

MODERNISM:

IS IT FROM HEAVEN OR OF MEN?

WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO TWO ARTICLES
IN THE "BRITISH WEEKLY" BY PRINCIPAL
A. E. GARVIE, D.D.

BY

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FOREWORD

THE positive truth set forth in this book is its chief recommendation, and the reader is assured that he is not being invited to wade through a dreary morass of Modernistic teaching merely. Modernism, to-day, confronts us everywhere. Its battalions are being massed for a concerted attack, and a general advance seems to have been ordered along the whole front, in order that the positions which are supposed to have been stormed and captured may be held and the gains consolidated. Many are being carried away by plausible arguments, and still more, perhaps, are affected by the assumption that no intelligent person can accept the Bible as a whole or receive the gospel as formerly preached. Which really means, not the gospel preached in recent times by ill-instructed people, but the gospel as preached by Paul.

Such statements as the following, recently published, abound: "The more honest a seeker is, the less can he be expected to accept as the truth teachings which simply outrage his intelligence. . . . *Taken as a whole* the broad results of recent scientific, antiquarian, historical and literary research are impossible to set aside . . . and nobody who wishes to be considered a person of ordinary intelligence can refuse to accept these results. No intelligent Christian refuses to accept them."

All this talk about intelligence is absolutely misleading. But as the majority of people know neither the Bible nor science thoroughly, they listen to these effusions and are carried away by them. For ourselves we should not consider any person intelligent who accepted the doctrine of evolution as at present propounded. For to do so simply means that theories are accepted on insufficient evidence and without taking into account all their implications. This does not represent intelligence of a very high order.

But thousands are caught and carried away by such statements as we have quoted, and even if they do not accept all that is said in disparagement of the Bible (though many, alas ! do) their hold upon it is weakened.

In this book we have examined much of the teaching of Modernism, and the reader must judge how far it is found wanting.

Modernism : Its Uncertainty

“THE baptism of John, was it from heaven or of men ? ”

Such was the question proposed by our Lord to the chief priests and scribes and elders of His day when they questioned His authority. They dared not answer. Are Modernists to-day in any better position ? Will they dare to say their message is from heaven ? Will they not prefer to leave the question unanswered ? Nor is the question irrelevant to-day. In the matter now under consideration it is the *test* question. When the relative positions of John and Christ were brought up as a sort of challenge, the former was content to leave the matter here : “ A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven.”

What evidence is there of Modernists having received anything from heaven, in respect of those doubts and uncertainties, those negatives and denials which characterize all their utterances, and which stand in such sharp contrast with the certainty of the Scriptures and of apostolic teaching ? This is the question we propose to consider.

It is reported that Professor Drummond, on his death-bed, said to Sir Wm. Dawson, the famous Christian geologist : “ I am going away back to the Book, to believe it, and receive it, as I did at the first. I can live no longer on uncertainties. I am going back to the faith of the Word of God.” He had been tempted, at one period, to wander amongst the uncertainties of science, so-called, and had found no sure ground and no resting-place for his feet. The characteristic of this age, so far as unseen and eternal realities are concerned, is uncertainty. The writer of some very striking articles which appeared in a leading religious weekly some time ago, under the title “ Have We Lost Our Way ? ” said : “ The fact is

that the pulpit has lost its power and authority because it has lost its certainty." The same writer declared: "Very few churches are anything like full, and many churches are nearly empty." He had heard leading preachers addressing forty or sixty people. "To-day," he told his readers, "there are 1,663,000 fewer scholars in the Sunday-schools than in 1906." He quotes a certain Bishop as saying: 'The future of institutional Christianity is uncertain.' And he goes on to say: "It is no use shirking the fact that there is a general attitude of uncertainty among preachers, the result of which is that young people are inclined to ignore organized religion until it has come to some agreement as to what it believes and how much of the Bible it holds to be true."

And who or what is responsible for this uncertainty? There is only one answer—Modernism. When preachers can tell their congregations that some of the Gospel stories 'are simply Arabian Nights inventions': that "the story of Adam and Eve, their innocence and their fall, is folk-lore," and that "Darwin's triumph has shaken, if not destroyed, the whole theological scheme," that "many of the Old Testament stories are legendary and worthless," what other result than uncertainty could be expected? Especially when it is remembered that these kind of statements are not isolated utterances but are being repeated *ad nauseam*.

One who had recently made a tour of the churches says:

"In one the preacher took as his text 'I am come that they might have life and that they might have it more abundantly' . . . he launched out into a panegyric upon the young life of our age, all seeking a more full life of freedom, and even where this quest led to tragedy yet it was the human soul yearning for that abundant life here signified." (As if "the abundant life" promised by Christ had anything in common with tragedy and sin!)

"Another took as his theme the new birth . . . but ignored the obvious meaning of Christ's words and diverted them into a channel of pure materialism: 'We speak to-day of the New Woman and rightly so. When I look upon our young maidens and virile youth I see the new birth of humanity in all its healthy vigour of body and mind.'"

THE GOSPEL FOR TO-DAY

We propose to make special allusion to two articles by Principal Garvie which have appeared recently—one entitled *The Gospel for To-day*, the other *The Christ for To-day*. We have selected these for several reasons. Principal Garvie is head of a theological college, and therefore we may take it he speaks with some sense of responsibility ; this responsibility extends to the nature of the instruction received by the students under his care, and therefore we are made aware not only of his own views but of what in the ordinary course will become theirs also : and last, but not least, he disclaims extreme Modernism, and therefore we cannot be accused of attacking merely the extreme outposts of the enemy. For good or ill, Modernism has entrenched itself within the very citadel of the Church. We can only say (and we say it as a matter of deep conviction, and not lightly or with any wish to give offence) if Principal Garvie's views are held by his students generally, their preaching will be without authority, and as a consequence both they and all who listen to them will be launched upon a sea of uncertainty, with neither rudder nor compass.

For what does Principal Garvie tell us ? Here is what he says : " What Jesus expressed was eternal truth, but it was expressed in the thought of His own people and times, and it is the task of scholarship to detach the kernel from the husk." We confess, we shuddered as we read these words. We had not before dreamed that anyone, least of all the head of a theological college, would dare to suggest that in connection with Our Lord's teaching there was any such thing as husk. We have read the Gospels closely and continuously for fifty years, but we have never discovered it. The Principal, we are sure, does not intend it, but, to us, such an accusation is little removed from blasphemy.

He speaks of Our Lord's " own people and times." But in the most real sense, as has often been asserted, He really belongs to no people and no time but to all ages. How could a half educated Jew have commanded the attention of the world all these centuries ? And not only commanded the

attention of multitudes of every generation, but won their allegiance and the surrender of all they had to give? Is this Modernism, that the Saviour of the world, the Light that lighteth every man, the One who claimed to be the Truth, and Who came into the world to bear witness to it, could not think beyond "His own people and times"? If the words we have quoted mean anything, they mean that we cannot trust Christ fully, but must trust partly in Him and partly in scholarship: for it is "the work of scholarship," we are told, "to detach the kernel from the husk."

But is there not some confusion of thought in the words we are analysing? How can "eternal truth" find expression in imperfect thought? Or to put it the other way about, How can a defective vehicle convey "eternal truth"? Or again, How can you have truth if the thought does not express it? The fact is, the words and the thought and the truth are one. And this is one of the strongest arguments in favour of verbal inspiration. The words must be inspired equally with the message, for in no other way could the truth contained in the Bible have been adequately set forth. If God is to be declared, the very words must be God-breathed. Thus the Apostle Paul writes: "Which things also we speak, not in the *words* which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth, comparing spiritual things with spiritual" (or conveying spiritual things by spiritual means). The words must be suited to the idea, otherwise the idea cannot be adequately expressed. Therefore, if there is any inspiration at all, it must be verbal. To say that our Lord expressed eternal truth in the thought of His own people and times and that this was not permanent is a contradiction in terms.

THE HUSK AND THE KERNEL

Moreover, what shall be thought of the attempt to bring the teaching of the Lord Jesus Christ into comparison and competition with modern scholarship, and of doing so to the disparagement of the former? If Jesus could express eternal truth it is quite certain no scholarship can ever improve upon the way in which He did it. And, further, modern scholar-

ship, as far as we have observed, instead of detaching any husk, has lost the kernel.

The question arises, what did the poor people do before 'modern scholarship' existed? Apparently God was so inconsiderate as to leave people to swallow the husk during a period of at least 1,500 years. Can one believe that the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ would do anything of the kind? Husks are exceedingly difficult things to swallow. We read of the prodigal, "he would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat." We are not told that he ever attempted to do so. Is God so impotent or so unfeeling that though He sent His Son to declare Him He could not, or would not, go a step further and relieve that revelation of its husks? To us the very idea of husks, from whichever point it is viewed, is derogatory alike to Christ and to God. We should be inclined to hazard a guess that Scholarship possesses a great deal more husks than can be found in the words and thoughts of the Word incarnate.

We have spoken of uncertainty. Where is greater uncertainty to be found than in the domain of science and Biblical criticism? If the varied theories, hypotheses, conjectures and conclusions which have been advanced during the past 50 or 100 years could be brought together they would for the most part form but a heap of opinions long discarded, fit only for the bonfire or the dustbin. The tails of these modern Kilkenny cats are the only tale that is left to be told.

Mr. Spurgeon, in his inimitable way, refers to this changing mood of Science in contrast with the immutable character of the Gospel:

"I will give you another proof, which to my mind is conclusive that our gospel is not after men; and it is this—that *it is immutable, and nothing that man produces can be so called*. If man makes a gospel—and he is very fond of doing it, like children making toys—what does he do? He is very pleased with it for a few moments, and then he pulls it to pieces, and makes it up in another way; and this continually. The religions of 'modern thought' are as changeable as mists on the mountains. See how often science has altered its very basis! Science is notorious for being most scientific in destruction of all the science that has gone before it. I have sometimes indulged myself, in leisure

moments, in reading ancient natural history ; and nothing can be more comic. Yet this is by no means an abstruse science. In twenty years' time some of us may probably find great amusement in the serious scientific teaching of the present hour, even as we do now in the systems of the last century."

Nothing is so ineffective, or so calculated to be harmful, as uncertainty, and most of all is this so in the region of the spirit. The human mind dreads a state of uncertainty in any domain and shrinks from it. It paralyses as nothing else does. What can the best and bravest soldiers do if their leader is uncertain as to his plans, and issues orders which are contradictory ? " If the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle ? " It is this uncertainty which is the outstanding characteristic of Modernism. It is the chief feature of the article we are considering. Indefiniteness and uncertainty are stamped upon it everywhere. We have no hesitation in saying that were any big commercial undertaking laid before a group of average business men in the hazy, uncertain, inconclusive fashion which Principal Garvie adopts they would turn the proposition down without hesitation. Is it any wonder, then, that men everywhere are turning away from a Gospel presented in such a halting manner as is the fashion to-day ? Almost anything is preferable to uncertainty. This is why some turn to Rome, but many more are simply standing aside in doubt and perplexity. They are unattracted because unconvinced. Uncertainty can only breed indifference.

A preacher well known in London said recently :

" True there is hardly any protest, but there is flight. While preachers proclaim the liberty of the pulpit the people exercise the liberty to stay away, especially in the Free Churches.

A writer in an evening paper said a few days ago that a sure way to fill the churches is to empty the creeds. Dr. Barnes, preaching in the Abbey, said that if the miracles of the New Testament were deleted young men would rush forward to fill the depleted ranks of the Anglican priesthood.

Well, the creeds have been shaken out pretty freely, yet the rush hour has not struck."

When Dr. Garvie speaks about adapting the Gospel to our age, of presenting it in its modern dress, and tells us we can " preserve the essentials of the Gospel without retaining the

traditions and the dogmas of the past," what is all this but the kind of talk that disquiets people, and leads to suspicion and unrest ? What exactly lies behind it ? How far does it go ? are the questions everybody is inclined to ask. When they come to be told what these " traditions " and " dogmas " are, they fail to distinguish between these and the very essence of the Gospel itself.

According to Dr. Garvie, it is a mere dogma to believe, for instance, that the authority of Our Lord was decisive. The thoughts He uttered were those of His " own people and times," so we have to find out what is kernel and what is husk. Further on he becomes even more pronounced, for he asserts : " We are not required to maintain that even His authority as perfect Son perfectly revealing the Father, extends beyond the sphere which He claimed for Himself." What could be more indefinite than this : " The sphere which He claimed for Himself " ? What he really means he tries to explain by a later statement : " We recognize," he says, " more fully than a previous generation the historical conditions and the human limitations of that revelation, in other words the reality of the Incarnation." Thus, Christ's revelation of truth and of God was, after all, limited, He did not know everything, if we are to believe Dr. Garvie, for he assures us " we must welcome the *progressive* character of the divine revelation."

All this is calculated to produce, and does produce, the utmost uncertainty. The more so when, in a later article, on *The Christ for To-day*, the same writer objects to our Lord's infallible authority being used in opposition to the findings of modern Biblical scholarship. Which, if words mean anything, mean that our blessed Lord had erroneous thoughts about the Bible and did not even understand it. And then when the authority and certainty of our Lord's utterances no longer avail us, when we have listened to the voice of scholarship and believed in " the inadequacy to reality of many dogmatic formulations," all we are left with is this : " The theologian must be diffident as to the adequacy of his formulations and modest in his claims for it." So that, according to Dr. Garvie all we have still are " inadequate formula-

tions," and why this inadequacy should be better now than formerly we are at a loss to understand.

What all this means, in simple language, is that the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ cannot be understood apart from modern scholarship, and it is implied, though not stated in so many words, that Our Lord and His apostles ought to feel greatly indebted to Modernism, for unless "the adequate divine revelation and the effective human salvation in Jesus Christ" is "restated . . . in the changing terms of the thought of each age," we should have been left with "the inadequacy to reality of many dogmatic formulations."

THE GOSPEL PAUL PREACHED

Let us turn from all this uncertainty to what the Apostle Paul claimed for the gospel he preached. In the opening of his epistle to the Romans he speaks of being "separated unto the gospel of God," and this gospel had been promised in holy writings—the records of holy men who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. That gospel concerns God's Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. What a majesty and authority is thus imparted to the message! Man has nothing to do with it, either as to its source or its subject. The Son of God is central to it, and the message is confirmed by no less a fact than the resurrection. Moreover, it is entirely adequate for man's needs, for the apostle goes on to declare that he is not ashamed of the gospel "for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." In it three things are revealed: (1) The righteousness of God. On the ground of Christ's blood God can be just and yet the justifier of him that believes in Jesus. (2) The power of God. The gospel offers, through the death, resurrection and present intercession of Christ complete deliverance, not only from the guilt of sin but from its power, and support amidst all the trials of this mortal life. (3) The love of God. That love is declared in the Cross as nowhere else. "God commendeth His love to us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us," and that love "is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given to us."

Such is the gospel. How can this be "restated," as Dr.

Garvie would insist, "in the changing terms of the thoughts of each age"? How can you change the terms? The terms are righteousness, power, love. If you change the terms you of necessity change the gospel. How can you take account of the thought of each age? The gospel in the first instance has nothing to do with man's thoughts about anything in this or any other age. It is quite possible some men no longer think of themselves as sinners. Do men's thoughts change God's thoughts? Have His thoughts changed since it was written "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God"?

The same apostle writing to the Corinthians declares that the gospel he preached and which they had received was one which he himself had received. "How that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried and that He rose again the third day according to the scriptures." Now how can these facts—facts central to Christianity—be restated? What has the thought of each age to do with them? And what liberty is there to alter what has been *received*? Christ's death, burial and resurrection, are either facts or they are not. They are facts with a definite meaning, and having a relevancy to human need. God alone can tell us the meaning of these facts, as He alone can judge the need they are designed to meet. He has told us through His apostles their meaning, and no one has any right to modify or change that meaning. Men may refuse the gospel but they do so at their peril. They are not at liberty to alter it. The Apostle Paul declares that if an angel preached any other gospel he was to be accursed. Christ "gave Himself for our sins"; He was "made a curse for us," "He was delivered for our offences and was raised again for our justification." The Apostle Peter with equal clearness and emphasis declares, "Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God." While the Apostle John affirms, "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin." And again, "He is the propitiation for our sins." Modernism rejects this view of the Cross. It will not admit any sacrifice "offered to the righteousness of God."

In contrast with all the uncertainty and hesitation of Modernism we find the apostle to the Gentiles speaking thus, in what is perhaps the earliest inspired communication from his pen, his first letter to the Thessalonians. "Our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance." Three things, be it carefully noted, which are absent from modern preaching—"power," the "Holy Ghost," and "in much assurance." What accounts for this uncertainty which prevails to-day? A mutilated gospel. A gospel shorn of that which really makes it a gospel to dying sinners. But with the apostle there is a confidence, an exhilaration, a conviction which breathes in every reference to his preaching. "We were bold in our God," he says, "to speak unto you the gospel of God." "As we were allowed of God to be put in trust with the gospel, even so we speak; not as pleasing men, but God, which trieth our hearts." In contrast with all this there is not a tittle of evidence that Modernists have been put in trust with anything. They speak out of their own hearts and to please men. The prevailing uncertainty is conclusive proof that Modernism is not from Heaven.

THREE POINTS OF VIEW FROM WHICH MODERNISM MAY BE JUDGED

1. Modernism may be judged by its doctrine of Christ.
2. By its estimate of His sacrifice. 3. By the place it gives the Scriptures. All these subjects are handled in Dr. Garvie's articles, and by the manner in which this is done Modernism may be judged. We have to some extent anticipated the first—the doctrine of Christ. Dr. Garvie is not one of the extreme Modernists, but prefers to be called, as he himself tells us, a *Liberal Evangelical*. It is very easy to be *liberal*, especially when we are dealing with other peoples' goods. But in this sense it is very easy to be dishonest. The unjust steward in Luke xvi. was liberal. St. Paul regarded himself as a steward, and, as he tells us, the essential thing in a steward is that he be found *faithful*. He cannot dispose of his master's goods as he thinks fit, or esteem as worthless what his lord sets great store by. Modernists seem to have

no sense whatever of stewardship. A steward is one who has had certain property committed to his trust, which is to be used for the benefit of its owner. A man is not obliged to be a steward, but being a steward he must recognize that the things he handles are not his own. In the same way, a Modernist is not obliged to be a minister of the gospel, or a theological professor, or an exponent of Christianity, but, being these, the first thing to recognize, surely, is that he must be faithful. He cannot tamper with Gospel truth, or shape that Gospel according to his own predilections and preferences. He is not called upon to fashion the faith. The faith is something that he found already formed and fashioned. It is complete. He can take it or leave it, but he must not adulterate it, or treat what is essential to it as if it were the opposite. If he is not willing to be a steward, then the sooner he finds some other occupation the better for himself and everybody else.

Now one thing that proves Modernism to be of men, certainly not from heaven, is that the Jesus it presents is not the Jesus of Scripture. Indeed the very fact that our Lord is so persistently deprived of all the titles given Him in Scripture is convincing proof of the origin of Modernism. For many years past, again and again, we have read articles and books in which Jesus, Jesus, Jesus has been repeated *ad nauseam*. Lord, Christ, Son of God, not so much as mentioned once. No earthly monarch, no titled person even, would be treated with the utter disrespect shown to Him Who is King of kings and Lord of lords. This damning fact stamps Modernism with its real character. For "no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost." The absence of Lord betrays the origin of this new teaching. We are glad to note that so far as the articles under review are concerned, Dr. Garvie is not such an offender as many.

But in spite of this admission, we are, though with the utmost reluctance, compelled to reject what he teaches with regard to the Word become flesh, and this in a most unequivocal and decided way. We have already referred to his statement, with reference to our Lord's teaching, about detaching the kernel from the husk. We might well ask what

will happen in the process ? or who will be the *final* authority as to which is kernel and which husk and the measure of each ? Scripture speaks very differently from this when it declares, " For He Whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God : for God giveth not the Spirit by measure." Do the words of God contain husk ? Can we attribute husk to One who possessed the Spirit without measure ? If there is husk, and Dr. Garvie is competent to separate the husk from the kernel, then he must be greater than God as well as superior to Christ. What was our Lord's estimate of His own words ? " The word that I have spoken the same shall judge him in the last day." And again, " For I have not spoken of Myself, but the Father which sent me, He gave Me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak. And I know that His commandment is life everlasting ; whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto Me, so I speak." In the light of such an utterance we can only conclude that if there is husk, either Christ was incapable of delivering the Father's message, or husk is equally to be found in the message as it was communicated by the Father to the Son !

THE SPHERE CHRIST CLAIMED FOR HIMSELF

But, we shall be told, our Lord's utterances in this connection did not go " beyond the sphere which He claimed for Himself," but that outside that sphere Christ shared the ignorance of His times. To which we reply that the words we have quoted preclude any such thought. The Lord did not get His message from His times but from the Father, and further, neither here nor anywhere does our Lord define any sphere. He speaks of His words, without exception, as not coming from Himself but from the Father. " My doctrine is not mine but His that sent Me." " I have not spoken of Myself," He declares. So that we are faced with this terrible fact that if there is husk, either it was there when Christ received the Father's words, or He was not a perfect medium. Either of which supposition is blasphemous. We challenge Dr. Garvie or any Modernist to quote one single passage of Scripture to show that a distinction has to be drawn, or any difference made whatever, between some of our Lord's

utterances and others. Therefore we entirely reject the Principal's words when he says: "We are not required to maintain that even His authority as perfect Son, perfectly revealing the Father, extends beyond the sphere which He claimed for Himself." He did not claim any sphere for Himself, for all fulness dwelt in Him, and therefore we are required to maintain that His authority was the same in every sphere. For the One Who perfectly revealed the Father, was the Son in the bosom of the Father; as much this when a Man on earth as previously (for where are we told He left it?), and to suppose that One occupying such a place did not know the facts as to creation and man is simply unbelievable. Mark xiii. 32 does not touch the point we are insisting upon. The day and the hour formed no part of the message He had received from the Father to communicate. We are dealing now with what He did communicate. To suppose that any person could have such an intimate acquaintance with the being, character and purposes of God as to give a perfectly true account of them and yet be in ignorance of His own creation, even more ignorant than His creatures, is to suppose something which is morally and intellectually impossible. But this is characteristic of Modernism. It lands us in impossible positions and predicaments from which there is no escape without sacrificing even ordinary common sense. It requires the most abject credulity to believe in Modernism and at the same time repose entire trust in either Christ or the Scriptures.

In his second article, the subject of which is *The Christ for To-day*, Principal Garvie goes even further in his repudiation of the Christ of Scripture. Far from exercising such divine attributes as omnipotence and omniscience we are not to be allowed to think that He even possessed them. What all this leads to is made very clear. His infallible authority is not to be opposed to the findings of modern Biblical scholarship. To suppose our Lord to be omnipotent or omniscient or infallible is, according to Modernists, to deny the reality of His humanity. In what uncertainty again do we thus find ourselves when we are told that we must not listen to Christ but to the Higher Critics! Yet we are told that in the sphere

which He claimed for Himself as perfect Son perfectly revealing the Father, His authority is to remain unquestioned. But who can define the limits of this sphere? When we are dealing with "one God and Father of all, Who is above all, and through all, and in you all," how is it possible for any human being to draw a line and say, on this side of the line Christ's authority may be accepted, but beyond it He knew no more than other people, and need not be regarded as an authority?

ECCLESIASTICAL DOGMA

In dealing with this subject Dr. Garvie refers deprecatingly to what he calls "ecclesiastical dogma." Does he apply this term to the doctrine of the epistle to the Colossians? It would almost appear so, for no one who really accepted the teaching of that epistle could deny our Lord's omniscience and omnipotence, or say He was not infallible in every sphere. God manifest in flesh does not mean God becoming a creature. If so, how could "All fulness dwell in Him"? Not only does the apostle make this assertion, but in Chapter ii. he supports it by one equally profound: "In Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." *Now these statements are made subsequent to the Incarnation and refer to Him as become Man.* But they cover past, present and future—for the Person to whom they refer was and is ever the same. There is not a suggestion anywhere in Scripture that Christ, in becoming Man, relinquished any power that was ever His or any position He ever held. He is said to be "the image of the invisible God." How could one who did not know so much as a Higher Critic be God's representative to man or man's representative to God? He is on behalf of both. And further, He is the firstborn of all creation, filling the highest place as heir of all things in that creation. Could such a one be limited in power and intelligence? The very idea becomes ridiculous. Moreover, all things "were created by Him and for Him." Where does it say that He Who called all things into being by His word and upholds all things by that same word ever relinquished such attributes or ceased to possess this power? The Bible nowhere tells us so, and

where have we any authority about such matters outside the Bible? "And by Him all things consist" or "are one harmonious whole" as Weymouth translates it. When was this office withdrawn from Christ? and when were "all things" handed over to the keeping of some one else? All things exist in the power of His Person, as His creation.

If we let the truth of Christ's Person go, everything goes. The work of the Cross was so tremendous that no less than One infinite in every way—infinite in knowledge and in holiness, One in Whom all fulness dwelt—could accomplish what needed to be done. He Who alone could make peace by the blood of His Cross and reconcile all things to God must be the creator and upholder of all things. To uphold all worlds was easier than to bear the burden of our sins on the Tree. Only one in Whom dwelt all the fulness of the Godhead bodily could be made a curse and endure it in our stead at the hands of a holy God. "Awake O Sword against My Shepherd, against the man that is My fellow, saith the Lord of hosts."

Nor is it necessary to reject all thought of omnipotence, etc., in order to retain the reality of Christ's manhood. There must be nothing in that manhood inconsistent with Godhead. In the first place, let us beware of negatives in approaching such a subject as the Incarnation. As Dr. Garvie knows very well, negatives are universals, and you cannot state a negative unless you know all that is to be known about your subject. Before anyone can say a certain author has never touched upon such a subject in any of his writings he must be familiar with them all. Whereas by merely reading one page out of many volumes it would be possible to make a positive statement as to some subject to which the said author had referred. Now, who will say he knows all that is to be known about our Lord? He Himself said that "No man knoweth Who the Son is, but the Father" (Luke x. 22). And, again, in that marvellous description of this same Person as He comes out of heaven (Revelation xix.) we are told: "And He had a Name written, that no man knew, but He Himself." Therefore, regarding such attributes as omnipotence, omniscience, infallibility, and so on, we challenge the

right or competency of any to employ negatives. How can we define that which is beyond us?

CHRIST'S PERSON

Dr. Garvie says: "Whatever our age may surrender it will not surrender the reality of the humanity of Christ, whatever consequences that may involve." This last phrase not only seems objectionable and uncalled for, but to savour of presumption. The reality of the humanity of Christ must never be separated from the reality of His Deity, nor must any view of His humanity be inconsistent with the truth of His Person. Dr. Garvie admits that Jesus was more than an ordinary man, more even than the wisest and best of men. "He is divine as well as human, the Word become flesh," he says. Does it never occur to him that it is somewhat unseemly to sit in judgment upon such an one, and speak as if it was easily possible to determine His limitations? The Word become flesh! Yes, but without ceasing to be the Word. Where can you place your limitations? How can anyone wish to be left to form his own estimate of Him? How can we ever cease to thank God that He enables us to share His estimate of this One, and that we have such a revelation of Him as the Scriptures give us!

Principal Garvie's articles are full of contradictions and inconsistencies. It is always so when men prefer their own thoughts to Scripture. Thus, before concluding his article, he declares: "Where the natural ends and the supernatural begins, who can determine? Who can distinguish what is human and what is divine, when both unite as in Him?" If so, then if Jesus were fallible and feeble, we must think of God as equally powerless and ignorant, according to Dr. Garvie, for he goes on to speak of "the human limitation of Jesus." In this way he seems to determine where the divine ends, or else the divine in Christ was limited, and such a conclusion robs us at once of a true Christ and the truth of Scripture.

Why reason about these things instead of accepting what Scripture says? Scripture tells us that Jesus was God and Jesus was Man, but it was Jesus Who was the two. And to separate either from the other is to lose the Christ of God,

and be left without either humanity or Deity as expressed in Him. Mere abstractions here are intolerable because unthinkable. Abstract Deity or abstract humanity, divorced from Him in Whom dwelt both in all their fulness, is for all practical purposes meaningless as well as valueless. But presented in Jesus how precious! "In Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." "It was pleasing that in Him should all fulness dwell." Here is the truth. Here is the faith once delivered to the saints. Here is the Christ of God. And anything short of this fulness, any limitation placed upon it, of whatsoever kind, must be rejected. In Person He is the Son, in nature Man—body, soul and spirit—one Christ.

That fulness ever dwelt in the One the Father sent to be the Saviour of the world—even as a babe. Not that that was the occasion for its manifestation. He grew, as Luke tells us, "in wisdom and stature and in favour with God and man." Everything was perfect in its season. And, what is equally true, everything in its season was perfect. His childhood was of equal perfection, in its time and place, with His fully developed manhood. His growth and development were the growth and development of the bud opening into the full blown flower. The bud is as perfect as any other stage in the existence of the flower. And, in addition, all that is in the full blown flower was present in the bud. It was not manifest, but it was there. Dr. Garvie speaks of "a moral character achieved in growth and struggle." Such a statement we feel compelled utterly to reject. "Being made perfect," an expression which occurs in the epistle to the Hebrews, does not refer to character at all. We must not interpret one Scripture in such a way as to falsify another. The words of the angel to Mary are: "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee, therefore also that Holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." What room is there for "a moral character achieved in growth and struggle," when from His very birth He was holy and worthy both morally and in every other respect to be owned as God's Son?

But Dr. Garvie does not believe the Bible, nor does the

Modernist. These men prefer their own thoughts. And so their Christ is not the Christ of Scripture. A Jesus who could not go beyond "the thought of His own people and times," whose teaching was encumbered and obscured with "husk"; Who was neither omnipotent nor omniscient, and Whose authority is of such little account that it must not be invoked against the findings of Modernism; one so imperfect that "it is personal development, character, experience which must hold the foremost place in our conception of His Person," and of Whom it has to be said, "there was a moral character achieved in growth and struggle"—such a Christ bears no resemblance to the One Paul knew and preached, and certainly such an One is altogether inadequate either to save a sinner or satisfy a saint. Much less is He the One in the bosom of the Father—the eternal Word in Whom God, in all His fulness, is expressed. Is Modernism, judged from this point of view, from heaven or of men? Christ is dragged down to a human level, and it is easy to see for what purpose; to rob Him of authority and thus give Modernism free scope.

The Work of Christ

IF Modernism has a false Christ, one of its own creation, it leaves us no better off as regards the Atonement. Under its treatment both sin and sacrifice have lost their meaning. Out of nearly forty sermonettes addressed to children, recently published, in no single instance were they pointed to the Atoning death of Christ. Scarcely any reference was made to that death, in any sense ; and therefore it is hardly surprising if sin was almost entirely ignored, and all were treated as if already children of God.

Principal Garvie leaves us in no uncertainty as to his own views on this point. "Much of the language," he says, "in which the doctrine of the Atonement was formerly stated is intolerable to us." The fact is, of course, that men who can speak of our Lord in the way Modernists do are not likely to feel any need of His atoning work. "I am not worrying about the curse of Adam," was said recently by the highest official representative of Congregationalism, and from no less a place than the chair of the Union. And he proceeded : "If I no longer believe that it was necessary for Jesus to come and die in order to appease the wrath of God, I believe the world needed and still needs His revelation of the righteousness and love of God, and His wonderful spirit of human service." Yes, anything, apparently, rather than the humbling truth that apart from the precious blood of Christ we are lost, hell-deserving sinners. Modernists seem to have discovered a righteousness which enables God to take no account of sin. Why should He, if there was no fall ? "Are we still to sing," this speaker went on, "'The Second Adam to the fight and to the rescue came,' when we no longer believe that the first Adam was there ?" What does all this mean

but that some of the professed exponents of Christianity have apostatized from the faith? That on all sides of us there are false prophets who deny every fundamental truth of Christianity, who are, as in Jeremiah's day, "prophets of the deceit of their own heart"? "I have not sent these prophets," said God, "yet they ran: I have not spoken to them, yet they prophesied." Do we realize the true character of the times in which we live, and how intensely solemn they are? In a recent sermon published in a leading daily paper, one of the most respectable of its kind, the "Fall," as related in Genesis iii. was described as a "Fall upwards," and when man eat of the fruit of the forbidden tree, this was but part of his development. "The Ascent of Man had begun, he had risen above the beasts to the level of a moral being, and it is this ascent of man which Genesis describes." So ran his strange exposition of Genesis iii. Strange indeed that, if so, God thought otherwise and man was driven out of the garden, and stranger still that this should be described as a fall upwards. The serious part is, the writer pretends to be giving the true interpretation of the passage. Thus the whole narrative becomes a mass of confusion, partly true and partly false. But this is nothing new with Modernists. When they have finished with a passage of scripture it is often left without rhyme or reason.

Let us return to our quotation from Principal Garvie's article. He says, "Much of the language in which the doctrine of the Atonement was formerly stated is intolerable to us." To what language does he refer? Doubtless, there have been theologians in the past who have misrepresented the case by speaking as if God and Christ were in opposition—God against the sinner and Christ for him. With the former nothing but wrath and punishment, and all the mercy and compassion with the latter, leading Him to interpose on the sinner's behalf. This, of course, is an altogether perverted view of the matter.

We fear that Dr. Garvie's statement goes beyond this, and what is *intolerable* to him is the teaching of the New Testament on this subject, or at least a large part of it. He often hides his meaning under a cloak of words, as when

he says, " Every theory must be rejected that is inconsistent with Christ's revelation of the Fatherhood " (of God). In other passages he seems to indicate that there are statements in the apostolic writings which are inconsistent with that revelation. Nevertheless one or two of his remarks have a very obvious meaning. As when he declares: " Neither Pagan nor Jewish sacrifices are the clue to the mystery of the self-sacrifice of God in the Cross of Christ. It is not a sacrifice offered to the righteousness of God : it is a sacrifice endured by the love of God."

JEWISH SACRIFICES NO CLUE TO THE CROSS

Let us consider these statements a moment. We can afford to leave on one side his reference to Pagan sacrifices, but Jewish sacrifices belong to a quite different category. No intelligent believer thinks of such sacrifices as anything more than shadows or as a temporary provision. They made nothing perfect, they could not take away sins. But they were shadows, and if so, shadows of what? Can anyone bring himself to believe that all these sacrifices, from their earliest form until their latest development as set forth in detail in Leviticus and Numbers, served no purpose and had no meaning ; in fact, were a mistake and, according to Dr. Garvie, were a clue to nothing? Yet these sacrifices were offered " year by year continually," the writer to the Hebrews tells us ; and also throughout the year, both by individuals and on behalf of the nation, with more or less strictness and constancy for hundreds and hundreds of years. And this by a people in closest alliance with God and under His special supervision and direction. Yea, if, in spite of Modernists, we may believe the Old Testament Scriptures, these sacrifices were offered expressly at the command of God. What purpose then did they serve? What conception must we form of God, let alone of the Jews themselves, if we suppose that they were absolutely futile, unnecessary and unwanted, a mistake and a delusion? When in one or two isolated passages in the prophets God seems to object to these offerings, it is clear that He objected to them only when they were divorced from moral conduct. To break His moral code and

yet be punctilious as to outward observances, was indeed hateful to Him. But He never objected to sacrifices in themselves.

When the writer to the Hebrews declares, "In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure," he certainly does not mean us to understand that they were a mistake and served no purpose. He means they never gave God all He wanted. Only the eternal Son could do that—He Who could say, "Lo, I come to do Thy will, O God," then it is said: "He taketh away the first, that He may establish the second." But this very statement—"He taketh away the first"—is some indication that He ordained those sacrifices. "He taketh away the first that He may establish the second," can only mean that both the first and the second were of His appointment. These two actions thus linked together seem to tell us this. And, if so, what purpose did the first serve? Surely, one purpose would be they pointed on to that which superseded them.¹ Strange would it have been were this not so. That it was so seems distinctly implied in the words, "The law having a shadow of good things to come." Now a shadow has some relation and some likeness to the thing foreshadowed. But, further, we are distinctly told that the tabernacle, in connection with which all these offerings were made, was a pattern of things in the heavens; and, in addition, we have the unqualified assertion: "For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh; how much more shall the blood of Christ, Who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God" (Heb. ix. 13, 14). If one is not a clue to the other we know not what could be. In Principal Garvie's teaching there seems to be no room for the *blood*. He does indeed say that "In Him (Christ) God endured and achieved something for man of eternal significance and infinite value, even man's redemption from sin and reconciliation unto God." These are very fine words, and there would be nothing of which to complain if the right thing were meant, but it is of little use

¹ Heb. iii. 5 declares: "They were a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after."

to borrow Scripture phrases if emptied of their meaning. Redemption in Scripture is redemption by blood—Christ made a curse, made sin, enduring God's wrath against sin—bearing "our sins in His own body on the tree," suffering for sins "the just for the unjust." But there is no trace of any of this in the articles we are considering, but, on the contrary, we are told the Atonement "is not a sacrifice offered to the righteousness of God : it is a sacrifice endured by the love of God." If Scripture is to be believed, it is both. "Therein (in the gospel) is righteousness of God revealed" (Rom. i. 17), again, "Justified by His blood," "God commendeth His love towards us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Rom. v. 8, 9). Of what use is love without righteousness? To love unrighteously is the worst form of sin. For it really means to love sin.

Dr. Garvie will not have us seek our analogies either in the Jewish sacrifices or in the law-court, but in the home. The reference to the law-court is evidently a thrust against the epistle to the Romans. (These sidelights reveal so much of his meaning.) But why not the law-court? Has God no laws—no rights? Is He not the Governor of the universe? Are not justice and judgment the habitation of His throne? Modernists are never tired of referring to God's Fatherhood, and of assuming that this applies to all men indiscriminately. Which is only a further instance of its weakness and onesidedness, not to call it by any harsher name. "Christ's revelation of the Fatherhood" may be, and is, a most blessed truth, and yet in the whole of the Bible no sterner words are to be found than those which fell from His lips.

If Principal Garvie repudiates all reference to the law-court, then, to be consistent, he must equally repudiate the term "justification." Thus, a great deal of Paul's teaching is jettisoned at once. That Dr. Garvie refuses the plain teaching of Scripture seems clear from the following: "For it (the Cross) is not the condition which makes forgiveness possible to God but the channel through which forgiveness becomes actual to man." The Apostle to the Gentiles, who tells us the gospel was committed to his trust, and declares to us the gospel he was expressly ordained to preach, surely

knew something of its contents, and he held a view of the Cross precisely opposite to that advanced by Principal Garvie. In his view the blood was that which declared the righteousness of God and made forgiveness possible to God. "Whom God hath set forth a propitiatory ("meeting place") in His blood through faith." This it is which enables God to be "just and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus" (Rom. iii. 25, 26). Here he distinctly borrows his thought from Leviticus xvi., where we are told, that on the Day of Atonement the blood of the sin-offering was sprinkled once on God's throne and seven times before it. On that ground alone Aaron could enter the Divine presence, or Moses meet God. The blood was the witness of God's hatred of sin and of His mercy to the sinner. A witness that sin can never enter His presence. His throne is established in righteousness. The mercy seat received the blood or there could have been no mercy. And this is the clue to the Cross as set forth in Romans iii. in the words already quoted: "Whom (Christ) God hath foreordained"—"foreordained," yet Dr. Garvie says there is no clue in what went before—"foreordained to be a propitiation (propitiatory or meeting place) in His blood through faith." And this, and this alone, in spite of all that may be said to the contrary, is what has made forgiveness possible with God. Enabled Him to be "just and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus."

No reasonable person can doubt this to be Paul's teaching, and therefore it is clear what it is Dr. Garvie refuses and what he declares to be intolerable to him; and consequently the plain declaration of God's word is intolerable to him. What then are we to think of Modernism, if it so flatly contradicts the Bible and considers even the apostle, who tells us the gospel was committed to his trust, of no authority?!!

Dr. Garvie asserts that Jewish sacrifices afford no clue to the Cross, but yet another apostle declares that Christ was the lamb foreordained before the foundation of the world. Are not the sacrifices of the Old Testament likely then to be some clue?

This is no isolated instance of Modernistic teaching. We wish we could think that it stood alone. Some statements

are even more pronounced and more daring. Here is a sample, taken from a sermon which recently appeared, intended to be read on Good Friday. "There are theories of the 'Atonement,'" says the writer, "still current to-day which are stumbling-blocks in the way of intelligent people." (Why is it always assumed that only "intelligent people" are unorthodox? or have difficulties about what has always been believed, and believed by some of the most learned men that ever lived? Is it necessarily a mark of intelligence not to be able to understand what is really quite simple?)

"Here are two such theories," he goes on to say, "expressed in two popular hymns." And he makes the following quotations:

"For what you have done His blood must atone;
The Father has *punished* for you His dear Son,
The Lord in the day of His *anger* did lay
All our sins on the Lamb and He bore them away."

The other is:

"Blessed through endless ages be the precious stream
Which from endless *torments* did the world redeem."

The words we have italicized are copied from the original and they indicate therefore the ideas to which special objection is taken—they are "*punished*," "*anger*," "*torments*." Now without committing ourselves to every expression of a hymn, we do not hesitate to say, making due allowance for the imperfection of human language, that there is nothing in these words to which intelligent people need take exception, because there is nothing in their meaning and intention contrary to the gospel.

We are told, for instance, that "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us" (Gal. iii. 13). If hanging on a tree and being made a curse does not involve the idea of punishment, we know not to what category punishment belongs.

The same inspired writer tells us that "God hath made Him to be sin for us" (2 Cor. v. 21). Does sin deserve punishment or does it not? If not, there is an end of all righteousness. If it does, how could Christ escape and God remain righteous, for He made Christ "sin"? It is not a question of what Christ was personally. Personally at that moment

He was never more pleasing to God, for He was doing His will at infinite cost to Himself. It is a question (1) of the nature of sin, (2) of the place Christ took, and (3) of the reality of the Cross. In Modernism all reality both of sin and the Cross disappears. So much then as to *punishment*.

What about *anger*? We are not assuming that there are no difficulties here. The Cross is as mysterious as the Person of Him Who endured it. How there can be God and Man—very God and very Man—yet but one Person, is inexplicable. Yet even some “intelligent people” believe this. Is there to be no mystery about the Cross, which involves the facts of sin and of God’s relation to it, and how He could in righteousness restore man? Our finite minds may find it very difficult to understand how the Son ever in the bosom of the Father could be forsaken of God, but the fact remains, and Scripture is very emphatic about it. “My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?” are words recorded in Psalm 22 and repeated by Christ on the Cross, and recorded in the Gospels no less than three times. These words not only contain mystery but they proclaim the awfulness of the ordeal then endured. Do they contain no suggestion of punishment or anger? We are not prescribing what punishment, or attempting to define it. There are varied kinds. If we say the words quoted above are the words of a martyr suffering on His own account because of His own righteousness, then He was the first and only martyr that had not God with Him in His trial, and this would place Christ on a lower platform than, say, Stephen, and many others. And such a view would make God unrighteous. The only intelligent explanation is that they were wrung from One Who at that moment stood in the sinners’ stead—One Who died as a Substitute in the truest sense and meaning of that word. He had to feel and to bear all that sin entailed. The words of the prophet, forecasting that moment, and foretelling what it involved, alone explain it: “When Thou shalt make His soul an offering for sin”; “It pleased the Lord to bruise Him.” Again we ask: Does sin and what is due to it (which Christ had to bear, or there could have been no Atonement)—does sin involve no punishment and no anger? If not, what has become of God’s

character and what explanation remains of *that* cry? for Christ was innocent Himself.

But the question is often asked: How can the innocent be punished for the guilty? Is it righteous to punish an innocent man for the sins of others? Certainly not. And if Christ had been but an ordinary human being, to inflict judgment upon Him on account of the wrong committed by others would indeed have been unjust. But Christ is God. And what we witness in the Cross is God Incarnate bearing our sins.¹

And now, lastly, what about *torments*? Are there no torments in connection with sin? We should have supposed that anyone familiar with human history, would have admitted that sin has its *torments*, even here and now. Is there no torment of the soul, no torment of conscience when it awakes to the full reality of sin? And what about the next world? It is Christ Himself—Christ, mind, not Paul—who describes a departed soul as “*being in torments.*” Four times over in a few sentences occur such words as torments, tormented, place of torment (Luke xvi.). Was there no torment then for the One Who died to put sin away? Is there no torment in being wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities? had the chastisement and the stripes none? Is none implied in that cry, “Why hast Thou forsaken Me”? Are we no longer to sing:

“O Lord what Thee tormented
Was our sins’ heavy load;
We had the debt augmented
Which Thou didst pay in blood”?

Is it possible that such an one as Christ—God’s Beloved Son—could be forsaken and endure no torment? What are the darkness and the earthquake and the rending of the veil and the rocks, and the opened graves, which accompanied that death, but the outward tokens of those deeper commotions of soul through which He passed, when Jehovah put Him to grief and when He poured out His soul unto death? Is He never to see of the travail of His soul, simply because there was no travail? Modernism knows nothing of all this. Indeed it refuses to admit anything of the kind. No wonder

¹ In addition, there is the voluntary character of Christ’s offering.

it has but the feeblest apprehension of sin, on the one hand, and of the righteousness and love of God, on the other.

And so the one from whose sermon we have been quoting, having dismissed all idea of punishment, anger and torments from the Cross, his comment upon the verses quoted is :

"This is not merely unmitigated nonsense, but very nearly heathenism. These verses depict a God so angry with mankind that He would only be pacified by having His own Son butchered. They also depict a God who had prepared 'endless torments' for His creatures, but was induced to abandon this pleasant scheme by an offer on the part of His Son to be killed in the place of the culprits destined for these torments. Moreover they assume that the Father had one kind of mind and the Son another, the Father being angry and vindictive and the Son loving and self-sacrificing."

This is not only a caricature, but a most dishonest one at that. Not only does it misrepresent what the particular lines teach, but holds them up to undeserved ridicule by introducing such words as "butchered" as descriptive of what Christ submitted to endure at the hands of God : and "this pleasant scheme" as descriptive of the punishment of the wicked. (Can one who uses such expressions have any sense of what sin is in God's account, or has he the least idea of what was needed to put it away ?) The lines in question do not *necessarily* bear any such construction as is here placed upon them. As we have already shown the words taken for what they are, a human composition, express very forcibly and clearly the very truth of Scripture. The words "has punished for you His dear Son" do not depict a God angry with mankind. "Dear Son" conveys the very opposite idea, viz., what God has done for man. There is no suggestion of "an offer on the part of His Son to be killed," nor so much as a hint "that the Father had one kind of mind and the Son another, etc." All these ideas are absolutely foreign to the hymns in question—as far as the lines quoted are concerned—and have simply been read into them.

SOME TYPICAL OFFERINGS

Dr. Garvie would have us believe that the Jewish sacrifices are no clue to the sacrifice of the Cross. They happen to be a most definite clue. So much so, that it is impossible to

have any accurate knowledge of Christ's sacrifice without some knowledge of the types. We can make only the briefest reference to some of them. Apart from the day of Atonement and the special feasts and celebrations, there were four main offerings: (1) The Sin Offering: (2) The Burnt Offering: (3) The Meat or Meal Offering: (4) The Peace Offering.

1. The Sin Offering: Here the outstanding feature was that the carcase of the bullock was burnt outside the camp, while certain specified portions were offered on the altar. In this we have foreshadowed the fact of Christ going out into the distance where man was, out of God's presence, and bearing the full judgment of sin. Yet even here the thought of His preciousness to God is retained in that the richest and choicest parts were burnt on the altar.

2. The Burnt Offering: Here we have another aspect entirely. Not the judgment of God descending upon Christ on account of sin, as in the former offering, but all that was presented by Christ to God as a sweet savour. The entire animal, except the skin, was consumed upon the altar. Christ doing the will of God, obedient unto death, that death being the expression of the love and devotedness of His heart, and the unspotted character of His Person. Christ an offering and a sacrifice to God of a sweet smelling savour is what is here set forth (Eph. v. 2). It is what God found for Himself.

3. The Meal Offering: The fine flour represents the even, unruffled character of our Saviour's life as a Man, and its unspotted purity. It was prepared in various ways, in the oven, in a pan, in a frying-pan, as indicating the tests and trials, in varying degrees of intensity, to which, from the cradle to the Cross, He was subjected. Luke, in a special way, presents this aspect of our Lord's life and death. He alone mentions that our Lord prayed for His enemies, on the Cross, and attended to the needs of the dying malefactor. He alone records the words, "Father, into Thy hands I commend My Spirit" (Luke xxiii. 34, 39, 46).

4. The Peace Offering: The great thought here is communion. The sacrifice was shared by God, the priest and the offerer. So the Apostle Paul declares: "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood

of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?" (1 Cor. x. 16). Communion with God and our communion with one another are equally the result of the Cross; for there God finds His portion, in the love and devotedness and perfection of Christ displayed on that occasion as nowhere else: and we find ours, for all its benefits are for us: while Christ reaps His reward, for His present place of exaltation and glory are the direct result of it. So that God and Christ and the worshipper are in communion.

Thus the Sin Offering, Burnt Offering, Meat Offering and Peace Offering, in various ways, all point to the one sacrifice of the Cross. Yet Dr. Garvie tells us they are no clue. Strange, indeed, that prophets should have inquired and searched diligently, and yet discovered no clue: that the Spirit which was in them should testify beforehand the sufferings of Christ, but without affording a clue; stranger still that Christ should have been foreordained before the foundation of the world to be the Lamb of God Whose precious blood was to redeem us, yet God never thought it worth while to give us a clue, though prophets were His spokesmen for hundreds of years before Christ was manifested; and, perhaps, stranger than all that Christ Himself on the day of His resurrection in His conversation with the two disciples on the road to Emmaus, apparently found no clue either, though "beginning at Moses and all the prophets, He expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself." If they concerned Himself is it possible to believe that there was nothing at all about the most important event which did concern Him—no clue concerning His death? Why then did He say afterwards to the assembled disciples, "Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day"? *Thus* it is written and *thus* it behoved Christ to suffer. Do not the *thus* and *thus* indicate a clue?

What we have already said surely contradicts Dr. Garvie's other assertion that the Cross is not a sacrifice offered to the righteousness of God. In what sense then are we to understand such words as "propitiation" and "righteousness" so

often associated with it? Why was it necessary to sprinkle the blood on the throne and before it? Why does Paul make use of the word "propitiatory"? (Rom. iii.). And why does the Apostle John twice, at least, employ the term? Once in his first epistle, Chap. ii. v. 2: "He is the propitiation for our sins and not for ours only, but for the whole world." And again in Chap. iv. v. 10: "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son, the propitiation for our sins." Who needed to be propitiated if not God? Certainly not Satan, and, with equal certainty, not man. Surely Modernists render the very language of Scripture meaningless. God needed to be propitiated because He had been wronged.

Dr. Garvie insists that it is not in the law-court but in the home that we must seek our analogies for the Cross. "Not the judge's mind but the mother's heart brings us nearest to it. Every theory must be rejected that is inconsistent with Christ's revelation of the Fatherhood." While admitting—fully admitting—that the mother's heart represents a part of the truth, and allowing, too, that Fatherhood is the final and completing revelation of God, yet we must affirm, and in no uncertain manner, that Dr. Garvie's presentation of the matter is both partial and imperfect. Indeed, taken as a whole, it is radically unsound. So much so, he disfigures and distorts the very truth he desires to press home. He is dealing with a subject which involves the whole character of God. Sin, atonement, His relationship with man, involve His justice, as well as His love—His throne, as well as His heart—His position as responsible Governor of the universe as well as His Fatherhood. Yet Dr. Garvie would have us dismiss the judge's mind and the law-court from the account.

By this method we get rid of some of the greatest words in the Bible. There is no longer any use for them. Such words as Propitiation, Ransom, Redemption, have lost nearly all their meaning. But this is not all. Even the love of God and the Fatherhood of God suffer in the process. It is easily possible by removing part of a building to bring the whole fabric to the ground. In the Cross mercy and truth meet together, righteousness and peace kiss each other. Take

away truth and you weaken mercy ; forget righteousness, and peace will take its flight. Dr. Garvie speaks of the home, but seems to forget that, from one end of Scripture to the other, man is presented as *away from home*—the “ far country ” is his place by nature, not the father’s house. A child at home does not need a ransom, nor has redemption any meaning except in regard to something once possessed, but lost. If you make God the Father of everybody indiscriminately you make Him the Father of nobody. If there is one thing Scripture is more insistent upon than another it is the reality of sin and its effects. Man is a rebel, not a child, in the Christian sense ; nor is God the Father of all men in the Christian sense, either. Until there is faith there is no Fatherhood. Man is at a distance, and only by the precious blood can he be redeemed ; only on that ground can God meet him or have anything to say to him.

Until satisfaction had been rendered to God by the Cross there was no way open for man to return. There and there alone God came out to man, but in righteousness as well as in love, and there and there alone does man find a meeting-place with God. You cannot have the love without the blood, or, in other words, without the righteousness. But in the Cross every attribute of God is reconciled. God uncovered His heart there, it is true, but He also made bare His holy arm. And you cannot have one apart from the other. God is Judge as well as Father, and we cannot know Him as Father until all His justice is satisfied. Blessed be His Name, He is both a just God and a Saviour. The believer may know not only that God can and does forgive sin, but that He has received satisfaction in full on account of every sin He forgives ; for only sins that have been borne can be forgiven. “ Forgiving iniquity, transgression and sin ” is the declaration God makes of His Name to Moses (Ex. xxxiv. 7), and it is said the Hebrew word for “ forgiving ” carries with it the thought of bearing. “ The Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all.” Only sins which have been borne can ever be forgiven.

“ The Lord in the day of His anger did lay
Our sins on the Lamb and He bore them away.”

Such is the language of faith. But this can be known and the benefit of it possessed by those only who are ready to confess: "All we like sheep have gone astray, we have turned every one to his own way" (Isa. liii. 6).

The whole of Christianity, as well as the entire revelation of the Bible, is based upon the supposition that man is not a child of God by nature, but that he may become one. And it is equally explicit upon the point as to how he becomes one. Nor is it less a fact that man is not *at home*, though God invites him home. There must be something anterior therefore to the home, some prior considerations, before the home can be thought of or its language employed, and upon this Paul insists in his epistle to the Romans, though Modernism seems to have no room for it. We are faced with the tremendous alternative of rejecting the Bible, and the teaching of Christ and His Apostles, if we accept Modernism. Our Lord Himself declared that Moses wrote of Him, that what Moses and the prophets wrote are the Scriptures, and that all that was written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets and in the Psalms concerning Him must be fulfilled. They testified *beforehand* the *sufferings of Christ*. But according to Modernists our Lord was ignorant on this subject. That, however, is not the point for the moment. The point before us is that Modernism rejects His teaching and that of His apostles. What briefly did they teach on the subjects we have been discussing?

Our Lord Himself certainly on many occasions did not use the analogy of the home. "For the Son of Man is come to save that which was lost," "The Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a *ransom* for many," are some of His utterances. He likens Himself to a shepherd seeking a sheep that had gone astray. He speaks of some men as "the children of the wicked one." While respecting others He pronounced the solemn words, "Ye are of your father the devil." He called the Pharisees and scribes, the religious leaders and teachers of His day, by such epithets as "blind guides," "fools and blind," "hypocrites," with striking and stern repetition, and closes His denunciation of them thus: "Ye serpents, ye generation of

vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell? " (Matt. xviii., xx. and xxiii.). There is not much analogous to the home or the mother here.

What about the Apostle Paul? The whole argument of the epistle to the Romans, which, by the way, is *the* epistle in which the Gospel of God is unfolded, is of a forensic character and belongs to the law-court. Man, whether Jew or Gentile, is the prisoner at the bar, and is brought in guilty before God. Is there a more solemn or impressive piece of writing anywhere? Could any argument be more cogent or more convincing? Witness after witness is brought up to testify to man's guilt. The indictment is set forth, the witnesses are heard, the whole history of man is laid bare. There is no escape. All are guilty. And then the way of justification is made plain. "For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God; being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." What unprejudiced person, what person exercising even a little ordinary common sense, to put it on no higher ground, can read through these marvellous chapters and believe that the writer of them had entirely missed his way? "It is not in the law-court but the home that we must seek our analogies," for the meaning of the gospel and the Cross, Modernists tell us. Is it not evident that Paul does not agree with them? One thing is absolutely certain—common sense, to put it again, no higher than that, forbids us to suppose otherwise—this chosen vessel of Christ, ordained to be a preacher and an apostle must have known something of the gospel he was called to proclaim. But it comes to this (if Modernists have now discovered the true gospel), Paul was mistaken and never really understood the gospel which was committed to him. As to this let us hear, in closing, what he has to say about it. "Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come, that Christ should suffer" (Acts xxvi. 22-3). Is this the language of one who has missed his way, or is uncertain of his message? At the close of his career, in his letter to Timothy, he makes this declaration:—

"For this (prayer) is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus; Who gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time. Whereunto I am ordained a preacher, and an apostle (I speak the truth in Christ, and lie not), a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and verity" (1 Tim. ii. 3-7).

So convinced is this man of the truth he is proclaiming, so assured of his mission and his message, so confident that God has ordained him to this ministry that he pauses to give us this assurance: "I speak the truth in Christ, and lie not." It is as if he anticipated that some would doubt and deny—as if he even anticipated Modernism (as indeed he did). Let us pause, for a moment, in the presence of God and of Christ and of this preacher of the gospel and ask ourselves whether or not he lied (not wilfully, of course, but nevertheless lied), or whether he did in very deed "speak the truth in Christ," as he avers. If we are not already convinced who it is that lies (not wilfully, again we say), then the sooner we decide the better, for that somebody lies is evident.

To put the matter very concisely and briefly it amounts to this—the effort of Modernism is to get rid of the "BLOOD." But a gospel without BLOOD has no more life in it than has a human body without blood. The blood is the life "and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls, for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul."¹ Nothing else can, for man has forfeited his life. This is the very word of God. It is His eternal truth. The blood of the everlasting covenant is the only thing that avails for man. (Lev. xvii. 11, Heb. ix. 22 and xiii. 20.)

¹The blood of Christ, as spoken of in Scripture, represents the value of the life *given up in death* as a sacrifice to God on behalf of the sinner.

The Scriptures

WE have tested Modernism by its doctrine of Christ and by its estimate of His work, and we have found it wanting. We have now to inquire what Modernism teaches with regard to the Scriptures. In some respects, the most important question of all. For what do we know about Christ and His work apart from the record we call the Bible? Absolutely nothing. The position assumed by Modernists in this regard seems to us weak in the extreme, and wanting even in sanity and common sense. How can any man, apart from some external authority, some revelation from without, possibly form a true estimate of such a Person as Jesus of Nazareth, or know the meaning and purpose of His death? The outstanding marvel of this Book is its presentation of the Lord Jesus Christ—"God manifest in flesh." Let any uninspired writer try to explain this mystery and he immediately becomes involved in error. With all due deference to Principal Garvie he is no exception to the rule.

Yet Scripture succeeds in presenting this Person to us in such a way as to appear truly Man, yet never less than God. Jesus is made to live before us, baffling our intellects, but engaging our hearts and compelling our adoration. At one moment, and in connection with one kind of incident, He speaks and acts as Man, at another time He is nothing less than God. He falls asleep in the boat, and then rises to still the storm: He pays the tribute money, but makes the fish yield the sum wherewith to do it. At one time He makes inquiry as if He were dependent upon human aid for His knowledge, as when He says, referring to Lazarus, "Where have ye laid him?" At another, He gives the same proof of His Deity as does Jehovah of the Old Testament, "declaring

the end from the beginning." He says to His disciples: "Now I tell you before it come, that when it is come to pass, ye may believe that I am" (John xiii. 19). At one moment He is performing the most lowly service in washing the feet of His disciples; shortly after, when they come to take Him in the garden, we read "they went backward, and fell to the ground." Only God could give us such a portrait, which, while it never appears unreal or overdrawn, still leaves us in the presence of a profound mystery. All is perfectly human and natural, on the one side, yet all is equally above nature and Divine, on the other.

The presentation of such a Person is the miracle which the Bible achieves. But this is scarcely ever recognized by Modernists. Such an acknowledgment would place the Bible too high, and this would not suit their purpose. Their effort seems always to be in the direction of discrediting and belittling the Bible. Again Dr. Garvie's article is no exception. The consequence is, both Scripture and our estimation of Christ are lowered. The Lord Jesus Christ Who, in Scripture, is Lord of every sphere (even at His birth He is announced as "anointed Lord") is in their estimation Lord only in one. Dr. Garvie defines the sphere in which His authority may be accepted. But how can these spheres be separated? To say that Christ's authority and infallibility belong to one sphere only, denies the truth of the inspired utterance: "It was pleasing that in Him should all fulness dwell." The Jesus of the Modernists is limited. Upon the Jesus of Scripture no limit can be placed. Its declaration is "In Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead *bodily*." If you separate, you destroy. Body, soul and spirit in man may be distinguished, but to separate them is death. Separate humanity and Deity in Christ and you have lost Him. Separate Scripture from its inspiration, its inerrancy and supreme authority, and it is a book which no longer lives and breathes. It has ceased to be "quick and powerful and sharper than any two-edged sword." In a very real sense the Living Word and the written Word are one. The marvel of the Bible is that you cannot lower your estimate of it without thinking less of Christ.

The Lordship of Christ in every sphere is the attestation of Scripture. Perhaps more than anywhere this is conspicuous in His death—the point where He was brought lowest—"Crucified through weakness" as the Apostle says. But on that occasion Nature owned Him as her Lord—the sun was darkened and the earth was convulsed; the unseen world acknowledged Him—the graves were opened; and the spiritual world, too, is His domain—the vail of the Temple was rent. Paul in his epistle to the Colossians, Chapter i., declares of one and the same Person, He is the image of God, Creator, Upholder and Heir of the universe, First-born of all creation, and Firstborn from the dead, and Head of His body the Church, that in all things He should have the pre-eminence. He is supreme in every sphere. Yet Modernists will not allow Him to be pre-eminent everywhere. They are pre-eminent (at least in their own estimation) in the realm of some departments of knowledge; for our Lord, according to their view, was ignorant as regards the authorship of the Pentateuch, and hardly less mistaken as to the meaning of His own death, for He referred His disciples more than once to Moses and all the prophets, whereas we are now informed that to His sacrifice Jewish sacrifices afford no clue. Ignorant! Can we measure the extent to which such a thought robs us of the truth? If we are to believe Scripture, Christ was "God manifest in the flesh." Then if He was GOD manifest in the flesh and He was ignorant, are we to suppose God to be ignorant? If not, then to the extent to which Jesus was, He did not manifest God.

We must not allow any thought as to His humanity which is inconsistent with His Godhead. He was ever God in the most absolute sense (see Greek for Godhead in Colossians ii. 9). To attach ignorance to One Who, although He became Man, remained God is incongruous.

If we are dependent absolutely and entirely upon the authority and accuracy of Scripture for any correct views as to the Person of Christ, not less are we dependent upon them for a right view of the Atonement. The Modernist empties the Cross of all thought of judgment, wrath, torment, etc., and to him it represents nothing but love. God has

never been anything else but love, we are told. But love is displayed and is recognized by the burdens it bears for others. We have never been able to discover from Modernist publications—and we have read them again and again—what Christ exactly did bear. In Dr. Garvie's article we read of "The divine sacrifice of redeeming and reconciling grace." And we are further told "that in Him (Christ) God endured and achieved something for man," and again, "It is a sacrifice endured by the love of God"; but what was endured, the nature of the sacrifice, there is no intimation, only we must not think of Jewish sacrifices or the law-court in connection with it.

But in Scripture what is prominent is the terror, the awfulness, the anguish of that hour—the reality of Christ's death as the Substitute. But who shall declare what was in that cup which the Father gave Him to drink? Only God the Father and God the Son know. But this may be said: If the Cross had no terror for Him, it cannot remove the terror that comes to every awakened sinner; if the question, "Why hast Thou forsaken Me?" did not mean that the One Who uttered that cry knew the distance and the darkness where sin had placed man: if the sweat, as it were great drops of blood, in prospect of it, does not indicate the awfulness of that ordeal for the Sufferer—then the Cross is no refuge for the sinner. If there was no darkness for Him, there is no light for us; if He bore no curse, we can know no cure; if Christ were not forsaken, in all the reality and meaning of that word, we can never be received; if no impenetrable shadows—shadows of blackest night—enveloped Him, there is no dawn or sunrise for us.

But some there are who sing, and will sing forever,

"O what a load was Thine to bear
Alone in that dark hour,
Our sins in all their terror there,
God's wrath and Satan's power.

The storm that bowed Thy blessed Head
Is hushed for ever now,
And rest divine is ours instead
Whilst glory crowns Thy brow.

Within the Father's House on high
 We soon shall sing Thy praise ;
 But here, where Thou didst bleed and die,
 We learn that song to raise."

It has been noticed that Modernists have no music. Their message inspires no song. They find fault with hymns continually, but create no new ones. "*The Modernist's own hymn book*" is still waited for. When it comes, what will it be like ?

Enough has been said to show the utmost importance of maintaining the authority of Scripture undimmed and undiminished. Yet, as we have said, Modernists generally lose no opportunity of belittling the Bible. Throughout Dr. Garvie's article there is not a word uttered calculated to enhance its value in the estimation of anyone. Just the contrary. "The modern Biblical scholarship," he declares, "necessitates the abandonment not only of many of the conclusions of the dogmatic method of interpreting Scripture but of the method itself. We cannot now prove a doctrine"—will the reader carefully note this—"we cannot now prove a doctrine by the citations of any number of texts from all parts of the Bible." Where are we? What is left to us? To whom can we turn? According to Dr. Garvie, we have moved away from what was held and taught in the first century of the Christian era. "We must recognize," he tells us, "the temporary and local human conditions of the revelation of God to men through men." "Temporary and local conditions"! and "through men"! We had always supposed it to be true that God in these last days had "spoken to us by (or in) His Son." Is this temporary and local? Who is to follow Him? Or who can go beyond Him? "Through men," Dr. Garvie says. But Scripture assures us that "God" spake to the fathers by the prophets. Is this revelation of God conditioned by what is merely "temporal and local"? Is there in it nothing more enduring than a passing appeal to one generation? Are we not beginning to realize that Modernism would rob us of everything that has come to us from God and substitute for it its own inventions? If this view of the Bible which we have been considering is

true, then its chief use is to show us what people once believed, but which we have long outgrown. It becomes nothing more than a record of the pious experiences and aspirations of ancient times. In other words, it is only fit to be kept under a glass case or in a museum.

NO ADVANCE UPON SCRIPTURE

Dr. Garvie speaks of "the progressive character of the divine revelation." This, again, is a flat contradiction of Scripture. The Bible knows of no progressive revelation beyond what it records. Our Lord declared, speaking of the coming of that other Comforter, "When He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth." Guide you—the apostles—into *all* truth. Not some, but all. It was to be no partial revelation. In keeping with this, we find the Apostle Paul telling believers at Colossae that the truth as to Christ's Body the Church, of which he was made a minister, was the completion of the Word of God (Chap. i. v. 25). What new truth have Modernists to reveal? What single addition can they make to the revelation already given? Could arrogance or presumption go further than to assume that they have something to declare which has been hid "from ages and from generations, but is now made manifest"? Have they something to add to "the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of Glory. . . . In which are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge"? (Col. ii. 3). The effect of their teaching is to unsettle and to disturb, with the consequence that the Churches are being emptied, and men are turning away from the Bible and Christianity. Does this look as if Modernists had received a Divine call and had been divinely equipped?

The Apostle John is as explicit as the Apostle Paul in warning us against this idea of progress. If Paul says to Timothy, . . . "continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them," John's reiterated exhortation is to "abide." "Let that therefore abide in you, which ye have heard from the beginning. If that which ye have heard from the beginning shall remain in you, ye also shall continue in the Son, and

in the Father." Could any statement, in the light of what Modernism teaches, be more impressive? or could any warning be more solemn? The very condition of continuing in the Son and in the Father is that we continue in what we have heard from the beginning. To "go beyond" ("transgress" in our A.V.) is to apostatize. Modernists are the modern gnostics. They claimed to have superior light and to have progressed, but it was the spirit of antichrist; and the Apostle John overwhelms them with condemnation.

Perhaps one of the most appalling claims of Modernism is that the source of their teaching is the Holy Spirit. We do not like to speak of blasphemy, but it appears to us that such a statement as the following seems to border on it: "We must rely on the ever present and ever active Spirit of truth to guide us into all truth by unfolding to us what lies in this revelation." First of all, why does he speak of this revelation as though he were referring to the revelation given in the Bible, when a few lines further up he has spoken of the temporary character of that revelation, and told us "we must welcome the progressive character of the divine revelation"? If he had referred simply to progress in the understanding of what the Bible reveals, no exception could be taken, but that is neither what he says nor what he means. He speaks of the progressive character of the revelation, and we are to infer from his words already quoted that the unfolding of further truth is to be attributed to the Holy Spirit Himself. Could anything be more calculated to deceive the unwary, on the one hand, or minister to the pride of man, on the other? As we have already seen, our Lord said that the Spirit of truth would guide the apostles into *all* truth. According to Modernists He must have failed in His mission. Further, is He now revealing truth to the Modernists which entirely sets His former revelation aside? When did the truth revealed in the first century cease to be true? Truth is truth not according to what men think of it but according to what it is in itself.

We quote here some pregnant words by Dr. Dinsdale Young, which occur in his book on Popular Preaching, recently published. We are glad there are some doctors of

divinity who still believe in something divine. This is what he says :

"First of all, the true Popular Preaching must be perpetually Biblical. I contend not here for a theory of the inspiration of the Bible, though I hold my own theory with ever-increasing intensity, and I am always ready to give my reasons for it. Suffice it now to say that Popular Preaching must be based upon the Bible as a divine revelation. And this must be unequivocal. There must be no 'ifs' or 'buts' about it. The Appeal must be to the Bible as *final*. It is not to be regarded as 'literature' or as in competition with other literature. It is not to be viewed as an historic collection of the multifarious opinions of good men. Its voice is 'Thus saith the Lord.' No Popular Preaching which is hesitant concerning the inspiration and authority of Scripture can be fruitful. The Popular Preaching of history has always rung true to the Bible as 'the Word of God.' The insuperable claims of the Bible must be stoutly maintained if the Popular Pulpit is to retain its sovereign power. . . . It is the 'satisfactory Cross' which makes preaching really popular. Man's salvation lies in the evangelical and ethical implications of the Cross of Christ. Preaching which has taken the Deity out of Christ, the Atonement out of the Cross, faith out of the method of Salvation, and the indwelling of the Divine Spirit out of Christian experience is 'cut down like the grass and withereth.' Study the history of preaching, read the biographies of preachers, ponder the story of the Churches, and the evidence of this will multiply overwhelmingly upon you."

Dr. Young, we are glad to see, does not hesitate to have a theory of inspiration and to maintain it against all comers. Nor does he shrink from calling the Bible the Word of God. Modernists seem to think that it is their prerogative to have theories and that this privilege is theirs alone. Theories, howbeit, which come up in a night and perish in a night, like Jonah's gourd. After all, the only theory about Scripture which will stand the test, is the Bible's own theory of the nature of its contents, how those contents came to be there and the source of them. We always find it extremely difficult to believe that Modern critics know more about the Bible than the men who were used of God to produce it ; or that the people who were specially charged by God to be its custodians are so ignorant of how it came into their keeping, and the nature of its contents, as Higher Critics would have us believe.

The Apostle Paul, for instance, declares most emphatically that amongst all the advantages possessed by the Jews the

chief was: "that unto them were committed the oracles of God" (Rom. iii. 2). Now is it conceivable that Paul, a Jew, and being the man he was, should have been deceived? If the Higher Critics are to be believed, certainly as regards large tracts of the Old Testament (and Paul had the Old Testament in mind) it was rather a disadvantage than any advantage to have it, for according to them it presents a false view of God, besides much of it being untrue. Yet, it is to be noticed, that Paul, in the statement quoted, makes no distinction or difference between the various writings of the Old Testament. Without any reservation whatever he speaks of these writings as all alike, God's oracles—they express His mind.

Now leaving out the question of inspiration, for the moment, and simply treating Paul's observation as that of a learned Jew, what man of common sense and of ordinary business capacity would not rather accept his estimate of the Scriptures than that of men in the present day, however learned, some of whom are not even Christians? ¹ But it must be remembered that Paul was himself an inspired writer. He claims this for himself repeatedly, and the Apostle Peter classes his writings along with the other Scriptures (see 2 Peter iii. 16) "as they do also the other Scriptures" he says, when speaking of them. So here we have a godly and learned Jew and an inspired writer telling us that even the Old Testament writings are "the oracles of God."

Modernists claim that the Spirit of truth is leading them into realms of truth yet unexplored. Have they produced any inspired writings worthy to rank with these "oracles of God"? How is it that the gift of inspiration was confined to one nation (with the possible exception of Luke) and how is it that it ceased with the first century of the Christian era? Someone referring to the character of the writings of the so-called apostolic fathers, those immediately succeeding the apostles, speaks not only of the grievous lack of spiritual power but of "the puerilities and, in some cases, inconceivable absurdities which are to be met with in these writings. It

¹ It is a well-known fact that Higher Criticism was cradled in infidelity.

seems as if God had stamped at once the difference between His own word and the productions of weak and erring men."

Paul constantly quotes the Old Testament as the very word of God and as of equal rank with the New Testament, for these quotations are embodied in the New. Take this as an example: "Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect" (Rom. ix. 6). Or this: "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning." "Whatsoever"! And then he does a very daring thing. He attributes the same qualities to Scripture as to God Himself. He speaks of "Patience and comfort of the Scriptures" (chap. xv. v. 4) and then of "The God of patience and comfort" (v. 5). The Scriptures have the very qualities of God Himself, and the only explanation is, He is their author.

In his first letter to Timothy, chapter iv., there occurs in the opening verse a statement of the utmost significance: "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith," and he proceeds to state with the utmost detail, what would take place. No question of date or authorship arises here. Critics cannot argue that this is mere history written after the event. Can they deny that it has become history? Does Church history record nothing of what is set forth in the first three verses of this chapter? So that here we have two tremendous facts—not suppositions or theories but *facts*. First, that the Spirit of God Himself inspired this utterance, for it is distinctly declared that He did, and it is of such a kind as to make it impossible to attribute it to any other source; and secondly, we have a prediction which in the course of subsequent centuries has been fulfilled. Then, again, how important to notice that what the Spirit testifies here is not an advance in the unfolding of truth but a departure from it. All thought of any advance is negatived. "The faith which was once delivered unto the saints" remains, but it has been completed, and all advance upon it is, in Scripture, always a departure *from* it—in other words, apostacy. Paul knows of no further revelation, but he constantly warns his hearers against the apostacy that threatens. "For I know this, that after my departing," he says in his farewell address to the Ephesian

elders, "shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after them." His exhortation to Timothy is to "Continue," and declares that the holy Scriptures are all God-breathed and are able to make us wise unto salvation. He knows nothing outside or beyond it, for its instruction will make the man of God perfect. And with what a practical result—"perfected unto all good works." And this is the Book which Modernists seek to discredit! According to Dr. Garvie it is of such little value that it cannot substantiate a single doctrine. "We cannot now prove a doctrine," he says, "by citation of *any number* (italics ours) of texts." If so, we are left entirely at the mercy of "the cunning craftiness and sleight of men whereby they lie in wait to deceive."

THE TESTIMONY OF THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS

The epistle to the Hebrews abounds with expressions and references and allusions entirely opposed to such a verdict as we have just quoted. Its opening word is God, and God speaking. Not as in Genesis, "He spake and it was done, He commanded and it stood fast," but still God, speaking, only now speaking to men by men.¹ Why should not God do this if He chooses? To suppose Him incapable of doing it, is to limit His power. To suggest He would not do it, is to question His goodness. So real, so powerful were these communications, so distinct from all others, that frequently the prophets mention the exact day on which they were given, recording the date and some earthly circumstance to mark it (Hag. i. 1; ii. 1; Zech. i. 1 and 7). He has now spoken to us by, or in, His Son, but whether through prophets or the Son it was equally the Word of God, though the revelation in the former case was only partial. But the inspiration and the authority were the same, and so we are told (chap. ii. v. 2), "Every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward." In verse 3 of this chapter we have the word "spoken by the Lord," and the word spoken by the

¹ In Heb. i. there occur at least six distinct quotations from the Old Testament—all of which refer to Christ.

apostles. Still no difference drawn between them. In chapter iii. there is a quotation from one of the Psalms, and the writer does not hesitate to say "as the Holy Ghost saith." So that we have God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost each and all referred to in connection with the contents of Scripture. While in chapter iv. it is "the Word of God," "quick, and powerful and sharper than any two-edged sword," and "a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." While passing on to chapter v. v. 12, we find the term "the oracles of God" again used.

So that under every variety of form and expression the one undeviating testimony of this and every other Scripture is to its Divine character and origin. It is, as another inspired writer describes it: "The word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever." And again, "The word of the Lord endureth for ever" (1 Peter i. 23-5), "And this is the word," he declares, "which by the gospel is preached unto you." How then can there be any fresh gospel? In what conceivable sense can there be a gospel for to-day as distinct from the gospel in the apostle's day, if the gospel originally proclaimed was the Word of God, and the Word of God "liveth and abideth for ever"?¹

But what had our Lord to say about the Scriptures? In what light did He regard them? For every reverent mind, for everyone born of the Spirit and taught of the Spirit, His word will be sufficient and final. If what is being advanced to-day with regard to the Bible is not in accordance with His estimate of it and His way of looking at it, then we may be quite sure the Spirit of truth has nothing to do with these modern ideas.

And first, our Lord pronounces Moses to be the author of the Pentateuch. Not in so many words, but it is difficult to form any other conclusion from His statements and His actions than that He deliberately treated Moses as the author. On one occasion, in particular, He does so, and in a most solemn way. Indeed so much hangs upon what He said, considering the circumstances of the particular occasion, that it is impossible to treat His utterance lightly. "Do not

¹ Heb. vi. 18 speaks of "two immutable things"—God's Word and His oath. "In which it was impossible for God to lie."

think that I will accuse you to the Father," He says to the Jews, "there is one that accuseth you, even Moses, in whom ye trust. For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed Me: FOR HE WROTE OF ME. *But if ye believe not his writings how shall ye believe My words?*" Can we possibly believe that our Lord in uttering these words was expressing merely a popular belief which had no foundation in fact?

Here we have three most important facts stated. (1) Moses wrote. (2) What he wrote was of such profound importance and had such reference to Christ that to believe his writings meant to believe Christ Himself, while to disbelieve them made it next to impossible to believe Him. And (3) our Lord places these writings on a level with His own words, as being equally inspired and of equal authority: "If ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe My words?" Could the case for the authorship of Moses be put more clearly? or the inspiration and authority of the Old Testament as a whole be more strongly asserted? "If ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe My words?" An utterance which finds its fulfilment in our own day, for Higher Critics began with disbelieving and discrediting Moses, they have ended in disbelieving and discrediting Christ.

How often our Lord refers to the Scriptures. "Have ye never read?" is one of His favourite formulas. In the Temptation He relies upon and quotes the very words of Scripture in meeting every fresh assault of the enemy. On another occasion, He declares "The Scripture cannot be broken." And again, "How then must the Scripture be fulfilled?" "The Scripture"—"the Scripture"—"the Scripture"—everywhere and always, in both our Lord's teaching and that of His apostles. Peter quotes it on the day of Pentecost; Philip began at the same Scripture, we read in Acts viii. in his dealing with the Ethiopian, and preached unto him Jesus. (The man himself was reading the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah.) With Paul it is the same: "He reasoned with them out of the Scriptures." This was his constant practice. Evidently he did not believe that we cannot prove anything from the Scriptures. "Saying none other things," he declares, "than those which the prophets

and Moses did say should come." It is strange, but if Modernists are right, then everybody else has been wrong until they appeared, except infidels and agnostics.

Last of all, why did our Lord take special pains, after His resurrection, to instruct His disciples out of the Old Testament and open their understanding that they might understand the Scriptures? Why did He think it worth while to go back over all that Moses had written and the prophets had written? For two reasons: First, because He knew—and who knew better than He?—He knew that it was the very word of God. And, second,—and this proved it to be the word of God—it all testified of Him. It was all the work of His own Spirit. Yes, let this be stated and affirmed and re-affirmed, without any hesitation or qualification, and in the face of all that critics may say or may not say—the Holy Spirit is the author of the Bible. It was the Spirit of Christ in the prophets which spake "when *it* testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glory which should follow." "Which things the angels desire to look into." And one of them, at least, considered there was nothing higher he could think of or talk about than the subject of Scripture testimony: "I am thy fellow-servant," said one of them to John, "and of thy brethren which have the testimony of Jesus; worship God, for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy" (Rev. xix. 12). Which is to say, the testimony everywhere throughout Scripture is to Jesus, and this testimony is given by His own Spirit. This is the everlasting theme of angels and of men. Nothing higher than this occupies the minds even of angelic beings. Blessed indeed are they that have it, and hold it, and defend it as their chief treasure. For in very deed "these are the true sayings of God" (Rev. xix. 9).

It is, then, from our Lord and His apostles and from the holy Scriptures themselves that we can alone form any estimate as to the place and importance of Scripture, its character and value. Holy men of God did indeed speak as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. And if so, what limit can there be to their value and authority?

What is the alternative? To fall back upon human opinion, with all its variety and contrariety, its vagueness and un-

certainly. Are we to believe that, while in the physical and material universe there is order, the spiritual world is characterized by the exact opposite? The same God is the source of both. Yet Modernists would have us believe that as far as the domain of the spirit is concerned we are left pretty much to our own devices, each man a law unto himself, guided by any flickering light his conscience or intelligence may yield, but governed by no law external to himself. If we believe in a God at all, can we believe that He has ordained order in the lower sphere and chaos in the higher?

FOUR ATTITUDES TOWARDS THE BIBLE

As an illustration of the uncertainty and contrariety prevailing at the present moment in the religious world as to the Scriptures, we will give the views of four learned divines, which have recently been made public.

Dr. Dinsdale T. Young believes and asserts, as we have seen, that the Bible is a divine revelation and the appeal to it must be as *final*. Its voice is "Thus saith the Lord."

Dr. Garvie, on the other hand, tells us it is no good appealing to it, for "we cannot prove a doctrine by the citation of any number of texts." That instead of the Bible, as a whole, being a divine revelation, as Dr. Young maintains, he is of opinion that the Scriptures may be contrary to "the revelation of God's character, purpose and relation to men." All of which implies that the Scriptures are not inspired in any real sense; that instead of containing a 'Thus saith the Lord,' they may, and *do*, contain the mere opinions of men and their account of what God said and did may be altogether misleading. As to any appeal being *final*, better, in Dr. Garvie's estimation, to make no appeal to it whatever.

Dr. John A. Hutton, editor of *The British Weekly*, has recently given us his view in "A Letter to a Minister's Fraternal" (see *B.W.*, Sept. 9, 1929), and he expresses the opinion that we ought all to address ourselves to this subject we are discussing as soon as possible. For, as he says, these various "attitudes to Holy Scripture" are doing so much "to poison and embarrass and disable us." In this judgment many will pronounce him to be right. But what view does

he hold? It seems to be one which comes midway between that of Dr. Young and Dr. Garvie. He will not admit the literal inerrancy of the whole of Scripture, but he considers the Bible in its "own region" to be infallible. To quote his own words: "I have not the slightest difficulty in saying without reserve that the Bible, in its own region, is infallible." But what is 'its region'? This is the question he asks and which he attempts to answer, and as *far* as the answer goes, we do not raise any objection, except that he seems to leave us suspended in the air. But we will return to this in a minute. At one point he joins issue with Principal Garvie, and we find the Principal on one side of the fence and Dr. Hutton on the other. The former, as we have seen, holds that we "cannot prove a doctrine by the citation of any number of texts," whereas the latter goes back to the Reformers and shows that in their conflict with Rome they always fell back upon the Bible. "The Reformers had no answer but the Bible," he says. "There the Bible is infallible." "There Holy Scripture is an impregnable rock." That is on the question of the approach of the individual soul to God. His words, and what his words express, are as far removed from the Principal's as is well possible.

But to return to the question as to the Bible's more particular region. The question raised by Dr. Hutton himself is "But what is its region?" And here surely we are in difficulties at once. Who is competent to decide? and is there likely to be very much agreement over any decision which might be reached? For, in discussing this matter, it must be borne in mind that Dr. Hutton would grant infallibility to the Bible only in regard to one particular aspect of truth. His "region" by no means extends from cover to cover of the book. The Bible is infallible in its revelation of God, we are told (though this is by no means admitted by the majority of Modernists, who consider large tracts of the Old Testament unreliable even on this matter). But for the time being let us accept the thesis as it stands. But what a region we are in when we think of God! God is the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. He is the God of "all flesh," He is equally the Creator and Upholder of all worlds; the God of Providence, and

the God of history. This is a pretty wide region in which to be infallible. For if the Bible is infallible in its revelation of God, it must be infallible in all that it tells us about Him. As much when it speaks of God as the God of history and creation as when it speaks of Him as "God our Saviour." When, therefore, Dr. Hutton propounds the question, What is its region? it is to be answered by asking another, which Dr. Hutton, being a Scotchman, will appreciate. To what region do you confine God? The answer to that will be the answer as to the extent of the infallibility of the Bible. In what difficulties and dilemmas we should be involved if we are called upon to dissect the Bible, and think of that part only as infallible which refers to God in one special aspect or one particular relation, or in one region only of His activities?

In this connection there is another important question to be asked: Can a book which is infallible at the highest be less than infallible anywhere? Can a book which does not fail me in that which is most above me, fail me in that which is nearest to me? If it can reveal God and the unseen, is it likely to betray us in regard to matters *most familiar* to us? The Bible reveals God in creation, redemption, history and providence; it presents the highest standard of morality and holiness; it tells us of the past, the present, and the future; it contains the thoughts of many minds yet only of one mind; history, poetry, doctrine, revelation, rules of conduct are all found within its pages; it took 1,600 years to compile, yet the Book is one, and it is a book for all ages and generations; above all it presents Christ; to what region then will you confine it?

Dr. Hutton speaks of those who are not afraid to apply their *minds* to the documents of Holy Scripture. We could wish that those who apply so much time to criticizing the *documents*, would pay a little more attention to the character of their contents. The date of the documents and their authorship are *from one point of view* a matter of very little concern indeed. There is the evidence of one mind operating through all and communicating all, and the supreme matter is not through whom or at what precise date these communications were made—though it is admitted that in certain

relations these have their importance—but what is their character, and are the contents true? The date, authorship and circumstances of an inspired communication, whether our views on such matters are correct or otherwise, do not within certain limits affect it as the Word of God. If it comes to us as “living and operative, sharper than any two-edged sword,” if it exposes “the thoughts and intents of the heart,” that is the all-important matter.

That view of the Bible which thinks of it as a record merely of the experiences and aspirations of godly men is a most inadequate and misleading conception, and gives no idea of its real character and merit. It is as unsatisfying as it is untrue. We are distinctly told that the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man; but “holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.” God did not use just anyone—they were holy men; nor were they merely holy men, they were men specially raised up—men of God. Nor did they speak simply out of their own spiritual experience—it was not their own will which moved them, they were “moved—borne along—by the Holy Ghost.” The revelations made to them and which they were empowered to communicate often went beyond anything they had known, indeed they were frequently outside their own personal experience altogether (see 1 Peter i. 12).

Let us now briefly consider a fourth view. We would refer to a book which has been widely read, and by some appreciated—Dr. John Oman's *Vision and Authority*. He seems to differ from all the others we have quoted. In contrast with Dr. Hutton, who thinks the Bible is authoritative within its own sphere, Dr. Oman contends for every man's authority being “within his own soul.” He thinks that God has planted “a principle of truth and unity in each heart” (pp. 49 and 50). According to him: “Every man following the direction of his own spiritual vision,” is the ideal (p. 53). “The foundation of faith must be belief in the unity of our experience.” Yet further on he says: “We must all build upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, on the foundation of those who obeyed the divine call and recognized the Divine teaching. To be faithful to our own spiritual

insight, it must be our constant endeavour to be faithful to our spiritual ancestry." To which (i.e. the last quotation) we have no objection to offer. But what is our surprise to find him two or three pages further on, denying the infallibility of Scripture and telling us that a "Thus saith the Scriptures," does not prove sufficient :

"Whatever view," he declares, "we may take of its inspiration, we no longer can think of it as a proclamation written down from Divine dictation by penmen who were so guarded from error as to be mere instruments in the hand of the Spirit of God. Hence, whatever its authority may be, it is not of the infallibility of verbal inspiration."

We cannot discover in such a statement as this any building upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, nor any faithfulness to our spiritual ancestry, but the reverse. As we have already shown, Christ went back to Scripture, and so did the apostles and prophets. Its voice for them was final. If Paul's declaration at the close of his address in the synagogue of Antioch is not a proclamation we know not what could be :

"Be it known unto you therefore men and brethren, that through this Man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins, and by Him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses."

Notice the "therefore"—a conclusion reached from what had gone before. And what had gone before? just a simple unfolding of Scripture, as his authority for his proclamation? Nay more, he shows that the fact that the Saviour he preached confirmed Scripture, because He answered to its predictions and its forecast, is the very reason for believing on Him. "Through *this Man*"—the Man who fulfilled what had been proclaimed by "the voices of the prophets." His review of history as recorded in Scripture, showing how all that he proclaimed had its roots deep in the past, is marvellous. And to carry this matter a step further. How can I be assured that the forgiveness and justification proclaimed are mine except that the proclamation comes to me with the authority of God?

Yet further on Dr. Oman has the temerity to say that the

prophets did not say "Thus saith the Lord," or ground their appeal upon that. Has he forgotten the book of Jeremiah, chapter twenty-six? Verse 2 begins with a "Thus saith the Lord," as regards the communication to himself, and in verse 4 there is a further, "Thus saith the Lord," with regard to the people on whose account the message came. Yet we are told, "We are not following the way of the prophets when we support their appeal by any extraneous authority." As we have shown, the very opposite is the case. See again that overwhelming utterance recorded in Isaiah i. Here, as always, it is "The Lord hath spoken" (v. 2), "Hear the word of the Lord" (v. 10). Dr. Oman makes the same asseveration as regards our Lord. He declares that He "never sets Himself as the absolute external authority of the perfect truth . . . but that He has only one appeal which is to the likeness of God, and the teaching of God within. . . . Exclusively He addresses Himself to the primal spiritual authority in man. . . . He was able to exclude every other appeal except the appeal to the spiritual in man."

Certainly we have not read Scripture as Dr. Oman appears to have read it. We do not believe for a moment either in "spiritual authority" or "the spiritual" in man. Those only received Christ who were born of God, or they only were born of God who did receive Him. In any case, man needed to be born of God, to be born again. But even supposing what Dr. Oman affirms is true, how could men know who Christ was except by external authority? The thing is impossible otherwise. Even John the Baptist, the Forerunner of Christ, testifies "I knew Him not." And on one occasion he adds, "But He that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me." By an outward sign, and by a word from without, did he know that Jesus of Nazareth was the Son of God. To the Jews our Lord says, "If ye believe not that I am, ye shall die in your sins." How could they believe that He—to outward observation a mere man—was God manifest in flesh, the "I am," except on His authority? Christ says to them, "And because I tell you the truth, ye believe me not." Is this the authority within answering to Christ's appeal? Dr. Oman speaks of the

spiritual in man. Which can only mean in every man. Our Lord, on the other hand, makes a very important distinction. He declares, "He that is of God heareth God's words; ye therefore hear them not because ye are not of God." And He avers, "If a man keep My saying, he shall never see death." And He adds: "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day; and he saw it and was glad." How could they believe this except on His authority? Much less could they accept His closing testimony: "Before Abraham was, I am," by any inward light.

The truth of the matter is, external authority is absolutely essential. It is not everything. But we must have the objective as well as the subjective—the external as well as the inward. And the latter as the result of the former. And we are not helped by those who ignore either the one or the other. Let us draw one or two illustrations from Scripture.

LUKE VII AND XV

This double aspect of truth is illustrated by our Lord's dealings with the woman that was a sinner, as recorded in Luke vii., on the one side, and by His parable in Luke xv., at least that part of it which refers to the Prodigal Son, on the other. To the woman the Lord says, "Thy sins are forgiven," and again, "Thy faith hath saved thee, go in peace" (vv. 48 and 50). This word was her authority for saying, "My sins are forgiven." Had anyone questioned her, she had an all-sufficient answer, "I have His word for it," and she might have added: "What more do I want?" She had believed on Him, and she now believes His word. This shows us the value of an external authority: *it assures us of the results of faith*. The woman had faith when she came, but she did not know that her sins which were many were all forgiven. And there are many to-day who believe on the Lord, but they have no assurance, no real peace, because they do not believe on the authority of His word that their sins are forgiven. That word is found in the Scriptures, and it is as true to faith as if heard from His own lips. And it is most important to observe that our Lord thought fit to

pronounce this forgiveness even after the woman had manifested such love. Here then is the answer to those who make everything of inward experience. It was not her *love* which saved her, but her faith—and faith looks to that which is outside and rests upon external authority. And so although love was there, and she “loved much,” it was not upon her love she was to rest, but upon His word: “Thy sins are forgiven, thy faith hath saved thee, go in peace.” The Apostle John writes to all the children of God to the same effect: “I write unto you children because your sins are forgiven you for His Name’s Sake” (1 John ii. 12). Thus the Scriptures and the Word of Christ are of equal authority, and it is upon such external authority we know, first of all, that forgiveness is ours. That forgiveness depending not upon anything in us but upon what He is—for His Name’s Sake.

In the prodigal we see the opposite side of the picture. In his case no word is spoken. We are told his “father ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him.” The son knew he was forgiven by the embrace and the kiss; the woman knew it by the word. Both are true, and both should be true in our experience. We need the authority, and we need the kiss. We must not bind God down to any particular process, for He is sovereign, but as a rule, these two experiences come in the order in which they are given in Luke’s gospel. Authority precedes experience. It is not mere accident that the scene in Luke vii. precedes that of Luke xv. We know that we have forgiveness and eternal life, if we have believed on Christ, on the authority of God’s word alone, apart from all feelings or inward emotions. “These things have I written unto you, that ye may know that ye have eternal life, that believe on the Name of the Son of God.” So writes John (1 John v. 13): “By Him all that believe are justified.” So says Paul. And with this the word through the Apostle Peter agrees: “To Him give all the prophets witness, that through His Name whosoever believeth in Him shall receive remission of sins” (Acts x. 43).

But the prodigal knew that he was forgiven equally with the woman. He could not doubt *that* after his reception by his father. We ought to be so convinced on the evidence of

the Scriptures of all that has been done, that we too, embracing all the Divine offers and believing all the Divine assurances may be conscious in our inmost souls of the welcome and the kiss, even as was the prodigal. It is the Father's answer to the work of the Son. But how could we know the meaning and value of His sacrifice and its worth to God except in the testimony of Scripture? That testimony leaves us in no doubt, if it is received in simple faith; but to cast doubt upon the testimony or to infer it is not needed is to cut the ground from beneath our own feet.

The Bible makes claims which are either true or false. The Modernist does not admit them. He refuses the testimony of Scripture to itself. What then are we to think of the Bible? What do we think of a man who makes claims he cannot substantiate? We treat him as an impostor. Is it any wonder, after all that Modernists have said about the Bible, people hardly know whether to trust it or not?

Nor can we confine the Bible to any particular region in the sense intended by Dr. Hutton. At one leap it rises to its source and finds its level in the opening verse. Its level is God and it never moves upon a lower one. It may record the sayings and doings of men, their passions and their prejudices, and may appear, at times, to sink very low, but this is only the level of human nature not the Bible's own level, for it reveals man as well as God. From its commencement it rises to its source, and that source is God, and never is it separated from its source however far or into whatever fields it may travel. It never fails God and never misrepresents Him. His character is safe in its hands from the opening to the close. As safe when it speaks of His judgments as when it testifies of His love. Men may not understand it and may resent its judgments, but this is only because they have formed an inadequate view of the God it reveals. When it represents God as bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly or overthrowing Sodom and Gomorrah or destroying the Amorites it reveals Him just as truly as when it declares, "God so loved the world."

A Book that can thus speak of God and for God is not likely to fall short at any point. As well imagine a man who has

leaped over a five-barred gate will fail when he comes to one much lower, as to imagine that a Book capable of revealing God as He is—revealing Him at the highest—cannot tell us about the world He has made or accurately describe the events of history. Its opening statement should silence all question and criticism : “ In the beginning God.” And then the contents of the third of Genesis ! Is there anything in the whole record more wonderful or more true to the facts ? It might have been written yesterday. God and man, the world and Satan and sin are all depicted with unerring accuracy. The serpent is still subtle, and still telling men, “ Ye shall not surely die ” ; still leading them to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. As though man could rise by further partaking of the fruit which caused his downfall ! If this is not what man is supremely bent on to-day we know not what is the meaning of all this boast about scholarship and the “ new learning.” Does it lead men nearer to God ? “ The world by wisdom knew not God.” The knowledge man is acquiring only leads to fresh discoveries of his own nakedness. For how little he knows ; and he knows less of God than ever ! The tree that was good for food and was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise is the prize man sets before him still. And that other “ tree,” where alone God is to be met with and known—a tree which opens to the trusting soul the very heart of God and all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, he neglects. Such is man to-day and such was man as represented in the third of Genesis. Listening to the voice of the charmer instead of to God’s word, listening to those who make light of that word and who repeat “ Hath God said.”

But such also is God, even to-day, as our chapter represents Him so long ago. God still the seeker. God still man’s only refuge, if he but knew it. God wants man. God made man for Himself. What is the message of Genesis iii. but that ? and it is the message still. “ Where art thou ? ” is still the question, for man is still out in the distance away from his Maker. Is there anything more wonderful throughout the Bible than God’s questions ? Just a question, but it touches the spot and reveals all. Man never has had an answer to God’s questions and he never will. The book of Job is full

of them. "Where wast thou when I——?" "Knowest thou?" "Canst thou?" until Job is dumb; and then exclaims: "Wherefore I abhor myself and repent in dust and ashes," and God has reached His end. "Doest thou well to be angry?" is God's question to Jonah, and at first Jonah contrives to find an answer. But God has not finished with him. There is no response to the last question: "Thou hast had pity . . . and should not I?" And to Saul long afterwards, that chief of sinners, the one who stood out against God as no one had ever done, though ignorantly—to Saul it is only a question: "Saul, Saul why persecutest thou Me?" And the Father's last word to the elder son, in Luke xv., is left unanswered.

Is not the Author of Genesis iii. the Author of the rest of the Bible? The God who appears there is the God who appears all through. No impatience, no stern rebuke, not even an accusation, first of all. Just a question. Man is left to tell his own tale, if he can. To excuse himself if possible. And how admirable the order of the questions! Not first of all "What hast thou done?" but "Where art thou?" As much as to let Adam know that he was missed. As if to tell him how much he was to God.

And then the apportionment of the blame. How equitable! how just! First the serpent, the direct author of the mischief, and for him a curse, with apparently no hope of alleviation, but no curse either for the woman or the man, but yet, as was meet, sorrow and suffering, toil and travail as the consequence of their disobedience and folly. And, here again, could anything be more true to life and to the state of things as we know them? How like God! Man has failed Him, ignominiously and hopelessly, failure from which no recovery is possible, as far as man himself is concerned, but God does not fail him, and in the very presence of the ruin and the perpetrator of it and the victims of it, Mercy comes forth to speak of a victory yet to be achieved, the final results of which shall fill heaven and earth with rejoicing. "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise His heel." What is this but the very seed plot of the Bible, from which all is

developed?—the prognostication of Bethlehem and Calvary and the Resurrection morning and the salvation they bring—the anticipation of the Man child to rule all nations with a rod of iron and subdue all enemies beneath His feet. “The tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God,” is but the sequel to that earliest promise of Genesis iii.

It is not our object to follow the author of *Vision and Authority* beyond the point we have been discussing, as to where the seat of authority is placed—in man or in the Scriptures. He speaks of “the primal spiritual authority in man” (p. 107), “The authority of their own hearts and consciences” (p. 108), “The authority which is within the soul.” He will not have any external infallibilities (p. 128). He seems to us to place the cart before the horse and to turn things upside down. An apostle declares that “faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the word of God.” It is not hearing voices within; they may deceive; but the Divine voice from without. That God addresses heart and conscience in the Scriptures is true, but it is God Who addresses them. Beside, the highest revelation of truth concerns that of which man knows nothing and can know nothing until he is told. Scripture tells us of God’s plans and purposes before time began; of things “hidden from ages and generations but now made manifest.” What can man know of these apart from an external authority? ¹ Nor can a man know right from wrong, or distinguish good from evil until he has a standard by which to judge these things. Conscience is no guide until enlightened, and the heart is dark and evil, “deceitful above all things and desperately wicked.” To reverse this order, and make what is within the judge of what is without, is to put the sundial in the place of the sun, and the lighthouse inside the ship instead of on the rock-bound coast. The mariner does not determine the correct course to take by looking within, but by all that is external to him—the heavenly bodies

¹ Statement after statement of fact in Scripture can be received only on external authority. See 1 Cor. xv. 23–8 as an example. The whole chapter is full of such facts.

and the compass. Any libertine is dangerous, but a spiritual libertine is most dangerous of all. It is an age of lawlessness. But when every man is a law unto himself there is confusion and every evil work. It is sometimes forgotten that sins of the mind are worse and more evil in their results than sins of the flesh. The higher we go in the scale of being the greater the sin. Perhaps this is why there seems no hope for Satan and the fallen angels. In any case, it was this which constituted Saul of Tarsus the chief of sinners. He was not that because he indulged his animal nature, no man perhaps was ever more free of evil in that respect, but he fulfilled the desires of the mind. "He *thought* he ought to do many things contrary to the Name of Jesus of Nazareth." And if he had achieved his purpose, the truth would have been stamped out. And no sin can be greater than to rob men of truth.

We have thus considered four views, each in opposition to the other, regarding the place and authority, the character and inspiration of Scripture. Which are we to accept? If we are to be shut up to man's views—even though they be the views of scholarship and the new learning—we are left in uncertainty, and if in uncertainty then in perplexity, doubt and confusion. Accepting, on the other hand, our Lord's view of Scripture and that of His apostles, which means accepting the claims the Bible itself makes, there is no uncertainty, for Scripture speaks with no uncertain voice. We may not like the way it speaks, and we may refuse its testimony. That is our own responsibility. But one cannot doubt or misunderstand what it says upon any matter which is really fundamental.

There is one more point to be considered before we close. Modernists constantly assert that we need a new presentation of the gospel. It must be shown to the world in a modern dress. It must take account of and not be out of harmony with the new learning. Now if all this meant merely a change of words and illustrations and external methods, not much objection need be raised. Whether a boy is told by his father to "close" the door or "shut" the door makes very little difference, as long as he understands and obeys. Nor need the method of doing it call for much criticism as long as it

is done quietly. But if he proceeds to *slam* the door and thereby damage it, beside doing other mischief and disturbing his father, a protest might reasonably be made. Especially if instead of quietly shutting the door he proceeded to throw the furniture out of the window.

Now with Modernists there is far more difference between the gospel they preach (if it can be called a gospel) and the gospel set forth in the New Testament than exists between a choice of this word or the other. There is far more difference indeed than between closing a door and slamming it. And in the process of the change they advocate, to use our figure, the room is being emptied of its furniture. Let there be no misunderstanding here. It is not a question of mere words and phrases, nor a question of the method of a preacher and his manner of presenting the gospel, as between to-day and two or three generations ago. It goes far deeper than that. It means another gospel. It means that the old gospel is abandoned. It means that if Modernists have their way the gospel preached in the first century will no longer be heard ; with the consequence that much of Scripture will become a dead letter.

Peter speaks of " them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven." And he declares, " The word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you." How then can there be any change in the gospel ? If men have not changed, and they have not, their needs and their sins are to all intents and purposes the same as ever ; if God has not changed : if His justice and holiness, His love and mercy remain the same, how can there be a new gospel ? If a new race of men had appeared it might be different. But if man has not changed, and God has not changed, what need for a new gospel ? We speak of what man is essentially.

And is there any evidence that God is blessing this new gospel ? Do empty churches and depleted Sunday-schools speak of it ? Is the fact that hundreds and thousands of people are utterly indifferent and are outside all churches any evidence of the Divine blessing resting upon the message of Modernists ? The Holy Ghost did own the gospel preached at the beginning, when, as Peter declares, it was preached

with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven. How marvelous then were the results ! Is the Modernist's gospel being preached with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven ?

The Gospel is " the gospel of God." With one united voice the inspired writers testify to this great and glorious fact. In it is revealed His righteousness, love and power to save. Did He know His own mind and the kind of gospel that man needed when He first gave the gospel ? If so, then how can there be a gospel for to-day as distinct from the gospel originally given ? To suppose another gospel is to suppose another God. Or really it means getting rid of God altogether. For to suppose God did not know the kind of gospel that was wanted, is not only to leave us without a gospel but without a God, in any real sense. For what can we think of a Being Who needed the help of the " new learning " and of modern " scholarship " to separate the husk from the kernel ? God put His best—His All—into the original gospel : how then can we have another ?

Moreover, as we have seen, an apostle declares that the Gospel is the Word of the Lord that endureth for ever. Man did not propose the Gospel. It is due neither to his imagination nor invention. In the ordinary course he does not feel his need of any gospel. God it was who proposed it, and that Gospel is " the Word of God which liveth and abideth for ever." If that word abides for ever, and that word is the Gospel, it is clear that if you change the Gospel you get rid of God's word. So that the gospel Modernists are preaching is not God's word, but the word of man.

The greatest preacher of the gospel among men that ever lived, or ever will live, asked, " Do I now persuade men or God ? or do I seek to please men ? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ." Is not this exactly the reverse of what Modernists are doing ? They are seeking to please men with a vengeance. Their main idea seems to be to accommodate the Gospel to the modern mind, and give intelligent people nothing that will hurt their susceptibilities. This stamps it at once as not of God. The gospel the Modernist preaches is " after man," and has been received " of man," and they have been " taught it " in theological colleges,

but "revelation" they have none. Whereas the Apostle Paul made this his boast: "I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ." And will Modernists listen to some other words from the same inspired pen?

"When it pleased God, Who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by His grace, to reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood" (Gal. i. 6-12, 15-16).

Would that all preachers of the gospel had passed through this experience! For no one can preach the gospel until he has been in the school of God—has known some Arabia or backside of the desert—where Jesus Christ, God's Son, has been revealed to him, and having learned from God, not from flesh and blood, he comes forth to preach Him, Who is "the same yesterday, *and to-day*, and for ever."

It is related that a professor from Chicago University was to lecture on the Acts of the Apostles. He said, "I suppose I ought to say something about Saul's conversion, but there was nothing remarkable about it: the simple explanation is that Paul had a sun-stroke." An American was present in the meeting, and getting to his feet he said, "Mr. Professor, I should like to ask you a question." "Questions are not allowed," was the reply. "Well, then," he said, "may I make a suggestion?" "Certainly, what is it?" "When you get back to Chicago University, I hope you will get the professors out into the sun and may the Lord God Almighty send them a sun-stroke too!"

This may seem crude, but is it more crude than much that Modernists say and do? In any case, we could wish that what happened to one Modernist might happen to a great many more. The following is related of Doctor Charles Berry of Wolverhampton.

On one occasion he was ready to go to bed, sitting with slippered feet by the fire, when a poorly dressed, common-looking woman was announced. She said in her own queer speech, "Minister, my mother is dying; you come and get

her in." He became aware that this poor dying woman wanted to be pointed to some certitude regarding the future; and he said he unwillingly went. He reached the house and sat down and talked to her about salvation by character and the advantage of appearing before God with the record of a good life. And he said, "She looked at me and plaintively said, 'Minister, you are not getting me in.' " And then he added, "In my agony of heart I thought of how I used to hear my old mother sing of a 'Fountain filled with blood,' where sinners could lose their guilty stains, and I thought of a time when I preached that same crucified Christ, from whom I had wandered away in my preaching; and I began to talk to that old woman about the Saviour who could reach down and lift anyone up into everlasting life. And I told her how she could come just as she was to that Christ and He would welcome her and wash her sins away and make her fit for heaven." And then that great man said, with tears rolling off his cheeks, "It got her in, and it got me in, too, and I am going to preach that for the rest of my life."

May we suggest that if preachers of Modernism spent less time in their libraries and over their books and were more often found at the bed of death or in contact with their fellow men, they would discover how inadequate is their message in the face of man's *deepest* needs. A gospel which addresses itself to the intellect is not enough. It must make its appeal to conscience and heart. Nor is the intellect really satisfied until those deeper voices have been awakened and their questionings answered.

* * * * *

Modernism, is it from heaven or of men? The answer to our question must be,—It is from men. And for the following reasons:

1. We judge it to be of men because it speaks with *uncertainty*. This is its characteristic, as we have shown, and therefore the stamp of heaven is not upon it. The apostles spoke with "much assurance." Therefore we are "always confident," said one. And again, "I know Whom I have believed." He speaks of "Full assurance of faith." The

Apostle John is always saying "We know" or "that ye may know." He speaks of both objective knowledge and conscious knowledge. Modernists are not like that man of faith, Abraham—he was "fully persuaded."

2. Modernism cannot be of God for it makes its boast and puts its confidence in human wisdom and learning. Forgetting that it is written "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent." Yet Modernism puts its trust in scholarship and the "new learning." Losing sight of the fact that "it pleased God by the foolishness of the preaching to save them that believe." This refers to the content of the preaching—the Cross. Pride of intellect will never be the means of advancing us one step in the direction of the truth as in Jesus. "Philosophy and vain deceit after the tradition of men" and to be "vainly puffed up by our fleshly mind" are not aids but hindrances. We can learn Christianity only from Christ: and to learn from Christ we must sit at His feet.

3. We distrust Modernism because its whole tendency is to puff men up and fill them with self-confidence and self-satisfaction. That which proceeds from pride can only minister to pride. In this, Modernism is entirely opposed to the Scriptures, and therefore it cannot be from heaven. Scripture would humble all our pride, and it is not afraid to tell us the truth about ourselves. The flesh profiteth nothing.

4. We judge Modernism not to be from heaven because of the diversity of opinion which it manifests. The absence of any agreement—except agreement to deny—is painful to behold. The report of a meeting of Modernists lately stated: "The Conference dealt largely with the intellectual implicates of Christianity and revealed considerable differences of view, *some of them very serious*" (italics ours). Can anything be more strange than such a condition of things nearly 2,000 years after the Christian faith was first promulgated and proclaimed! Not only serious differences, but the professed teachers of Christianity seem to delight in seeing how much of the faith they can dispense with in order to reach some point of agreement. At the beginning they sought to build one another up in their most *holy* faith.

5. We reject Modernism because of its one-sidedness. Only whole views are really wholesome views. And a half truth is sometimes said to be the worst lie. It presents a one-sided view of God, exaggerating His love at the expense of His righteousness; dwelling almost exclusively upon His Fatherhood, and neglecting other aspects. God in Government and Judgment is scarcely mentioned. It presents a one-sided view of *truth*. Here again love is often exalted, and righteousness almost dethroned. This is seen in the modern doctrine of the Atonement. The law-court is put in contrast with the home instead of room being found for both; and the display of God's love on the Cross is emphasized until any view of that stupendous fact as a *whole* (which is the only true view) is lost.

6. Another feature which stamps Modernism as of men is that by its own confession it is still *searching for the truth*. This is its favourite formula. Now we can no more find truth by searching for it than we can find God by searching for Him. The only way to find God is to "believe that He is." The only way to find truth is to accept it as presented to us by God. Truth must be *revealed*. If we search for a thing in the wrong place we are never likely to find it. Truth is to be found in the Scriptures of Truth. Christ did not say He was in search for truth: He said "I am the Truth." If I have received Christ, the truth is mine. Paul was not in search for truth. Nothing is more clear than that he was conscious of possessing it. He speaks again and again in his epistles of *the truth*. And he warned against those who would turn away the ears *from* the truth. He never exhorts Timothy to search for the truth. "O Timothy," he says, "*keep* that which is committed to thy trust." "The things which thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men who shall be able to teach others also." And again he exhorts, "Hold fast the form of sound words which thou hast heard of me." In the light of these reiterated statements the cry about searching for truth is a delusion and a snare. And how dishonouring to God! As if He had not given us the truth! and to the Scriptures, as if they did not contain "all truth"! These inspired writings alone can

make us "wise unto salvation," and they warn us against those who are "ever learning and never able to come to the knowledge of *the* truth" (see 2 Tim. i. 13; ii. 2; iii. 7 and 15).

7. Modernism *rejects the word of the Lord*. Therefore it cannot be from heaven. The word of God is made of none effect and, indeed, it is often rendered ridiculous. The story of Jonah is rejected as history and is spoken of as an allegory. Now whatever it is, it cannot be *that*. What pious Jew would ever dream of putting words into Jehovah's mouth He never uttered, or of attributing to Him actions He never performed? Such an one—or anyone else for the matter of that who had any reverence—would never dream of writing, "Now the word of the Lord came unto Jonah," when all the time it did not come. Jonah's prayer, God speaking to the fish, and the repentance of the Ninevites are all alike unthinkable unless they really occurred. In the hands of critics the narrative is reduced to something worse than nonsense. Jonah is often likened to Bunyan's allegory. But Bunyan drew all his ideas from Scripture and merely clothed them in an everyday dress, presenting them in human guise. He never allowed his imagination to transgress these limits. His one authority for every thought of God was the Bible, and we are pretty confident he never attributed to God either speech or action which was unwarranted. If he did, he failed.

In their efforts to get rid of the miraculous, Modernists make the Bible ridiculous. One of their number tries to explain (or explain away) the incident of the manna by telling us it was "the sweet nourishing gum which exudes from certain plants and bushes; and that Moses from his previous experience of the desert knew where these were to be found. But does this explain why, if they left of it until the morning, it bred worms and stank? Why it did not stink or breed worms on the sixth day when it was kept till the next morning? or why none could ever be found on the Sabbath? Instead of accepting the miracle as it stands we are asked to believe an account which turns the whole story into a subject for ridicule; and further, are asked to put another miracle in its place, viz. that there existed in the desert a shrub

which was so constituted that its gum never exuded every seventh day. It was so intelligent that it kept the Sabbath.¹

But we must close. Can one possibly believe that Modernism which holds the Bible up to ridicule, which rejects its teaching concerning the Lord Jesus Christ and the work of Atonement, is from heaven and of God?

Modernism trusts to its own wisdom, forgetting that "the world by wisdom knew not God." "And if any man think that he knoweth anything, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know" (1 Cor. viii. 2). Its boast in scholarship and reliance upon what is called the "new learning" proves it to be of man. There is a story told of Socrates that on one occasion a discussion arose as to who was the wisest man in Athens. The decision rested between him and one other. When Socrates was appealed to he replied: "Well, I am thought to be wise and So and So is thought to be wise. But then he thinks he is wise. I do not think that I am wise and therefore I am wiser than he."

"Where shall wisdom be found? and where is the place of understanding?" and the answer to this question, asked long ago, is "Man knoweth not the price thereof; neither is it found in the land of the living." "It is hid from the eyes of all living." Only One does know: "God understandeth the way thereof, and He knoweth the place thereof. And unto man He said"—"unto man": God speaking to man, and what will He say?—"Unto man He said, Behold the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding" (Job xxviii. 12-13, 23, 28).

The Psalmist could say:

"Thou through Thy commandments hast made me wiser than mine enemies. I have more understanding than all my teachers, for Thy testimonies are my meditation. I understand more than the ancients, because I keep Thy precepts" (Ps. xcix. 97-104).

¹ One signing himself "A Chemist" writes to the *British Weekly* to say that this gum "cannot be regarded as a true food that supports life," and moreover that "these exudations are only secreted at certain seasons of the year." We are told the children of Israel "did eat manna forty years."

And this did not mean that he thought himself wise, or trusted in his own wisdom, rather, he is directing us to the fountain of all truth and knowledge—the Word of God. And the cause of all the present unrest, uncertainty, perplexity and doubt and the indifference to Christianity is due to one thing—the neglect of the Scriptures, the non-acceptance of them as the very Word of God. Not until Scripture, in every part of it, is again believed and preached will there be any change for the better.