or translators, but the wholesale claims made by these erudite men in this direction are utterly preposterous, especially as they seem to resent the use of brackets by others as an infringement of their own patent rights.

10. There is nothing about modern higher critical scholarship, as to its loyalty to truth, its piety, its erudition, or genius, which would naturally lead us to accept of its views of Scripture in opposition to those which have been represented by all the rest of the Hebrew and Christian scholarship of all the ages. And I think most thoughtful people will agree with Lightfoot when he says: "The historical sense of seventeen or eighteen centuries is larger and truer than the critical insight of a section of men in our late half-century."

Furthermore, it is not probable that God hid the real character of the Holy Scriptures from the devout and holy of all their history—prophets, priests, psalmists, evangel-

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ists, and apostles, and even His own Son, to make a revelation of the same, through the reason or otherwise, to His defiant enemies, such as Porphyry, Celsus, and Ingersoll, or rationalists such as Vatke, Graf, Eichhorn, Kuenen, and Wellhausen, or through these to a few liberal orthodox men of this egotistical age, such as Horton, Driver, Briggs, Harper, Gladden, and Abbott.

11. It is folly to hold that when Jesus Christ referred to the Old Testament so as to create the impression that He considered it historically and prophetically reliable, and a Divine revelation, He was only accommodating Himself to the false views of His people. If He could not make Himself understood regarding things in the Old Testament, He can not be believed in regard to what He says in the New. If He did not mean what He said when He spoke of the Scriptures as testifying of Him, how can we believe Him when He testifies of Himself?

12. After all is said, the supreme ques-

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tion lies in the issue the leaders make between themselves and their critical method and Christ as to authority; and it is futile for second-rate, liberal, orthodox critics to evade the issue by hair-splitting explanations or vain subterfuges. The leaders offer no compromise. They acknowledge that Christ's words, "The Scripture can not be broken," expressed His view of the Old Testament. Referring to the New Testament, Kuenen says: "Its judgment concerning the origin of the Mosaic law and of the prophetic expectation, and concerning their relation to the historical reality, may be regarded as diametrically opposed to ours." "We must either," he says elsewhere, "cast aside as worthless our dearly-bought scientific method, or must forever cease to acknowledge the authority of the New Testament in the domain of the exegesis of the Old."

Of course, if we reject the authority of the New Testament, we reject Christ's authority. And surely no one who has



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divested himself enough of intellectual pride to be worthy of the name Christian would do that, or would presume to have a more thorough critical knowledge of the Bible than the one he calls Lord. When he does either he should renounce the name Christian. "Doubt as to the validity of our Lord's and of His apostles' method of expounding involves," says Meyer, "necessarily a renunciation of Christianity." It would be strange if any one who has confidence in Him as God would part with Him for the sake of an unproved "scientific method." If he should, it would be certainly a "dearly-bought" method. Is it worth the sacrifice? He loses Christ; what does he gain? a scientific mirage. He loses Christ; and what a loss! Christ the soul of the Bible; the "Central Sun that illuminates the whole!"



God's Bible the  
People's Bible

“ This book of stars lights to eternal bliss.”—GEORGE  
HERBERT.

## God's Bible the People's Bible

DURING the time of the Reformation and long after, men looked mainly at the Divine side of the Bible; Almighty intelligence dictated it all, and man's part was largely that of a machine. The tendency now is toward the other extreme. Instead of putting a strong emphasis on God's part, many lay it chiefly on man's, and lower the Book to the level of common literature. Both views are very inadequate; the first ignores man; the second ignores God; whereas the Book is

“Most human and yet most Divine,  
The flower of man and God.”

Not less than forty different writers, differing in intelligence, spiritual discernment, taste, style, and method, and covering a pe-

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riod of over sixteen centuries of history, shared in its composition, and have all left the marks of their personal elements upon its pages. Men wrote all its words, and no doubt were in full use of their human faculties, even when filled and lifted up and moved by the Divine Spirit, as "they were not God's pens, but God's penmen." As writers they were animated and illuminated by God; were subject to His suggestions, His thoughts, and His control. They worked voluntarily and harmoniously with God; the stronger directing and using the weaker. Thus God was the co-author of it all; and you can no more separate Him from man in the Bible, than the soul from the living body. In this way alone can the marvelous unity of the different books of the Bible be accounted for; a unity that is not merely mechanical or literary, but real and vital.

The Holy Scriptures are not merely a "Divine library" or "a piece of patchwork," or "a reconstruction and adaptation of en-

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tirely heterogeneous literary elements," as Delitzsch and others represent it, but a continuous organic whole, every part being vitally related to the other, and each book being not only pervaded with God's Spirit, but occupied with His message. It is not a record of truth which various men have discovered separately by their own natural powers, but is a record mainly of a progressive revelation of truth and the plan of salvation made by God to His chosen people at various times and by different, specially-equipped persons. It reveals to us the progressive development of the kingdom of God, first under the dispensation of the Father, then that of the Son, and then under that of the Holy Spirit. The progress is slow in the Old Testament, the stream seemingly running backward at times; but in the New Testament it advances rapidly from the beginning to the end, from Gospel to Gospel, and from "Gospel to Acts, and Acts to Epistles, and Epistles to Revelation." The entire

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New Testament period was embraced within the lifetime of the apostle John.

The Bible is a unique Book, being the only inspired history in the world of the religious experience of a great people, and the only record of a Divine supernatural revelation given to any people. It is supernatural in an important sense in its composition; supernatural in its scenes; supernatural in its doctrines; supernatural in its theme; supernatural in its purpose. "There is none like it." We have in it a Book of unfailing veracity as a record of facts, and which is clear and faithful as a record of religious truth, without any mixture of error; and which contains all that is necessary for us to know, and all that can be known here about religion, and is the only rule and standard which the Church has for faith and practice.

As there is a strong tendency these days, as in the second and fifth centuries, even among many of those who claim to regard highly the New Testament, to belittle and



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disparage the Old, I might, if space permitted, call attention to its great worth; its rich historic deposit; its high ideals of life; its devout spirit; its clear teachings respecting sin, the principles of worship, and the plan of salvation; its wonderful forecast of the character and work of the Redeemer, and its clear unfolding of the doctrine of God. It will be sufficient, however, for most people to know that it was the early Christians' true and only Bible for many decades; that it was able then to make men wise unto salvation through faith in Jesus Christ, as Paul assures us; and that it was, in fact, *Christ's own Bible*.

If for no other reason but the latter, the Old Testament would be invaluable as a document. What it is now it was in His times practically—the Law and the Prophets and the Writings. Almost all else that was closely associated with Him, except the land and His race, have disappeared. Even His tomb is in doubt. The Book of His boyhood

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and of His manhood and of His ministry remains. When we read it we know we are busying ourselves with what occupied Him, and taking in the thoughts that filled His mind. It not only spoke of Him from Moses to Malachi, but it spoke to Him. It seems that it was not only the arsenal to which He went for weapons in His temptations and discussions and struggle with death, and the fountain from which He drew strength and comfort, but the source also of many of His thoughts, His discourses, and even His figures of speech. His use gave it unusual sanctity; and His reverent, sympathetic, and appreciative treatment must always make it an object of the deepest interest, and secure for it similar treatment on the part of all His true followers.

We find in the New Testament over eight hundred quotations from or allusions to the writings of the Old, which were made by Christ and His disciples, and yet neither He nor they in any of these ever questioned the

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character of the historical books, or their truthfulness, or the predictive nature of the prophetic portions, or sought to lessen the supernatural in any instance, or spoke of or treated at any time these Holy Scriptures as common literature, or explained away or minimized their meaning, or discredited their testimony. Christ quoted from the 110th Psalm as David's words, and as referring to Himself; and from Isaiah as Isaiah's, and as foretelling Himself. He affirmed the law as Moses', and plainly said, "Moses wrote of Me" and declared that "not one jot or tittle" of it should fail of accomplishment.

Not only did His nation and His followers look upon the ancient Scriptures as historically trustworthy, and as containing a Divine revelation, but Christ evidently so regarded them and saw in them Divine foreshadowings of Himself, and so taught. If He had known such views to be false, He could not, in the way of accommodation, have spoken as He did; for though He was silent

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about many things respecting which men might think He should have spoken, He never taught an untruth or approved of anything that was wrong. To urge that what He thought or said could have no reference to the questions now considered by historical criticism, as they were not then raised, is to assume that He did not know the future of Scripture; but leaving that aside we all know that no better evidence can be introduced into the settlement of any question than authoritative references that relate to it, which were made before the matter was in dispute.

As we then must believe that Jesus Christ authenticated the Old Testament, and that "As God He knew all the circumstances of it," as Wesley says, we as Christians are bound to accept it from the Jewish Church on *His authority*.

The New Testament was not His Bible in the sense that the Old was, though it contains His sayings, the events of His beautiful life, and the full unfolding of His scheme of re-

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demption. The Book comes to us, so far as man's agency is concerned, as the work of followers whom He created into the Christian Church twenty years or so before the first portions of the New Testament were written, and to whom He gave special gifts, guidance, revelations, and authority. Christ Himself was purely an oral teacher. He never wrote a line of the New Testament, or ever used the Book; but He said: "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My words shall not pass away;" and He was careful to provide for the fulfillment of these significant words. He did not leave the different books which comprise the new revelation to be canonically selected at random, or to be limited by the literary taste or historical sense or critical acumen of scholars of any age, or the partisan votes of ecclesiastical councils. The Holy Spirit who inspired the apostolic writers enabled the inspired, early Church to recognize what was Scripture, and to sift out these writings from the spurious

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mass of religious literature which abounded at that time, in accordance with the promise, "He shall guide you into all truth;" and the same Holy Spirit which always dwells in the spiritually-illuminated Christian Church has enabled her ever since to recognize these books, as well as the canonical books of the Old Testament, as the inspired Word of God.

Competent and fair-minded scholarship must allow that this subjective proof—this impression which the Bible and its contents make upon the minds of regenerated Christian men, is to *them* irresistible evidence of the Divine origin and character and authority of all the books of the Bible in spite of all the objections which criticism may raise.

As a matter of course it required much time to gather together these widely scattered writings; but from all that can be learned from ancient manuscripts, from the testimony of the Fathers and contemporary heathen writers, and from the records of Church Councils, all the canonical books of

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the New Testament must have been accepted by the true Church, there being only a few heretical objectors, before the close of the first century, or soon after. The Church Councils of whose proceedings we have any certain knowledge did not determine the canon of Scripture; they witnessed to what had been recognized and settled before, and had been received from those who preceded them; and they in their turn registered their indorsement of the same. Of the "authority" of the "canonical books of the Old and New Testaments" "there was never any doubt in the Church," as the Articles of Religion affirm. And as we receive the Old Testament from the Jewish Church on the authority of Jesus Christ, we receive the New Testament, as individuals, from the Christian Church on the *authority of the Holy Spirit*, who still dwells in the Church, and who also bears witness to the Divine character of all these books in our own hearts.

This implies that the Church has some re-

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sponsibility and authority as custodian and interpreter of the Word of God above even that of our modern scholars. It would be strange, indeed, if the Church, having been created and commissioned by Jesus Christ, and having been empowered and equipped by the Holy Spirit, and having a splendid history of nineteen centuries behind her, should now be superseded in the most important matters in connection with the Holy Oracles, so long confided to her care by a clique of scholars who have received their strange, revolutionary, so-called modern view from deistic, rationalistic, or agnostic sources.

She has authority, and because of this she has a grave duty to perform in this great crisis of her history; viz., to resist the time-spirit, to entertain no novelties regarding the Bible, and to hand down to future generations the faith unchanged and unimpaired which was once delivered to the saints.

It is evident that Jesus Christ purposes to perpetuate His truth by means of His



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Church and the written Word, and not through the one without the other. He repudiated tradition, but magnified Scripture. "It is written," was almost a formula with Him; and He claimed that His Church would overcome all opposition. But the Bible and the Church are necessary to each other. The Bible needs the Church to perpetuate, translate, and circulate it, and to interpret its fixed forms of thought to the ever-changing minds of men.

The Church, on the other hand, is subject to change in belief and life; and if revelation were simply a voice or a tradition it would probably soon be lost, as the first revelation, which was oral, was lost to all but one family. As long, however, as she holds closely and firmly to this revelation of Divine truth, which is complete and final and expressed in unalterable, permanent terms, and recorded in the Book, and remains imbued with its spirit, though she may get fresh light from the Word, expand in thought, change her ver-

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nacular or formulas, and restate her doctrines, she will perpetuate the truth, and can never differ very much from what her Creator intended she should be. She is the true Church always, only so far as her faith and life are substantially identical with her Sacred Book. Ours, in a large sense, is a Book Religion.

The Church, though not always faithful to her trust, has usually given much intelligent and conscientious thought and attention to the written Word, and until recent times has presented almost an unbroken front to its enemies. From the completion of the Book until now her best scholars, in seeking to know what it is and what it contains, have scrutinized it from end to end. They have turned over every word; analyzed every chapter; searched into the origin, date, authorship, and trustworthiness of all the documents; have inquired carefully into their literary and historical characters and doctrinal and ethical teaching; and welcomed light

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from every source. Our King James Version was the work of the most erudite students of their day. Both the Old and New Testaments have passed in our own day through the hands of many of our most prominent Biblical scholars, and after years of the closest investigation and research they have returned them to us with some unhappy verbal changes and a few unnecessary omissions, but substantially as they found them, without any marked evidence of distrust as to their Divine character, their doctrinal worth, or their general historical reliability.

Tom Paine wrote: "I have now gone through the Bible as a man would go through a wood with an ax on his shoulder and fell trees. Here they lie; and the priests, if they can, may replant them. They may perhaps stick them in the ground; but they will never make them grow." The critics exhibit the same boastful spirit, and ask, "What has the higher criticism left us of the Bible?" Notwithstanding the answer suggested, the Bible

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to most of us is what it has ever been. If the critics have put it through their crucible, they have not destroyed it, except for themselves and those who accept their decisions. The assured destructive results of higher criticism have no existence. The Bible is still an unbroken forest. Not even a twig is felled. The old worthies are not yet myths, or even eponymous heroes; they still stand along the line of the ages like sentinels watching, while their generations sleep. The prophecies are written there still; many fulfilled in Christ, others yet pointing to the future. The theophanies have not lost their heavenly brightness, nor the miracles their supernatural character, nor any part of the entire Book its Divine impress. The history of the race is still an unbroken chain—reaching down to “Seth who was the son of Adam who was the son of God.” The story of the fall, the promises of redemption, the plan of salvation, the record of the virgin birth, the sacrificial death, the open tomb, and the

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tongues of fire are all there, and no intimation of a forged document. Moses still writes and legislates; David sings psalms; Isaiah, undivided, portrays the Christ; Daniel, not yet a fiction, stands in his lot and place; and even Jonah, though he has had a stormy time, has not yet faded into allegorical mist.

The critics call their production the scholar's Bible; but the true Bible is still the People's Bible. It was not especially designed for scholars, but for *men*. It is in their language and for their use. It addresses men much as Luther claimed he did when he used these words: "I take no notice of the Doctors who are present, of whom there may be twelve; I preach to the young men and maidens, and the poor, of whom there are two thousand." There was a time when the learned alone could read it; when the scholastic priest alone dare interpret it; and when the rich alone could own it. That day is happily past. The promise which Tynedale made in reply to a scoffing scholar of his

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day, when he said, "If God spare my life, ere many years I will cause a boy that drives the plow shall know more of the Scriptures than thou dost," has been made good. He translated it, and the printing-press has put it into the hands of plowmen, bakers, masons, miners, tanners, and weavers—an open Book for each man's scrutiny and use; and the best things in it may be better understood by these if they are enlightened by the Holy Spirit, and have heart-faith, than by the learned who lack these qualifications.

"Give me a theme," a little critic cried,

"And I will do my part."

"'T is not a theme you need," the world replied;

"You need a heart."

It is not the clearest or biggest brain, covered with a quizzing cap, that gets the most out of the Bible; but the head and heart that are the most fully under the influence of Him who inspired the Book. It is this same influence, more than scholarship, that enables the Christian world to distinguish the true canon.

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Scholarly investigation and interpretation often sterilize the good seed—often wither and bury the life in the Word. “Most of the Homeric and Dantean and Shakespearian scholarship,” says a discriminating writer, “is the mere dust of time.” Why? Because the pedants, instead of busying themselves with what these splendid works contain, have been covering them over with their own literature. How heavy and thick this kind of dust lies on the Bible! The New Scholarship is merely a new layer, or a new parasitical growth that covers and obscures and kills it as certain mosses do tropical trees.

It is very evident that it was never intended that we should be benefited by criticising the Holy Scriptures, but by allowing them to criticise us; or that they should be mainly a sphere of scholarship, but rather a means of grace.

Make them a simple sphere of intellectual activity or of scholarly display, and you

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transfer religion from the heart to the head, which is like carrying fire from the hearth up into the chimney, where it is extinguished in smoke; in this instance in volumes—vast volumes—of scholarly Scriptural smoke.

This generation is suffering much loss through the persistent effort that is being made in our theological schools and elsewhere to lead people to study about the Bible, rather than the Bible itself. Its wealth lies in what it contains and what it conveys.

We are told of an art critic who, seeing a fountain by the roadside, instead of refreshing himself and calling the attention of others to the abundant supply of cool water, busied himself in finding fault with its design, although it had been put there by a benevolent man, not to minister to men's artistic tastes, but their natural wants. Our Bible is God's fountain of truth, and He invites men to it, not to pass upon its origin or structure, or to admire or criticise its literary or artistic elements, or to extol or disparage its worth,



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but to *quench their spiritual thirst*. And I imagine that He is not very much elated when critical virtuosos praise its beauties, or depressed when they point out what they so loudly claim are its defects. Like the man who placed the fountain by the wayside, He is anxious only that the multitude, and even the critics, may drink, and drink deeply. The cry of the fountain itself is the same as Christ's when He lifted up His voice in the Temple, "If any man thirst let him come unto Me and drink."

Hosts of the common people have heard the call, and have drunk freely of this Divine fountain of life and truth; not only these—many of the best scholars and the greatest thinkers, and all the noblest souls—men, the best able to judge, like Milton, Pascal, Newton, Edwards, John Quincy Adams, and Gladstone—have largely lived intellectually and spiritually on this Book.

The injury which criticism is doing in turning the minds of so many from the study

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of such a Book to the consideration of its own puerile and false views concerning it is *immeasurable*; for in doing this it is turning men's gaze away from the

“Star of Eternity! the only star  
By which the bark of man can navigate  
The sea of life and gain the coast of bliss,  
Securely!”

The greatest damage, however, which it does lies in the *doubts it suggests and nourishes in the minds of men regarding the Bible*. It is doing this with persistent energy, and with results that threaten to be fatal to evangelical Christianity. Even in its mildest forms higher criticism is destructive in this way; perhaps more so than when it assumes a more warlike appearance.

It is well to keep in mind that *criticism is destructive, not because it destroys Scripture, but because it destroys men's confidence in the Scriptures as the WORD OF GOD*.

*The Bible is indestructible*. The fires of criticism may destroy the fables of the Shas-

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ters or the lies of the Book of Mormon; but not the Bible. "The words of the Lord are pure words; as silver tried in a furnace of earth purified seven times."\* It could stand the seven-fold test of David's day, and proves itself unconsumable in our day.

It neither needs nor dreads the critic's crucible. Notwithstanding all the attacks made upon its integrity, it is still what the evangelical Gladstone called it, "*The Impregnable Rock.*" It stands to-day like Mont Blanc, facing the mysteries of time and eternity, and remains unmoved by the storms of unbelief, which swell about its foundation facts, or which constantly beat about its glorious Head, who is the strength and majesty and crown of it all. Well may Dr. Bonar sing:

"A thousand hammers keen  
With fiery force and strain  
Brought down on it in rage and hate  
Have struck this gem in vain."

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\* Psalm xii, 6.

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“Destroy the Bible,” says Dr. L. W. Munhall; “one might as well talk of puny man blotting the sun out of the sky.”\*

Not long ago I crossed an old Roman bridge which spans one of the sources of the Jordan. Its solidity has been tested by the heaviest pressure for centuries. The immense weight of greatly burdened camel caravans and of the mighty armies of Imperial Rome, of the Crusaders, the Saracens, and the Turks have tried its sustaining power. Yet that old Roman bridge stands to-day comparatively firm, affected apparently only by the waste and wear of years. This Book—this high passage-way from the seen to the unseen—has had on it from the first thousands of pagan and infidel scholars; and then all atheistical France and all rationalistic Germany; and now the ponderous tonnage of all to-day's heavy-weights and feather-weights of science, philosophy, and higher criticism, confessed enemies and professed

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\* *The Highest Critics vs. The Higher Critics* p. 96.

## People's Bible

friends,—all crowded over every square inch of its road-bed testing its strength.

So far as I can see, it remains solid and firm. Its foundations are unshifted; the keystone of every arch is in place; the buttresses all stand plumb; there is not a crack or a crevice in the walls; there is not a mark even of the old tooth of time, nor a vibration noticeable anywhere. There are no indications of instability. This end rests on massive, incontrovertible facts, which appeal with undiminished force to the human reason and spirit; and which are guaranteed by the Holy Ghost. The other end rests, I believe, on the Rock of Ages. I feel quite safe myself in resting my faith on its strength, and I have absolute confidence that through God's grace it will carry me dryshod to the eternal shore.

“How firm a foundation ye saints of the Lord  
Is laid for your faith in His excellent Word.”



# Epilogue

“Earnestly contend for the faith once delivered to the saints.”—JUDE.



## Epilogue

THERE IS NO need for alarm respecting the future of the Word of God; it can not be destroyed. "The Word of our God shall stand forever."\* There is, however, much reason for grave apprehension lest the tide-wave of unbelief, which is rising so high at present, should roll up and over all obstructions, and "bury the old landmarks of Christian faith" for the time at least.

Dr. Francis L. Patton, who is no hysterical alarmist, referring to the dangers of the hour, says: "The crisis in which we are today is the greatest war of intellect that has ever been waged since the birth of the Nazarene." The forces in this "war," opposed to evangelical Christianity, were never in all

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\* Isaiah xl, 8.

## Earnestly Contend

her history better equipped, more skillfully handled, or strategically placed, or more actively engaged than now. Quite a proportion of them are in her own ranks; carry her flag and wear her uniform. There was a time when they stood outside the fortress they wished to destroy; now they stand within. They are doing in their various Churches very much what the enemies of our Federal Union sought to do just before the breaking out of the Civil War—scattering and weakening our forces, seizing our forts and arsenals and our West Points. They are using every possible form of propaganda. They are quietly at work in our denominational institutions of learning, and are constantly sending out students charged with their destructive views. Bishop S. M. Merrill does not overstate the facts when, referring to this phase of the question, he says: “A large number of young men come out of the schools inclined to discredit the authority of much

## for the Faith

that is in the Bible. They speak lightly, if not sneeringly, of what experienced Christians hold sacred." They publish or apologize for their sentiments in the pulpit, and are endeavoring to popularize them on Chautauquan, Christian Endeavor, Epworth League, and Young Men's Christian Association platforms.

They are publishing extensive Bible Dictionaries and Encyclopedias, and their views obtain currency through the "Expositor's Bible," and other works of a much more radical character. Their books and magazines are very numerous, and their critical works of a popular kind, often unlabeled, are finding their way into the hands of the common people. They worm their views into our Sunday-school literature, and are making a serious effort to control the work of the International Sunday-school Committee. While they seem to overawe the denominational papers that are opposed to them into profound silence,

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they boldly advocate their revolutionary opinions in those that are friendly, and flood the daily press with their attacks and defenses.

Bishop W. F. Mallalieu, a wise, calm, world-wide observer, sees great danger in all this. After referring to men who "assume to be 'advanced thinkers,' 'progressive theologians,' 'higher critics,' 'profound scholars,' 'abreast-of-the-age, up-to-date investigators of all knowledge,'" he uses these words: "It is a cause of unspeakable regret that any man holding these views should be tolerated in any evangelical pulpit or school of theology, for the ultimate outcome will be as baleful as the exhalations of the deadly upas-tree."

It is very apparent to not a few that these disturbers of the peace of God's people will not require, should they be still tolerated, many years through these various agencies to disrupt our Churches, or to destroy their evangelical character. Many of the critics

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themselves are free to say that ten more years of work like that accomplished during the past decade would complete their task. Others of them attempt to show us that there is no cause for alarm. One of these oracularly tells us: "There is little danger from the most extreme conclusions of criticism as long as saints are common."\*

Common sense teaches us that it is no more foolish to wait until most of the people are diseased before we fear a threatening plague, than it is to wait until saints are scarce before we dread the evil effects of higher criticism. When saints become uncommon, there will be too few of them to effect much against the growing unbelief of the multitude.

Too many good people—even Church leaders—seem to think that the truth needs no defense, and that their denominations are safe, no matter how much unbelief and sin are tolerated within them. The people who

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\* Rishell, *The Higher Criticism*, p. 275.

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sang some time ago at the dedication of a church in New England this doggerel verse:

“The world, the devil, and Tom Paine;  
To spoil our work have tried in vain,”  
The reason why they failed is this:  
The Lord takes care of Methodists.”

expressed the false confidence of very many. Men fail to keep in mind that God *protects and perpetuates His truth, as He propagates it, through human co-operation*. Evangelical Christians can, if they will assume an air of indifference, ignore the changes which are going on in religious thought and feeling, and do nothing, and await the deluge. Is it wise to do so?

When the Republican Party waked up a few years ago to the fact that free silver ideas had been earnestly and intelligently propagated among the people until their harmony and supremacy as a political party were threatened with destruction, they lost no time in preparing for the inevitable struggle. A thorough and an intelligent system of popu-

## for the Faith

lar education was begun in regard to fiscal and other questions, and a thorough reorganization was everywhere effected. There were some serious conflicts within the party, and some tearful partings; but the leaders believed they were right, and they promptly and boldly met the issue.

Ours is a much more important and vital question than that of hard or soft money. It is our evangelical faith that is in question—what a pure, vital Christianity has stood for, all these centuries. Has not the time come for all those who love the old Bible to stand kindly but boldly for its defense, and for a clear and definite affirmation of their faith in evangelical Christianity, whether they be ministers or laymen?

Ours is an age of doubt and danger. Assaults are being made on our religion by its supposed friends, which threaten to shake its historical foundations; for the conflict is now in this country much as it was in Germany thirty years ago, when Christlieb claimed

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that it was removed from "the field of speculative reasoning to that of historical criticism of the *origines* of Christianity."

And would it not be a fatal mistake for the American Church to continue to follow the example of the German Church of Christlieb's day, of which he said: "She has favored the advance of unbelief among her own people by quietly looking on, when she ought to have been up and doing?"

There are many who see no reason for special activity now, because they fail to realize the greatness of the danger, as it is *internal* and not *external*. There is a queer legend of a mountain which one man on one side was trying to overturn with a handspike, and which another man on the other side was in alarm endeavoring to prop up with a stick. It was in great danger all the time; but not from the effort of its external foe, but because it was harboring within it a sleeping volcano, which ultimately awoke and utterly destroyed it. The Church is impregnable



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against outside enemies; but as long as she tolerates these false Scriptural views and their accompanying rationalism within herself, she is harboring her own ruin. The evangelical Churches of Germany, Holland, and France did this, and we all know the demoralization which followed. The Dissenting Churches in England, and the evangelical portion of the Established Church; and the United Presbyterian Church of Scotland are doing the same with the same results. The Presbyterian Church in this country, on the contrary, has met the issues intelligently and boldly, and by doing so she has greatly strengthened herself as an organization and as a spiritual and evangelistic agency; and has fought a winning battle for all the Churches that will follow her noble example.

Some of our denominational bodies, however, seem to be losing their old-time vigor and enthusiasm, *because they are not aggressive against these forms of unbelief, and have adopted a peace-at-any-price policy, and*

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*pride themselves in the large liberty they allow, forgetting that truth is never tolerant toward error, and that a good cause gains nothing by compromise.*

In almost all our denominations a strange apathy prevails respecting this unhappy condition that exists. Perhaps it is the apathy caused by the threatening danger, as danger often has a hypnotic power, as it seemed to have over the Pompeians and the inhabitants about Pelee before they were overwhelmed in ruin.

The danger will not, however, last long if God's people will but realize its presence, and arise and "earnestly contend for the faith once delivered to the saints." A little over a century ago the clouds of religious doubt hung heavy and thick all over this country through the importation of French infidelity, as they do now through the importation of German rationalistic criticism. Unbelief was especially prevalent in Yale College, as it is to-day in too many of our denominational

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educational institutions—so much so that the students actually proposed to the Faculty for discussion the question, “Is the Bible the Word of God?” The challenge was accepted by President Timothy Dwight himself, and “he so ably,” we are told, “presented to his hearers the proofs of the genuineness, authenticity, and inspiration of the Scriptures as to root out infidelity in Yale College.” Hundreds of Timothy Dwights are needed nowadays, not only at Yale but all over the land, from Sea-blown Boston in the East, to the Golden Gate in the West. If there is anything for which men should contend, it is the living and eternal truth of God. Its value to the world can not be overestimated. Its influence for good upon the past and present ages has been immeasurable, and “each succeeding generation,” as Goethe expresses it, “will renew its youth in the Bible, and the standard for the life and power of a people will be the measure of that people’s faithfulness to the precepts of the Bible. Let mental

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culture increase and science spread and deepen; let the Spirit of man broaden as it will—the majesty and the morality of Christianity as it shines forth in the Gospels will never be surpassed.”

Such a Word must stand when everything else fails; and the man that stands by it can not fail, nor will he stand alone. As Luther sang:

“The Word of God will never yield  
To any creature living;  
He stands with us upon the field  
His grace and Spirit giving.”

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