

THE  
SEMITIC GODS  
AND  
THE BIBLE.

BEING

OVER THREE HUNDRED PAGES FROM "THE GODS  
AND RELIGIONS OF ANCIENT AND  
MODERN TIMES."

*WRITTEN WHILE UNJUSTLY IMPRISONED.*

BY D. M. BENNETT,  
Editor of The Truth Seeker.

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## GODS OF THE SEMITIC RACES.

<b>GENERAL REMARKS</b> . . . . . 503 Baal, or Bal, the Lord . . . . . 504 Ashtarath . . . . . 505 Asshur . . . . . 505 Moloch . . . . . 506 Moladah, or Mylitta . . . . . 511 Melkart, or Hercules Astree- hyton . . . . . 511 Chemosh . . . . . 513 Ninip . . . . . 513 Nebo . . . . . 514 Iva . . . . . 514 Adad, or Hadad . . . . . 515 Allah . . . . . 515 Mohammed . . . . . 517 Jah, Jahveh, or Jehovah. . . 519	Dishonesty of Translators . . . 529 Anthropomorphism . . . . . 530 The Bible Criticised . . . . . 533 Quotations from Bible of To- Day . . . . . 534 Sacrifices and Bloodshed . . . 551 Jehovah's Disregard of Human Life . . . . . 555 Jehovah's Cruelty . . . . . 558 Jehovah's Imperfections . . . 560 Jehovah compared with other Gods . . . . . 573 Satan, or the Devil . . . . . 576 The Holy Ghost . . . . . 581 Jesus Christ . . . . . 583 The Virgin Mary . . . . . 602
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## THE BIBLE.

<b>GENERAL REMARKS</b> . . . . . 607 The Pentateuch . . . . . 617 Joshua . . . . . 622 Judges . . . . . 622 Samuel . . . . . 624 Kings . . . . . 625 Chronicles . . . . . 625 Ezra and Nehemiah . . . . . 625 Ruth . . . . . 626 Esther . . . . . 626 Job . . . . . 626 Psalms . . . . . 628 Proverbs . . . . . 631 Ecclesiastes . . . . . 632 Song of Solomon . . . . . 633 The Prophets . . . . . 634 The Apocrypha . . . . . 645 Origin of Old Testament Books . . . . . 647 Theory of Origin of Bible . . . 650 Improbabilities . . . . . 652 Facts about Old Testament Books . . . . . 656 The Septuagint . . . . . 657 The New Testament . . . . . 661 The Four Gospels . . . . . 665 Extracts from Supernatural Religion . . . . . 666	The Fourth Gospel . . . . . 679 From Creed of Christendom . . 683 Discrepancies in the Gospels . 683 Prophecies of Christ . . . . . 692 Acts of the Apostles . . . . . 711 The Epistles . . . . . 714 Revelation . . . . . 715 Ceasar on the New Testament . 715 Bible Improbabilities and Im- possibilities . . . . . 733 Contradictions of the Bible . . 796 Patriarchs and Prophets . . . . 803 Noah . . . . . 803 Abraham . . . . . 809 Lot . . . . . 811 Isaac . . . . . 811 Jacob . . . . . 811 Moses . . . . . 813 Aaron . . . . . 815 Jeshua . . . . . 815 David . . . . . 815 Solomon . . . . . 817 The Prophets . . . . . 817 Bible Obscenity . . . . . 818 Summing Up . . . . . 819
CONCLUDING REMARKS . . . . . 823 Invocation to the Universe . . . 832	CONCLUDING REMARKS . . . . . 823 Invocation to the Universe . . . 832

## TO THE READER.

An apology is hardly necessary for presenting the following pages detached from the body of the work of which it forms a part. The utility of this portion, even when disconnected from the other, will be apparent to the most casual observer.

It is also hardly necessary to inform the reader that the entire work of which this forms a part was written while serving out a sentence in the Albany Penitentiary, for the crime of vindicating the freedom of speech and the freedom of the press, the two main pillars in the structure of American liberty; but such is the truth.

Should these pages please the reader to the extent of inducing him to wish the entire work—two large octavo volumes—they can be obtained at \$3.00 for a single volume in cloth, \$5.00 for the two volumes; \$7.00 in leather binding with red burnished edges; or \$8.00 in morocco and gilt edges, sent by mail or express.

## GODS OF THE SEMITIC RACES.

It will, of course, be observed that latterly, especially, the chronological order of the gods, as to the age they appeared in the world, has not been observed. It was deemed better to first treat the gods of polytheism before taking up the Semitic races, some of whom ultimately became believers in monotheism, and who brought into notice the gods who have attracted a larger share of attention in our own country, in Europe, and in parts of Asia and Africa, than have most of the other gods that have disturbed the world. It is proposed, last of all, to take up the Semitic God who still rules in a large share of the civilized world and who is jealous of all the other gods named among men. A few others will first be briefly noticed, though some of them are worshiped by the neighbors of the Semitic races as well as by themselves.

The home of the Semitic races is in the western part of Asia on the Arabian gulf. They comprise the Syrian tribes, the Arabs, the Jews, the Assyrians, Babylonians, Phœnicians, Carthagenians, etc. Of the home from whence the old Semitic races originally migrated a considerable degree of uncertainty exists. Some think it was the country watered by the rivers Euphrates and Tigris, while others regard Arabia as their original home. These nations have filled an important place in human history, though they have not spread themselves over the earth to the extent that have the Aryans. Religion has been a leading feature with the Arabs and the Jews, while the Phœnicians led the world for a time in commerce, and the Babylonians established a great empire and built the most splendid city in the Old World. The Phœnicians gave us the alphabet, and the Arabians gave us

mathematics. Each branch has contributed its quota of that which has become the property of the world. The most noted cities of the Semitic races were Nineveh, Babylon, Tyre, and Jerusalem, but they have nearly all passed away, and the sites of some of them can hardly be found.

The names of the Semitic deities, or their variants, generally express moral qualities; thus, instead of a name which means storm, fire, or sky, we have the Strong, the Exalted, the Lord, the King, etc. It occurs in the Babylonian inscriptions, as *Ilu*, God, and in the very name of *Bab-il*, the gate or temple of *Il*. The same is seen in *Bethel*, the house of God, and in many other similar names. *El* was worshiped at Byblus by the Phœnicians, and was called the "Son of heaven and earth." *Eloah* is the same word as the Arabic *Ilâh*, God; *Ilâh* without the article means a god in general; with the article *Al-Ilah*, or *All-ah*, it becomes the god of Mohammed.

It will not be undertaken here to give an account of all the old Semitic gods, as their number is great and the data within reach referring to them is hardly sufficient to justify it; but enough will be given to answer all reasonable desires.

## BAAL, OR BEL, THE LORD,

Besides being the god of the ancient Chaldeans, was the supreme god of the Babylonians, the Assyrians, and the Phœnicians. He represented the sun, and was extensively worshiped as the "God of Light," the "Lord of Heaven," the "Exalted," the "Most Excellent One," the "Upright," the "Ruler of the Heavens," the "Answerer of Prayer," and numerous other names of similar import. He was regarded as the author of the world and all forms of life, and particularly was regarded as the god of reproduction and generation. This was placed beyond a doubt by the images and representations of him, whereon the male reproductive organs were unmistakably given; many of the names applied to him were decidedly in the same direction. He was looked upon as the creator and preserver of all that exists, and without him his worshipers were positive that nothing could be accomplished.

A large and magnificent temple was erected in his honor in the city of Babylon, which remained long after the city went to ruins. It was of such immense size that much has been written to prove that the foundation of the Tower of Babel was taken for the temple of Baal; but the evidence in that direction is weak. The fact that a large temple was erected in Babylon to Baal is not sufficient to prove that it was the edifice that Nimrod was said to have commenced at Babel. Smaller temples to the brilliant god were built in other cities. His worship was the prevailing one for many centuries, and was adopted by neighboring nations.

## ASHTAROTH,

Called also Ishtar, Astarte, and Asherah. This goddess was the counterpart of the preceding god Baal, and was the Venus, or goddess of love and beauty, of the Babylonians and contiguous nations. She was called the "Queen of Heaven," and was sometimes represented in works of art as a virgin mother and child, and was termed the "Celestial Virgin Mother;" and though it may seem somewhat paradoxical she was also regarded as the goddess of prolificness, fertility, and sexual love. She was also the goddess of war, and a stern, relentless character was in consequence accorded to her. In Tyre she came to be connected with Melkart, the Tyrian god of the sun, becoming his spouse, and her character was considerably modified, parting with her severe and cruel traits as a goddess of war and chastity, and becoming a gentle patron of love and fruitfulness.

## ASSHUR.

This was the Supreme God of the Assyrians. Their religion was much like that of the Babylonians, and was distinguished mainly by the conspicuity or predominance of Asshur, to whom was accorded all the powers and characteristics yielded to Baal in Babylon. He was the main object of worship, was kept distinct, and was not confounded with Shamas, the sun;

Sin, the moon; Nergal, the god of war; Nin, the god of hunting; Iwa, the wielder of the thunderbolt, and others of the like. Asshur probably occupied the same place in the Assyrian pantheon that Brahma did in that of the Hindoos. He was accredited with being the source of all forms of life and existence, the supreme arbiter of events, and the ruler and controller of all things. Below him were a class of secondary gods who were subservient to the great god Asshur, arranged in two series of double triads, male and female. Among these were Anu, Pluto, Jupiter, Hea, Shamas (the sun), Sin (the moon). Among the goddesses were Anat, Mylitta, Iva, the air. They also had groups of other divinities, including the planets and the natural forces. Doubtless some of them were the originals from which some of the Greek deities were afterwards devised. Thus Merodach was the prototype of Jupiter, Ninip of Saturn, Nergal of Mars, Ishtar of Venus, Nebo of Mercury. This pentad seemed after a time to become more popular with the people than the older triads. Nebo, like Hermes, or Mercury, was the special patron of learning and eloquence, and the symbol of royal authority. The two triads and the pentad are said to have comprised the twelve greater deities of the Assyrian people; and after them came a host of inferior divinities with ever-varying offices and duties. Prominent among them was Nisroch, or Salman, the eagle-headed winged god, whose figure so often appeared in the national sculptures.

## MOLOCH,

Molooch, Molech, or Molach—Lord and King—was one of the principal gods of the Phœnicians and Ammonites, and doubtless was a representative of the parching heat of the sun. As fire was employed to represent the sun it seems that that element was used in the worship of this god. The extreme cruelties that were practiced in the rites pertaining to his worship are horrible to contemplate. It is claimed that his statue was made of iron, with a human body, the head of an ox, and extended arms. The statue was heated by a fire placed in the lower part, and children were placed as offer-



ings in the arms of the horrid king, where they perished, while the priests drowned their cries with the noise of musical instruments. Others modify the sad tale by saying there were two images, or fires, between which children were obliged to pass, thus exposing them to a high degree of heat. Moloch was considered also the god of war, and before a battle and after a victory human sacrifices were freely made to him. The Jews often worshiped this god.

Dr. Thomas Inman, in his "Ancient Faiths," in connection with this god, says: "We find that the practice of immolating living offspring was common to the Hebrews and to the heathen around them. Abraham appears to have been the first to prepare such a sacrifice, though he did not carry it out; Jephthah was the second; a certain king of Moab, the third. In the days of some of the later kings of Judah, such occurrences were not uncommon. Micah, who wrote in the time of Ahaz, Jotham, and Hezekiah, evidently has in view these human sacrifices, when he says (Mic. vi, 7), 'Shall I give my first-born for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?'"

"It would be useless to reproduce here the labors of W. A. Wright, who has written a most able article on Moloch, in 'Smith's Dictionary of the Bible,' and of Nicholson, who has penned an interesting essay upon this god in Kitto's 'Cyclopædia of Biblical Literature.' I prefer rather to summarize the conclusions which they have drawn, mingling them with such considerations as have suggested themselves to my own mind when thinking upon the matter and perusing the accounts of previous authors. In acting thus I must necessarily pass rapidly over from one point to another, without laboriously proving that every step taken treads upon perfectly stable ground.

"Moloch is a name essentially Melech, Milcom, and Malcham, and it simply signifies 'the king.' The deity passing by this name was extensively worshiped amongst the Phœnicians, and the Semitic races generally. He represented the destructive attribute of the Almighty, and may be regarded as analogous to the Hindoo 'Siva the terrible.' As the heat of the sun and fire are the most destructive agencies to those living

in hot countries, it was very natural that they should be personified as a dreadful deity. Amongst the Parsees, to the present time, a bright-burning or luminous object is used as a means of kindling reverential thoughts respecting the power of the Almighty, which is quite as rational as to regard with adoration a statue, a crucifix, or a morsel of bread. As fire and heat burned up the crops in hot countries, it is natural that the god who was so destructive should be propitiated. To effect this he was personified as an image which was associated with material fire; and was, still farther, worshiped by the actual destruction of life, even of human life. Of the adoration paid to Moloch by the Jews, we have in the Bible many evidences, which would be largely increased were we able to restore all the passages that have been altered to obliterate the idea that the god was widely regarded as a deity by the Hebrews. Moloch may be called essentially the fire-king. But fire is not only a destructive agent, it is also a 'purifier,' a word which embodies the idea that we wish to convey. As heat brings the pure metal from the ore, so it was supposed that it would sublime the soul from the human clay. Yet, when there was no thought of futurity, the notion of distilling an eternal principle from man's mortal elements could not have existed. That the Hebrews had no idea of a life after death is clear from their writings. Sacrifices to Moloch, therefore, had only two ends, one of which was to propitiate the 'terrible' god, the other to get rid of those who might prove to be, or really were, encumbrances on the living. For the present we shall postpone what we have to say upon sacrifices in general, and confine ourselves here to the immolation of children.

"Now, so far as we can learn from the Bible, the Hebrews disposed of their dead by deposition in caves, by sepulture in the earth, or by burning. We have evidence of this in Gen. xxiii, 3-19; 1 Kings xiv, 18; 2 Chron. xvi, 14; xxi, 19. It is possible, therefore, that burning infants in the fire to Moloch was a form of sepulture. This involves the idea that the innocents were, in some way or other, killed before being sacrificed. It is quite consonant with our knowledge of Grecian usages to assert that all animals, whether brute or

human, that were used in sacrifices, were slaughtered prior to incremation. Death by fire was reserved as a punishment for criminals. In this belief we are confirmed by the passage, 'slaying the children in the valleys under the clefts of the rocks' (Isa. lvii, 5), wherein the murder of babies is unconnected with the ceremony of burning the bodies. I can find no reliable evidence that infants were ever burned alive to Moloch. There is, I know, a story to that effect, but it is apocryphal.

"Let us now turn our attention to the condition of Palestine generally, and of the Jews in particular, as recorded in their sacred writings. Lawgivers, prophets, priests, diviners, etc., all promised to their votaries abundance of children as a reward of their faithfulness to the god whom they worshiped. The Old Testament teems with passages in which a large family is spoken of as a special mark of divine favor. To procure the desired end, or rather under covert of obtaining fertility, the form of worship adopted was eminently sensual. Many men and women were encouraged to indulge in frequent intercourse, and, as a natural result, the number of births was in excess of their means of support. When once a man finds that his family is so large that he cannot procure food for the mouths that are dependent upon him, he has the option of starving himself to feed them, allowing them to starve, or making way with the superfluous young ones. The Jews, whose country was extremely small, whose personal fertility is represented as having been very great, and whose land could not by any possibility support such an ever-increasing population, must have been particularly pressed by hunger whenever the population materially increased.

"No sooner do the directors of the public mind see the abundance of offspring becoming a curse upon parents, and upon the state generally, than they consider whether it is desirable to prevent the union of the sexes, to kill off the old folks, or to make away with the young ones. The first alternative is opposed by all the instincts of our nature; the second is equally opposed by the old, although in many instances adopted; the third may either be accomplished by procuring abortion—the plan adopted by ancient Roman and

modern American ladies—by wilfully preventing conception, as was practiced of old by Onan, and in modern times by the French and others, or by making away with the children after birth, by sending them to a foundling institution or parish workhouse, where they are almost sure to die, a plan adopted in Christian Europe; by killing them outright, a plan adopted in China, India, England, and elsewhere, with or without the sanction of the law; or by sacrificing them devotionally to the god of the land, as was done by the Phens generally, including the Hebrews. (See ‘Wisdom of Solomon,’ xiv, 23-27). The philosopher is equally horror-struck at the mortality amongst infants which is brought about by the profligacy of our countrymen, and that induced by the religion which ordained sacrifice of superfluous offspring to Moloch. Were I to write metaphorically, and as strongly as the subject deserves, posterity would see that we have, and even in the metropolis of Christian England, a Moloch as horribly destructive to infant life as the idol to which Solomon gave local habitation, viz., baby-farms, wherein children are expected by their parents to slowly pine away to death.

“The idolatrous Jews, when children were born too fast, were encouraged by the priest to kill and burn them as ‘innocent blood,’ for a holy sacrifice. El, the creator, had given them, and the Great King asked for them back. It was easy for a lawgiver, who directed warriors to spare virgin women amongst their enemies, that they might be used in the harem, to invent a religious form of infanticide by which the superabundant family ensuing might be pruned to a convenient dimension. There is no doubt, from Jer. xxxii, 34, 35, that the worship of Moloch was not opposed by the temple priests, although it was denounced by the prophets. It is very probable that the law forbidding the sacrifice of offspring (Lev. xviii, 21; xx, 2-5) was introduced into the Pentateuch with the express intention of opposing the practice. The modern Jews do not require such a command, for they are peculiarly tender and loving to their children. The Jews, during the latter part of the monarchy, when they were very heathenish and very poor, their territory being exceedingly small, appear to have made child-murder a pious act for a *quasi* religious

duty. We execrate it publicly, but too many encourage it privately.

“It would be well if those who, professing to hold the doctrines of Christ, think it right to abuse, as foul idolators, the nations whose practice differs from their own, would remember the teachings of Jesus, who, when the woman, found in the very act of adultery, was brought before him for judgment, said, ‘He that is without sin amongst you, let him first cast a stone at her.’ And ye who execrate Moloch, remember that he reigns supreme yet. We do not subscribe to pay for fires wherein the innocents can be burnt, we only patronize burial clubs, and houses where unwelcome children may die, and where others may be blighted ere they see the light. Moloch is simply the avenger of lust and luxury, and it matters little whether it is represented by the bonfire, or the premature grave which wilful neglect prepares.”

## MOLADAH, OR MYLITTA,

Is the name of a Babylonian goddess as well as a Carthaginian one, symbolizing the procreative principle. Inman says she was also called the Celestial Virgin, and was pictured as Virgin and child. She was the goddess of birth and fertility, and symbolized the beneficent effect of moisture. Her worship was often held at the sea-shore and on the banks of rivers. Her images sometimes represented her with a body merging at the waist into that of a fish. Many Phœnician colonists are said to have adored a Venus of the sea, and it was sometimes urged that this goddess was claimed to have come out of the sea and may have been the original of the goddess Venus of the Greeks and Romans.

## MELKART, OR HERCULES ASTROEHYTON.

Before the Grecians boasted of their god Hercules, the Tyrians had a god by the above name, and his worship had been extended to the island of Thasus and to Cadiz, where a

temple was also consecrated to the year and the month which divided it into twelve parts, or, in other words, into twelve labors or twelve victories which conducted Hercules, or Melkart, to immortality. Dupuis says it is under the above name, Hercules, or of the god clad in a mantle of stars, that the poet Nonnus designates this sun-god worshiped by the Tyrians. The titles of the King of Fire, of the Lord of the World and of the Planets, of Nourisher of Mankind, of the God whose glowing orb revolves eternally around the earth, and who, while followed in his track by the Year, the daughter of Time and mother of the twelve Months, draws along in regular succession the seasons, which renew and reproduce themselves, are so many traits of the sun that he would be recognized, even if the poet had not given to his Hercules the name of Helios, or the sun. "It is," says he, "the same god which is worshiped by many nations under different names, as Belus on the shores of the Euphrates, as Ammon in Libya, as Apis at Memphis, as Saturn in Arabia, as Jupiter in Assyria, as Serapis in Egypt, as Helios at Babylon, as Apollo at Delphi, as Æsculapius throughout Greece, etc. Martianus Capella, in his magnificent hymn to the sun, also the poet Ansonius and Macrobius, confirm this multiplicity of names which were given by different nations to this luminary."

Plutarch says the Egyptians held that Hercules had his seat in the sun and that he traveled with it around the world.

The author of the hymns which are attributed to Orpheus describes in the most precise manner the affinity, or rather identity, of Hercules with the sun. He calls Hercules the god generator of Time of which the forms change, the father of all things, and who destroys them all. He is the god who brings back in regular succession Aurora and the black Night, who from east to west travels over his career of the twelve labors; a valiant Titan; a strong, invincible, and almighty god, who dispels sickness, and who delivers mankind from the evils with which it is afflicted. Can there be any mistake when we recognize in these traits under the name of Hercules the sun, that beneficent luminary which vivifies nature and which engenders, composed the twelve months,

and was expressed by the career of twelve labors? The Phœnicians have consequently preserved the tradition that Hercules was the sun-god, and that his twelve labors represented the journey of the luminary through the twelve signs of the zodiac. Porphyrius, born in Phœnicia, affirms that the name of Hercules was given there to the sun, and that the fable of the twelve labors expressed the transit of that luminary through the twelve signs of the zodiac, in which the sun accomplishes its annual course, is the real career which Hercules travels over in the fable of the twelve labors; and that by his marriage with Hebe, the goddess of youth, after the achievement of his career, we must understand the year which renews itself at the end of each revolution.

Dupuis then takes up the twelve labors of Hercules and shows that they were symbolical of the journey of the sun during the year, passing regularly through the twelve signs. There is no doubt but what the Greeks borrowed many of their myths from the Semitic races under consideration.

### CHEMOSH

Was the principal national deity of the Moabites. (Num. xxi, 29; Jer. xlvi, 7, 13, 46.) He appears also to have been worshiped by the Ammonites. Solomon introduced his worship at Jerusalem, but when Josiah came to occupy the throne he abolished it. Jerome identifies Chemosh with Baal-Peor; others with Baal-Zebub. He is held to be a god of war, and the equivalent of Mars in the Greek mythology. He was also a sun-god, and symbolized a high state of heat. The name is thought to mean heat, "the one who is hot," "the ardent one," and again, "the being causing desire." If the name is from *chamash*, it means "he glows or burns"—the sun in his destructive capacity. Like many of the gods of that age, there was doubtless a reproductive or phallic idea connected with him.

### NINIP

Is the name of one of the gods of Assyria, who was of sufficient magnitude to be called the Creator. Nin was also

another name. Among others of his titles are the Champion, the First of the Gods, the Powerful Chief, the Supreme, the Favorite of the Gods, He who Invites to Everything, the Opener of Aqueducts, etc. These titles without doubt point to his supposed recuperating power, and he was considered one of the gods of reproduction.

## NEBO

Was a very ancient Babylonian deity. "He is mentioned," so says Inman, "B. C. 1300," but it was not till some time after that he became popular in Assyria, after which time the number of Assyrian and Chaldean names compounded with Nebo was immense.

## IVA

Was another Assyrian god, called also the Prince of the Power of the Air, God of the Atmosphere. His synonyms were also Era, Aer, Our, Ar, Er, and Val. His emblem was a draped male, carrying a rod, from whence sprang their thunderbolts.

As goddess of the moon, Astarte was brought into connection with Melkart, the god of the sun, becoming his spouse, assuming the name of Milkath; dropping her severe character, she became a goddess of love and fruitfulness. The Phœnicians combined their deities into a sort of system forming a circle of seven gods called Rabirim, the powerful or the great. Among them were Khusos, or the prototype of Vulcan, the worker of iron. His counterpart, the goddess Khusarthis, or Thuro, the law, who in many aspects resembled Astarte, and Melkart, was the patron god of Tyre. The eighth god of the series seems to have been Esmun, "the eighth." He was a saving and pardoning divinity, and somewhat like the Thoth of the Egyptians and Hermes of the Greeks.

The images of these eight patron gods were often carried on the bows of Phœnician vessels, and were thus introduced into the countries where their arms and enterprise prevailed. Next to the Rabirim were demons, and by degrees was formed a system of divinities of three times seven, or, with Esmun,



twenty-two gods arranged according to the Phœnician alphabet, and often put into fanciful relations to each other. In Phœnician legends their gods, especially Melkart and Hercules, conquered the savage races of distant coasts, founded the ancient settlements on the Mediterranean, and planted the rocks at the Straits of Gibraltar, then considered the end of the world. This was the land-mark and extent of his journeyings.

## ADAD, OR HADAD,

“The Powerful or Mighty,” the name of a national god of the Syrians. He also symbolized the sun, and was worshiped and venerated as the greatest and highest of the gods. It would seem that the heathens had as distinct ideas of the unity of the Almighty as the monotheists themselves.

## ALLAH.

Down to the time of Mohammed, the Arabs were believers in a plurality of gods, as had been and still were all branches of the Semitic race, with the exception, possibly, in later times of the Hebrews. The Arab pantheon was supplied with the gods and goddesses of nearly all the known mythological systems of the world. The seven days which constitute our week were successively appropriated to the worship of the seven planetary spirits which were believed to preside over the principal heavenly bodies, and a temple was erected to each one. The one built at Mecca is claimed to have originally been consecrated to the spirit of the planet Saturn. Each tribe—the Arabs were composed of some forty tribes—considered itself under the protection of one or more tutelary deities. One tribe was devoted to the sun, another to Jupiter, another to Sirius, and another to the star in the “Bull’s Eye.” The temple at Mecca, called the Kaaba, contained the images of these and many other gods.

After the introduction of Christianity into that country considerable effort was made to introduce the worship of what

was believed the "one true God," but with very limited success. A great proportion of the people continued to worship the heavenly bodies or the spirits believed to be connected with them, and these were presented to the popular mind by means of images, as was done in all other nations. The Kaaba contained three hundred and sixty images, either in human form or in the forms of lions, bulls, eagles, and other members of the animal kingdom, especially those representing constellations in the heavens. Three goddesses, called AlLata, Al Uzzale, and Manah, were denominated "daughters of God," and their images were regarded with more than usual reverence. Mrs. Child says one of them held a babe in her arms, after the style of the Egyptian Isis and her infant son Horus, as well as the "Virgin Mothers" of a large proportion of the older oriental religions. Nearly every family had images in their dwellings or tents, which were household or domestic gods. To these prayers were offered daily, especially in sickness, trouble, and affliction; also when they set out upon a journey, and when they returned from a journey. In the last month of every year a great concourse of pilgrims made a journey to Mecca to offer vows and sacrifices, return thanks, and present images and other gifts to the temple. Before entering upon the sacred ground the pilgrims laid off their garments, and seven times they walked in a naked condition round the Kaaba, throwing a stone at each circuit, in deference to the legend that Abraham once stoned the devil on the same ground. They also reverently touched the Kaaba stone, a dark stone, believed to have been an aerolite, and claimed to have been sent from God by the hand of the angel Gabriel for Abraham to rest upon. The pilgrims also traveled seven times to the neighboring mountains, looking intently upon the ground, in imitation of Hagar's search for water when cast out with her child to perish in the wilderness. They sacrificed goats, sheep, and camels, part of which they ate, and distributed the residue among the poor. Before they set out for home they trimmed their hair and nails, and they burned them in the sacred valley Mina. They also wore amulets or fetiches to protect them from the evil influ-

ences, showing the faith they retained in the system of fetich worship more or less common to all the early races.

This was the state of things in Arabia at the time Mohammed believed he had received a mission from heaven to break down the worship of idols and of the heavenly bodies in the form of images and symbols representing them. The main purpose of his life seemed to be to abolish idolatry, and in its place establish the worship of the "one true God." The key note of his preaching was, "There is no god but Allah, and Mohammed is his prophet." He encountered great opposition in promulgating his new doctrines, and on several occasions his life was placed in danger from those who strongly opposed them. During three years from the time he began to teach the number of his adherents only amounted to thirteen, and these were principally his own connections and the friends of his family. Thirteen years after he commenced his public teachings, to save his life, he was compelled to make a flight by night from his native city, Mecca. This was called the "Hegira," or flight. A few followers accompanied him. They went to Yathreb, one hundred and seventy-five miles from Mecca. It was afterwards called Medina, and became the holy city of the Mohammedan faith. Here his doctrines, which had been previously introduced there, spread with such rapidity that in three years from the Hegira he was able to lead a band of his followers against the Jews of Koreidha, who had previously joined his tribe, the Koreish, against him. He dragged nearly seven hundred of them to the market-place in chains, where they were massacred and thrown into one common grave. The conquerors took possession of their goods, and carried away the women and children into bondage. Mohammed afterwards took the principal Jewish city in Arabia, and completely subjected the people to his power. He came to be quite belligerent, and led his followers to many engagements. He is said to have been personally present in twenty-seven military expeditions, in nine of which he gave battle. On one occasion he was severely wounded and came near losing his life. Six years after the Hegira his cause had become so strong that he started on a religious pilgrimage to Mecca with an escort of fifteen

hundred armed men, who were his devoted disciples. His old enemies, the Koreish, at first determined to oppose his visit by force of arms, but learning his strength, they retired to the mountains and allowed him to worship in the temple three days in peace, and a treaty of ten years cessation from hostilities was agreed upon; but Mohammed, conceiving that the Koreish had violated their treaty, marched against them with ten thousand troops. He ascended a hill near Mecca, and prayed in a loud voice that Gabriel and three thousand angels might be sent to his assistance. Though these celestial warriors could not be seen, his followers believed him when he assured them they were present. His troops rushed forward to the attack; the Koreish were taken by surprise, and offered slight resistance. The chiefs fell at the feet of their conqueror, who inquired of them, in a stern manner, "What right have you to expect mercy from a man whom you have so persecuted?" They answered, "We trust to the generosity of our kinsman." "You shall not trust in vain," was his reply, and he granted them life and liberty on condition that they should embrace the faith of Islam. He condemned but ten to death, six of whom were subsequently pardoned. All the idols in the temple and on the neighboring mountains were destroyed, much to the grief and dismay of their worshipers. The temple became a mosque, and from that time it was the point towards which all his faithful followers turned their faces in prayer, let them be where they might. The diamond from Paradise, on which Abraham had sat, which had long been known as the black stone, was touched by Mohammed, and at once became invested with increased sacredness, and has since been revered and worshiped as though it were itself a god. Ten years after the Hegira, Mohammed made a pilgrimage to Mecca, with a splendid retinue of more than one hundred thousand followers. This was his last journey.

He seemed to be more intent in establishing the belief in Allah and him alone than in teaching his followers particularly about the character of Allah. It has been thought he adopted the Jewish Jehovah under another name; but by the bitterness which existed between him and the Jews, as well

as between his followers and Christians who did acknowledge the god of the Jews, and with whom his followers have had the most bloody wars, it would seem their gods must have been antagonistic.

The word Al or El, which became Illah or Allah, simply meant "God," without implying his characteristics or attributes. Inman says they may be considered cognate with the Assyrian Il or Ilu, which Rawlinson, of cuneiform explorations, says is the Semitic value of "a god," for which, however, Yahu is sometimes substituted, as in Hebrew. The modern representative is Al or Allah, and that name is adored over all the localities where once Al was worshiped, and where from 150,000,000 to 200,000,000 still repeat the watch-word of the Arabian reformer, "There is no God but Allah, and Mohammed is his prophet."

## JAH, JAHVEH, OR JEHOVAH.

The reader does not need to be told that this is the principal deity of the branch of the Semitic race called Hebrews or Jews. The words *principal deity*, are advisedly used, for upon examination it will appear that the people called "the children of Abraham" did originally believe in a plurality of gods, that they bestowed their worship and allegiance, from time to time, on other gods than Jah or Jahveh, that there was for a long time an antagonism, or at least a discrepancy, between what by scholars are termed the Elohistie authorities, and the Jahvehistic, or Jehovistic authorities.

As regards the orthography of the name, the remarks made by the Rev. J. W. Chadwick in "The Bible of To-day" seem appropriate here. "I shall use this name (Yahweh) instead of Jehovah. A more correct spelling would be Jahveh, but as Jahveh should be pronounced Yahweh, I adopt the phonetic spelling. Jehovah is entirely incorrect. The Hebrew consonants were J H V H. When this became 'the ineffable name,' too sacred to be spoken, the scribes when reading the scriptures substituted for it *Adonai*, Lord; and for Lord Jhvh, they substituted Elohim, God. When at length it became customary to write the vowels, which had before

been simply understood, instead of taking the vowels originally understood with J H V H, the rabbis took either the vowels belonging to *Adonai* or to *Elohim*, making it either Jehovah or Jehovih. (The first *a* in *Adonai* is like *e* mute in French, and the final *i* is *j*, a consonant.) When Lord occurs in our common version, it generally represents J H V H in the original, which it does not translate at all, but follows the septuagint, where J H V H is always rendered Lord, an exact translation of *Adonai*. The name Jehovah only occurs twice in our translation, where the true name should occur a hundred times.

“But if not the vowels *e, o, a*, what vowels should be written with J H V H? The consensus of scholarship is for *a* and *e*, making Jahveh. But J is pronounced Y, as in Hallelujah, and the *v* should have the sound of *w*. Hence phonetically Yahweh, the final *h* of which is silent. See a complete discussion of this matter in an appendix to Ewald's Hist. Israel, vol. ii, by Mr. Russell Martineau” (p. 20).

Prof. A. L. Rawson, in his “Evolution of Israel's God,” says: “The origin of the name Jehovah (or more correctly (*Yahweh*) was Greek or Phœnician, where it appears as *Iao*. The Latins use the form *Jov* (Jove); the Samaritans wrote the word with five letters *Ihoah*, and the Hebrews with four, J H V H, or Y H V H (called the four, by distinction). The attributes of Jupiter (Jove) were numerous, and as given by the Greeks in the name of *Zeus* included all those ascribed to Jehovah by the Hebrews, as well as a power behind all the gods, which was called *fate*. We call it *law*.”

#### VIEWS OF DR. INMAN.

The late Thomas Inman, M. D., London, in his “Ancient Faiths,” in treating the name Jah, or Jehovah, uses this language: “It is doubtful whether any name is of more importance in the Old Testament. Upon it hangs the questions whether the Pentateuch was the production of a single hand; whether its composition took place at the time usually represented, or at a period subsequent to the coming of David to the throne; whether Jah was a name specially revealed to the

Jewish nation, or one adopted by them from another people. Indeed, we may say that upon this mysterious word hinges the whole superstructure which moderns have built upon the absolute truth and inspiration of the Old Testament.

“Deeply impressed as the philosopher must feel with the issues, which depend upon his inquiries, he nevertheless understands that his judgment must depend upon testimony rather than upon feeling; and that it is safer to trust to the inexorable logic of facts than to the flimsy web of theory. In searching out my evidence, I very naturally turned to those writings which have been left by ancient authors; but these have already been given to the world so largely by Movers and other inquirers, and have been so ably condensed by the Bishop of Natal (Colenso) in his exhaustive work on the Pentateuch, that it is unnecessary for me to reproduce them here. We therefore turn our attention to other points, which have not been so prominently advanced before the public eye. Throughout my investigations into the proper names, two facts stood forward with startling prominence: 1, that there is not a single Egyptian name amongst the Hebrews, before or after the alleged exodus from the land of Pharaoh; and 2, that the use of the name *Jah* in cognomens comes in like a flood amongst the Hebrews after the return of David from the land of the Philistines and the Phœnicians. It is this second consideration which we have now to discuss.

“To appreciate the full value of this let us recapitulate the statements which we have elsewhere made. Proper names amongst the Shemites in general were given by a priest. Into them he introduced the name or one of the characteristic attributes of the god whom he adored. Hence an examination of cognomens discloses the title or nature of the deity which was popular when the child was born or named. Now prior to the time of David almost every Jewish name was compounded with *El*, *Ab*, *Ach*, *Shemish*, *On*, *Am*, *Baal*, or some word indicating ‘life,’ ‘existence,’ ‘brilliancy,’ ‘might,’ ‘strength,’ ‘glory,’ etc. It is almost impossible to find one into whose composition *Jah* enters. On the contrary, after the period of David’s accession to the kingdom, there are scarcely any cognomens which are not distinguished by the

name of Jehovah. (I adhere to the current method of spelling this word, although it is not strictly correct. I find from the "History of Israel," by Ewald, which appeared whilst this sheet was in press, that *Jahveh* or *Jahve*, is the form which is supposed to be nearest to the real pronunciation.) The conclusion to be drawn from this fact is inevitable, viz., that the sacred name, which is said to have been revealed to Moses in the burning bush, was really unknown to the Jews in the earlier days of David. It is equally remarkable, but we cannot stay to consider the subject fully now, that the name of Moses was as much unknown to Saul and to the young David as was Jehovah. Another fact of singular importance is the complete disappearance of the sacred word at the time of our Savior. Though used by the prophets subsequently to the captivity, we do not find any evidence of its existence in the New Testament; even our Lord himself either does not know it or else avoids its use.

"Considering it then as a certain fact that the word *Jah*, or *Jehovah*, was introduced into Judea by David and his hierarchy, our next consideration is whence he obtained it. Ere we attempt to decide, let us contemplate the character of this king. Of a singularly superstitious character, he was driven from his own country, whilst his mind was still young and ductile, into a land whose religion differed from that of his own. It is improbable that he possessed a copy of the Pentateuch, even if it then existed, and if he was able to read it. We know from his behavior with Achish that he was timid. There was, therefore, every element in him necessary for the adoption of a new faith. During his absence from Judea he became friendly with Hiram, king of Tyre. On his return to Judea David brought with him Carians of Asia Minor; Cypriotes, probably of Grecian extraction; Gittites, or Philistines, possibly Pelasgians, and Hellenists, or Italians; whilst his bosom friend and counsellor was Hushai, an inhabitant of Erech, and of Babylonian or Assyrian proclivities. We therefore examine the names of divinities recognized by the Greeks, Phœnicians, and Babylonians, to ascertain if there are any names corresponding to *Jah*. As the true pronunciation of this name is lost, we can but determine the question approxi-



mately. Amongst the Greeks we find the name *Iao*, which corresponds to the *Ju* in Jupiter, and *Iac* in Iacchus. The name *Iao* is explained in many ancient passages to be the equivalent of Helios, Aides, Zeus, Dionysus, Adonis, Attya, Iacchus, and Bacchus, and I see no reason to doubt the value of the quotation adduced by Movers to confirm his views. Now this word *Iao* may be considered as an archaic form of the Greek *iaomai*, 'I heal, I cure.' It thus becomes the equivalent of the Greek Apollo, and the Phœnician Eshmun, and it is associated with *hieros*, 'holy,' 'sacred,' connected with the gods.

"Passing from the Greek language we turn to the Phœnicians, in which name we include all the people living in the western shores of Palestine. Amongst these we find such names as Araunah, Jabin, Uriah, Moriah, Hiram, and Tobiah, which are compounded with some variant of *Yho*, *Iah*, *Iao*, *Iu*, etc. Still further we find that David and Solomon worshiped the same God as the king of Tyre, for Hiram affords great assistance in building a temple to his honor. Again, we find from Mr. Talbot's translation of the annals of Sennacherib ("Journal of Royal Asiatic Society" vol. xix, p. 143, seq.) that the names of one of the kings of Sidon was Luliah; Zedekiah was king of Ascalon, Padiah was the name of another Phœnician king; Aloniah is another; Ritziah and Ubiah are also met with; all of which are apparently compounded with *Jah*, just as Hezekiah, Isaiah, and other Jewish names are. The cognomens may be thus explained: Luliah is equivalent to 'Jah moves in a circle;' Zedekiah is the same name as that of a Jewish king, and signifies 'Jah is righteousness;' Padiah is equivalent to 'Jah is a redeemer;' Maniah is equivalent to 'Jah is a perfecter,' a name we may compare with the Hebrew Manoah; Ritziah is equivalent to 'Jah is a friend;' Uriah is probably equivalent to 'Jah protects or covers.' Again, amongst the Phœnician proper names we find Abdaias mentioned by Josephus and Juba, which seems to be a corrupted form of *Yubaal*, or 'Jao is Baal.' Again, the name of a Numidian, mentioned by Polybius, can best be rendered 'the boy of Jehovah;' the name of a king of Tyre mentioned by Josephus can best be explained by considering

it equivalent to *pelaiah*, or 'Jah is distinguished;' and Phamaias, a cognomen of Himileo, is probably the same as *phamiah*, 'the hammer of Jah.' Sichæus, the name of the husband of Dido, and one with which we are more familiar as Zacheus, is probably the same as *Zachiah*, 'Jah is pure.' Zuanas, the name of a god in Tyre, is probably equivalent to *Zuniah*, 'Jah fills or impregnates,' all of which appear to have been compounded with a form of Jah.

"The evidence that a name similar to Jah, or Ju, or Jao, was used amongst the Syrians, Assyrians, and Babylonians, is very strong. Rawlinson, for example, states, 'Journal of Royal Asiatic Society,' New Series, vol. i, p. 193, that *Il*, or *Ilu*, is the Semitic value of a certain sign, for which, he adds, *Yahu* is sometimes substituted, as in Hebrew. Again, Talbot, in the 'Transactions of the Royal Society of Literature,' second series, vol. viii, p. 273, gives '*Jahu-lulu*' as the name of a Syrian king, '*Jahu-biadi*' as a king of Hamath. In both of these the sacred name closely resembles that of *Jehu*, the king of Israel. Talbot adds that the name of '*Jahu*' is sometimes changed for *Ilu*, showing that it means 'god' in the Syrian language; and the word has even the divine sign prefixed in some inscriptions of Sargon. Still further he enables us to identify *Jahu* with *Jah* by pointing out that the Assyrian way of spelling Hezekiah is Hazak-*iahu*. *Ya-ilu*, *Sha ya ilu*, was the battle-cry of the Assyrians, equivalent to our hurrah. (Compare 'Allah il Allah.')

"To this testimony we may now add the statement of Furst, with whose 'Lexicon' I only became acquainted after the preceding remarks were penned. 'The very ancient name of God, *Yaho*, which is preserved only in proper names as an enclitic, written in the Greek *Jao*, appears, apart from its derivation, to have been an old mystic name of the supreme deity of the Shemites. In an old religion of the Chaldeans, whose remains are to be found among the new Platonists, the highest divinity enthroned above the seven heavens, representing the spiritual light principle, and also conceived of as demiurge, was called *Jao*, who was like the Hebrew *Yaho*, mysterious and unmentionable, and whose name was communicated only to the initiated. The Phœnicians had a supreme

god, whose name was, trilateral and secret, invented, as is alleged, by the hierophant Istris, and brother of *Chna* (*i. e.*, since the origin of the Phœnician people), and he was *Iao* (Lydus, 1 C Cedranus 1 C). This Phœnician *Yaho*, a knowledge of whom spread farther, represented the sun-god (*Sol*), in a fourfold variety of senses, agreeable to the oracle of *Apollo Clarius* (Macrobius, *Saturn*, 1, 18); according to an account in *Eutathius* (see Munter, *Religion du Karth*, p. 40) he represented Baal, whose image was set up in the temple by Marasseh, Suidas; he represented also Dionysus and Adonis. The identification of the *Iao* of the heathen Shemites, with *Yaho*, or *Jehovah*, of the Hebrews, is already in Tacitus (*Hist.* v. 5), Plutarch (*Symp.* 1, iv, *quant.* 5, *seq.*), Julian, etc., Cyril, *adv. Jul.*, which makes it necessary to seek a Semitic origin alone for the name.'

"Notwithstanding the opinion which Furst thus expresses, we may remark that there is great difficulty in finding any valid Semitic explanation of this mysterious word, while there is very little difficulty if we refer it to an Aryan or a Sanskrit source. In that language there are two words, *Jah* and *Jaya*, which signify 'the Almighty'; they are sometimes written *Jaa* and *Jaga*. It appears under the latter form in the word *Jaga-nath*. But, and the objection is a strong one, we do not find much evidence of the existence of Vedic influence in ancient Palestine, consequently, before we can entertain the Sanskrit origin of the name, we must have some show of reason for the belief. Now there are two sources whence the Aryan in western Asia might spring, one on land, in the parts where the Shemites and Aryans touched, the other where they became acquainted with each other in voyaging, or through the medium of travel generally. We have the testimony of Rawlinson (*Jour. of Roy. As. Soc.*, new series, vol. i, p 230), that there are proofs of a Vedic or an Aryan influence on the early mythology of Babylon; and we have evidences from ancient history that many philosophers traveled into distant countries to study their products, their inhabitants, and their religion. The country of India was visited by some Europeans, in comparatively very ancient times. During the reign of Solomon, it is all but certain that

Phœnicians were familiar with the route to India. As a voyage lasted three years, it is clear that much of the time of travelers must have been passed on shore. At every port vast pagodas were to be seen, then as now; and we can readily imagine that inquiries would be made respecting the god who was adored. Much like King Ahaz (2 Kings xvi, 10) it is probable that some wealthy merchant, attended by his diviner, may have brought from India to Tyre the pattern of a new altar, and the name of a new god, that of the supreme one of India. That Elohim, or the popular deity, had his nomenclature changed, is certain, from the introduction of Nebo into the Assyrian theology, as there is great reason to believe that the name of this divinity was Indian, we may conceive that *Jah* was equally so. It is impossible for any one at all familiar with the sacred literature of the Hebrews to pass by the extreme reverence with which the name Jehovah was associated. To such an extent was this carried, and so careful were all who knew it not to divulge it lightly, that the true word, or rather the pronunciation thereof, is lost. It is very probable that the majority of readers consider this veneration for a particular cognomen peculiar to the Jews. There is, however, no doubt that a similar reverence for a name, peculiarly sacred, has obtained in oriental countries from time immemorial, and still exists among the Hindoos."

Upon this subject, there is a very interesting essay by W. H. Talbot (Transactions Roy. Soc. Lit., 2d series, vol. viii, p. 274) of which the following is a condensation:

"That the Greeks believed the language of the gods to be altogether unlike the speech of man is certain from the boldness with which Homer makes assertions like these: 'The gods call it Xanthus, but men call it Scamander.' . . . This is illustrated by reference to an Assyrian inscription wherein are found the words, in the language of the gods, 'Ninev had a divine name;' this occurs in the reign of Ashurakhalbal. Another inscription of Neriglissar contains the sentence, 'In thy celestial name, which is never pronounced aloud;' whilst another tablet of Nebuchadnezzar's has almost the same words, viz., 'In thy divine name, which is not spoken aloud.'

Now Ninev was not the celestial name, the real one being indicated in the sentences, 'At the first he was called —— in the speech of the gods' (the dash represents a cuneiform word which is provisionally rendered Hercules). Two lines after this sentence, which comes in an invocation to the Assyrian gods, the line concerning Ninev occurs, 'Whom men call not by his royal name, nor by his great title, "Chief of a Hundred Gods," and mystically he is the "Meridian Sun."' In an inscription of Shamus Phul, the king again invokes Ninev and calls him the 'Meridian Sun' and 'Inspector of All Things;' and adds, 'Mystically called ——, whose real name they do not receive [*do not know?*]; Arubnaki in the language of the gods.' This name Arubnaki was evidently very holy, and probably very ancient, but other gods than Ninev claim it. The clearest evidence of an ineffable name amongst the Assyrians is the sentence in the first-mentioned inscription, 'Ninev, whose divine name by which he is called in the language of the gods no one must lightly pronounce in vain.' Mr. Talbot then demonstrates that the third commandment in the Jewish decalogue is to be taken literally, and has always been understood to mean that 'the name' was never to be pronounced lightly; and he finishes the essay by a reference to the Egyptians, amongst whom it was an injunction, 'Speak not in the name of the Great God.'

"It would be easy to multiply passages from the Old Testament to show the vast importance which the Jews assigned to the name of the Almighty; nay, we can find many in which the Creator himself is made to appear as though he thought more of his name than of anything else. See, for example, Jer. xliv, 26, 'I have sworn by my great name, that my name shall no more be named in the mouth of any man of Judah in all the land of Egypt;' and again, Ezek. xx, 9, 'I wrought for my name's sake that it should not be polluted before the heathen,' etc. Now this extreme veneration for the 'great name' of the Almighty suggests the consideration that the word, whatever it was, could not have been indigenous amongst the Jews, nor a vernacular one amongst other nations. We cannot suppose for an instant that the mystic syllables signified simply 'He is,' 'He exists,' 'He gives life,' or de-

noted any similar ideas; for in that case the name must necessarily have been profaned daily in ordinary language. We conclude, therefore, that the name was either imported from a foreign country or was compounded of certain initial letters; and thus it would never be necessarily used in ordinary language. We may well illustrate the ancient practice by the modern. Amongst the devout there is at the present day a great disinclination to use the words God and Jesus Christ except in prayer and worship, the names being considered too sacred to be used in general conversation, and such expressions as 'the Deity,' 'the Creator,' 'the Savior,' 'the Lord,' etc., are substituted for them. Even where it is requisite to use the very names in question, they are uttered with bated breath, as being too holy to be uttered in an ordinary tone. In other words, we use our own vernacular circumlocutions, which we do understand, with far less reverence than certain foreign sounds, of whose signification we have but a faint idea; so true is the adage, *Omne ignotum pro magifico*. It is probable the Greeks had equal reverence for the divine names of other nations, for conquerors were specially told by an oracle not to obliterate the titles of the gods of the people whom they vanquished, as the names were of importance in the mysteries.

"If we now closely examine ourselves we shall readily understand the discontent which would be felt if our spiritual guides attempted to persuade us that the Omnipotent was known amongst the hosts of heaven by an English name. A similar idea has doubtless pervaded all nations who had any conception of an Almighty. Hence the power to communicate to man the appellation by which he passed sufficed to demonstrate that the one who has had direct intercourse with the King on high knew it. The selection, then, of some ineffable name has been an exigence in the foundation of all new religions. It is a very remarkable fact, however, that our Savior, 'who was in the bosom of our Father' (John i, 18), never laid any stress upon 'the name, the great name Jehovah;' and throughout his ministry spoke of the Almighty as 'my Father,' 'the Father,' or 'Theos.' This leads us to ponder more deeply the ideas conveyed in the ancient theology

that the Almighty had a sacred name by which he was known on high. It is clear that there is no necessity for nomenclature in heaven, unless more than one being exists there. To assign, therefore, a name to the Creator involves the idea that there are others besides him. That such an opinion really prevailed amongst the Jews, and others, we recognize by such expressions as the following :

“ ‘Who is like unto thee, O Lord (*Jehovah*), amongst the gods?’ (*Elohim*) Ex. xv, 11. ‘Now, I know that the Lord (*Jehovah*) is greater than all gods’ (*Elohim*) Ex. xviii, 11. ‘Among the gods (*Elohim*) there is none like unto thee, O Lord’ (*Adonai*) Ps. lxviii, 1. ‘For the Lord (*El*) is a great god’ (*Jehovah*), and a great king above all gods (*Elohim*) Ps. xc, 3. ‘Worship him, all of ye gods (*Elohim*) Ps. xvii, 7. ‘Our Lord (*Jehovah*) is above all gods’ (*Elohim*) Ps. cxxxv, 5. ‘Great is our God (*Eloah*) above all gods’ (*Elohim*) 2 Chron. ii, 5. ‘The Lord (*Jehovah*) will furnish all the gods of the earth’ (*Elohim*) Zeph. ii, 11. ‘Now, there was a day when the sons of *Elohim* came to present themselves before *Jehovah*, and Satan came also amongst them’ (Job, i, 6). The cogency of our argument, derived from these passages, may be seen from the fact that in all the ancient versions, these texts have been altered to obliterate the polytheistic idea which they embody. See Ginsburg on ‘The English Bible in its relation to the ancient and other versions.’ ”

## DISHONESTY OF TRANSLATORS.

The dishonesty which has been exercised by the translators of our version of the Bible is well exemplified by these quotations, though but a portion of them are presented. In the first narrative of the creation, as given in Genesis, chapter i, and the first three verses of chapter ii, the Hebrew word *Elohim* is used in every instance. It is the plural form of the word, and the only way to translate it honestly is to render it “the gods”—reading thus: “In the beginning the gods created the heaven and the earth;” “the spirit of the gods moved upon the face of the waters;” “and the gods said, Let there be light;” “and the gods saw the light that it was

good; and the gods divided the light from the darkness;' and so on in more than thirty instances in that one place, in every instance of which absolute dishonesty was used by the translators. They seemed to be unwilling to let the story read as it was originally written, lest it should be seen that the person who wrote the first version of the creation believed in a plurality of gods, and that it was not the same writer who wrote the subsequent version. It would certainly seem that a translator who presumed to change what he and others believed the revealed diction of heaven was wholly unfit for the occupation. Bible scholars have divided the Pentateuch into what they call *Elohistic* from the *Jahvehistic* or *Jehovahistic* portions. There were doubtless two parties among the Jewish writers, and in time the Jehovahistic party triumphed, and the Elohistic party went to the wall. More on this subject further on. A continuation of Dr. Inman's remarks will now be given.

### ANTHROPOMORPHISM.

"These, and many other passages, demonstrate that the idea of a 'great name' was associated with that of the existence of a court above in every respect similar to one on earth except in its inconceivable vastness; and we are thus brought again by another route to the subject of anthropomorphism. Let us now pause awhile to contemplate the Grecian conception of heaven, and those of the philosophical student. In the first there is a powerful king, father of gods and men, *Ju-pater*, and associated conjugally with him is *Juno*; they have with them the lords of the sea and land, wisdom, beauty, love, light, darkness, war, and song; they are served by attendant spirits who fulfil their behests; they have messengers to send to distant quarters, and to men; nay, the anthropomorphism is carried so far that their celestial rulers have passions just as men and women upon earth. Change but the names of 'gods' for 'angels,' suppress the sexual passions, and read Our Father *Jah*, for the Father *Ju*, and we then have the Old Testament idea of heaven. Contrast this with such conceptions as have been formed by



thoughtful minds. With them the Creator is a being who fills all space, whom the mind of man cannot conceive. Per-vading all things, there is nothing so large he cannot treat it as he would the smallest atom. Present alike in the sun and the most distant star, he governs the universe, and at the same time knows when a sparrow falls. Under his power is builded up the most stately mountain, from whose sides, clothed with everlasting snow, flow down mighty rivers, to irrigate and fertilize plains of equal vastness; and from the same power come animalcules of wondrous beauty, too small for man to see. In the attempt to gain a fair idea of such a being, the understanding is lost in immensity, and gladly turns to repose upon the word of some deep thinker of old—‘O Lord, how manifold are thy works; in wisdom hast thou made them all; the earth is full of thy riches’ (Ps., civ, 24).

“Our attention is now arrested by the consideration if a being such as the Almighty does really care whether his creatures address him in Latin, Greek, Hebrew, or English; whether they wear robes of pink, scarlet, green, or white; whether they burn lambs, rams, wax-candles, or incense. To such a Being, is it not better to offer up a prayer direct, rather than through the intervention of another man? nay, have we not a warranty for the practice in the words: ‘The hour cometh and now is when the true worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth; for the Father seeketh such to worship him; God is a spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth?’ (John iv, 23-24.)

“In writing the preceding article, I have abstained, as far as possible, from going over again the ground already trodden by the Bishop of Natal, and those whose opinions he quotes. Although I have carefully perused Dr. Colenso’s book on the Pentateuch, I have thought it unnecessary to use in the present volume, as the task undertaken by me has been wholly independent of any individual writer. Being, as I believe it to be, an independent work, it is corroborative of, rather than dependent upon, such writers as the Reverend Bishop. Moreover, I am too profoundly impressed with the momentous result which follows from the establishment of the fact that the name of Jehovah only came to be known and used by

the Hebrews after the return of David from Phœnicia, to treat the subject lightly. The result may be briefly stated as follows: A very large portion of the Old Testament is certainly of no more value than a Hindoo, Greek, or Latin legend; in other words, the Jewish history, prior to the time of David, is entirely mythical, and its laws and ordinances are wholly of human origin. The consequences which flow from this it is almost unnecessary to consider at present; it is perhaps more appropriate that we should leave them until we have laid before the reader the whole of the evidence on which we ground our conclusions.

“In announcing such a result of my labors, I am perfectly conscious that I shall give much pain to many earnest and devout minds, and to many of my personal friends; I have indeed done much violence to myself. But my aim has been to examine impartially the claims of our modern churchmen, and the foundation of those claims. I had it very early inculcated into my mind that it was the duty of every Christian to be thankful to any man who convinces him of a fault, and enables him to see himself as others see him. In the course of my life I have heard very many sermons and speeches made by missionaries, and have perused very many of their written reports and books. In these we see conspicuously a contempt for the absurd belief of the heathen, and sneers at the theology of their priests. But I have also heard that ‘those who live in glass houses should never throw stones;’ and I know that it is useless to defend an argument unless its foundations are certain. To me, then, it has seemed of the utmost importance to examine into the condition of our own premises ere we attack those of others. As the whole of our system of theology is based upon the Bible, it appears to be of fundamental importance that the real value of the book should be ascertained. I am profoundly impressed with the belief that no system of religion ought to be based upon a fable, and that no priest is deserving of respect who dares not examine closely the foundations of his teaching. True and pure Christianity will survive, even though the Old Testament is grouped with the apocryphal; and it will not be altogether for the injury of mankind if greater stress

is laid upon what a man does, rather than upon the dogmas which he holds. There is a tolerably high assertion that 'pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world' (James i, 27). Such religion all can exercise, even though they think that the Old Testament is not what it professes to be" (Ancient Faiths, vol. i, pp. 608-624).

The author just quoted at considerable length is doubtless quite right in seeking to determine whether *Jah* or *Jahveh* was original with the Hebrews, or whether they had borrowed the word in part or wholly from some of the neighboring nations; but when it is remembered that nearly every nation in the various grades of barbarism and semi-civilization have not only devised gods but original names for them in every way equal to those employed by the Hebrews, it does not seem too much to accord to them the ability to devise a name of one or two syllables for a god any more than to devise the god himself. While this was common to nearly all the nations of antiquity, and is still among the savage tribes of the world, the inhabitants of Palestine need not be regarded as an exception. They could originate to that extent and not transcend their neighbors.

### THE BIBLE CRITICISED.

The Hebrew Bible being the source whence all information relative to *Jahveh* is supposed to be obtained, a limited examination of some of its features may be very proper. It is a volume composed of anonymous writings and legends written at different times, hundreds of years apart, and mostly by persons now wholly unknown. With the exception of some of the prophecies, scarcely one of the books of the Old Testament was written by the person whose name it bears, or at the time it purports to have been written. Within a few years students and critics have paid increased attention to the origin and character of the Hebrew scriptures and the views of candid scholars have become materially modified with reference to the antiquity and authenticity of the various parts

of the Bible. Prominent among this class of investigators are Ewald, De Wette, Kuenen, Dr. S. Davidson, Prof. W. Robertson Smith, Greg, Knappert, Prof. Newman, and others. Rev. J. W. Chadwick has studied these authors closely, and in his "Bible of To-day" has embodied their views and his own conclusions in a most clear and candid manner. It is deemed appropriate to make some quotations from him here.

### QUOTATIONS FROM THE "BIBLE OF TO DAY."

"Before the Babylonish captivity there were no *sacred* writings in Judea. There were some laws, and some of the writings of the prophets, and some historical compositions; and some of these, no doubt, were highly valued, but no special character was attached to them, no peculiar authority assigned to them. And this, you must remember, was about eight hundred years after the time of Moses. Soon after the captivity, in the fifth century, B. C., the law appeared, and soon after came to be considered sacred" (p. 7).

On the subject of the *histories* of the Bible he says: "Those parts of them which are worth least as histories of early times are worth a great deal as unconscious testimony to the religious tendencies of the times when they appeared. But nothing could be more dangerously misleading than to take the apparent histories of the Old Testament as they stand and use them as veritable histories. A very little investigation proves that they were not originally written as histories but as didactic compositions" (p. 41).

"It is difficult to believe that less than twenty years ago the denial of the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch by Bishop Colenso roused such a storm of indignation as threatened to cost the good bishop his position in the English church, for at the present time Stanley, the Dean of Westminster, holds his position in the church, one of the proudest too, with absolute security while frankly publishing opinions far more radical than Colenso's. Moreover he has the scholarship of the church almost entirely on his side, and hundreds of the lower clergy. But here in America, so far as I can judge, the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch is

commonly assumed in all the evangelical churches. A history purporting to begin with the beginning of the world, 4004 B. C., and to end in 1451, shortly after the death of Moses, whose death it piously records—all this is supposed to have been written by the hand of Moses, and to be a faithful and consistent account of things which really happened, and words which were really spoken by the persons or the deity to whom they are ascribed. . . . The theory of supernatural inspiration, as well as the theory of Mosaic authorship, was never started till ten or a dozen centuries after the death of Moses. The theory of Mosaic authorship was part of a general system, which just before the beginning of the Christian era ascribed the Old Testament books to those persons who figured in them most conspicuously, for example the book of Joshua to Joshua, the books of Samuel to Samuel. But this conclusion of the Talmudists, ever the most uncritical of men, was without any critical justification whatsoever. There is not a sign that the book of Joshua was written by Joshua, or the books of Samuel by Samuel, or the five books of the Pentateuch by Moses. The Pentateuch is not, if you will permit me to say so, Mosaic, but it is *a Mosaic*. Perhaps a patchwork would be a still correcter designation; a patchwork too, in many parts, of the sort called harlequin, so incongruous are the materials that are arbitrarily joined together. So far was the composition of the Pentateuch from being contemporaneous with even the latest events which it narrates, that the oldest fragment of any size which it contains dates from the ninth century, B. C., that is to say, five hundred and fifty years after the events, if we accepted the Old Testament chronology, three hundred and eighty on a more rational system. The gap between this fragment and the patriarchal times is about a thousand years. This fragment, which the critics have agreed to call the Book of Covenants, extends from Exodus xxi, to xxiii, 19. The next considerable portion of the Pentateuch was probably written about 750 B. C., a dozen centuries and more from the events to which it gives the most attention" (pp. 43-45.)

On the book of Deuteronomy he remarks: "The next great addition was made in the time of King Josiah. This

was the book of Deuteronomy. It was made public in 621 B. C., and had been written just before, six hundred and fifty years after the death of Moses. Soon after it was incorporated with those parts of the Pentateuch which had been previously written, the Book of Covenants and the two prophetic narrations. The standpoint of the writer is priestly-prophetic. The priests and prophets had often been opposed to each other. But here was a man who believed heartily in both parties, and his book is a sort of compromise between them. His is the fragment of the Pentateuch which shows the most individual genius. He is another Great Unknown.

“For a long time after the modern date of Deuteronomy was established to the satisfaction of the ablest critics, it was supposed to be the latest fragment of the Pentateuch. After the Deuteronomist there was supposed to have been only a redactor of the whole. But it is much more likely that at the time when Deuteronomy appeared, the most influential and characteristic portion of the Pentateuch was still unwritten, namely, the great Elohist document, so called because it is very careful to speak of God only as Elohim up to the time of Moses. Ewald and others after him call it also the Book of Origins. The date of this document is a matter of fundamental importance in dealing not only with the Pentateuch, but with the religious history of the people of Israel. The date of Kuenen, about 450 B. C., it seems to me rests upon absolutely irrefragable foundations. This Elohist document or Book of Origins contains the bulk of Numbers and Leviticus, together with considerable parts of Genesis and Exodus. Therefore it contains the whole of what for centuries has been regarded as preëminently the Mosaic Law, and it proves to have been written at least eight hundred years after the death of Moses. A wonderful conclusion, but one which is the key to many a mystery before insoluble!

“The Pentateuch was now well nigh complete. After the fifth century, B. C., only a few more Levitical precepts were added, and the whole by processes of elimination and addition made to appear somewhat more congruous. The fourth century, B. C., beyond a doubt beheld it in its present form.

“If the account which I have given of the formation of the

Pentateuch is even tolerably correct, it is certainly a very different matter from the imaginary Pentateuch of our popular Christianity, which is a book made by Moses at one cast 1450 B. C. Instead of this we have here a book made up of fragments, arbitrarily forced together, which fragments made their appearance all the way along from 900 to 450 B. C., one of the most considerable of all being the latest. . . . In short the Pentateuch was not a manufacture, but a growth, a growth of many centuries" (pp. 46-48).

"As monotheism gradually arose, the hero ancestors became pious servants of Yahweh. Religious sentiments were freely attributed to them which it had taken centuries of sad experience to develop. As they have come down to us, the patriarchal stories are a palimpsest on which a legend of civilization is written over a solar myth, and a tribal legend over the legend of civilization, and a theocratic legend over the tribal. The first of these are very dim, so dim that average eyes can hardly be expected to discover them; but patient scholars, with their critical acids, have made some things legible enough" (p. 50).

"The scientific study of the Bible leads the modern student to conclusions very different from these. He learns that the monotheism of patriarchal times was purely imaginary; a reflection back upon those times of men's beliefs who lived centuries later. The religion of Israel, like that of every other people, began in fetichism, pure and simple, in the deification and worship of petty natural objects—trees and stones. These trees and stones were afterwards adopted into the higher faith, and interpreted as monuments set up in honor of Yahweh, or as marking the site of some appearance of the deity to man. The tribes in Goshen had already risen above fetichism for the most part, or at least to some extent, into nature worship. But the worship of many gods does not preclude special devotion to one. The principal god of Israel in Egypt was a god of light and fire, a dreadful god, much more closely akin to the Ammonitish Moloch and Moabitish Chemosh than to the Phœnician Baal. The fiercer and gloomier aspects of nature were those in which the Israelites saw the lineaments of their deity. And so conceiving him

they worshiped him with cruel rites, with human sacrifices. The dedication of the first-born and circumcision were rites that could have had their origin only in the brutal worship of a deity brutally conceived. The principal god was worshiped under the image of a bull, and the bull-worship of Yahweh continued in the northern kingdom until its extinction in 719. The festival of the new moon dated from the old nature worship, and the institution of the Sabbath from the dedication of every seventh day to Kewan or Saturn, also worshiped as a god. It is most likely that the names El Shaddai, Adonai, Elohim, and Yahweh were at first names of different gods. The idols called *teraphim*, which were in common use till David's time, were idols of one or the other of these gods. David was not so good a Yahwehist but that he had one in his house.

"The function of Moses was not only that of a deliverer. He was a religious enthusiast. He selected Yahweh from all the gods of the Israelites as the one the most worthy of honor. Why he did this we cannot tell. Perhaps he was the god of his own tribe. But his great service was to connect the worship of him with morality. He did this in the Ten Commandments. But Moses was no monotheist. He believed that there were many gods, but believed that only one should be worshiped. Nor did he object to idolatrous worship of Yahweh. The commandment against this was of much later origin" (p. 73-75).

"For fifty-nine years the religious history of Israel, as well as the political, is a blank—from 516 to 457 B. C.—when Ezra arrived in Jerusalem with 1,500 men, besides a number of priests and Levites. In 445 Nehemiah followed, and soon after these together published the Pentateuch in much its present form, the Levitical law of Numbers and Leviticus now making its first appearance 'not amid the thunders of Sinai,' but amidst the thunders of Babylon was the law delivered, and not to Moses, but to some daring innovator, whose fame would have been fatal to his work. The publication of the law announced the death of prophecy.

"I thoroughly appreciate how different this presentation of the matter is from the conceptions of the popular theology.



We have here in these Old Testament histories no supernatural writings. More natural were never written, nor more human either. They are human in their errors, in their false pretensions, in their thousand imperfections, but also in their grandeur and simplicity, their infinite and nameless charm. And so with the religion. It is no ladder let down. It is no supernatural revelation. It is built from the earth up with various blunder and mishap. It is an evolution, step by step, from small and poor beginnings to such conclusions as are still remote. From fetichism and nature-worship up to the filial heart of Jesus! It took a little more than thirteen centuries for the religious sentiment from the first of these points to the last. That was not very long, it seems to me, for such a journey. In the joy of its completion, is it not almost pleasant to remember the hundred glooms and terrors of the way?" (pp. 77-79.)

Treating further on the authorship of the Pentateuch, he says: "Doubts of the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch were entertained by a few distinguished scholars (notably by Jerome, decidedly *the* scholar, and almost the only one with any critical perception) among the fathers of the church. But then for more than a thousand years the Mosaic authorship had full credit. Late in the seventeenth century we find Hobbes, the English philosopher of the Restoration, throwing doubt upon it; and Spinoza, the father of modern criticism, whatever be his rank as a philosopher, was still more explicit in the same direction. But the controversy which has since been so protracted and so violent was not fairly inaugurated until Astruc, a French physician, in 1753, announced the discovery of two parallel documents in Genesis characterized by different designations of the deity. This discovery was at once allowed by various critics, but strenuously denied by others. Little by little the theory of the fragmentary composition of the Pentateuch gained ground, until now it would be difficult to find a scholar of even respectability who would not concede that if the bulk of the Pentateuch came originally from the hands of Moses, this bulk has since his time been subject to much alteration and enlargement. The existence of the different documents is almost universally allowed, and, when it

is denied, the denial is supported with such elaborate ingenuity as is its own refutation. The formal designation of the different fragments which have been combined to form the Pentateuch has been carried further by Ewald than by any other scholar. He contends for at least eight different documents united in the Pentateuch, the most considerable of which are the Book of Covenants, the Book of Origins, or Elohistie document, a couple of prophetic narrations of the primitive history, and the Book of Deuteronomy" (pp. 81-82).

"The most important question of all concerning the Pentateuch is the age and general trustworthiness of the Book of Origins. . . . It is the opinion of later critics that it originated in Babylon, for the most part after the return of the first colony of captives to Jerusalem, in 536 B. C. These last results are far enough from the conventional belief that Moses was the author of the Pentateuch, and wrote it all, even to the account of his own death, by supernatural inspiration; but they have been reached by a process of critical evolution, which has admitted of no leaps.

"Little by little, successive scholars have modified the opinions of their predecessors until the satisfactory results of Kuenen and his school have been developed. Even these may not be final. Many of their details no doubt are capable of better explications. But in the main they constitute an order in criticism as new and irreversible as in astronomy the discovery by Copernicus of the motion of the earth around the sun" (pp. 83-84).

"If these passages or any others in the Pentateuch asserted the Mosaic authorship of the whole with unequivocal distinctness, such testimony would go for little in comparison with the internal evidence afforded by the Pentateuch itself. For we know it was the custom of writers for hundreds of years before and after the beginning of the Christian era to ascribe their books to celebrated persons in the hope of giving them a wider currency and insuring for them a larger measure of authority. Whether they could do this conscientiously it is difficult to determine. But that they did do it, more than one book in either Testament bears ample witness" (p. 86).

“There is then nowhere in the Bible even an unmistakable tradition of the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch, though if there were, it would be no sufficient testimony in the teeth of so much opposition furnished by the internal evidences of the book itself to its diverse and post-Mosaic origin. These I will briefly summarize, and then proceed to state some of the positive results of scientific criticism in regard to the gradual development of the Pentateuch in its present form. I must confess, however, that it is with some reluctance that I spend our precious time in adducing arguments against a theory in favor of which there is no argument whatever, only a groundless prejudice and a tradition stamped by the mint from which it came as counterfeit. The first internal evidences of non-Mosaic authorship by which Biblical scholars were arrested were those furnished by historical, geographical, archæological, and explanatory passages implying a different state of things from that which existed in the time of Moses. For a sample of such passages take, ‘And the Canaanite was then in the land’ (Gen. xii, 6). Evidently this was written after the expulsion of the Canaanite, which was not completed for several centuries after the death of Moses. There are many similar passages. In Gen. xxxvi, 31, we read, ‘Before there reigned any king over the land of Israel.’ Evidently this was written after the establishment of the kingdom, and so at least two hundred years after the death of Moses. ‘The nations that were before you,’ in Leviticus xviii, 28, of course implies that the Canaanites have been already conquered. ‘Now the man Moses was very meek, above all the men that were upon the face of the earth.’ Very learned critics can convince themselves that Moses wrote this, but they cannot convince any unlearned person of ordinary common sense. The formula ‘unto this day’ in its connection is frequent proof that the writer’s time is long subsequent to the events which he narrates. Again, there are various passages in the Pentateuch implying that their author was a resident of Palestine, and so could not be Moses. In Deuteronomy xix, 14, we read, ‘Thou shalt not remove thy neighbor’s land-mark, which they of old time have set in thy inheritance.’ In Leviticus xxvi, 34, 35–43, neglect to keep

the Sabbath 'in the past for a long time,' is spoken of as a reason for the captivity. Critics contending for the Mosaic authorship have sometimes tried to break the force of these and many similar passages by calling them interpolations. But as there is not the least reason for regarding them as such, except that they do not harmonize with the theory of Mosaic authorship, it is a manifest begging of the question to resort to such a theory.

"There are things omitted as well as things inserted which do not tally with the authorship of Moses. The most notable of these is the omission of any account whatever of thirty-eight years out of forty during which the Israelites were wandering in the wilderness. In Numbers xx, 1, the Israelites come to Kadish, where Miriam dies. In the twenty-second verse they remove from Kadish and come to Mount Hor. But these events, we learn from a subsequent chapter, were thirty-eight years apart. What must we infer, if not that the Pentateuch was written so long after the Exodus and the time of Moses that all tradition even of those eight and thirty years had faded from the memories of men? The next and most important argument for the post-Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch is the existence within its limit of at least two leading documents. These are known to critics as the Elohistie and Yahwehistic, or Jehovistic documents, because in one of them the use of the name Yahweh for the god of Israel is carefully avoided until Exodus vi, 2, 3, when it is told where the god revealed himself to Moses by his name Yahweh, by which he had not before been known, while in the other the names Yahweh and Elohim are used indifferently throughout the book of Genesis. After Exodus vi, 2, 3, the Elohistie writer also uses the two names indifferently, and so it becomes more difficult to keep the two documents distinct. It may be sometimes quite impossible. But having once been put upon the scent of the two documents by different divine names, we discover that this difference is but the smallest part of the difference that exists between them; and the nature of this further difference having been discovered by it, we can track the different documents up to Deuteronomy, in the concluding parts of which there are a few verses of

the Elohist, and then on again all through the book of Joshua. On the very threshold of the Pentateuch we are confronted by these diverse documents. Thus in Genesis i ; ii, 3 we have one account of the creation, and in Genesis ii, 4 ; iii, 24, another which is widely different. The first of these is Elhoistic ; the second Yahwehistic. Again, in Genesis vi-ix, we have two entirely different accounts of the flood. But it would be very wearisome to continue the enumeration. In Davidson's 'Introduction to the Old Testament' you will find a careful list of the Elhoistic and Yahwehistic passages. And in the majority of cases by referring to them in the Bible you will be able to discover for yourselves the lines of demarcation, for both the manner and spirit of these two documents are indeed very different. The Yahwehistic is much the fresher, simpler, more spontaneous. It tells the patriarchal stories in their most engaging forms. The Elhoistic document, or Book of Origins, is much more studied, formal, and artificial in its character. But the great difference between the two is that one (the Yahwehistic) is dominated throughout by the prophetic spirit, while the other is dominated throughout by the priestly spirit in its Levitical form. All of the Levitical legislation of Numbers and Leviticus is in the Book of Origins. . . . We shall yet discover that the separate documents came into being long after his time (Moses')—the Yahwehistic document some five hundred, and the Elhoistic some eight hundred years.

“Besides the reasons named already for the non-Mosaic and divine authorship of the Pentateuch, others might easily be named. Thus it abounds in duplicate etymologies and in duplicate traditions of the same transaction, and also in diversities and contradictions. The numerous repetitions of the legal prescriptions is fatal to the supposition that the whole was written by one who stood in any such relations to these prescriptions as is ascribed to Moses in the text. But not only are these prescriptions repeated ; they are developed. In the Book of Covenants (Exodus xxix ; xiii, 19), in Deuteronomy, and in the Book of Origins we have three different sets of laws corresponding to these different stages of development ; the first not Levitical at all ; the next somewhat more so, but

not very markedly; the third intensely and exclusively so. That Moses could have published all of them is inconceivable. The first appears to have been published soon after the disruption of the kingdom (*circum* 900 B. C.); the second in the time of King Josiah (621 B. C.), and the third by Ezra and Nehemiah, in 445 B. C. . . . What then shall be excluded? Evidently that portion which so expressly forbids the worship of images of Yahweh, for, seeing that the image-worship of Yahweh was kept up by the most zealous followers of Moses for six hundred years after his time; seeing that such great prophets as Elijah and Elisha never questioned the rightfulness of such worship, it is impossible to believe that one of the original 'words' of Moses was an express prohibition of such worship" (pp. 87-93).

"If Moses didn't write the Pentateuch, who did? demands the supernaturalist. Alas! we cannot answer him. Apparently there was no vanity of authorship in those good old times. With the exception of the prophetic writings, the books of the Old Testament are almost all anonymous. There is this at least to be said for those who, like the authors of Daniel and Deuteronomy, put forth their own writings as the writings of illustrious men who had lived long before, there is this at least to be said for them, it was not for themselves that they desired the honor and authority which would accrue from such a source; no, but only for the word they had to speak, the cause they wished to serve. If only this might prosper, they were willing to remain forever in obscurity. And there they have remained until this day. The authors of Samuel, Kings, Chronicles, are all unknown to us. The greatest, too, of all the prophets is, and ever must be, the Great Unknown" (pp. 94-95).

### EFFECT OF THE PALPABLE FRAUD.

It is most unfortunate that the world is compelled to remain in such uncertainty. However commendable it may have been in the writers of the different parts of the Old Testament to be willing to forego the honors of authorship, the very fact that they could obtain their own consent to write

and let the world or even the Israelites suppose it was written by another person and at a very different time, utterly shakes the confidence heretofore reposed therein. If we know not by whose authority we are obliged to accept, "Thus says Yahweh," or "Thus saith the Lord," we have no safe foundation upon which to stand. We have no safety in taking anything on trust. If Moses did not speak for Yahweh, or if he did not transmit to parchment the words which Yahweh is said to have spoken to him; if they were not recorded till many centuries afterwards, and no one can tell us by whom they were recorded, the sacred reverence we were early taught to cherish for those utterances is gone, and the confidence thus lost cannot be restored. We are far worse off than in the case of the writings of Menu, the moral teaching transmitted from Ormuzd by Zoroaster, the moral injunctions of Buddha, Confucius, and others, for in those cases we have real individuals to look back to, and no one has yet been able to rob us of the confidence thus reposed.

#### FURTHER QUOTATIONS FROM THE "BIBLE OF TO-DAY."

In speaking of the idol-worship which prevailed in Palestine, Chadwick continues: "In the vicinity of Jerusalem was the Topheth where children were sacrificed to Moloch. It was defiled. On the Mount of Olives there were sanctuaries of Milcom, Chemosh, and Ashtoreth dating from the time of Solomon, and established by him. Even the altars dedicated to Yahweh were everywhere defiled, for the Book of the Law which had been found [?] in the temple declared that only in the temple at Jerusalem could sacrifice be acceptable to Yahweh. Josiah's zeal extended even beyond the boundaries of his own kingdom to the northern districts, in which the Assyrian power had become weakened by the rise of Babylon. What was this Book of the Law, the practice of which demanded such a thorough-going reformation? I do not see how any intelligent and reasonable person can doubt that it was our present Book of Deuteronomy, not quite the whole of it, but iv, 44, to xxviii, inclusive, leaving out chapter xxvii.

Moses himself is represented as the speaker, but with the exception of fragments here and there, it is evident that the book had come into existence only a short time previous to its discovery. The prophets, after Josiah's time, frequently refer to it, while those before his time never refer to any such book. It could not have been written long before the time at which it appeared. Its doctrines and ideas are the doctrines and ideas of the priests and prophets of Josiah's time. It was a manifesto of their wishes put into the the mouth of Moses to express their sense of its importance, and to give it an authority which otherwise it could not have possessed. The Book of Deuteronomy was much more of a manufacture than any previous portion of the Pentateuch. Here calculation takes the place of spontaneity. The Yahwehist and older Elohist had unconsciously allowed their predilections to determine their interpretations of the past, but the Deuteronomist went about deliberately to invent a great historic fiction. He knew what he wanted; namely, to abolish all idolatrous worship of Yahweh, all worship of other gods, and as a means to these ends to confine the worship of Yahweh to Jerusalem. His book was written to enforce these ideas, with the sanction of the greatest name in Hebrew history. The writer was tremendously in earnest; his hatred of the false gods and other image-worship of Yahweh was immense; but at the same time he was an artist and had an eye to dramatic effect. Choosing Moses for his mouth-piece, he represents him as calling the people together, in the fortieth year of their wanderings in the wilderness, to refresh their memory of the Law which had been previously revealed to them. Sternly commanding them to serve no other gods but Yahweh, he adjures them to utterly exterminate the Canaanites when they have come into their land. Rehearsing the 'ten words,' he makes the 'word' forbidding any images of Yahweh much more explicit than it had ever been before. But he is still more emphatic in his prohibition of the worship of Yahweh at the various altars here and there throughout the country. He must be worshiped nowhere but in the temple at Jerusalem. And as there can be but one proper place of worship, so there can be but one proper tribe of priests, and this the



tribe of Levi. The Levites who minister in the temple have fixed dues assigned to them; those scattered about the country are commended to the charity of the people. The three feasts, already mentioned in the Book of Covenants, are insisted on, but he readjusts the eating of the passover to the feast of unleavened bread in such a way as to throw the dedication of the first-born as much into the shade as possible, and give to the passover a historic explanation. The distinction of clean and unclean had long been in vogue among the Israelites, but it had not appeared before in any popular code. Originally a natural distinction, the priests had taken it in hand and made it a religious one. Hence the injunction—following the prohibition of unclean animals or those which had died a natural death—‘Thou shalt give the thing that dieth a natural death to the stranger that has settled among you, or thou mayest sell it to an alien, for thou art an holy people unto Yahweh thy God.’ Mark well the reason. It is a perfect sample of the priestly tendency to substitute artificial and senseless for natural and rational grounds of conduct” (pp. 102–105).

### JEHOVAH ORIGINALLY A NATURE-GOD.

That Yahweh was originally a nature-god, and was worshiped in that view, there is a chain of proofs that cannot be set aside. With nearly every ancient nation the central orb, the “Sun,” the “Light of Heaven,” was the principal object of adoration. This was particularly the case in Chaldea, Egypt, and many oriental nations; and as fire was thought to be the proper representation of the sun, it was often substituted for it. That the idea of fire in the minds of the Israelites was connected with their national deity is observable from the following passages from their scriptures:

“And there came a fire from the Lord and consumed the two hundred and fifty men that offered incense” (Num. xvi, 35).

“Get you up from among this congregation, that I may consume them as in a moment” (Num. xvi, 45).

“For I will not go up in the midst of thee; for thou art a stiff-necked people; lest I consume thee in the way” (Ex. xxxiii, 3).

“Ye are a stiff-necked people; I will come up into the midst of thee in a moment, and consume thee” (Ex. xxxviii, 5).

“And the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of the bush; and he looked, and behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed” (Ex. iii, 2).

“And Mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the Lord descended upon it in fire” (Ex. xix, 18).

“And the sight of the glory of the Lord was like devouring fire” (Ex. xxiv, 17).

“And there came out a fire from before the Lord, and consumed upon the altar the burnt-offering and the fat” (Lev. ix, 24).

“The mountains melted from before the Lord, even that Sinai from before the Lord God of Israel” (Judges v, 5).

“Then the fire of the Lord fell and consumed the sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench” (1 Kings xvii, 38).

“For our God is a consuming fire” (Heb. xii, 29, and Deut. iv, 24).

“His throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire” (Dan. vii, 9, 10).

“His head and his hairs were white as snow, and his eyes were as a flame of fire, and his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace” (Rev. i, 14, 15).

“His body was like the beryl, and his face as the appearance of lightning, and his eyes as lamps of fire” (Dan. x, 6).

“God came from Teman, and the Holy One from Mount Paran. Selah. His glory covereth the heavens, and the earth was full of his praise. And his brightness was as the light; he had horns coming out of his hand; and there was the hiding of his power” (Hab. iii, 3, 4).

The idea of fire and light is as conspicuous in these and other quotations as anything that can be found in reference to Agni, Ormazd, Helios, Baal, Chemosh, Moloch, and many

others of the fire and sun-gods of which the ancients had so many.

Here are a few other passages referring to the Jewish deity which convey the idea of the sun riding in the heavens :

“ There is none like unto the god of Jeshurun, who rideth upon the heaven in thy help, and his excellency on the sky ” (Deut. xxxiii, 26).

“ Extol him that rideth upon the heavens by his name Jah, and rejoice before him ” (Ps. lxviii, 4).

“ To him that rideth upon the heavens of heavens, which were of old ; lo, he doth send out his voice, and that a mighty voice ” (Ps. lxviii, 33).

“ Who layeth the beams of his chambers in the waters ; who maketh the clouds his chariot ; who walketh upon the wings of the wind ” (Ps. civ, 3).

“ His going forth is from the end of the heavens, and his circuit unto the ends of it, and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof ” (Ps. xix, 6).

“ Yea, he sent out his arrows and scattered them ; and he shot out lightnings, and discomfited them ” (Ps. xviii, 14).

These passages give in figurative and poetic language a fair idea of the sun in the heavens, especially in keeping with the amount of information possessed by the ancients with regard to the motions of the heavenly bodies.

S. B. Gould, on this subject of nature-worship, says : “ The spectacle of nature now became a stately drama in which all the actors were divine. The sun was supposed to be a warrior, clad in golden panoply, the moon to be a queen, the stars to be armies of heroes or spirits ; the rivers moved of their own accord, the tides were the pulsations of living heart-ocean ” (Origin and Development of Religious Belief, p. 146).

Milton Woolley, M. D., in his work entitled “ The Science of the Bible,” has at considerable length and with much ingenuity shown that the Bible account of the creation, Adam and Eve, Cain and Abel, the Flood, the Tower of Babel, Abraham and Sarah, and numerous others of those old stories and characters, are only explainable upon an astronomical basis, making the sun the central figure and following him in his journey through the twelve signs of the zodiac. In the

creation, when the gods said, "Let there be light," he interprets as being the sun entering Aries at the spring equinox, which brought summer, or light, out of darkness, or winter. The six days of the creation, with the seventh day of rest, he interprets to mean the sun's course through the seven succeeding months, which he explains in this wise: "During the first day (month March) of summer, God (the summer Ram) "divided 'between the light and between the darkness' (marginal reading), *i. e.* he made the days and nights of equal length—twelve hours each. He dried the waters off the earth during the second day (month April), leaving the ground fit for cultivation. During the third day (month May), he made the grass grow, when the cattle are turned loose to feed on it. The sun having gained his highest point (summer solstice) in the heavens during the fourth day, when he made the sun and moon, ruled the day; *i. e.*, the longest day of the year. At this time, too, God, or Aries, having gained his zenith at sunrise, becomes the Most High God, *i. e.*, the Most High Ram. The moon, being at her full, in the eastern horizon at sunset, of course gave light by night, *i. e.*, shone all that night. On the fifth day (month July), God brought forth insects, creeping things, etc., which we all know flourish best at this time. During the sixth day (month August, the ingathering month), God made the beasts of the earth and cattle, and lastly man, *i. e.*, in addition to his daily food, God gave man his winter supplies. Thus it happened that all animals, man not excepted, had become sleek and fat, and were of course to breast the hardships of the coming winter. 'Thus the heavens and the earth were finished and all the host of them,' *i. e.*, the six summer months had passed away. 'On the seventh day (month September), God ended his work which he had made' (Gen. ii, 1, 2). That is, we are to understand, God (El), or the group of stars called Aries ('Stars of God' Isa. xiv, 13), which was always, during the six months of summer, somewhere above the horizon at sunrise, and successively corresponded to each of these summer months, in its turn, now went below the horizon, or set in the west at the approach of day, *i. e.*, Aries, or God, got on the side of the earth opposite to that of the sun, and so

became a night constellation. The sun and Aries being thus rudely disjoined by the intervention of the earth, cease their labor! Therefore Aries, the poor Ram, gropes his way through the darkness of Egypt, or winter, in order to rejoin the sun, his spouse, at the following spring equinox" (pp. 25, 26).

Probably sufficient has been quoted from the Doctor to give an idea of his style of interpreting the Bible myths upon the basis of the movements of the heavenly bodies, particularly the sun. He adapts his system to all the Bible narratives and explains their apparent mysteries in this astronomical manner. Perhaps his explanation comes as near being correct as anybody's—that the Jewish deity is only another symbol for the sun.

## SACRIFICES AND BLOODSHED.

Many of the heathen gods were fond of sacrifices, the free flow of the blood of human beings and animals of various kinds; or at least so their worshipers believed. From the Bible accounts it seems the Jewish divinity was no less fond of blood and inhaling the odors of burning flesh, animal tissue, etc. It is quite possible that more human beings have been sacrificed in the worship of some of the pagan gods than in that of the Jewish God, but that the latter recognized human sacrifice, and that his people did not revolt at it, there is abundance of proof. Child-sacrifice appears to have been common among the Israelites. Passages in Psalms, cvi, 36–38, read thus: "And they [the Israelites] served their idols; which were a snare unto them. Yea, they sacrificed their sons and their daughters unto devils, and shed innocent blood, even the blood of their sons and their daughters, whom they sacrificed unto the gods of Canaan; and the land was polluted with blood."

The sacrifice of children was continued in Palestine down to the time of Jeremiah and Ezekiel. Quotations have already been made showing that children were sacrificed in the immediate neighborhood of Jerusalem, and that on the Mount of Olives there were sanctuaries of Milcom, Chemosh,

and Ashtoreth dating from the time of the wise man Solomon and established by him. Jephthah offered his only daughter a burnt-offering to Jahveh. Jahveh commanded Abraham to offer up his boy Isaac, and the Father of the Faithful seems not to have been at all shocked at the commission of the cruel deed. Jeremiah, speaking of the people of the country, said: "They have built the high places of Tophet . . . to burn their sons and daughters in the fire" (Jer. vii, 31). Ezekiel makes the same bloody charge, that they slew their children to their idols (xxiii, 39). He again speaks for Jahveh: "Wherefore I gave them also statutes that were not good and judgments whereby they should not live. And I polluted them in their own gifts, in that they caused to pass through the fire all that openeth the womb, that I might make them desolate" (Ezek. xx, 25, 26). Manasseh and Ahaz, kings of Judah, sacrificed their children to Moloch, as stated in Kings and Chronicles. It is fair to presume the kings were not the worst. To regulate the sacrifice of human beings a law was given: "No devoted thing, that a man shall devote unto the Lord, of all that he hath, both of man and beast, and of the field of his possession, shall be sold or redeemed; every devoted thing is most holy unto the Lord. None devoted, which shall be devoted of men, shall be redeemed; but shall surely be put to death" (Lev. xxvii, 28, 29).

Passing over the subject of human sacrifice by the inhabitants of Palestine we come to their bloody and endless slaughter of animals to please their deity. Truthfully has the Bible been called a "bloody book," its religion a "bloody religion." Its God delights in the shedding of blood. The first acceptable sacrifice to him was the blood of innocent lambs; the fruits of the earth were not acceptable. His laws required the almost unceasing slaughter of animals for his pleasure and pacification. His altars he ordered to be sprinkled with the blood of slain animals and the flesh to be burnt for a sweet odor in his nostrils. His temple, when completed according to his orders, was little less than a slaughter-house, and his priests who ministered unto him must have looked like a band of butchers who kill animals for the feeding of our large cities.

Almost every worshiper was required to bring a bullock, a ram, a goat, a lamb, or a bird, for its blood to be spilled for the benefit or pleasure of this Jewish divinity.

It is said in the scriptures, when Moses established the religion of Judaism at the foot of Mount Sinai, the first thing he did was to sprinkle and bespatter all the people with bullocks' blood. One of the laws said to be from heaven, as to how to use the blood, reads thus: "Then shalt thou kill the ram and take the blood and put it upon the tip of the right ear of Aaron, and upon the tip of the right ear of his sons, and upon the thumb of their right hand, and upon the great toe of their right foot, and sprinkle the blood upon the altar round about; and thou shalt take the blood that is upon the altar and of the anointing oil, and sprinkle it upon Aaron and upon his garments, and upon his sons and upon the garments of his sons with him" (Ex. xxix, 20, 21). When Aaron and his sons and their garments were thus blooded and sprinkled with grease it is to be supposed they were prepared for worship. Such a ritual may have been adapted to a very rude people in ancient times, but would hardly suit a cultivated, civilized nation at the present day.

When the priests were consecrated an unusual amount of blood was required. Every day a bullock and two lambs were to be killed, besides individual offerings, the blood in all cases to be sprinkled upon the altar. On the Sabbath a double offering must be made, an extra amount of blood being demanded on a holy day. At the new moon, at the three great festivals, the great day of atonement, and the feast of trumpets, two bullocks and seven lambs were usually demanded. For a sin-offering the blood was sprinkled seven times before the veil of the sanctuary, a portion of it put on the horns of the altar of incense, and the rest poured at the foot of the altar of sacrifice. When Solomon assumed the crown of his father David he is said to have offered up one thousand burnt-offerings on the brazen altar at the tabernacle of the congregation. At the time of the introduction of the ark into the temple the blood and flesh of the slain animals must have been more than abundant. 11 Chron. v, 6, states that sheep and oxen were sacrificed in such quantities that

they could not be told nor numbered for multitude. Subsequently, in chapter vii, 5, we are informed that at the dedication of the temple, twenty-two thousand oxen and a hundred and twenty thousand sheep were offered up in sacrifice. Among all the gods of which any account is given, is there one for whom anything like that quantity of blood was shed on any occasion? Is there one with such a marked appetite for blood?

In commenting on this sacrifice Prof. William Denton says: "Hear the bellowing of the cattle, the bleating of the sheep, the death-thuds of Jehovah's butchers! See the pools of blood, the temple floor bespattered with gore, the red stream constantly flowing round the altar and down into the brook Kidron! Watch the dying struggles of the animals, the varying emotions as they mirror themselves on the faces of the assembled multitude, where the sickening smell is almost overpowering, where the smoke is constantly ascending in a place that has no chimney, and is grimy as a smithy!" What an idea of the worship of a god of love, compassion, and mercy!

But the most repulsive of any of the demands for blood from the deity under consideration was when he is said to have demanded the blood of his only beloved son, as a sacrifice for the sins of the world, and to appease the wrath he cherished towards them!

The Bible is truthfully said to be a book of blood. Mr. Pentecost, a Boston revivalist, makes much capital of this fact. He says: "If you should take a camel's-hair pencil, as I have done, dip it into a bottle of carmine ink, and pass it lightly over those passages of scripture from Genesis to Revelation that make reference to blood in connection with all that refers to salvation, forgiveness, redemption, sanctification, glory, and everything of that kind, you would be astonished to see how red your Bible would look." And he adds: "If you should cut out everything associated with blood there would be no salvation left at all."

Mr. D. L. Moody, another noted revivalist, talks in a similar strain. In his sermon on "Blood," he says: "If you read your Bibles carefully, you will see the scarlet thread running



through every page of them. The blood commences to flow in Genesis and runs on to Revelation. That is what God's book is written for. "Take out the scarlet thread and it would not be worth carrying home." If any deity or any reputed sacred writings present a more bloody record, they have not been brought to notice. It would seem that no nation in the world could desire a more bloodthirsty divinity or a more bloody religion.

### JEHOVAH'S DISREGARD OF HUMAN LIFE.

There are other features in the character of this Jewish deity that in justice should have some attention. The dark side of the other gods has been freely presented, and it is equitable that his should be also, though space will be taken for a limited number of points only. His disregard of human life is pretty clearly indicated in numerous instances. In the time of the flood, when he drowned all the inhabitants of the earth save one family of eight persons, to say nothing of the immense number of animals destroyed, there was a great, and, as it proved, a useless waste of life.

The destruction of the first-born of each family in Egypt in one night, and of the animals also, was another great visitation of death. It must have amounted to hundreds of thousands. The drowning of a million or two of Egyptians in the Red Sea, to say nothing of their horses, was another great destruction of life.

The destruction of some fifteen thousands of the Israelites by plague—soon after the revolt of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram—was much less than it would have been had not Moses and Aaron taken timely means to arrest the anger of the enraged deity.

The slaughter of the Midianites, when not only every man was put to death, but not less than fifty thousand women and children, with the seizing of all their cattle and worldly effects, was a very cruel visitation. It seemed more unfeeling because Moses had married a Midianitish woman for a wife, and resided forty years among them. A very black feature in the horror was the turning over for the use of the soldiers

thirty-two thousand virgins and young girls. But the Book says it was all done "as the Lord commanded Moses." A more cruel and damnable slaughter was never recorded of the most brutal monster that ever lived.

The campaign of Joshua in the land of Canaan was a continued series of carnage, massacres, and slaughters for years in duration. Great numbers of cities were destroyed, and in some instances the entire inhabitants, including women and children. The tenth chapter of Joshua is indeed a bloody page. Here are a few specimen passages: "And that day Joshua took Makkedah and smote it with the edge of the sword; and the king thereof he utterly destroyed, them and all the souls that were therein."

"And he smote it [Libnah] with the edge of the sword, and all the souls that were therein; he let none remain in it."

"And the Lord delivered Lachish into the hand of Israel, which took it on the second day, and smote it with the edge of the sword, and all the souls that were therein."

The Lord was said to be "with Joshua" through all this bloodshed and carnage.

The putting to instant death fifty thousand and seventy men from a harvest-field, because one or more of them had raised the lid of the ark, an old box, was a pretty summary proceeding.

The destruction by pestilence of seventy thousand Israelites because David took a census of the people seems like punishing the innocent in place of the guilty, and was intensely cruel and unjust. There is, by the by, an unpleasant discrepancy as to who incited David to the deed. 2 Samuel xxiv, 1, says it was the Lord who moved David. Whereas, 1 Chron. xxi, 1, says it was Satan. One passage must be an error unless there was no difference between the two characters. Another discrepancy also appears in the result of the census. The first account gives it thus: 800,000 men of Israel and 500,000 of Judah. Whereas the second account gives it thus: Of Israel, 1,100,000 men, of Judah, 470,000; a net difference of 270,000. Such errors, however, may be regarded by some as mere trifles.

The wars between the Israelites, if the accounts are true, were attended with immense slaughter, and as one or both sides claimed their god was assisting them, he should perhaps be duly credited with his share of the bloodshed.

On the occasion of war between Abijah, of Judah, with 400,000 men, and Jeroboam, of Israel, with 800,000 men, it is said God smote Jeroboam and all Israel, and delivered them into the hands of Abijah, who slaughtered on that day 500,000 chosen men of Israel (2 Chron. xii). This is an unheard-of destruction of human life in a single day, and in so small a country, considerably less than the state of New Hampshire in size. How so small a territory could raise two such immense armies is a mystery to many. When Napoleon Bonaparte started with his immense army for Russia, he had but 500,000 men—and that was a great draft upon a large country—less than half the number the little mountainous country of Palestine was able to turn out.

On another occasion the tables were turned when the army of Israel, under Pekah, slew 120,000 of the army of Judah in one day. The debt of slaughter, however, was but partly paid.

Sometimes the slaughter of the neighboring nations, who made war with the Jews, was of a similar character. On one occasion the Israelites, under Ahab, with the help of their fighting god, slew 100,000 Syrians, under Ben-hadad, in one day, and when his army fled to the city a wall was made to fall on them, and killed 27,000 more (1 Kings, xx). Were the Syrians God's creatures?

The Assyrian army at another time fared still worse. The god of the Jews slew 185,000 of them in a single night, so that when they woke up in the morning they found themselves all "dead corpses." His fondness for slaughter and bloodshed cannot be disputed if no further quotations of the kind are given. If the fondness of a man or a god for taking human life is to be taken as a proof of his cruel, blood-thirsty disposition, it will have to be admitted that no being was ever heard of who equaled in this respect the Jewish deity.

## JEHOVAH'S CRUELTY.

Some of Jehovah's traits are illustrated in the following: He is described as a murderer, Exod. iv, 24: "And it came to pass by the way, in the inn, that the Lord met him and sought to kill him." And again, in Exod. xi, 4, 5, he is represented as a destroyer of man and beast; Isa. xxxiv, 2-8, as an actual slave dealer; Joel, iii, 8, "I will sell your sons and your daughters into the hands of the children of Judah, and they shall sell them to the Sabeans, to a people far off, for the Lord hath spoken it." See again Jer. xiii, 14, "I will dash them one against another, even the fathers and the sons together, saith the Lord. I will not pity, nor spare, nor have mercy, but destroy them." Paul attributes foolishness to him, 1 Cor. i, 24. He is described as an inciter of evil, 1 Sam. xxiv, 1; Jer. xx, 7; Ezek. xiv, 9; 1 Chron. xvii, 21. He describes himself as not keeping his promise, Num. xiv, 22, 33. In every particular part of the Old Testament God is almost invariably painted as if he were a devil, to all the enemies of the Jews. He is also described as making men for the very purpose of being able to damn them, *e. g.*, Exod. ix, 16, "And in very deed for this cause have I raised thee up for to show thee in my house;" Rom. ix, 18, "Whom he will he hardeneth." See also Isa. xix, 14, "The Lord hath mingled a perverse spirit in the midst thereof, and they have caused Egypt to err." It is seen that God fought for Israel just the same as Jupiter and others, who are classed by the Jews among the devils, fought for the Grecians or the Trojans, Deut. i, 30; iii, 22; xx, 4; Josh. x, 42; Ps. xlv, 1-9. 2 Sam. 1-14, he commanded that the Gibeonites hang up seven sons of Saul before the Lord, to stop a famine. Seven persons were thus all put to death. There are some who think such deeds not merciful nor lovable.

A few specimens of his laws and requirements from his people may be in order. The quality of mercy is not very conspicuous in them: "When thou comest nigh unto a city to fight against it, then proclaim peace unto it. And it shall be if it make thee answer of peace, and open unto thee, then

it shall be that all . . . found therein shall be tributaries to thee, and they shall serve thee. And if it make no peace with thee, but will make war against thee, then thou shalt besiege it. And when the Lord thy God hath delivered it unto thy hands thou shalt smite every male thereof with the edge of the sword. But the women and the little ones, and the cattle and all that is in the city, even all the spoil thereof, shalt thou take unto thyself, and thou shalt eat the spoil of thine enemies which the Lord thy God hath given thee. Thus shalt thou do unto all the cities which are very far off from thee, which are not of the cities of these nations. But of the cities of these people, which the Lord thy God doth give thee for an inheritance, thou shalt save nothing alive that breatheth" (Deut. xx, 10-16).

Here is another of his injunctions: "Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Put every man his sword by his side, and go in and out from gate to gate throughout the camp, and slay every man his brother, and every man his companion, and every man his neighbor" (Ex. xxxii, 27). How a merciful God could issue such orders seems marvelous.

"Thus saith the Lord of hosts: I remember that which Amalek did to Israel [some four hundred years before], how he laid wait for him," etc. "Now go and smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have; slay man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass" (1 Sam. xv, 2, 3). Truly this was a sweeping, merciless order.

One of his laws respecting servants or slaves reads in this way: "If thou buy a Hebrew servant, six years shall he serve, and in the seventh he shalt go out free for nothing. If he come in by himself, he shall go out by himself; if he were married, then his wife shall go out with him. If his master have given him a wife, and she have borne sons and daughters, the wife and her children shall be her master's, and he shall go out by himself. And if the servant shall plainly say, I love my master, my wife, and my children; I will not go out free; then his master shall bring him unto the judges; he shall also bring him unto the door, or unto the door post, and his master shall bore his ear with an awl, and he shall serve him forever" (Ex. xxi, 2-6). This law required a man, if he

would have his liberty, to forsake wife and children, and if he loved them and wished to remain with them, he must be a slave forever.

### HIS FICKLE-MINDEDNESS.

That he changed his mind and repented of what he had done there is sufficient proof. Not long after he had made the world and all it contains, and pronounced it good and satisfactory, "It repented him that he had made man on the earth, and grieved him at his heart" (Gen. vi, 6). "He repented of the evil he thought to do unto his people" (Ex. xxxii, 14). "The Lord repented that he made Saul king" (1 Sam. xv, 35). There are numerous other passages, of the same character, showing he changed his mind and indulged in regret like an ordinary human being.

### HIS LIMITED KNOWLEDGE AND POWER.

That his knowledge was limited, and that he had to take means to find out such things as he wished to know, the same as men do, appears from numerous passages; thus, when he walked in the garden in the cool of the day and wished to find Adam, he was under the necessity of calling him to learn where he was. It was the same when he wanted to see the tower which men had builded; he had to "come down and inspect it." He could not see it from a distance. The same again was the case when he wished to inform himself about the condition of Sodom and Gomorrah, from which he had heard a cry; he found it necessary to go down to obtain the information he desired. "I will go down now and see whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it which is come unto me, and if not, I will know" (Gen. xviii, 31). Omniscience at that time seemed to be limited. It was much the same with his omnipotence. "And the Lord was with Judah, and he drave out the inhabitants of the mountain, but *could not* drive out the inhabitants of the valley because they had chariots of iron" (Judges i, 19). Iron chariots seemed to place a limit to his power.

## HIS IRRASCIBLE TEMPER.

That his temper was irascible and that he yielded to anger is abundantly shown. The expressions, "his anger," "his fierce anger," "the anger of the Lord was stirred up," "his anger was kindled," "it waxed hot," and "of his wrath waxing hot," etc., are often used. Moses seems frequently to have succeeded in allaying the Lord's anger. Old Jupiter was no more irascible and impetuous.

The *hatred* of Jahveh is often spoken of: "Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." "He will not slack to him that hateth him, he will repay to his face." "Because the Lord hateth us." "Then I hated them, I will love them no more." He visits the iniquities of the fathers upon generations of unborn children, etc.

His *jealousy* is frequently mentioned: "I, the Lord, thy God, am a jealous God." "They provoked him to jealousy with strange gods." "He is a jealous God." "I will give thee blood in fury and jealousy," etc.

His *vengeance* is often referred to: "I will take vengeance." "The day of vengeance is in mine heart." "Vengeance is mine," etc.

## DEFECTIVE MORAL INSTRUCTIONS.

Some of his moral instructions are not faultless. His enjoining the Israelites to spoil the Egyptians by borrowing jewelry, apparel, and money from them when he knew <sup>have</sup> they would never return them, has a decidedly dishonest look. His instructions to rob various nations of their lands, houses, <sup>S."</sup> property of all kinds has the same bad aspect.

## HIS LOVE FOR HUMAN BEINGS GREATLY RESTRICTED.

His friendship and paternal feeling seemed not to extend beyond the little country over which he presided. He was much a tutelary deity, with a very circumscribed realm—about one hundred and forty miles in length by less than forty in width, which seemed the extent of his compassion

and authority. To all other nations of men he seemed a persistent enemy.

### HIS PERSONAL APPEARANCE.

That he was regarded as a being in the form of a man with the parts, organs, and passions of a human being is too well attested to require further quotations. His eyes, ears, mouth, face, nose, nostrils, tongue, breath, voice, speech, bosom, hands, feet, loins, back, and other parts of his body, are too often spoken of to escape the observation of any one. His form and person were said to be seen on many occasions. Moses "talked with him face to face," and on another occasion saw his rear parts. Jacob wrestled with him the better part of a night. And again, "Moses and Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel, went up, and they saw the God of Israel" (Ex. xxiv, 9). The idea of anthropomorphism has not been more adhered to with any of the gods of other nations than with Jahveh of Israel.

From the effects of education and the evolution that has taken place in the attributes and characteristics ascribed to him since he has been adopted by nations outside the small country where his fame had a beginning, an increased amount of reverence is bestowed upon him. But we have to take his record as it was received in early times, and which was more definite than later conceptions of him.

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### WHICH GOD IS OLDEST?

hearch the score of antiquity or priority in the world of the gods inf. India, China, Chaldea, and probably some of the neighboring nations also, the palm must be yielded to those of the oldest nations. It is definitely settled that the mythology of the countries named is a thousand years at least older than that of Palestine. The best students in philology and oriental literature, as has already been shown, have decided that what are called the sacred writings of India, Ancient Persia, and the religious systems of Egypt and China had an existence, as well established, three thousand years before our era. It has been shown that there is no proof that any portion of the



Hebrew scriptures were written farther back than eight or nine hundred years before Christ, and a considerable share of the Old Testament was not penned until within three to six hundred years of the Christian era. The most probable conclusion is that much of the Old Testament was written about the time of the return from the Babylonian captivity, when a necessity was felt for a national history and a national religion; and after a favorable opportunity had been offered the people of Israel to become acquainted with the cosmogony of Babylon and Nineveh, which was easy for them to ingraft upon their own system. In the explorations and discoveries of George Smith and Sir Henry Rawlinson, originally in the service of the "London Daily Telegraph," and later by the Royal Asiatic Society, they found cuneiform inscriptions from which they were able to decipher an account of the creation of the world and of man, the deluge, the flood, the building of the tower of Babel, etc. That those inscriptions were made long, long before any part of the Hebrew scriptures were written is well understood. Which, then, is the original is easy to decide. It certainly is not Jehovah!

The Grecian mythology was undoubtedly devised as early as the Hebrew. Homer and Hesiod lived nearly a thousand years before the Christian era, and they sung of the Olympian gods and goddesses, Jupiter, Neptune, Apollo, Juno, Minerva, Venus, and all the host of them, and at that time those gods had been believed in for centuries. According, then, to the learned students in ancient religions, the gods of Greece have as great antiquity as those of Palestine.

#### QUOTATIONS FROM INMAN'S "ANCIENT FAITHS."

Some of the observations and conclusions of this able and learned scholar in Hebrew literature will doubtless be interesting here. His views of the religious and sacred writings of the oriental nations are worthy of the highest respect: "Guided by a judicial carefulness let us now attempt to investigate the evidence laid before us in the Old Testament, and especially the testimony it bears respecting the Jews. We may, I think, fairly divide our case into two parts, the one of

which is the attestation of bystanders, the other being the depositions of the individual. We commence by interrogating history and taking the data afforded by the silence or the speech of ancient writers.

“The monuments of Egypt, which abound in sculptures of all kinds, and writings without end, give us no indication whatever of a great people having resided amongst them as slaves, and of having escaped from bondage; but they do tell of a nation which enslaved them, and which was subsequently subdued. To conclude that the Hyksos, the people which we here refer to, were Jews, would be as sensible as to call the Moors, who conquered Spain, Carthaginians, because they came from an African locality. Homer, whose era is generally supposed to be 962 B. C., does not mention the Jews, although he does mention Sidon and the Phœnicians. In *Odyssey*, iv, 227, 615, we hear of Paris and Helen visiting Sidon; and Homer tells us (*Odyssey*, xv, 117) that Meneclaus was for some time in the house of Phœdius, king of the Sidonians, but the poet makes no mention of the wonderful Solomon, the fame of whom, we are told, went out into all the land, so that ‘all the kings of the earth sought his presence’ (2 Chron. ix, 23), and whose reign was barely forty years before the time assigned to Homer, or the Trojan war. Herodotus, who flourished about 480 B. C., and was a close observer and an indefatigable traveler, never mentions the nation of the Jews; and though he gives a long account of the history of ancient Egypt, there is not a word to indicate that its early kings had once held a nation captive, though he does tell us, book ii, 112, how Tyrian Phœnicians dwelt round a temple of Vulcan at Memphis, the whole tract being called the Tyrian camp, and he remarks, book ii, 116, that Homer was acquainted with the wandering of Paris in Egypt, for Syria borders on Egypt, and the Phœnicians, to whom Sidon belongs, inhabit Syria. After visiting Tyre, it would appear that the historian went to Babylon, of which he gives a long account without making any reference to the captive Jews, their ancient capital, or their peculiar worship; although it is probable that many were then captive in Babylon, and Daniel was scarcely dead. In book ii, 102, 3, 4, he gives an

account of the army of Sesostris, 1489–1308 B. C., who must have marched through Syria on his way northward to the Scythians, and whose soldiers, left behind after his return, become Colchians, and says, ‘the Colchians, Egyptians, and Ethiopians are the only nations of the world who from the first have practiced circumcision.’ For the Phœnicians, and the Syrians in Palestine, acknowledge that they learnt the custom from the Egyptians; and the Syrians about Thermidon and the river Parthenius, with their neighbors the Macrones, confess that they very lately learnt the same custom from the Colchians. And these are the only nations that are circumcised, and thus appear evidently to act in the same manner as the Egyptians;’ the historian very clearly knowing nothing about the Jews as a nation—if they existed as such. ‘But of the Egyptians and Ethiopians I am unable to say,’ writes the historian, ‘which learnt it of the other, for it is evidently a very ancient custom, and this appears to me a strong proof that the Phœnicians learnt this practice through their intercourse with the Egyptians, for all the Phœnicians who have any commerce with Greece no longer imitate the Egyptians in this usage, but abstain from circumcising their children. Respecting the expedition of Sesostris, the same author remarks: ‘As to the pillars which Sesostris, king of Egypt, erected in the different countries, most of them are evidently no longer in existence, but in Syrian Palestine, I myself saw some still remaining, and the inscriptions still on them, and the private parts of a woman.’ The inscription (we learn from book ii, c. 102) declared the name or country of Sesostris, or Rameses the Great, and the male or female organs were used as an emblem of the manliness or cowardice of the people whom he conquered. The death of Sesostris is not exactly ascertained, but it is generally placed between 1489 and 1308 B. C.

“Let us now consider what this expedition of Sesostris involves. He could certainly not have marched without an army, and we find that, at a period variously estimated between the limits 1491 and 1648 B. C., the whole of the Egyptian army was destroyed in the Red Sea (Ex. xiv, 6, *et seq.*) Now as it is stated, in Exod. xii, 29, 30, that prior to

this destruction of the armed host there had been a slaughter of every first-born son, and all the first-born of cattle, it is tolerably clear that Sesostris could not have got an army powerful enough for invading Syria immediately after the 'exodus' of Israel from Egypt. If then, we place the date of the exodus at any earlier period than 1491 B. C., so as to allow time for Sesostris to collect an army in 1489 B. C., we arrive at the certainty that this king must have overrun Palestine and conquered the Jews after their settlement in Canaan. This conquest, too, must have occurred, according to the ordinary chronology, during the period covered by the records in the book of Judges. Now this book describes an enslavement by the kings of Mesopotamia, Moab, Midian, Ammon, Canaan, and Philistia, but no mention is made of the invasion of Rameses. That the expedition of Sesostris did take place during the time of the Judges, we have the evidence of the book of Joshua, such as it is, for therein all the cities of Canaan are described as 'standing on their strength,' and being full of men, which could not have been the case after the destructive march of the Egyptian conqueror. That the expedition did happen after the time of Samuel, the book which goes by that prophet's name abundantly testifies.

"If then we are to credit the account of Herodotus, and the interpretations of certain hieroglyphics, we must conclude (1) that the Jewish race, if it then existed, was a cowardly one; (2) that its historians have suppressed a very important invasion and conquest of the nation; or (3) that the Hebrews as a nation had no existence at the time of Sesostris.

From the preceding considerations we conclude that the Jews were of no account amongst their neighbors, and that, if they existed at all in the time of Rameses the Great, they were as cowardly a race as they showed themselves to be in the time of Rehoboam, when their city was plundered by Shishak.

"When once we separate our ideas of the Hebrew nation from the bragging forms in which they are presented to our notice, we readily see that the people could not by any possibility be ever a great or powerful nation. The whole extent of habitable Palestine is scarcely equal in area to the county

of Nottingham; and its inhabitants, being purely agricultural, could never have greatly exceeded in number those who are now living on its soil. Even granting, for the sake of argument, that the modern population is only half of that of the ancient time, we should then find that there were only two millions in the whole country; and when we have deducted from this amount the inhabitants of Tyre and Sidon, and the Philistines, whose numbers we cannot but believe, were very much larger than those of the Jews, we shall easily find a population equaling a half a million. This would scarcely allow eighty thousand men who could fight, and not more than forty thousand who could be drafted into an army for aggressive purposes.

“With this modest estimate the size of Jerusalem agrees. The modern city—which seems to correspond precisely with the old one in size, there being geographical or physical reasons why it should do so—is, I understand, two miles and a quarter in circumference, outside the walls, which would give, making allowance for the space occupied by the temple, an average diameter of one thousand yards. A town of such a size, in any densely populated British county, would show a population of about twenty thousand, of which about four thousand would be able-bodied men.

“Having by this means arrived at a tolerably fair conclusion as to the real state of matters let us see what is the result of the census as taken by the order of King David; we find that it is given, in 2 Sam. xxiv, 1,300,000, *i. e.* 800,000 of Israel, and 500,000 of Judah. In 1 Chron. xxi, 5, we have the total given as 1,470,000, *viz.*, 1,000,000 of Israel, and 470,000 of Judah, which would involve a total population of about 6,000,000, which about equals that of the whole of Ireland. Still farther, we find 1 Chron. xxvii, 1 to 15, that David’s army was about 288,000, a force exceeding the British regular and volunteer muster roll. We might be astonished at this boastful tone assumed by Jewish writers did we not know how constantly brag and cowardice go together. . . . .

“Not only do we fail to find any positive evidence whatever respecting the existence of a Jewish nation prior to the

time of King David, but we have some evidence that none such could ever have existed. For example, it is clear that at the period of the Trojan war there were numbers of vessels possessed by the Grecians, capable of bearing about one-hundred and eighty men; and as these were the warriors, and the list did not include the oarsmen, we may assign two hundred to each ship. This, added to what we know of Phœnician merchants, helps to prove that a considerable trade existed on the shores of the Mediterranean. With commerce comes an extended knowledge of geography, and travelers visited different countries to study their religion or acquire general information. The Greeks were always celebrated for their acquisition of knowledge by voyaging, and they were enabled to enrich their literature by the accounts of the nations so distant from them as Assyria, and of stories, doubtless fabulous, about Ninus, Semiramis, Sardinapalus, and others; but notwithstanding all the fame of Solomon, the wealth of his treasury, the extent of his empire, the profundity of his wisdom, his alliance with the king of Tyre, and the kings who came from all parts of the earth to consult him, the Greeks seem to have been wholly ignorant of his existence, and even of the name of the nation over which he ruled" (vol ii, pp. 17 to 24).

Our author follows with a summarized account of the progress of the Hebrew nation from their own historians, but it is not necessary to quote him further. In a foot-note on page 51 he gives it as his belief that the whole of the Old Testament, as we have it, was fabricated subsequently to 600 B. C. or thereabouts, and a very large portion of it prior to 280 B. C. In the following chapter, page 57, he says; "The more I examine into the real history of the Jewish people the more impressed I become with their insignificance as a nation. It is even doubtful whether the Jewish kings and people differed from any of the robber chieftains, who, with their retainers, inhabited some of the strong castles on the Rhine, or elsewhere; or from the Taepings in modern China. I distrust the Jewish legends as I doubt the romantic legends of the Rhine. To me it would be a marvel how modern critics could give any credence to the Hebrew stories, did I not

know how powerful is the effect of infantile credulity upon the adult man and women, and how strongly fear of the unseen modifies our judgment upon the things which are visible." On page 120 he again says: "There is positive evidence that there were no sacred books known amongst the Jews in the early days of Josiah, and there was no recollection or tradition of any having previously existed. There is constructive proof that no sacred books were known to David or to Solomon, and also that no sacred books existed in the early times of Ezra, with the probable exception of some prophetic writings. There is positive proof that the Jews as a nation know nothing of any religious or sacred books until after the Babylonish captivity. There is positive proof that the Hebrew scriptures were unknown to the Greeks until the time of the Septuagint. It is certain the Jews were so insignificant that they were absolutely unknown to other nations until a few centuries before the Christian era; and when known they were regarded as degraded and contemptible. The Hebrew scriptures show such a savage, mean, and despicable idea of the Creator that it would be morally impossible for a civilized nation to regard any of these as worth copying."

On page 128 he gives the following: "The conclusions which forced themselves upon my mind during the investigation of the Hebrew names were:

"1. That the nation of the Jews did not essentially differ in anything from other nations of antiquity.

"2. That the Jews were a section of the Shemitic race and partook of the weaknesses, of the goodness, of the idolatry, and of the customs of the Phœnicians, Assyrians, Chaldeans, Syrians, Edomites, and possibly the Egyptians.

"3. That they had not in reality any, even the smallest, ground for their pretensions to be a holy, chosen, and peculiar people (Deut. xiv, 2), whom God had avouched to be his particular treasure (Deut. xxvi; Ps. cxxv, 4).

"4. That the majority of the Jewish nation was peaceable, pusillanimous, addicted to sensuality, grossly superstitious, and in reality polytheistic.

"5. That there were two elements in the nation ; the one a dominant and at first a warlike minority, consisting of soldiers of fortune ; the other a numerous but a not very pugnacious majority.

"6. That the former had a different faith to the latter, and were more learned in the arts of civilization, in consequence of having traveled and met with other peoples.

"7. That the worship of the minority was more pure and consequently more distasteful to human nature than the worship of the majority ; just as it is among ourselves, where the sensuous idleness in which the Roman Catholic laity indulge in sacred matters, and which is inculcated upon them by the hierarchy, is far more pleasant to human nature than the personal and individual 'striving after holiness' which is inculcated upon every man by the pious divines of the Protestant faith.

"8. That the nation did not exist as such prior to the time of David, that which was ruled by Saul not being identical with that organized and governed by the son of Jesse.

"9. That no written books of any kind existed in the early days of the monarchy.

"10. That the sacred books were fabricated so as to describe something which suited the ideas of the people, and to suit the ideas of the priests and rulers.

"11. Hence there were two sets of books, one written by or for those whom we have termed Israelites, *i. e.*, the *plebs* or common people ; the others by and for the dominant race, amongst whom were Grecian mercenaries and their leaders.

"12. That the whole of the books so written were never publicly propounded or generally known prior to the time of Alexander.

"13. That the Jewish kings exercised no supervision over the books, if even they knew of their existence, and consequently that additions or other changes could be made in them with impunity by any interested priest, scribe, or librarian.

"14. That the books, being fictitious, cannot be considered as divinely inspired or dictated by the Almighty ; conse-



quently that they are not of more authority than the Koran, the Vedas, or the Book of Mormon.

“15. That there is direct evidence that the institutions which are said to be divine, are of human origin, circumcision for example, having been a custom common amongst the Egyptians, the Colchians, the Phœnicians, and being now practiced among the Malays. Sacrifice, including that of human beings, was common amongst every ancient nation, as well as amongst the Jews, and was a contrivance to insure a festive meeting for priests and people. Festivals were equally common amongst other nations as with the Jews who copied them, however, with such art as to oppose their parentage. These celebrations, like sacrifices, had their use, for they commemorated celestial phenomena, inaugurated times and seasons, and formed important epochs of the year, just as do Christmas, Easter, Lady day, Candlemas day, St. John's day, and Whitsunday amongst ourselves. A multiplication of festivals involved a multiplication of priestly fees.

“The Sabbath is the only purely Jewish institution known. It seems to have been invented under the hope that a day of rest would send persons to worship, and thus afford to the teacher, or priest, an opportunity either to read aloud something out of the books which had been compiled for the purpose, or multiply fees, or for both purposes combined; just as the Roman Catholics have saint's days, on which laziness and worship, confession and congress, feasting with and offerings to ecclesiastics, are encouraged.

“Prophecy was not a gift peculiar to the chosen race, for there has not existed amongst any nation a hierarchy who did not make pretensions to it. Roman Catholic virgins still appear to peasant children in the Alpine regions, to tell the same tales to the moderns as Isaiah and Jeremiah did to the ancients, and ‘spirit-rapping’ has replaced Urim and Thummim. Prophets, so-called, are generally of the same stamp, and are partly charlatans or knaves, and partly lunatics or fools. Any earnest thinker, close observer, and good actor, may assume successfully the character of a prophet, if it should so please him. As a matter of fact, the prophets of Israel and Judah were no better than the oracles of Delphi.

"16. That the priests of a rude nation are ever the most intellectual amongst its denizens; sometimes they are the only individuals who can read and write. Generally they have the superintendence of education, consequently the power of tampering with manuscripts, inventing history, and encouraging the growth of bigotry and intolerance in youth and mature age, as we have seen in Spain.

"17. That in a nation where education is general, the diffusion of knowledge extensive, religious freedom insured, and the development of thought encouraged, the priesthood, as a body, are inferior in mental culture, in general information, and in sound judgment, to the better classes of the laity. Whenever, therefore, the latter call upon the former, their 'freethinking' is denounced and persecuted, rather than treated rationally. Hence the imperfectly instructed hierarchy, and one which, like modern Christianity, shuns inquiry, forces the community to divide itself into bigots and independents. But as young men of education, who are accustomed to use their reason, can readily judge between such parties, it follows, naturally, that very few of them swell the ranks of the priesthood; except, indeed, those whose mental powers are unable to detect an absurdity when it is laid before their eyes, or who have been blinded when children by bigotry."

On page 860 are the following terse remarks: "Having systematically and scrupulously aimed to investigate every subject which has come before me, as our judges inquire into the evidence of witnesses, and 'sum up' a case, without any other bias than the testimony compels them to have, I am obliged to acknowledge that every inquiry which I have entered upon has demonstrated the comparative worthlessness of the sacred writings as a test of antiquity or as the proceeds of revelation. They seem to be a mixture of childish stories, mythic legends, fond fancies, quaint ideas, folk-lore, religious feeling, fanaticism, ignorance, braggadocio, badness, goodness, cruelty, kindness, denunciation, exhortation, encouragement, and genuine history—as Shakespere would put it, 'A great deal of sack and very little bread.'"

## JEHOVAH COMPARED WITH OTHER GODS.

By way of summing up the consideration of the Jewish god, Jehovah, it is quite proper to state concisely how he compares with the gods of other nations, with the view to be able to determine whether Christendom, in choosing a god to worship, made the best possible selection. It may then be set down as true that in the foregoing treatment of the character and peculiarities of Jehovah, with the claims set up for him, the following facts have been established :

1. There is as much of vagueness in the mythical conception of the origin of Jehovah as of any of the other gods.

2. He was originally a nature-god, as were large numbers of the other gods.

3. His record is quite as unreliable as that of any other god. The first accounts of him in the Bible are now known not to have been written by the persons who have been reputed as the authors. A fraud has been committed in this respect. It is not known by whom the books of the Bible were written.

4. The records of Jehovah and his works are not nearly as ancient as those of other gods.

5. The Jehovah records are far less ancient than has been represented. Instead of having been written 1350 B. C., they were chiefly written from 600 B. C. to 250 B. C.

6. Jehovah is not the only god spoken of in the Bible. Elohim, El Shadai, Adonai, were other gods than Jehovah, and before him.

7. There is as much crudeness in the description of Jehovah as of the other gods.

8. He is as anthropomorphic as other gods. All the parts of his body are spoken of in various places in the Bible as though he had a body in the form of a man.

9. He was not omniscient. He was near-sighted, and could not see at a distance.

10. He was not omnipotent. His power was insufficient to overcome certain difficulties.

11. He was not omnipresent. By having a body like a man he could be in only one place at a time. In order to be present in any given locality he was obliged to go there.

12. He lacked prescience. He could not foretell the result of his enterprises.

13. His mind was changeable. He often was regretful of what he had done.

14. His judgment was at fault. His grand schemes proved utterly abortive, otherwise the "fall" would not have taken place, the Deluge would not have been necessary, the abandonment of his chosen people would not have been a necessity, and scores of similar events would never have needed to occur.

15. He had a counterpart—a devil, created by him, or co-eternal with him, the same as had numerous other gods.

16. He had a temper more irascible than any other god on record. His anger was almost constantly being kindled, waxing wroth, and arising to an uncontrollable degree.

17. In his fits of anger he slew more human beings and caused a far greater destruction of life than any other god ever heard of.

18. His vengeance and revenge exceeded those of other gods. They were absolutely unbounded.

19. His malice was exceeded by that of no other god.

20. His cruelty was without a parallel.

21. His injustice was shocking to contemplate.

22. His disregard of the life and comfort of his creatures was wholly inexplicable.

23. He took an interest in but a very limited portion of the human family, and proved false to them.

24. He commanded that a witch should not be suffered to live, when a witch never had an existence. In consequence of that command thousands of hapless mortals have been tortured to death.

25. He was a most bloodthirsty god. He took more life than all the other gods ever heard of.

26. He approved and ordered human sacrifices to himself. The other gods did no more.

27. He was fully as fond of having animals slain, burnt, and roasted, for the pleasure of his olfactories, as any other

god of whom there is record. His taste for blood was astonishing.

28. He found it as necessary to employ priests as any other god, and his have been a bloody set.

29. He has been quite as exacting in the matter of dues and tithes as any other god.

30. He is not as old by a thousand years as Brahma, Chang-ti, Ormuzd, and Osiris.

31. He has not been acknowledged and worshiped by nearly as many people as Brahma, Chang-ti, Buddha, and others.

32. His sacred writings are not nearly as ancient as those of other gods, and less extensive.

33. He punished children unto death for the deeds performed by their great-grandfathers.

34. He often forsook and abandoned honest, deserving, but unfortunate people.

35. He fellowshipped and approved as a man after his own heart, a robber, adulterer, and murderer.

36. He was on the best of terms with Noah, who was guilty of intoxication.

37. He was very partial to Abraham, who was guilty of falsehood and dishonesty.

38. He called his servant, Lot, "righteous," who got drunk and committed incest with his two virgin daughters.

39. He acknowledged Isaac as one who pleased him, who uttered falsehood.

40. He was very friendly with Jacob, who was false and dishonest in the extreme.

41. No god has been more fond of wars and fighting than himself. He is about the only god who called himself the "God of Battles," the "Lord of Hosts."

42. He often betrayed his armies into the hands of the enemy.

43. He approved, and even commanded, great acts of dishonesty and immorality.

44. He inaugurated and sustained the worst system of human slavery known. He has never opposed slavery.

45. He instituted and perpetrated unequal and unjust oppressions upon woman.

46. He instigated those who penned his holy word to write more that is immodest and indecent than any other god.

47. His cruelty in planning an endless burning hell for his own children exceeds all that other gods have done in the same line. His hell is hotter, crueller, more horrible, and longer continued than any other hell.

48. Like other gods, he cohabited with a human virgin and produced a son half man and half god.

49. Like other gods, who had done the same thing before him, he sent his own innocent son into the world to suffer and die to satisfy his own sense of justice and right.

50. There is just as much proof that he existed as there is that all the other gods mentioned in the foregoing pages existed, and not a particle more. All are alike the creations of mens' brains according to their own ignorance and superstitious conceptions. There is just as much proof, and not a particle more, that Jehovah created the universe and all that exists, that there is that Brahma, Chang-ti, Ormuzd, Baal, Asshur, Osiris, Zeus, Jupiter, Allah, Odin, and Mumbo Jumbo created it. It existed millions of ages before either of them were known or thought of. They, each and all of them, were at first only national or neighborhood gods, and never had any existence, save in the vain imaginations of their makers. The sooner man lets all the gods go to the shades of forgetfulness, and looks to himself for all that he wishes done that nature does not do unasked, the better will it be for him and for the world.

## SATAN, OR THE DEVIL.

Men have believed in devils as long as they have in gods. The oldest systems of religion of which the world can boast had a personal devil representing the evil principle antagonistic to the beneficent, life-giving power in nature. Man in his primitive state saw opposing forces in the world around him—light and darkness, heat and cold, life and death. He per-

sonified the first as gods and the last as devils. We see this was so in the early Hindoo religion ; Brahma being the creator, the god of life, and Siva, the destroyer, or god of death, with numerous evil spirits called Rakshasas, with Ravana at their head. In Persia, Ormuzd was the good being, and his brother Ahriman, the evil. They were ever in deadly conflict. It was the same in Egypt. Osiris was the source of good, and his twin-brother, Typhen, the source of evil. In the Greek mythology, Jupiter was the chief god of the celestial dominions, and his brother, Pluto, of the infernal regions.

The Hebrews must needs have something upon the same plan, though whether Jehovah and Satan were *brothers* does not clearly appear. From their being mistaken, however, for each other, in the matter of David numbering the people, one writer saying it was the Lord who moved David to the act, and another that it was Satan, it would seem they were very similar. Jehovah either created the Devil or the latter had a co-equal and co-eternal existence with him. The cordiality with which they appeared to meet and converse about afflicting poor Job argued that at least they were on terms of friendship.

But really the Old Testament tells us very little about the Devil. His name is not mentioned once in the Jewish scriptures. The plural form, *devils*, appears four times, but simply means evil spirits or idols, and not the old arch-fiend and eternal adversary of Jehovah, who was not really discovered until after the Old Testament was written. Moses is said to have become well acquainted with Jehovah, but he seems to have formed no acquaintance with the Devil. The prophets also had not a word to say about the Devil. The name Satan appears five times in the Old Testament—twice in Job, once in 1 Chron. xxi, 1, when it should perhaps have been Jehovah ; in Psalms cvi, 6, and in Zachariah iii, 9. It is only in Job that our Christian Devil could have been meant. In the last two cases an adversary is implied, and not a personal being. It is most singular, if the Devil really had an existence in the time of Moses & Co., that they did not find it out.

His Satanic Majesty is believed, however, to have been first introduced to us in the story of the Garden of Eden as a very precocious snake, who could stand upright and converse in human language with the reputed mother of our race, relative to the eating of some beautiful fruit which God had caused to grow there, and by which his plans were to be completely thwarted, and the race of man to be perpetually damned. He readily succeeded in his efforts, and the immense injury was done before God knew aught of it. But as that is the only instance where a serpent is said to have conversed in human language, it is usually supposed that the strange story is merely an allegory, a fable, or a poem, in the same way that Æsop, in inculcating moral lessons, used to represent dumb beasts as talking like men and women. Nobody believes those stories literally; they are accepted as fables only.

God, according to the Eden fable, was so completely circumvented by the serpent in the wheedling of mother Eve that he condemned the reptile to crawl upon his belly and eat dust all the days of his life; and we have the satisfaction of knowing that he has never stood upright since nor spoken a word in any human language. Whether he has ever eaten dust as a diet is a matter of extreme doubt. Serpents are very fond of frogs, toads, mice, birds, etc., which they take alive, but they have never been discovered eating dust. We are safe in concluding that the Satan who assembled with the sons of God, from *walking* up and down the earth—when he and God entered into a contract to test the patient man Job to see how much suffering he could bear before cursing his Maker—was not the serpent who had been condemned to *crawl* upon his belly forever. The serpent and Satan could not have been the same person.

It is proper to mention here that the story of Job is also thought to be a poem or a drama, and that the events there narrated never occurred; and more, that it was not written by a Hebrew, but was borrowed from one of the neighboring Gentile nations. The names of the characters and places used do not correspond with any others in the Old Testament. It is pleasant to think this is the case, as the bargain entered into between the two great powers to subject Job to a most



cruel and unjust course of affliction was most discreditable to both the contracting parties.

In the New Testament much more is heard of the Devil than in the Old. He even tempts the Son of God. He carried him to the top of a high mountain, where he showed him all the kingdoms of the earth (it probably was not known by the writer that the earth is round), and offered them to him if he would bow down and worship the giver. The Devil, however, conducted himself creditably on that occasion and committed no outrage. If Jesus left his bright, happy home in heaven to come down to this gloomy world to make human beings happy, it has been wondered why on that occasion he did not kill the Devil outright with a single blow, and thus end at once all the trouble men encounter in consequence of "the great enemy of souls." It would seem he might have been more effective in thus crushing evil than by dying himself on the cross. But perhaps if God wished a Devil in the first place, and took the trouble to create one, he did not wish him destroyed. It has been claimed that the Devil is serviceable to God, and that probably a kind of mutual interest prevails between them; that the scheme of salvation could not have been carried out but by the Devil's aid, and that the wicked cannot be eternally punished but with his assistance.

The exploits of the Devil narrated in the New Testament, such as obtaining possession of the wild man among the tombs, and then entering into two thousand swine and drowning them in the sea, etc., are too familiar to be repeated. But if he acted badly in that instance there is reason to believe him a greatly slandered individual in other cases. He has been maligned and vilified more than all other persons put together. Good people are in the habit of blaming him for everything that goes wrong. He is denounced in the most vehement terms. It is placed to his charge that he is constantly lying in ambush, seeking to waylay, seduce, entice, and then destroy forever every son and daughter of humanity. It would require volumes to contain a tithe of the oft-repeated indictments brought against this individual by clergymen and other pious, godly persons. He has been called "a liar and the father of liars" millions of times. But there are those who

deny the truth of these charges. He did not lie in what he said to Eve about the fruit of the tree of knowledge. He said they would "not surely die" on the day they ate of it, and they did not, but lived nine hundred years afterwards. If there was a lie told on that occasion it was not by the serpent. And it is doubtful if a single lie can unmistakably be proved against him from that day to this. The writer has challenged clergymen to point out a single falsehood the Devil had ever told, and they failed to do so. Until a lie can be proved against him he is entitled to be considered truthful.

He is charged with malice, cruelty, and injustice towards the human race; but when did he ever maltreat any one? When did he ever steal? When did he commit robbery? When did he take life? When did he commit murder? No one knows of his being filled with "vengeance," with getting "fierce with anger," and his "wrath waxing hot." Contrast him with his opponent in these respects and how great the difference! His defamers should cease their maligning and let him rest.

In point of ability he seems to compare very favorably with his antagonist. He won in the first game for the human race, and has been successful in every succeeding contest. It is believed he wins nine-tenths of the human family and that his influence is increasing in almost geometrical progression.

But, after all, he has been a friend to man. He favored the diffusion of knowledge at the start, and has been in favor of education, inventions, and innovations ever since. His revilers have charged him with being the author of nearly every mechanical improvement—the printing press, the steam engine, railroads, the telegraph, and hundreds of other useful inventions have been charged upon him. But notwithstanding all the insults, false accusations, and injuries thrust upon him he bears all with patience and retorts not a word in malice. "When he is reviled he reviles not again." *Such a being is the Devil*, if what his enemies say of him is true.

## THE HOLY GHOST.

This third member of the Christian Trinity is comparatively a modern one. No mention is made of him in the Old Testament. God was very silent about the existence of this partner. Neither Noah nor Abraham, though they met God frequently, and conversed with him, saw or heard aught of the Holy Ghost. Though Moses was so intimate with Jehovah for forty years, on one occasion passing forty days and nights with him, he never heard the name of the Holy Ghost. God never even lisped to him that the Godhead was a trinity, consisting of himself, Ghost, and Son. Neither did God impart this information to any of his prophets. Not one knew aught of the Ghost or Son. It was not until the New Testament was written that his name appears. In the year 381 a council was held at Constantinople which adopted as a dogma the existence of the Holy Ghost; but it was a hundred years later that the troublesome question was fully settled, and the dogma accepted. Thirty-eight councils were held in the early Christian centuries to settle the problem bitterly contested between Arius and Athanasius as to whether the Father and Son were consubstantial with each other, or whether the Father was older and superior to the Son. Nineteen of these councils decided with Arius that the Son was not equal in age, power, and majesty with the Father, while the other nineteen agreed with Athanasius that the Son *was* equal in age, power, and majesty with the Father. The contest raged bitterly for more than half a century, and was ultimately decided in favor of the Athanasians.

It is claimed that the Holy Ghost is the part of God that impregnated the Virgin Mary, and was the Father of Jesus, though the matter is far from clear. Matthew says Joseph dreamed that it was the Holy Ghost that overshadowed his affianced wife. Luke gives the narrative differently. He says Mary had a vision and saw the angel Gabriel, who told her "the Holy Ghost should come upon her and the power of the Highest should overshadow her." But as Matthew was not present when Joseph dreamed, and Luke was not

present when Mary had her vision; as neither of them wrote the gospels called by their name, and as they were not written till the second century, neither the vision nor the dream is entitled to much weight. The other evangelists, Mark and John, say not a word about how Jesus was begotten. We have only the statement of Matthew and Luke to offset each other. If Jesus was begotten by the Holy Ghost, or "the Highest," it is the most remarkable event that ever occurred. Mark and John are very inexcusable for saying nothing of it and leaving the world in doubt between Matthew's and Luke's stories. Thus two of the four writers are perfectly silent upon this momentous question, and the other two relate it differently—a rather uncertain foundation for a religious system to rest upon, which is looked to solely for the salvation of the world.

This fractional part of divinity is called by different names and likened to different substances in various parts of the New Testament; sometimes he is represented in the form of "a dove" (Luke iii, 22); a "mighty rushing wind" (Acts ii, 2); "an ointment" (Acts x, 38); "a breath" (John xx, 22); "in cloven tongues of fire" (Acts ii, 20); "a magnetic aura imparted by the laying on of hands" (Acts viii, 17); "he speaks with vocal organs" (Acts xxviii, 25); "is of the neuter gender" (John i, 22). He was also regarded as *breath*; the Greek word *pneuma*, sometimes translated Ghost, means *breath*, or wind, or air. The famous passage in 1 John v, 7—"There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one"—was not found in any Greek New Testament earlier than the fifteenth century, and in no Latin manuscript of the New Testament earlier than the ninth, and not found in any of the ancient versions. It was first quoted by Vergilius Tapensis, a Latin writer of little credit, and it was believed he was the author of the interpolations.

It is easy to discover the source of the Trinity and the Holy Ghost by the study of older oriental religions and the writings of Plato four hundred years before the Christian era. The visible manifestation of the members of the Trinity was a sacred tradition in several of the ancient oriental sys

tems, notably the Hindoos, the Egyptians, the Persians, the Estrurians, as well as the Celts and Druids. Triads and double triads were common, as we have seen, in the mythologies of the Semitic races. When a person was baptized in the Brahminical religion it was held that he was "born again," and that the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove descended and settled upon him. This was the "new birth." The Estrurians baptized with fire, wind (ghost), and water. Baptism into the first member of the Trinity (the Father) was with fire, into the second member (the Word) was with water, while baptism into the third (the Holy) consisted of the initiatory, spiritual, or symbolical application of *gas*, *gust*, *wind*, or *spirit*. It appears from "Herbert's Travels" that in some of the ancient countries, the child was taken to the priest, who named him before the sacred fire; after which ceremony he was sprinkled with "holy water" from a vessel made of the sacred tree known as "the Holme." (Graves' Sixteen Crucified Saviors)

In the form of "tongues of fire" the orientals spoke of the influence or spirit that proceeded from their deity. This was an ancient conception with the Buddhist. Buddha was represented in a symbol of glory—a tongue of fire upon his head. The Christians had no lack of oriental ideas to choose from with regard to the third member of the Trinity, the same as with the other oriental dogmas, which they borrowed from the old pagans. The Rev. John Miller, tried for heresy by the Presbytery of Princeton, N. J., was very probably correct when, with a rhetorical flourish, he pronounced "the whole idea of the Holy Ghost and the doctrine of the Trinity a borrowed paganism or Platonism."

## JESUS CHRIST.

Whether this second member of the Christian Trinity ever had a real existence; whether he had a divine parentage, or whether he was simply an ordinary human being, are questions which have divided the Christian world for nearly two thousand years, and must continue to divide it perhaps, for

centuries to come. Unfortunately the story of his birth, life, and death is illy authenticated. All we have to give us information that there was such a personage is what are called the four gospels ascribed to Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, with the current assent that whatever they said must surely be true. But since it is clearly settled by learned modern critics that there is not a particle of proof that either of those four books were known to be in existence until the second century, and that they were not written by the men it is pretended wrote them, and that we have no possible way of knowing who the authors were, their credibility depreciates greatly, and many feel the irresistible conviction that they ought not to give their assent to such unauthentic stories.

Rev. Nathaniel Lardner, D.D., who died in 1768, fixed the dates according to the best of his ability when the books of the New Testament were written, and his conclusions were generally accepted by the Christian world; but more recent investigations on the part of Rev. W. Rathbun Greg in the "Creed of Christendom," still more recently by the author of "Supernatural Religion," which was published anonymously in London, and soon reached its sixth edition, and is believed to be the production of Prof. F. W. Newman, Emeritus Professor of the University of London, have thrown much additional light upon the subject. The later work has demonstrated that no certain trace exists of one of the four gospels prior to the year 180. If this conclusion is correct the conviction is irresistible that the writers of the narratives could not possibly have known anything about the Jesus who was the subject of their recitals, and that their stories were made up of fragmentary legends, traditions, and obscure gospels which appeared earlier. They are only hearsay evidence, at best, and cannot be depended upon.

When Essenism became Christianity, when the mythical Christ became transformed into a pretended historical Jesus, when the obscure narratives of the first century were supplemented in the second century by fictitious memoirs of Jesus and his Apostles; when the mass of Christian converts had accepted the gospel stories concerning the incarnate deity as facts; when, in short, the gospels became paramount

authority, and the maintenance of a historical Christ imperative, then it became necessary to bring forth something besides Jewish and pagan prophecies to prove his existence. Contemporary proof was decreed essential to support the weak structure. But, alas! it was not found.

### CONTEMPORARY EVIDENCE.

The writers of the first century were all silent as to the contemporary historians of such a man as Jesus. Philo, Pliny, Justus, and Josephus had not so much as named Jesus Christ nor one of his apostles, nor noted any of the wonderful events narrated by the gospel writers. Something had to be done to supply the omission, and in an uncritical age, when forgeries were rife, the remedy was at hand.

Josephus was the most important contemporary historian. He was born in Jerusalem in A. D. 37, and resided there till the city was destroyed, after which time he became a resident of Rome. How was it possible for Christianity and its founder to escape his observation? He who had exposed impostors and leaders of parties among his own people would hardly have failed to take notice of a new religion with a conspicuous leader who performed the most astounding miracles. He did mention persons by the name of Jesus, as it was a common name in Palestine. His mention of the stoning of "James, the brother of Jesus," was changed by interpolating the words, "who was called Christ." Another addition was made, saying, "Jesus was a wise man, if it be lawful to call him a man who was the Christ, who was condemned to the cross, and who appeared alive again on the third day." Origen made the first interpolation and Eusebius, the father of church history, the second. The forgery served its purpose for fifteen hundred years, but the best and most candid Christian critics now give it up. Josephus knew nothing of Jesus Christ, and did not write a word in relation to him. A similar attempt was made with Tacitus' "Tactics." The gist of the interpolation is that Nero, to suppress the rumor that he had set fire to the city of Rome, "inflicted the most exquisite tortures on those

men who used the vulgar appellation of Christians were already branded with deserved infamy. They derived their name and origin from Christ, who in the reign of Tiberius had suffered death by the sentence of the procurator, Pontius Pilate."

Rev. Robert Taylor, in his "Diegesis," gives numerous reasons for rejecting this passage as a forgery, of which these are the principal:

"1. It is not quoted by any of the Christian Fathers, whose purpose it would have served better than any quotation from any pagan writer.

"2. Tertullian refers to Tacitus twice (to the *History*, not the *Annals*), and appeals to Roman history, without specifying any author, to show that Nero was the first persecutor of Christians, but does not stumble on the passage.

"3. The all-searching Eusebius would have saved himself the labor of forging evidence if this had then been in existence.

"4. It rests upon the fidelity of a single individual, who had the ability, the opportunity, and the strongest possible inducement to make the interpolation.

"5. It is exaggerated, improbable, and incompatible with the gentle and cultured Tacitus; nor could he, if Christianity was what it claimed to be, have characterized its professors thus.

"6. How could innocent children have provoked such hostility? and how could even so bad a man as Nero have been so sportive in cruelty?

"7. It is falsified by the text of the New Testament, in which rulers are called God's ministers and not a terror to good works (Rom. xiii, and 1 Peter, iii). Nero was emperor when the epistles of Paul and Peter are supposed to have been written.

"8. It is falsified by the apology of Tertullian, and the far more respectable testimony of Melito, Bishop of Sardis, who explicitly states that Christians up to his time, the close of the second century, had never been victims of persecution.

"9. Tacitus has in no part of his writings made the least allusion to Christ or Christians."



To these reasons others may be added, to wit :

Gibbon doubts whether Nero persecuted the Christians at all, and conjectures that Tacitus may have confounded them with a pernicious sect of the Jews called Galileans, who were determined rebels and were punished by Nero. Take away from the passage in Tacitus the few words relating to Christians, and the sense would be just as complete, applying only to certain criminals who were "enemies of mankind." The clever interpolation is all that is necessary to identify them with Christians. But the whole passage lacks confirmation, even more than the apocryphal story of Nero's fiddling while Rome was burning.

And yet, after all, what does it prove if genuine? Only that Tacitus, eighty years or more after the alleged death of Christ, heard that his followers, "branded with deserved infamy," had been cruelly tortured by Nero. Even if true, it does not deserve the name of historical proof, and Christianity has nothing better to offer.

A well-known late writer in the "Edinburgh Review," proposes to prove that the "Annals" of Tacitus, from whence the story emanates, were forged by one Poggio Bracciolini, who died in 1459, having for over forty years been apostolic secretary to seven successive popes. Bracciolini was a fine scholar and competent to commit such a forgery.

Another proof is adducible, going to show that a part of the passage in the "Annals" concerning the punishment of the Christians by Nero is plagiarized from Sulpicius Severus, an elegant Christian writer of about the year 400. Thus:

SULPICIVS SEVERVS. A. D. 400

PSEUDO TACITVS. A. D. 1459.

Quin et novæ mortes excogitatæ, ut ferarum tergis contacti, laniatu canum interirent. Multi crucibus affixi, aut flammâ usti. Plerique in id reservati, ut cum defecisset dies, in usum nocturni luminis urerentur.

Et pereuntibus addita ludibria, ut ferarum tergis contacti, laniatu canum interirent aut crucibus affixi, aut flammâ, atque ubi defecisset dies, in usum nocturni luminis urerentur.

"Out of twenty-five consecutive Latin words in pseudo Tacitus, eighteen are identical and consecutive in Severus. One passage, therefore, is certainly plagiarized from the

other. Now, does any rational man believe that the Christian writer, Severus, would have failed to cite his authority for so important a passage if the "Annals" of Tacitus were then existing and contained it? Is it not far more likely that Bracciolini plagiarized it from Severus as the basis of his impudent forgery?" (Revelations of Antichrist, p. 177.)

"The celebrated passage in Josephus concerning Christ being set aside as an acknowledged forgery, what remains of external evidence as to his existence? Absolutely nothing. All the rest of the Christian forgeries have been exposed and swept away, leaving the gospel fabric without a single historic support. The epistle of Jesus Christ to Abgarus, king of Edessa, and his answer thereto; the wonderful portrait of Jesus which he miraculously photographed on the Veronica handkerchief by wiping his face therewith; the letter of Pontius Pilate to the emperor, Tiberius, describing the miraculous events attending the crucifixion, more marvelous than even the gospel story-tellers could invent—all these and like forgeries of the Christian Fathers, having served the purpose of the church in darkening the minds of the people for fifteen hundred years, are no longer able to endure the light of the nineteenth century. So, too, in regard to later forgeries, such as the pretended letter of Publius Lentulus, the supposed predecessor of Pontius Pilate, describing the personal appearance and character of Jesus Christ. This clumsy forgery is fathered upon Jerome Xavier, about A. D. 1600. Even now these and other obsolete evidences appear from time to time in the newspapers, exciting the wonder of the ignorant and the contempt of the learned. All, then, that is left of genuine historical Christian evidence relates to Christianity and not to Christ, except by implication. The celebrated passage in Tacitus, even if genuine—which it is not, at least in essential parts—is only hear-say evidence at best, written more than eighty years after the alleged death of Christ. The earliest trace of any of our four gospels is sixty or seventy years this side of Tacitus; and there is no proof that the story of the crucifixion under the procurator Pontius Pilate existed when Tacitus wrote."

## JESUS A COPY FROM PAGAN MODELS.

As, then, the contemporary evidence of the existence of Christ must be set down as extremely slight: as the four gospel stories were written so long afterwards—and by persons wholly unknown to us—that they cannot establish the narratives as could be desired, let us look for a moment at the patterns held up for following by the pagan systems of religion, that we may see whether the later system is merely a copy of those preceeding it, or whether it is unmistakably original:

The mythological idea of demi-gods and sons of gods has prevailed in the world for at least three thousand years. Nearly all the principal ancient systems had their trinities, “begotten sons of gods,” “virgin mothers,” “world’s redeemers,” “crucified saviors,” etc., as we have seen abundantly in the preceding pages. Every supreme god in the ancient mythological systems has had one or more sons, and many of them were reputed to have been crucified. Kersey Graves, in his “Sixteen Crucified Saviors,” has compiled from highly credible authorities accounts of sixteen sons of gods who have reputedly been put to death on the cross. Very likely many of them were mythical, but the myth shows that the idea had been entertained and promulgated from five hundred to one thousand years before the time of Jesus. There are such a number of these reputed crucified saviors that a large portion of them may be set aside and still enough be left to show the idea of sons of gods, saviors, and crucified redeemers to give the starting idea, and make a path for others to follow in. The least that can be said in the case of the birth, life, and death of Jesus is this: if it was a scheme or plan necessary for the salvation of the world, it is most singular that it should have to be a copy of numerous heathen prototypes. This has placed the matter in so unenviable a light that it is perhaps not strange that certain Christians have made the effort to make it appear that the heathens have borrowed their ideas, rites, and dogmas, from Christians, instead of the opposite. But this cannot serve their purpose

Several of the heathen religions, which had trinities, sons of gods, and sons of virgins, incarnations, crucified saviors, with the rites, sacraments, and dogmas appertaining thereunto, existed a thousand years before our era, and this cannot be disproved or set aside. Besides, the heathens have never exhibited the slightest disposition to borrow or copy the least religious idea from Christians.

### ADMISSIONS OF THE EARLY FATHERS.

Several of the apostolic and Christian fathers admitted in their writings, and otherwise, the similarity between the old heathen systems and the Christian. Justin Martyr, born near the close of the first century, admitted that the worshippers of Mithra, the Persian Mediator, had the sign of the cross affixed to their foreheads as a badge of divinity, and this nearly a thousand years before Christians made use of the symbol.

In an apology addressed to Antoninus Pius this same father said : " If, then, we hold some opinions near akin to the poets and philosophers in most repute among you, why are we thus unjustly hated? For in saying that all things were made in this beautiful manner by God, what do we say more than Plato? When we teach a general conflagration, what do we teach more than the Stoics? By opposing the works of men's hands we concur with Menander the comedian; and by declaring the Logos, the first-begotten of God, to be born of a virgin, without any human mixture, to be crucified and dead, and to have risen again, and ascended into heaven, we say no more in this than what you say of those whom you style the sons of Jove. For you need not be told what number of sons the writers most in vogue among you assign to Jove. There is Mercury, Jove's interpreter, in imitation of the Logos, in worship among you. There is Esculapius, the physician, smitten by a thunderbolt, and after that ascending into heaven. There is Bacchus torn to pieces, and Hercules burned to get rid of his pains. There are Castor and Pollux, the sons of Jove by Leda, and Perseus by Danaë, not to mention others. I fain would know why you always deify

departed emperors, and have a fellow at hand to make affidavit that he saw Cæsar ascend into heaven from the funeral pile. As to the son of God called Jesus, should we allow him to be no more than man, yet the title of 'Son of God' is very justifiable on account of his superior wisdom, considering you have your Mercury in worship under the title of 'the Word' and 'Messenger of God.' As to the objection of our Jesus being crucified, I will say that suffering was common to all the afore-mentioned sons of Jove, but only they suffered another kind of death. As to his being born of a virgin, you have your Perseus to balance that; as to his curing the lame, the paralytic, and such as were cripples from their birth, this is little more than what is said of your Esculapius."

Tertullian, born in the second century, admitted in an apology he wrote the previous existence among the pagans of Christian doctrines, Christian rites and symbols, including the cross.

Melito, Bishop of Sardis, in Libya, in the second century, in an apology addressed to Marcus Antoninus, said, "The philosophy which we possess truly flourished aforetime, but having blossomed again in the great reign of Augustus Cæsar, thy ancestor, it proved to be above all things ominous of good for thy kingdom."

Origen, in the second century, admitted the earlier use of the rites and symbols of the church.

Minutius Felix, in his "Octavius," written A. D. 211, said thus: "I must tell you we neither adore the crosses, nor deride them; you it is, ye pagans, who are most likely to worship wooden crosses, as being a part of the same substance with your deities. For what else are your ensigns, flags, and standards? Your victories not only represent a similar cross, but a cross with a man on it. Thus you see that the sign of the cross has either some foundation in nature or in your own religion, and, therefore, ought not to be considered an objection against Christians." Here was an admission in the very infancy of the church that the sign of the cross had long before been used as a sacred symbol by pagan nations.

Shelton, in his "Appeal," said: "How came it to pass that the Egyptians, Arabians, and Indians, before the time of

Christ, paid such a remarkable veneration to the sign of the cross, is to me unknown, but the fact is known, and in Egypt it stood for the sign of eternal life."

Dr. Oliver (*Hist. Juif*) says: "The Christian reader may start when he beholds the sacred emblem of his faith, and as a symbol of heathen devotion, but it is ever so. . . . It is found engraven on their monuments, and the erection of their temples was conducted on the same cruciform principle. The two great pagodas at Benares and Mathura were erected in the form of vast crosses."

The Christian writer, Georgus (*Antoine Auguste*), in his "Thibetum Alphabetum," gave plates of the god Indra nailed to a cross, with five wounds; which crosses are to be seen in Nepaul at the corner of roads and on eminences.

A writer in the "Edinburgh Review" used this language: "From the dawn of organized paganism in the Eastern world to the final establishment of Christianity in the Western, the cross was undoubtedly one of the commonest and most sacred symbolical monuments; and to a remarkable extent is so still in almost every land where that of Calvary is unrecognized or unknown. It appears to have been the original possession of every people of antiquity."

"In the year 1829," says Dr. Inman in his "Ancient Faiths," vol. i, p. 407, "the late Godfrey Higgins, than whom few more original thinkers and more indefatigable readers have existed, wrote, in a work entitled 'Celtic Druids,' the following: 'Few causes have been more powerful in producing mistakes in ancient history than the idea, hastily taken up by all ages, that every monument of antiquity marked with a cross, or with any of those symbols which they conceived to be monograms of Christ, were of Christian origin.' He then proceeds to point out the existence of the cross as an emblem even in the time of the Phœnicians, the evidence being that an old coin, found in the ruins of Citium, where the cross is united to a 'rosary;' and after many other quotations he concludes the chapter with the following remark: 'The cross is as common in India as in Egypt and Europe.'"

The Rev. Mr. Maurice says (*Indian Antiquities*, vol. ii, p. 361): "Let not the piety of the Catholic Christian be offended

at the preceding assertion that the cross was one of the most usual symbols among the hieroglyphics of Egypt and India. Equally honored in the Gentile and the Christian world, this emblem of universal nature, of that world to whose four quarters its diverging radii pointed, decorated the heads of most of the sculptured images in the former country, and in the latter stamped its form upon the most majestic of the shrines of their deities. In the cave of Elephanta, in India, over the head of the principal figure, again may be seen this emblem, and a little in front the huge Lingham. 'The two principal pagodas of India, those of Benares and Mathura, are built in the form of a cross.'

Mr. Higgins gives (page 750, *Anacalypsis*) an account of the crucifixion of Salivahana, Wittoba, and Buddha, Hindoo divinities; and gives a drawing of Ball-ii from the famous temple of the crucified Wittoba at Tripatty, which differs in no respect from the picture of the crucified Savior with which we are familiar. A halo of glory shines upon his head, on which there is a crown, serrated with sharp angles on its upper margin; the hands are extended, the feet are slightly separated, and all are marked with the stigmata; the body is nude, save a simple girdle about the loins. Christna, whose history so closely resembles Christ's, was also like him in his being crucified. Higgins subsequently concludes a paragraph thus: "It is certainly proved, as completely as it is possible in the nature of things for a fact of this kind to be proved, that the Romans had a crucified object of adoration; and this could be no other than an incarnation of the god Sol, represented in some way to have been crucified."

## ANCIENT DOCTRINES AND CEREMONIES.

So surely as the symbol of the cross was held in high estimation by the ancients, long before the era of Christianity, so surely as the belief in crucified Saviors was strong in their religious creeds, so surely had the rites, sacraments, and doctrines since dear to the believers in Jesus been much earlier sacred to the people embracing those older religions.

The immortality of the soul was taught by the ancients of many nationalities long before Christianity was introduced, not only in India, Egypt, China, Persia, but it was also inculcated by Thales, Pythagoras, Socrates, and Plato, in Greece. It cannot be claimed for Jesus that he originated this belief.

Baptism, as a religious rite, was practiced many centuries before it was used by Christians. The Brahmans had great faith in the efficacy of water in cleansing the soul from sin, and they had their regular periodical ablutions in the Ganges and other streams and bodies of water. It was a regular ceremony with the Brahmans to sprinkle the infants with the holy water of the Ganges nine days after the birth of the child. When a person was dying it was not uncommon for the Brahmans to hastily plunge them into a river or other water, under the belief that by the action of the fluid the soul of the dying man would be cleansed from the effects of sin.

It was the same with the rite of the Eucharist—the Lord's Supper. That was used among the ancients many centuries before adopted by Christians. The Brahmans practiced the rite under the name of "prajadom" as described by Alnetonae. In proof of the ancient rite reference is made to the Christian writer, Father Acosta, in his "Travels" (chap. 11). Marolles, in his *Memoirs* (p. 215), quotes Tibullus as saying, "The pagan appeased the divinity with holy bread." Tibullus, in a panegyric on Marsula, wrote, "A little cake, a little morsel of bread, appeased the divinities." Mr. Higgins gives his testimony that the whole paschal supper was in fact a festival of joy to celebrate the passage of the sun across the equinox of spring. The Greeks also had something of the kind, which rite was a part of the mysteries of Eleusis in honor of Bacchus and the sun. The goddess Ceres was believed to give her body to be eaten by her worshipers, similar to the belief that Bacchus gave his body and blood. In reference to this class of rites Cicero wrote some forty years before the birth of Christ, as follows: "How can a man be so stupid as to imagine that which he eats to be a god?" That question is doubtless as pertinent now as at the time when written.

The belief in devils and evil spirits, as has been fully shown, was common to all the pagan religious systems older



than Christianity. Monasteries and nunneries were built a thousand years earlier in pagan Asia than in Christendom.

Absolution and the confession of sins was practiced by a portion of them.

The doctrine of the resurrection of the body, the efficacy of fasting and prayer, the dogma of the "second birth," the importance of repentance and humility, were taught by the pagans long before they were by Christians. The belief in miracles was indulged in by all pagan nations from the remotest antiquity.

### SIMILARITY OF MORAL TEACHINGS.

Ths moral teachings of Jesus have justly been spoken of in the highest terms, but the similarity between his teachings and those of Christna, Zoroaster, Buddha, and Confucius, are most striking, though these pagans preceded him from five hundred to one thousand years. Mr. Graves, in his "Sixteen Crucified Saviors," adduces three hundred and forty instances of agreement or parallelism between the life and doctrines accredited to Christna and those accorded to Jesus; many of them are very striking. Of the morals of Buddha, both in amount and purity of character, not a word need be said. They have never been excelled. The morals of Zoroaster were exalted and almost faultless. The teachings of Confucius were of a practical and excellent character, their object being to promote the happiness and usefulness of mankind. The moral teaching of Pythagoras, Thales, Socrates, Plato, Zeno, Epicurus, and many of the old sages, stoics, and philosophers of olden times, were of an exalted character. The beautiful "Golden Rule," "Do unto others as you would have others do unto you," for the utterance of which so much praise has been accorded to Jesus, was also taught by those older reformers and sages. It was explicitly taught by Confucius five hundred and fifty years before Christ; by Aristotle, Pittacus, Thales, Isocrates, Aristippus, Sextus, and Hillel, and all except the last hundreds of years before Jesus was born; the last was fifty years. Their language varied somewhat, but the sentiment was the same.

What they said, and what Jesus said, was grand and good—the effect of which was to make their fellow-beings better—and is worthy of the unfaltering approval of mankind.

### DEFECTS IN MORAL TEACHINGS.

That everything they said was equally faultless and loving is not to be presumed. That each was sometimes more or less at fault can hardly be doubted. That some of the utterances ascribed to Jesus appear harsh and unfeeling cannot successfully be disputed. A few samples will suffice: "He that hath no sword, let him sell his garment and buy one." This sounds a little belligerent for a "Prince of Peace."

His inculcation of mendicancy, and enjoining his disciples "to take no thought for the morrow," have been severely commented upon as being destructive of enterprise, thrift, and the proper preparation for old age and the cold, inclement season of the year. If no provision is made for the future, mankind will soon be in a wretched condition.

His scourging of the money-changers in the temple has been censured as unbecoming one of his peaceful character.

His becoming angry at the fig-tree, and cursing it because it was not in bearing at the wrong time of year, has been criticised unfavorably as not being characteristic of a perfect god-like being.

His formula, "He that believeth not shall be damned," has been thought unjustly imperative by those who regard belief as depending upon evidence, and not at all a matter of choice.

His reply to the Pharisee who invited him to dinner and wondered somewhat that Jesus did not wash his hands before eating, denouncing his host and others of his class as "fools," "full of ravening and wickedness," pronouncing "woe" upon them, etc., has been characterized as rude and uncivil on the part of a guest.

Expressions like these seem harsh and censorious: "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees! hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte; and when he is made, ye make him twofold more a child of hell than yourselves;" "Fill up also the measure of your fathers, ye serpents, ye

spawn of vipers; how can ye escape the damnation of hell?" "Woe unto you, blind guides," "Child of hell," "Serpents," "Engenderment of vipers;" "Ye are of your father, the devil, and the lust of your father ye will do," etc.

The words which he put into the mouth of the nobleman, used in one of his parables, "But those mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither and slay them before me," smacks strongly of vindictiveness and want of mercy.

His reply to his mother, "Woman what have I to do with thee?" would be deemed unfilial in others. His reply to the Syrio-Phœnician woman who requested him to heal her child, "It is not meet to take the children's bread and throw it to the dogs," seems to lack in charity. It was hardly polite to call a woman *a dog*, but from a remark made by the woman he relented and cured her daughter.

## DISCREPANCIES IN GOSPEL READINGS.

It will not be attempted to recite in full the many discrepancies, omissions, and disagreements in statement which are found in the four gospel narratives respecting the birth, life, crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus; but that there are many of these in the aggregate cannot be denied. As to the time of the birth of Jesus, neither the day, the month, nor the year can be agreed upon. As to the month of his birth, there is no probability that December is correct. The twenty-fifth day of that month was doubtless selected because for ages it had been commemorated as the birthday of many of the gods, particularly old Sol and the gods representing him, because on the twenty-fifth day of December the sun begins his northern journey after having been buried in the night of winter. On that day the sun begins to rise in the heavens, and the days to increase in length. By selecting that time for the birth of Jesus it was thus convenient for Christians to avail themselves of the time for the great festival that had long been held on that date. (See Mithra, in Gods of the Persians.)

Dr. Adam Clark, in his Commentary, says: "The nativity of Jesus in December should be given up." The Egyptians are said to have placed it in January, Wagenseil in February, Bochart in March, Clement in April, some in May, others in June and July. Wagenseil, as a second choice, in August, and Lightfoot in September. So it has been claimed by somebody that he was born in nearly every month in the year. In the year the discrepancy is as great, varying between statements of Matthew and Luke from four to seven years. Prof. Draper says there has not been less than thirty different opinions as to the time of Jesus' birth. Chamber's Encyclopedia admits this: "The date of the birth of Jesus is now generally fixed a few years—at least four years—before the commencement of the Christian era. The reasons of this opinion we cannot here state, but it may be observed that the reckoning of the dates from the birth of Christ did not begin till the sixth century, when error on such a point was very probable. The precise date of the birth of Jesus, however, cannot be determined, nor can the year of his death be much more confidently settled. The common computation fixes his death at A. D. 33, or when he was probably thirty-seven years of age. As to the month or day of the birth of Jesus nothing is known, although the circumstance that shepherds were watching their flocks by night makes it very certain that it did not take place at the time at which the festival of Christmas is held." McClintock and Strong's Cyclopaedia of Biblical Literature and Appleton's New American Cyclopaedia concede that the birth of Jesus must have been at least as early as 6 B. C. The Encyclopedia Britannica (Art. Chronology) says: "Christians count one hundred and thirty-three contrary opinions of different authors concerning the year the Messiah appeared on earth—many of them celebrated writers." The place of his birth is also in doubt; some say Bethlehem, some Nazareth.

The discrepancies between the four gospel narrators are too numerous to mention in detail, as they pertain to hundreds of events or incidents. A few will be noticed. The slaughtering of the infants by Herod is mentioned by Matthew only; the other three seemed to know nothing of the sad affair. Mat-

threw is also the only one who knew anything about the sun's being darkened at the crucifixion, the graves being opened, and the dead walking forth. If such a remarkable occurrence took place and the others made no allusion to it, it proves them unreliable historians. The remarkable miracle of raising Lazarus from the dead after he had been four days buried and had begun to decompose is mentioned only by John. The same of Christ's first miracle of turning water into wine at the marriage in Cana. The other three seemed to know nothing of either.

Three say that Simon was the first evangelist chosen; one says it was Andrew. As to the matter of Jesus riding into Jerusalem, two have it that it was an ass and its colt, while the other two have it the colt only. The little incident of applying ointment to his person, two say it was poured upon his head, the other two say it was the feet. Mark says that the devils which passed into the thousand swine came out of one man; Matthew says two men. John represents Jesus as having visited Jerusalem several times; the others admit but one visit.

The manner in which Judas betrayed Jesus and the salutation employed on the occasion are narrated differently by each writer. The reply of Jesus to Judas is also stated four different ways. The fate of Judas is very differently stated. Matthew says he cast down the thirty pieces of silver in the temple and went and hanged himself; Mark, Luke, and John say nothing about it; while Acts i, 18, says he purchased a field with the money, and, falling headlong, he burst asunder in the midst and all his bowels gushed out.

The reply made by Jesus to Pilate is differently stated by each writer. The number of times the cock crew is a disagreement. Mark says twice, the others say once. Mark says Peter denied Jesus once, the others say it was three times. The inscription placed upon the cross is differently stated by each of the four. They also differ as to where the crucifixion took place. Luke says it was Calvary, while the others say it was Golgotha, the place of the skulls. Matthew and Mark differ as to the color of the robe Jesus wore, one saying scarlet, the other purple. They agree no better as to what was given

Jesus to drink while on the cross; Matthew saying "vinegar mingled with gall;" Mark, "wine mingled with myrrh;" Luke, simply "vinegar;" John, "vinegar and hyssop." The last words of Jesus are not stated alike by either two of them. The hour of the crucifixion is stated with nearly the same divergence, Matthew says the ninth hour, Mark the third, Luke the ninth, and John the sixth.

Mark says Joseph begged the body of Jesus "boldly," John said he did it "secretly." Matthew says it was Mary Magdalene and the other Mary who first visited the sepulcher; Mark says it was Mary, the mother of James, and Salome. Luke says Joanna and Mary, while John says Mary Magdalene, and alone. They differ as to how the stone was rolled away. The number of angels seen at the sepulcher is differently stated. Matthew says one angel, Mark one young man, Luke two young men, John two angels. They disagree in the same manner as to the position the angels occupied. There is the same amount of inharmony as to whom Jesus appeared after he arose. Matthew says two women, Mark one woman, Luke two apostles, John one woman, while 1 Cor. xv, 5-8, says it was to Cephas. The announcement that Jesus had been seen, and how, is stated quite unlike, no two agreeing.

There is a still greater discrepancy of statement as to how many persons Jesus appeared to after his resurrection, and on what number of occasions. Matthew says two—to the women at the sepulcher, and later to the eleven in Galilee. Mark says three times—to Mary Magdalene, to two disciples, and to the disciples at meat. Luke says three times—to Cleopas and his companion, to Peter and the eleven, and to others. John says four times—to Mary Magdalene, to the disciples with Thomas, to the disciples without Thomas, and to several on the Tiberias lake. Paul makes the appearances amount to six times—to Peter, to the twelve, to more than five hundred, to James, to all the apostles, to Paul himself.

The difference in the narrative of the ascension of Jesus, and the omission on the part of some to mention the remarkable event at all, are very singular indeed. Matthew did not seem to think it of sufficient importance to allude to it. Mark dispatched it in this manner: "So, then, after the Lord had

spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand side of God." Luke says Jesus led his disciples out as far as Bethany, when he lifted up his hands and blessed them, whereupon he was carried up into heaven. John, like Matthew, has ignored the event entirely.

The foregoing are but a part of the discrepancies that exist in the four versions of the story of Jesus; and even if it may be said that it is not singular that some differences should be made by four persons narrating a long list of events, and that they are really of not much practical importance, they at least prove that either the four narratives were not dictated by superhuman authority, or if they were so dictated, that a superhuman source is no more truthful, no more reliable, than a human source. Either horn of the dilemma is fatal to the value and trustworthiness of the gospel story. If the authors of the four gospels did not write by inspiration, their statements are worthy of no more credence than the statements of any other men, referring to any other class of events. If the writers have no character superior to ordinary writers, who may state truths or falsehoods as they please, or in accordance with the information they may possess; especially if, as seems to be the fact, the four writers were not Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, but four wholly unknown persons, who have been palmed off upon the world as Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John; that the stories were *not* written immediately after the events were said to have taken place, and not till more than one hundred and fifty years afterwards, why, then the sacred character of the gospel is gone; its credibility is without value, and the whole thing falls flat to the ground. The only conclusion to come to is that the story is merely a fable, gotten up after the pattern of some of the heathen demi-gods that were believed in over five hundred years before; that the existence of Jesus, even as a man, is extremely mythical, and that millions of people, who have not taken the pains to examine into this subject at all, have been utterly deceived and imposed upon.

## THE VIRGIN MARY

Is hardly regarded as a goddess by the Protestant portion of the Christian church, though the mother of him whom they fondly call God; but they cannot do less than to regard her as a very distinguished personage. The Roman portion of the church, however, esteem her as a veritable goddess—"the queen of heaven, and the mother of God"

Of the mother of Jesus Christ but slight account is given in the New Testament. Beyond the statement that she was a Jewess, of the tribe of Judah and of the lineage of David; that she had a sister by the same name as herself, and that she was a relative, by marriage, of Elizabeth, nothing is given of her antecedents. She was betrothed to Joseph, a carpenter, at a young age, and before her espousal she attracted the attention of the Holy Ghost and the "Highest," as vaguely described in a dream which Joseph is said to have had, and in a vision by Mary herself; and by most miraculous proceedings she became the mother of Jesus without the aid of mortal father. Hence the titles have been given her in her litanies, "Mother of God," "Queen of Heaven," "Mother of Divine Grace," "Mother Most Pure," "Virgin Most Powerful," "Mirror of Justice," "Seat of Wisdom," "Morning Star," etc.

In her was reproduced or rejuvenated the very ancient myth of a virgin giving birth to a god, which has existed in nearly all the older systems of religion. In Egypt the virgin mother was Isis; Horus was her son. Her titles, according to the Litany of our Lady Isis, were, "Holy Isis," "Universal Mother," "Mother of Gods," "Mother-soul of the Universe," "Mother of all the Virtues," "Illustrious Isis, Most Powerful, Merciful, Just;" "Queen of Heaven," "Model of All Mothers," "Sistrum of Gold," etc.

In the Hindoo litany of our Lady Nari, virgin, also Devaci or Devanaguy—Virgin Mother of Christna, the Hindoo savior, the avatar of Vishnu—the following titles are accorded her: "Holy Nari, Mother of Perpetual Fecundity;" "Mother of an Incarnated God, Vishnu;" "Mother of Christna;" "Eternal



Virginity;" "Mother, Pure Essence;" "Virgin Most Chaste;" "Celestial Light;" "Queen of Heaven and the Universe;" "Mother, Soul of all Beings;" "Devaci is Conceived without Sin and Immaculate Herself." (Isis Unveiled, vol. ii, p. 209.)

Ishtar, the adored virgin goddess of Babylonia, was regarded in the same light, and among her titles were, "Queen of Heaven," "Mother of Gods," "the Celestial Mother," "the Holder of the Scepter," etc. Sir Henry Rawlinson procured a figure of this goddess and child and conveyed it to London. Myrrha, mother of Adonis, was held to be impregnated by her father, Cinyras, long prior to the Christian era.

Ri, the great goddess among the Assyrians, "the mother who bore me," had these titles conferred upon her: "Queen of Heaven," "Spouse of God," etc. She was the spouse of Asshur.

Dr. Inman, in "Ancient Faiths" (vol. ii, p. 260), says: "If there were any other evidences required to prove the identity of the modern virgin and child with the Ishtar of Babylon, the Ri of Assyria, the Isis of Egypt, the Sara of Hindoostan, the Ceres of Greece, and the Venus of Cyprus, we should find it in the style of ornaments which crowd the Romish churches on the continent. Amongst others, the most conspicuous are the sun and moon in conjunction; precisely as we see them on the ancient coins of Greece and Babylon, wherein the sun represents the triad of Mahadeva, and the moon his natural consort."

In addition to the virgin mothers of gods already given there may be added: Alcmene, mother of Alcides; Semele, mother of the Egyptian Bacchus; Minerva, mother of the Grecian Bacchus; Prudence, mother of one of the Hercules; Shing-Mon, mother of Yu (Chinese); Mayenu, mother of Hesus, all held to be chaste virgins, and believed in many hundreds of years before the Virgin Mary or her child was born. The number of goddesses and females, not particularly virgins, who gave birth to gods is almost without end.

The Virgin Mary fills in the minds of the Romish portion of the Christian church much the same position held in their pagan predecessors' by the immaculate goddesses

above named. Her worship is most devout in all Catholic countries. She is prayed to on all conceivable occasions, and as she is the mother of God they believe she can procure the answer to all prayers. Hundreds of thousands of altars are dedicated to her, and images in nearly equal numbers. In the instructions from the works of St. Alphonso Liguori worshipers are told how often to kneel before the altar of the Blessed Virgin in the church, or before any image of her in whatever place it may be, and are instructed, if they cannot have access to the church, to keep a small image of the Virgin in some part of their house at home. In this way the images of the Virgin are multiplied beyond all calculation.

Jesus did not exhibit any marked respect for his mother while on earth. When he spoke to her it was usually in a curt, unfilial sort of way. She seemed to be no more esteemed in life than the other females who followed her son. She was believed to be the mother of several children besides Jesus—those called the brothers of Jesus—and Joseph was supposed to be the father of them; but her devout admirers insisted that she was nevertheless a virgin all the time. In the fourth and fifth centuries the doctrine was agitated with earnestness, some opposing Mary's continued virginity and others insisting upon it. At length the continued virginity of Mary, the mother of God, became a settled doctrine of the orthodox church. Her worship amounted to but little till the sixth century, but by the tenth it became extensive, and has since remained so.

The doctrine of the immaculate conception of the Virgin Mary was agitated in the Romish church for several centuries. Certain portions of the church insisted that it should be accepted that she was herself conceived without stain or sin, and thus specially prepared to become the mother of God. Others opposed it, thinking there was not sufficient ground for the belief. In the council of Trent the doctrine, however, was practically admitted, but it was not formally promulgated as a dogma until the meeting of the Ecumenical Council in 1854, since which time its belief has been as imperatively demanded as any other dogma of the church. Consequently a devout Catholic believes himself sure of going to hell if he

doubts that the holy Virgin was herself conceived without sin, in a similar manner as was afterwards claimed for her son.

### FROM AN APOCRYPHAL GOSPEL.

The following "Facts about the Virgin Mary" are taken from one of the apocryphal gospels—the "History of Joseph the Carpenter," a book that was popular and believed to be genuine in the so-called evangelical age of the church. It is reproduced here from the "Revelations of Antichrist:"

Joseph was a widower with four sons and two daughters, all married but James and Judas. Joseph was a priest as well as a carpenter, but lived mostly by the latter trade. Mary had been brought up in the temple till she was twelve years old, when the priests sought to intrust her to the care of some pious old man who wanted a wife. So they assembled twelve old men, who raffled for Mary. The ex-priest and carpenter won and was betrothed to her at once, the marriage to be postponed until she reached a suitable age. But he took her to his house and kept her two years, when she became a mother by the Holy Ghost.

When Joseph discovered the condition Mary was in he became sorely troubled, and could not eat or drink for a whole day. He thought of hushing up the scandal by putting her away secretly. (It is not said whether he suspected his son James, who was most tenderly attached to his prospective step-mother. When she first came she found him broken-hearted at the recent loss of his own mother, but the advent of a lovely maiden, who, though some years his junior, assumed the relations of a mother to him, soon assuaged his grief; and she, caring for him as a loving step-mother knows how, became known as "the mother of James," even before she became a wife to his father. The absence of Joseph, who had to be away at work at his trade, to say nothing of his age, which was then ninety-two, no doubt tended to strengthen the ties between the son and the female guardian.)

Joseph was not long left to remain in trouble about the condition of Mary. In the midst of his distress he fell asleep at noonday, and had a dream, in which Gabriel appeared to

him and explained the mystery of the immaculate conception. That was enough ; happiness was restored. The angelic friend had tied up the storm. The far-off magi made haste to welcome the new-born King of the Jews. But the wicked Herod was wroth with them for not telling where the infant was, so he might go and worship him also. Jesus grew up and worked with his reputed father Joseph at the carpenter trade, and lived in sweet accord with his two half-brothers, until the death of their father Joseph, who lived to the ripe age of 111 years. These statements should undoubtedly be taken with many grains of allowance.

The worship that is now bestowed by the Romish church upon the Virgin Mary is a striking instance of the ease with which the human race accords deific attributes to revered personages, and of the fondness with which it there bestows its worship and adoration. At first the mother of Jesus was thought no more of than the mother of any other child ; and we have no reason for believing that during her lifetime she was honored on this account in excess of ordinary mothers. Even for several centuries there was no special esteem felt for her ; but at length the church conceived the idea that inasmuch as she was the mother of Jesus, and Jesus was God, she must necessarily be the mother of God, and hence far greater honors should be extended to her than previous to that time. This grew into a pronounced worshipful feeling, which increased with exercise, until she had really become the leading deity in the Christian Pantheon. She is prayed to by the Catholic church more than Father, Son, and Holy Ghost combined ; and inasmuch as the parent is superior to the child, *the mother of God* is greater than God himself. The same kind of veneration and worship is bestowed upon her that was formerly accorded to Lackshmi in India, Isis in Egypt, Ishtar in Babylon, and Juno in Greece and Rome, and she has in the same way become to be regarded as the great representative of the female element in the universe and consequently in divinity.

## THE BIBLE.

It would be as unjust to leave this revered book unnoticed in this volume as it would be to omit from the Christian Pantheon either of the characters named in connection with it. True, personality, or the attributes of a living being, are not accorded to the Bible, but it is as really worshiped by the Protestant division of the Christian church as the Virgin Mary is by the Catholic portion, or as any god which has been treated in the foregoing pages has been worshiped by those who believed in him. The Catholic church recognizes it as divine in its source and character, but still regards it, comparatively, as of little importance, placing its own dictum before it, and not recommending it for general use and reference among the masses of its own followers. But the Protestants place the Bible before the church, and before every living organization and existence. Every Protestant family in this land, however rich, or however humble, has one or more copies of this revered volume, ranging in price from fifty cents to fifty dollars, according to purchasing ability; and it is given the place of honor in the household, on the center-table of the best room, or other most sacred location. There is a kind of prevalent feeling in thousands of families that if they have a fine copy of King James' translation occupying its appropriate position on the family altar, a measure of divine protection is thereby secured, similar in kind, if not in degree, to that which is felt by many savage races of men toward the favorite family fetich, which they worship with devout veneration. It is a serious question, under this state of facts, whether the Bible is not a fetich among its Protestant worshipers as really as any of the inanimate blocks and objects which the African tribes bow down to and worship as a portion of divinity itself.

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The worship that is now bestowed by the Romish church upon the Virgin Mary is a striking instance of the ease with which the human race accords deific attributes to revered personages, and of the fondness with which it there bestows its worship and adoration. At first the mother of Jesus was thought no more of than the mother of any other child ; and we have no reason for believing that during her lifetime she was honored on this account in excess of ordinary mothers. Even for several centuries there was no special esteem felt for her ; but at length the church conceived the idea that inasmuch as she was the mother of Jesus, and Jesus was God, she must necessarily be the mother of God, and hence far greater honors should be extended to her than previous to that time. This grew into a pronounced worshipful feeling, which increased with exercise, until she had really become the leading deity in the Christian Pantheon. She is prayed to by the Catholic church more than Father, Son, and Holy Ghost combined ; and inasmuch as the parent is superior to the child, *the mother of God* is greater than God himself. The same kind of veneration and worship is bestowed upon her that was formerly accorded to Lackshmi in India, Isis in Egypt, Ishtar in Babylon, and Juno in Greece and Rome, and she has in the same way become to be regarded as the great representative of the female element in the universe and consequently in divinity.

## THE BIBLE.

It would be as unjust to leave this revered book unnoticed in this volume as it would be to omit from the Christian Pantheon either of the characters named in connection with it. True, personality, or the attributes of a living being, are not accorded to the Bible, but it is as really worshiped by the Protestant division of the Christian church as the Virgin Mary is by the Catholic portion, or as any god which has been treated in the foregoing pages has been worshiped by those who believed in him. The Catholic church recognizes it as divine in its source and character, but still regards it, comparatively, as of little importance, placing its own dictum before it, and not recommending it for general use and reference among the masses of its own followers. But the Protestants place the Bible before the church, and before every living organization and existence. Every Protestant family in this land, however rich, or however humble, has one or more copies of this revered volume, ranging in price from fifty cents to fifty dollars, according to purchasing ability; and it is given the place of honor in the household, on the center-table of the best room, or other most sacred location. There is a kind of prevalent feeling in thousands of families that if they have a fine copy of King James' translation occupying its appropriate position on the family altar, a measure of divine protection is thereby secured, similar in kind, if not in degree, to that which is felt by many savage races of men toward the favorite family fetich, which they worship with devout veneration. It is a serious question, under this state of facts, whether the Bible is not a fetich among its Protestant worshipers as really as any of the inanimate blocks and objects which the African tribes bow down to and worship as a portion of divinity itself.

and infallible, even as God himself is perfect; and thus being a part of the divine mind it is entitled to the same kind of veneration and worship that is accorded to him. Whether this claim is altogether tenable will be briefly considered in the following pages. If errors are found in it; if imperfections are made apparent; if contradictions and falsehoods are pointed out; if absurdities and impossibilities are discovered in it, the claim of its divine authorship will be seriously shaken, and the belief in its infallibility will be materially impaired; for a faulty, imperfect production cannot emanate from a being without fault, and whose handiwork shows such mathematical accuracy that in millions of the earth's revolutions on its own axis not a second of variation occurs, and in its annual journey around the sun not half a minute lost or gained can be detected in a thousand years. If it is true that Deity is the author of the physical universe, and if it is also true that he is in the same way the author of the book under consideration, the same accuracy and infallibility must be found in it that is so perceptible in his other works. If this proves not to be the case there is at once the best of grounds to doubt the claim that it is his production.

The Bible, as is well known, comprises the Jewish scriptures, called the Old Testament, consisting of thirty-nine books, and the Christian scriptures, called the New Testament, consisting of twenty-seven books. Between these, in the larger Bibles, appears the Apocrypha, of fourteen books. This latter portion is accepted by the Catholics as of divine origin, while the Protestants usually deny it. The first five books of the Bible are called the Pentateuch, or the Five Books of Moses; and the name of Moses is attached to them as author, though without the slightest authority to be found in the books themselves. It is nowhere stated in them that Moses wrote them or had anything to do with them. When his name is mentioned it is invariably in the third person, not as a man speaks of himself, but as another person speaks of him. *The Prophets* are the prophetic and slightly poetical writings of a class of men called prophets; while the Psalms, Proverbs, the book of Job, etc., are called the *Hagiographa*, or *Chetuhim*. These are held to-day in higher esteem than are



any other parts of the Old Testament, but they were not regarded as really sacred much before the beginning of our era. Thus age lends sacredness to all writings. The books of the New Testament were not regarded as sacred in the same sense as was the Old Testament until several centuries after Christianity had been introduced. The longer the date from the writing of a book the more sacredness attaches to it.

Mr. J. T. Sunderland has written a very candid, sensible work on the volume under consideration, entitled, "What Is the Bible?" In speaking of the formation of the Old Testament canon, he says, on page 82: "How the canon of the Old Testament was settled no one can tell. When or by whom it was settled no one can tell. Indeed, it never was *settled* at all. The first step toward the formation of a canon seems to have been taken by Ezra, in the fifth century before Christ. From this time various influences, oftener indefinite than definite, conspired to carry it forward. By the time of Jesus it had, somehow or other, come to be about what it has still remained. And yet there seems never to have been a time previous to the establishment of Christianity when the Jews were at all perfectly agreed among themselves as to which books were properly canonical. And certainly since that time there has been no period when the Christian church has been at all unanimous upon the subject. Indeed, as I have already said, one-half the Christian world to-day contends that the fourteen extant apocryphal books of the Old Testament ought to be included as a true part of the Old Testament, and actually publish them in its Bible as such; while the other half casts them out as spurious.

"As to the New Testament canon, that never was settled only in the most haphazard and utterly inadequate way. Up to the beginning of the second century no one seemingly ever thought of such a thing as any writings ever being regarded as sacred scriptures except the Old Testament writings. For a long time after the gospels and various epistles came into existence, they were much less esteemed than the old scriptures. Indeed, up to the middle of the second century they were not so highly esteemed as the oral traditions of the churches in which any of the apostles had preached. By the

close of the second century, however, a change appears. Certain New Testament books have come into more general favor than the rest, and are beginning to be classed to a certain extent by themselves as a new collection of sacred scriptures. As time goes on they grow more and more into use among the churches. Yet for centuries the various churches continued to use, side by side with the writings which make up our New Testament to-day, various books which we call spurious. It is curious to note that hardly one of the great writers and 'Fathers' of the early church draws the line of canonicity of the New Testament books just where we draw it. In almost every case they either include some books that we reject, or else reject some that we include. For instance, Irenæus, one of the earliest and most authoritative, rejects five books which we have in the New Testament, viz., Hebrews, Jude, James, II. Peter, III. John; while he puts great value upon the 'Shepherd of Hermas,' one of the so-called apocryphal books which we reject, and calls it scripture. Again, Clement classes the three apocryphal books—to wit, the 'Apocalypse of Peter,' the 'Epistle of Barnabas,' and the 'Shepherd of Hermas'—as all of equal value and authority with our three New Testament books, to wit, Hebrews, II. John, and Jude. The celebrated Tertullian cast out all the books of the New Testament except the four gospels, Acts, thirteen epistles of Paul, Revelations, and I. John. Even Athanasius quotes a number of apocryphal books as of equal value and inspiration with those which are included in our present canon. Origen (in the third century) says that 'the churches use Tobit'—an apocryphal work. Jerome, late in the fourth century, quotes the apocryphal book Sirach as scripture, remarking that it is in the Christian catalogue.

"It is claimed by some that the Council of Laodicea (A. D. 363) settled the canon finally; but this, Davidson, our highest English authority on the subject, denies. Says Davidson: 'Notwithstanding the numerous endeavors both in the East and West to settle the canon during the fourth or fifth centuries, it was not finally closed. The doubts of individuals were still expressed, and succeeding ages testify to the want of universal agreement respecting several books.' Indeed, if

that council did settle what books properly belong in the Old and New Testaments, then we are wrong to-day in not including Baruch in our Old Testament, and in retaining Revelation in our New. Moreover, if, as is sometimes claimed, the Council of Carthage (A. D. 397?) settled the canon, then we are wrong in not including Ecclesiasticus, Wisdom, Tobit, Judith, and First and Second Maccabees in our present Bible. Indeed, the Romanists allow that the canon was not settled until the modern Council of Trent, held in 1546, in the midst of the German Reformation. This council proceeded to pass a formal decree declaring what books properly belong in the Bible. The list is of our present Protestant Bible, with the addition of the fourteen books of the Old Testament Apocrypha. The Romanists, therefore, with their theory that the church is infallible in its decisions, may well claim to have an authoritative scripture canon. But there can be no ground for such claim on the part of Protestants. Luther was decidedly of the opinion that our present canon is imperfect. He thought the Old Testament book of Esther did not belong in the Bible. On the other hand, in translating the Old Testament, he translated the old apocryphal books of Judith, Wisdom, Tobit, Sirach, Baruch, First and Second Maccabees, and the Prayer of Manasseh. In his prefaces he gives his judgment concerning these books. With regard to the First Maccabees, he thinks it almost equal to the other books of holy scripture, and not unworthy to be reckoned among them. Of Wisdom, he says he was long in doubt whether it should be numbered among the canonical books; and of Sirach, he says that it is a right good book, proceeding from a wise man. He had judgments equally decided regarding certain New Testament books. He thought the epistle to the Hebrews came neither from Paul nor any of the apostles, and was not to be put on an equality with epistles written by apostles themselves. The Apocalypse (or Revelation) is considered neither apostolic nor prophetic, and of little or no worth. He did not believe the epistle of Jude proceeded from the apostle. James' epistle he pronounced unapostolic, and 'an epistle of straw.' The great Swiss reformer, Zwingli, maintained that the Apocalypse is not properly a Bible book.

Even Calvin did not think that Paul was the author of Hebrews, or Peter of the book called II. Peter; while as to the book of Revelation, he denounced it as unintelligible, and prohibited the pastors of Geneva from attempts at interpreting it."

From the foregoing facts it appears that there is great disagreement among the highest authorities of the Christian church as to which books should be accepted as the word of God, and which should be rejected; that the councils which were convened to decide the momentous question which man wrote for God, and which did not, were held in the centuries when great ignorance and credulity prevailed; that the delegates to those councils sometimes quarreled and fought over the question whether a given writer had authority to declare God's will or not; and that might, not right, generally decided the disputed points. We have inevitably to come to the conclusion that there is little reliability in the decisions that have hitherto been arrived at, and that no man, and no body of men, have the power to decide whether a writer, wholly unknown to them, had been commissioned to pen the word and will of the Architect of the Universe. The same right which they assumed in this direction inheres in every individual into whose hands the books may fall. Inasmuch as God has not made known to any person any rule or criterion by which his word and his writings can be distinguished from the word and writings of a man, and inasmuch as for two thousand years or more his priests and vicegerents have found out no means of deciding the troublesome question, no one is compelled to accept the divine origin of the writings of any man contrary to his own reason and belief. By the same rule by which Luther and Calvin rejected Hebrews, Revelation, and other books, Smith or Jones has the perfect right to discard any or all others of the books which are claimed to be from the hand of the Almighty.

It is, indeed, to be regretted, if the Ruler of the Universe saw fit to write a work for the children of men, that he did not also see the necessity—inasmuch as numerous spurious books would be placed before them with the positive assurance that they were genuine and from the pen of heaven—of giv

ing with his word some unerring rule by which the genuine could be told from the counterfeit—a heavenly detector, in fact, which would enable every honest inquirer to choose the true without danger of failure. But this was not done; and those who assume to know, and to be able to decide for themselves and others, are simply impostors, and know no more of that which they pretend to have full knowledge of than the most ordinary person. This being the case, every individual remains his own arbiter and judge as to which he shall believe as divine and which he shall disbelieve. And it is a consoling reflection that no man has the power to send a fellow-being to the realm of eternal torment for not accepting that for which there is no authority that it should be accepted.

It seems there is no lack of books which have claimed admission in both the Old and New Testament, and which either were lost or failed to secure the requisite amount of support to secure their admission. Among the lost books, which perhaps had claims to be regarded as the word of God equal to those now forming the Old Testament canon, are the Prophecy of Enoch, referred to in Jude 14, 15; the Book of the Wars of the Lord, referred to in Numbers xxi, 14; the Book of Jasher, spoken of in Joshua x, 13, and 2 Samuel 1, 18; the Book of the Manner of the Kingdom (1 Samuel x, 25); the Books of Nathan and God concerning King David (1 Chron. xxix, 29); the Book of the Acts of Solomon (1 Kings xi, 41); the Books of Nathan, Ahijah, and Iddo; Solomon's Parables, Songs, and Treatises on Natural History; the Book of Seraiah; the Book of Jehu; the Book of Isaiah concerning Uzziah; the Words of the Seers; the Book of Lamentations over King Uriah; the Volume of Jeremiah, burned by Jehudi; the Chronicle of the Kings of Judah; the Chronicle of the Kings of Israel. These sixteen books are all lost, or supposed to be lost; and herein comes the place for marvel, to wit, why it was that if these books were written by the Creator of heaven and earth, or that he authorized them—and that he did a portion of them, at least, we have the right to infer, because they are mentioned in the books we have, which are decided to be

authentic—why he should have suffered them to be destroyed or lost. If he did not think enough of those lost books to protect them, and keep them safe for his people, have we not the right to conclude that he did not write them, and also that he did not write the books which make reference to them?

Among the gospels and epistles—of which large numbers made their appearance in the early centuries of the Christian era, and which were presented for recognition and admission in the New Testament collection—may be mentioned the Gospel of the Infancy of our Savior; the Gospel of the Nativity of St. Mary; the Gospel according to the Twelve Apostles; the Gospel of Bartholomew; the Gospel according to the Hebrews; the Acts of John; the Acts of Andrew; the Acts of Pilate; the Epistle of Christ to Peter and Paul; the Narrative of Joseph of Arimathæa; the General Epistle of Barnabas; the First Epistle of Clement to the Corinthians; the Second Epistle of Clement to the Corinthians; the Epistle of Ignatius to the Ephesians; The Apostolic Constitutions; The First, Second, and Third Books of Hermas. These are but a small part of the entire list. Of the apocryphal books pertaining to Christ and the apostles, forty-one are still in existence, while sixty-eight which were mentioned by some of the writers in the early centuries are now lost. In view of these facts it is highly probable that our present canon is minus several books which it ought to contain, and that it contains some which should be rejected. The whole thing, then, is in a sad muddle, and there is no way of clearing it up. Again, we are left to conclude that the King of heaven did not write any of the books which are ascribed to him, or that if he did write them he took very little care of them afterwards; or still again, that he suffered numerous deceivers and counterfeiters to write for him, or in his style, and impose spurious productions upon the innocent, credulous masses who had no means given them of deciding which books were written by God and which by man.

To add to all these difficulties upon the earnest and long-continued investigation given to the subject by such learned Bible students as Ewald, Knappert, Kuenen, De Wette, Zel-

ler, W. R. Greg, Colenso, Strauss, Scott, Renan, Muller, Farrar, Prof. Newman, Dr. S. Davidson, Prof. Robertson Smith Rev. S. Baring Gould, Matthew Arnold, Dean Stanley, and others, truth compels the statement that with the exception of some of the prophets in the Old Testament, and some of the Epistles of Paul in the New, of the eighty books of the Bible, including the fourteen books of the Apocrypha, not one of them was written by the person to whom it is ascribed, and scarcely one of them was written at the period when it is claimed it was written. This will be made clear as we get further along. This has indeed a bad outlook for what is called the "infallible Word of God." If falsehoods as to the writers of those books, and of the time when they were written, have thus been palmed off upon the world, is there any reasonable grounds for believing that they were penned by the hand or by the dictation of him who formed the suns and worlds which make up the universe? If a part of the claims set up are fraudulent, have we any assurance that any of them are true and reliable?

## THE PENTATEUCH.

In the article on Jehovah pretty extensive quotations are made from the Rev. J. W. Chadwick's "Bible of To-day," by which it is very satisfactorily established that the five books of the Bible called the Pentateuch were not written by Moses, and not until from five hundred to nine hundred years after his death. The reader will do well to turn to those quotations and read them in connection with what is here said. A few additional reasons will be given here why Moses could not have been the writer of those books :

1. Moses could not have written the Pentateuch because it records his own death and burial. Of all the remarkable men that ever lived, not one has been known to possess the ability to write up the account of his own death, his funeral services, and a description of his burial. It is not to be presumed that Moses differed in this respect from all the other men who have lived in the world.

2. The writer of Deuteronomy, who wrote the account of the death of Moses, says that "no man knoweth of his sepulcher till this day," implying that the statement was written a long time after the event of the death happened. It would have been simply ridiculous to have used such an expression if written immediately after the event occurred, or before it happened, which would have had to be the case if written by Moses.

3. Another phrase in connection says, "There arose not a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses, who knew the Lord face to face." Moses could not have written thus about himself, nor did any one else write that phrase except one who lived a long time after the time of Moses. It is most clear that Moses was not the author of that language.

4. In Genesis xiv, 14, an account is given of Lot being taken prisoner and carried off, upon which Abraham armed his household and secured Lot from his captors, and "pursued them unto Dan." Paine shows conclusively that this account could not have been written till hundreds of years after the time of Abraham, and a long time after Moses. At the time of Abraham there was no Dan. No man had lived by that name and no part of the country had been known by that appellation. After the children of Israel entered the land of Canaan, the descendants of Dan made a foray, as described in Judges xviii, 27-29, against the people of Laish, who were "at quiet and secure; and they smote them with the edge of the sword, and burned the city with fire, and they built a city and dwelt therein, and they called the name of the city Dan, after the name of Dan their father, howbeit the name of the city was Laish at the first." This Dan became a somewhat noted place after that, it being on the northern boundary of the Holy Land; but there was no city or country before that called Dan; consequently that part of Genesis could not have been written until after the death of Moses and after the children of Israel entered the promised land and commenced their cruel warfare against the rightful owners of the country. Probably the account was not written till a long time even after the entry into Canaan, for about that time they were too busy to be writing what Abraham



had done four or five hundred years before. Moses certainly did not write it, and the assertion that he did is simply a falsehood.

5. Genesis xxxvi, 31, reads thus: "And these are the kings that reigned in the land of Edom before there reigned any king over the children of Israel." How absurd it is to suppose for a moment that that passage was written by Moses three hundred and sixty years, at least, before ever a king reigned over Israel! The only truthful conclusion is that the statement was not written until after there had been kings in Israel, and how much later than that we cannot tell. Moses assuredly was not the man who penned it.

6. Numbers xii, 3, reads in this way: "Now, the man Moses was very meek, above all the men which were on the face of the earth." No friend of Moses should accuse him of being so egotistical and vain as to write in that way about himself, and no friend of God should accuse him of inducing any one else to write it. Whoever did write it wished to present Moses in a favorable light; but if he really was the meekest man on the face of the earth, he certainly would not write in that absurd way about himself. It is very safe to decide that the claim that he wrote it is utterly absurd.

7. Exodus xvi, 35, reads as follows: "And the children of Israel did eat manna forty years, until they came to a land inhabited; they did eat manna until they came unto the borders of the land of Canaan." This statement includes time after the death of Moses, and could not have been written by him. The children of Israel did not reach the land of Canaan until after Moses had departed this life, and he was taken away before the manna was. The account of its discontinuance was written by some other person. In Joshua v, 12, this account is given of the same event: "And the manna ceased on the morrow, after they had eaten of the old corn of the land; neither had the children of Israel manna any more, but they did eat of the fruit of the land of Canaan that year." This, like the former statement, was written a long time after their arrival in the land of Canaan.

8. Deuteronomy iii, 11, makes this statement: "For only Og, king of Bashan, remained of the remnant of giants; behold,

his bedstead was a bedstead of iron; is it not in Rabbath of the children of Ammon? Nine cubits was the length thereof, and four cubits the breadth of it, after the cubit of a man." Not stopping to consider the improbability of this Munchausen story about a giant so large as to require a bedstead sixteen feet and four inches long, and seven feet and four inches wide, we will consider the simple fact that it could not have been Moses who wrote about Rabbath, or Rabbah, for at the time he was alive it had not been taken, and it was not till four hundred years after his death. 2 Samuel xii, 26, states the case in this wise: "And Joab [David's general] fought against Rabbah of the children of Ammon, and took the royal city." Thus again we see that Moses could not have written the books ascribed to him.

9. In Deut. ii, 12, we read this: "The Horims also dwelt in Seir beforetime; but the children of Esau succeeded them, when they had destroyed them from before them, and dwelt in their stead; as Israel did unto the land of his possession, which the Lord gave unto them." This refers to a condition of things that did not take place until after the death of Moses; it is spoken of as having already transpired, and could not have been written by him.

10. Deut. xxiv, 14, has this: "Thou shalt not oppress a hired servant that is poor and needy, whether he be of thy brethren, or of thy strangers that are in thy land, within thy gates." This was not written till after the children of Israel were already in possession of the land promised them, when they had land and when there were strangers also in it. It could not have been written by Moses when in the desert, where they had no lands and where there were no gates and no strangers within their gates.

11. Deut. iii, 14: "Jair, the son of Manasseh, took all the country of Argob, unto the coasts of Geshuri and Maachathi, and called them after his own name, Bashan-havoth-jair, unto this day." This records an event that took place after the death of Moses, and the expression "unto this day" is conclusive that it was not written till long after the event occurred. Moses most assuredly could not have been the writer.

12. Lev. xviii, 24, 28: "Defile not you yourselves in any of these things . . . that the land vomit not you out also as it vomited forth the nations which were before you." It would seem to require an insane person to insist that that statement could have been written by Moses, who died long before the land referred to vomited forth the nations which occupied it before the children of Israel entered it.

13. Gen. xl, 15: "For I was stolen out of the land of the Hebrews." This is another similar instance. There was no land of the Hebrews until after Palestine came into their possession, and that, as we well know, was not until after the death of Moses; so most assuredly we will have to deprive him of the honor of writing that quotation.

14. Gen. xxiii, 2: "And Sarah died in Kirjath-arba; the same is Hebron in the land of Canaan." This text could not have been penned until subsequent to the occupation of the land of Canaan by the descendants of Abraham.

15. Gen. xxxv, 19: "And Rachel died, and was buried in the way to Ephrath, which is Bethlehem." Also 27: "And Jacob came into the city of Arbah, which is Hebron." These names were not in existence until after the Israelites occupied Palestine, and nothing is more clear than that Moses could not have been the writer of them. There are other similar passages which contain self-evident proof that Moses positively was not the writer of the Pentateuch. This being established, one thing remains clear to be seen, that the world has been grossly imposed upon in being time and again assured that Moses was the inspired writer of the Pentateuch. It is as false as any assertion that could be made. Again, in this connection, the question inevitably presents itself for solution, If such an amount of misrepresentation has been practiced upon the world in reference to the authorship of the first five books in the Bible, can men repose implicit confidence in the statements made in those books? If they were not written by Moses, nor in the time of Moses, and not until six, eight, or ten hundred years afterwards, and then by whom, whether reliable or unreliable, no one knows, but probably some priest who had an object in view, can they still be regarded as the revealed words of the Creator and Ruler of all the worlds

throughout endless space? When men see the fallacy of what they have been taught to believe is truth, will they continue to hug the delusion to their bosom and say, "We will continue to believe in this absurdity though every proof that our former belief is true is wrested from us?" If it is found that a great mistake has been made in the authorship and divine origin of the first great five books of the Bible, is not all confidence in the remainder of the volume most seriously impaired? Can falsehood and truth thus be blended together, and all be accepted as divine and infallible?

16. Deut. xxxiv: "There arose not a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses." It does not need an argument to convince any reasonable person that Moses could not have penned that, even if he wished to boast in that way about himself. It was written long after there had been an "Israel," and long after Israel had had numerous prophets.

17. In Exodus xxxviii, 8, looking-glasses are spoken of. Could Moses have written that, when looking-glasses were unknown for many hundreds of years after his death?

## THE BOOK OF JOSHUA

Is subject to the same kind of damaging criticism. We have always been told it was written by Joshua himself, and the world readily accedes to that belief; but as it alludes to events which did not take place until long after Joshua had died, the claim of his authorship falls hopelessly to the ground.

In chapter xxiv, 31, it is said that "Israel served the Lord all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that overlived Joshua." Although this valorous cut-throat and murderer has had the reputation of stopping the sun and the moon in their course, it can hardly be thought he could report what took place up to the hour of his death, and also during all the days of the elders that succeeded him.

Chap. vi, 27: "His fame was noised throughout all the country." It is hardly reasonable that Joshua should have written that of himself. If he did, he must be set down as a braggart whose statements are not entitled to respect or credit.

Chapter x narrates the wonderful event that the sun and moon stopped at the command of Joshua and stood still for nearly the length of a day, and adds in verse 14: "And there was no day like that, before it nor after it, that the Lord hearkened unto the voice of a man." Waiving for the present the extreme absurdity and impossibility of the story, it must be evident to every sane mind, from the construction of the language, that the account could not have been written near the date of the event; the expression, "before that day nor after it," precludes the possibility of that. If even Joshua stopped the glorious orbs of heaven, he could not write in that way.

Chap. xv, 63: "As for the Jebusites, the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the children of Judah could not drive them out, and the Jebusites dwell with the children of Judah at Jerusalem unto this day." Now as Jerusalem, or Jebusi, as it was originally called, was not taken till the time of David, and as there is no account or claim of its ever being taken at any other time and then retaken by the original inhabitants, it is clear that this account could not have been written before the time of David, which was three hundred and seventy years after the death of Joshua. This is another proof of how false the claim is that the book was written by Joshua.

The same remarks will justly apply to chap. viii, 28: "And Joshua burned Ai, and made it a heap forever, even a desolation unto this day." This most evidently was written by some person long after the event occurred—somebody besides Joshua. Several other similar passages present the same proofs that Joshua was the author of the book. In one place it says, "And he raised thereon a great heap of stones, *which remaineth unto this day.*" And again, "And he laid great stones on the cave's mouth, which remain unto this very day." This style of expression was used to denote that a long time had elapsed since the occurrence of the events described, and must necessarily have been written long after Joshua had ceased his murderous career and was sleeping the sleep of death. But it is needless to point out all the statements which go to show that Joshua could not have been the author of the book bearing his name. A few quotations will

prove this point as well as a multitude. It remains very clear that the world has been deceived about Joshua having been the writer of the book of Joshua. It probably would have been no better written had it been done by him, but a falsification has been made apparent that cannot be overlooked. Let it be remembered then, it was not written by Joshua, and who the writer was, nobody knows. Whether he was a truthful man, nobody knows; but that he was *not*, everybody has a right to insist. Whether he was inspired to write as he did from the Eternal Source of Truth, nobody knows, and nobody has grounds to believe that he was.

### OTHER BOOKS.

The same criticisms apply with equal cogency to the book of JUDGES. It is an anonymous work, and probably by the same writer as the book of Joshua. The writer of it is an unknown person, but it is very sure it was not written at the time the events named in it were said to have occurred. For instance, in chap. i, 7, 8, it speaks of Jerusalem and of its having been taken by the children of Judah. As just remarked, the place was not taken by the Israelites but once, and that in the time of David. It was not called Jerusalem previous to that time, but Jebus or Jebusi, consequently it must be seen that the book of Judges was not written before the time of David, more than three hundred years after the date of the events it narrates. How much confidence such a work is entitled to the reader can judge for himself. It is unnecessary to examine the book further; one instance of this kind proves as much as twenty. If a part is spurious probably all is.

The two books of Samuel will, upon examination, fare no better. As they relate events that occurred after the death of Samuel it is very unreasonable to suppose he wrote them. The first book relates the Witch of Endor story, about Samuel's being raised from his grave. Of course that was after he had departed this life; and it would, indeed, require an insane person to insist that Samuel wrote the account after he was in his grave. It is the same with the second book. It begins with events that did not occur till after Samuel's death, and

continues down till the close of the reign of David. It would be pretty hard to make a sensible man believe that Samuel, after nearly forty years in his grave, could write the history of current events. Nothing is more sure than that Samuel was not the writer of the books credited to him. Who the writer was, or whether he was worthy of credit, no man knows.

The two books of **KINGS** are simply historical compilations which any man of ordinary ability could write, had he the data before him. No inspiration is necessary to write history, and it is singular that it should be deemed necessary to count the books of **Kings** as the word of God. First **Kings** begins with the reign of Solomon, and Second **Kings** ends after the reign of Zedekiah, and with the Babylonian captivity. Some think the books were written in Babylon, and others that not till after the return of the captives, and then by some priest. Nobody knows who the author is, or whether what he wrote is true or false. The greater part of the details is little more than a series of wars, massacres, assassinations, and bloodshed. If the Ruler of the universe can be believed to be the author of that very indifferent history, it must be admitted that he was not well employed in getting it up.

First and Second **CHRONICLES** go over much the same ground as the two books of **Kings**, and are evidently the work of another author, with many contradictions and discrepancies. Rev. J. W. Chadwick very correctly says "they pervert our knowledge more than they increase it." It is thought by the best judges that the books were written 300 B. C. to 250 B. C., but by whom no one knows. They are unreliable as history, and unworthy a place in the Jewish scriptures. It is derogatory to the character of the Eternal One to charge him with having been their author.

**EZRA** and **NEHEMIAH** are believed to be by the same author as **Chronicles** and originally formed a part of them. This is pretty evident from the fact that the last two verses of **Chronicles** and the first three of **Ezra** are alike, with the exception that in the last verse of **Chronicles** it breaks off abruptly and omits three lines (about rebuilding the temple) contained in **Ezra**. The books were not written till within 250 or 300

years of our era, or two hundred and fifty years after the events transpired which they relate. They are of an unreliable character, as are the Chronicles. The books of Ezra and Nehemiah agree in the statement that forty-two thousand Jews returned from Babylon to Jerusalem, but in the details they give to make up this amount they disagree, and fall considerably short of the number. Ezra's items added up make a total of 29,818, being 12,542 less than the number claimed. The items named in Nehemiah make a total of 31,089, or 11,271 less than claimed. This shows the amount of accuracy and credibility which should be accorded them. It is a mockery to say that God was the author of such fourth-rate history or that any human being is under obligation to accept it as his word.

The small book of RUTH, though passed, must not be slighted. It is a kind of love story, not very well told, of a strolling Moabitish girl, creeping slyly into bed at night with her cousin Boaz. The world has been filled with similar incidents. Those who choose to accept this particular adventure as the revealed word of heaven have a right to do so. The story is thought to have been written 300 or 400 B. C., nearly a thousand years after the time when the little affair was said to have taken place. Why it was deemed necessary to place it in the Hebrew canon is difficult to comprehend.

The book of ESTHER is still worse, being simply a story of the prostitution of Esther to the passions of a drunken king, who put away his wife and queen because she refused to come to her drunken husband, in the midst of a drunken company, to be made a show of. It is not strange that the astute Dr. Davidson thought it unfit to be placed in the Old Testament canon. It is purely a fiction, written about 250 B. C., and probably in Persia, where the plot of the romance is laid. Why, it may be asked, are people compelled, under penalty of hell-fire, to accept such vile trash as God's revealed word?

The book of JOB, in many particulars the grandest and best book in the Bible, is undoubtedly a work of fiction, but it is wholly unknown who the author was, and no one can tell within a thousand years the time when it was written. Where it was written is equally a great riddle. The names of the per-



sons and places in the book have no connection with any other part of the Bible. Job was said to be of the land of Uz, but where the land of Uz is nobody has been able to decide. But evidently it formed no part of Jewry, and Job was not a Jew. There is great reason for thinking the book was not written by a Jew. Such Hebrew scholars as Abenezra and Spinoza say the book has no internal evidence of being a Hebrew production. Undoubtedly it is of Gentile origin, and on account of its worthiness and grandeur was appropriated by the Jews and ultimately added to their sacred writings. It is in the form of a dialogue, six persons, including God, taking part in it; and it has by some been styled a drama. God and Satan are represented in the first chapter as holding a friendly conversation relative to the good qualities of the man Job, and a contract was entered into giving Satan power over Job to do with him as he pleased, so he did him no personal injury. Satan accordingly caused the death of Job's seven sons and three daughters, as well as the destruction of Job's property, consisting of seven thousand sheep, three thousand camels, five hundred yoke of oxen, five hundred she-asses, and a very great household, all of which Job bore very patiently. At another interview (chapter ii), in a conversation between God and Satan, the latter suggested that ailments and bodily afflictions be brought upon the good man. To this God agreed, merely stipulating that the man's life should be spared. Then Satan smote Job with sore boils from the sole of his foot to his crown, so that the miserable man took a potsherd to scrape himself with, and sat down in the ashes. In this unhappy plight he was visited by censorious friends, who administered anything but comfort to the afflicted man. Long and very pious dialogues were held, and the patient man became very impatient. A great many grand things, however, were uttered by the *dramatis personæ*, and the doctrine of Deism was thoroughly enunciated.

After Satan had tortured the hapless Job to his heart's content, the Lord remunerated Job by giving him twice as much as he had before, besides seven other sons and three daughters. The Lord gave him 14,000 sheep, 6,000 camels, 1,000 yoke of oxen, and 1,000 she-asses. With such wealth bestowed upon

him it might well be said, "The Lord blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning." This is the only instance where Satan is introduced in the Old Testament; but it can easily be seen that the whole thing is a fiction. It is thought that the first two chapters and the last are additions to the poem after the original was written. The speeches of Elihu are also thought to be interpolations, as they have no proper connection with the composition. A strong argument in favor of its not being a Hebrew production is the familiarity shown with the science of astronomy. The Jewish writers evinced no such knowledge.

The PSALMS have been ascribed to King David, but there is very slight probability that he was the author of a single one of them. There are one hundred and fifty in all, and some writers generously accord seventy-three of these to David, while others, like Ewald, are willing to accede to fifteen only being the production of David; and Kuenen, probably quite as sound a judge, says, "We cannot safely predicate of a single psalm that it was written by David, and the chances are that not a single one was written by him." Chadwick says this position is a thousand times more reasonable than the opposite extreme. Twelve of the psalms are ascribed to Asaph, eleven to the sons of Korah, two to Solomon, and one to Moses. Had they been ascribed to Zoroaster, King Cyrus, Thales, and Confucius, probably there would have been equal truth and justice in the award. There are no proofs that the credits have the slightest truth.

The Psalms are simply a collection of religious songs, by different authors and written at different eras, varying in time, probably, from the earliest to the latest, nearly a thousand years. Some of them are vindictive and malicious enough to have been written by Nero or Caligula. The one hundred and thirty-seventh psalm, which speaks of the captivity in Babylon, could not have been written within four hundred years of the time of David. Several of them, by the ablest critics, are said to have been written as late as the time of the Maccabees—one hundred and fifty years before our era. Some of the psalms have been broken in two; others made up of incongruous fragments. The nineteenth is an example.

It begins by saying, "The heavens declare the glory of God," and, as Chadwick says, "is a magnificent poem of nature, such as an eighth century prophet might have written. The second part, beginning, 'The law of the Lord is perfect,' is a glorification of the ritual law, dating from Ezra's time or later." The fourteenth psalm is a duplicate of the fifty-third, and parts of various psalms reappear in others. Quite a number are alphabetical in their poetic form. Each verse in the original begins with a letter of the alphabet, till all are gone over, as in the twenty-fifth. Sometimes each half verse begins with a different letter. But there is much imperfection in them; letters are often missing. These facts show how many changes, mishaps, and vicissitudes they have been subjected to.

The observations of Chadwick relative to David and the authorship of Psalms are very correct and will be partially given here: "Let us remind ourselves very briefly what the character of David actually was, and what sort of religion was illustrated by the practice of his life. We have really three accounts of David, one in the Chronicles, which is hardly worth attending to; two in Samuel, one, as it were, inside the other. That is, we have a set of legends imbedded in a Deuteronomic idealization. It is evident we get nearest David in the legends. Drawing out our conclusions from these legends, we find that David was a man of splendid force and courage; that he followed up successfully the work of Saul in consolidating the wrangling tribes into a single nation; that he could love as passionately as he could hate, and did love his children and a few others with a great affection. But for all his physical courage he was smitten through and through with moral cowardice. One of the most cunning, he was also one of the most treacherous of men, and one of the most cruel. He put the captive Ammonites 'under saws and under harrows of iron, and under axes of iron, and made them to pass through the brick kiln,' that is, roasted them alive. 'And thus did he unto the cities of the Ammonites.' Joab, who had fought his hardest battles for him and done his dirtiest work, he hated and yet feared, and so, himself afraid to strike at him, arranged his murder on his dying bed. This man had

all the vices of a Herod and a Henry VIII. He was as licentious as he was murderous and cruel. 'A man after God's own heart' was he? 'After Yahweh's own heart' the text should read, and this he was, his Yahweh being such a god as such a man would naturally conceive. As for his religion, it was not even the best religion of his time. Samuel and others had arrived at the exclusive worship of Yahweh. But David apparently worshiped Baal also, and named one of his sons Baal-jada. He had a domestic *teraphim*, or idol, which he worshiped. And what was his conception of Yahweh? As a god whom he could not worship outside of Canaan. As a god whom he could appease by letting him smell a burnt-offering; a god who could delight in human sacrifice. You have not forgotten that terrible picture at the Centennial of Rizpah defending the corpses of Saul's seven sons against the wild beasts and the vultures. That was a picture of King David's worship of Yahweh. Those frightful corpses were a sacrifice which he had offered to his god in time of famine.

"It is only possible to think of David as the author of any number of the psalms by forming our idea of the man and his religion from the psalms themselves, a manifest begging of the question. Such a man as he actually was, with such a religion as he practiced, could have written but a very few, if any, of the psalms that have come down to us. Some of them are harsh and cruel and vindictive enough to be his, but they have other marks which prove a later origin. This is the general argument. Then by taking up one by one the three and seventy psalms ascribed to David, it is found that almost without exception they betray a situation very different from his, and a religion of a much higher order—conceptions of Yahweh, of the worship appropriate to him, of his relation to nature and to Israel and to other gods, such as no one in David's time had reached. Take the fifty-first psalm. It is ascribed to David on the occasion of Nathan's rebuking him for his sin with Bathsheba. But it contains a spiritual doctrine that David never could have anticipated, and its closing verses, 'Show favor to Zion; build up Jerusalem's wall,' indicate the time of the captivity, or after, when the walls of the

city had been broken down. Very likely these closing verses were stuck on at a later period, but the remainder of the psalm is a sufficient argument, and in almost every case the psalms ascribed to David are as evidently as this of later origin." This reasoning is good, and helps us to see what misrepresentation and fraud have been practiced in the sacred name of God and his writings.

It is easy to understand why the psalms should be ascribed to David. He was a noted individual, was believed to be a great warrior, and was represented as a devout worshiper. It doubtless was supposed that to make a song or a psalm popular it was only necessary to have it believed to be a production of King David. In the same way hundreds of jokes and witty anecdotes have been attributed to Abraham Lincoln which he never heard. It is the tendency of ecclesiastics to attribute to Moses all that pertains to law, to David every devotional hymn or psalm, and to Solomon every proverb, but all are equally false and unwarranted. The truth rather is that neither of these persons had ought to do in the field of literature thus ascribed to them. David was very likely such a brigand and such a libertine as he is represented, but his character as a psalm writer and singer has been immensely overrated.

PROVERBS.—These have been attributed to Solomon in the same way that the Psalms were to David. There is just as little truth in one credit as the other. Possibly a few of them may have been by Solomon, but there is no proof of it, and very little probability. They are undoubtedly by different authors and of different nationalities, and were not collected together as they now are until after the return from the captivity. After six introductory verses in the first chapter, a discourse, rather than proverbs, follows and continues to the end of the ninth chapter. It is an earnest exhortation to a moral life; a warning against murder, theft, contentiousness, dishonesty, sloth, and above all, unchastity and adultery. Who could accuse Solomon, with his seven hundred wives and three hundred concubines, of preaching rigid chastity and sexual continence? From the beginning of chapter ten to chapter twenty-two it

is made up of fragments from various sources. Other fragments make up to chapter thirty. The latter chapter begins: "The words of Agur, the son of Jakh." Whether Agur was Jew or Gentile does not appear, but probably the latter. Chapter thirty-one begins with: "The words of King Lemuel, the prophecy that his mother taught him." As the children of Israel never had a king by the name of Lemuel, the proverbs that follow are assuredly Gentile. The probability is, as they were not compiled till after the return from the captivity, that many of them were gathered up in Babylon, and were largely Gentile, and that few or none were by Solomon. It kept him so busily engaged to attend to the numerous females of his household that it is reasonable to suppose he spent very little time in writing proverbs.

**ECCLESIASTES, OR THE PREACHER.**—This sad book is also attributed to Solomon, but with as little truth as Proverbs. The person who wrote it undoubtedly wished to have his production pass as written by Solomon, but the cloven foot shows itself too often. In the very first verse we find "King in Jerusalem," and in the twelfth, "I, the Preacher, was king over Israel in Jerusalem." Can any sensible person think Solomon would have written of himself in that way? He was king over Israel when he died, and he evidently did not write that work while he was dying. If he was the writer why should he say in the past tense, *I was king over Israel in Jerusalem*, when at the time of his life there had been a king over Israel only *in Jerusalem*. How absurd to think he should have said of himself, "I have gotten more wisdom than all that were before me!" The wisest man that ever lived would hardly write in that way of himself. Thus says Chadwick: "The part of Solomon is not well sustained. The writer is continually forgetting himself and writing in his own proper person as a critic of the rulers of his time. The time of Solomon was a time of splendor and success; the writer's time, a time of the opposite character. And once there pops out an allusion to Judæa as the 'province;' whether of Persia or the Seleucidæ is not specified. The ideas of God are more advanced than those of Solomon's time, or than the prophets'. The word Elohim is used for the

Deity exclusively, as it did not come to be till after Ezra's time, when Yahweh became the ineffable name. The character of the Hebrew, abounding in Chaldaisms, that is, forms of speech contracted in Babylon, and most resembling the Hebrew of Daniel, and the decay of the poetic forms, are other arguments which have great weight with those who can appreciate their force."

There are slight differences of opinion among the critics as to the precise period when the book was written. Ewald and Davidson say 325 B. C., or seven hundred years after Solomon succeeded to the throne of Israel. Kuenen, Oort, and others, make it a century later, about 225 B. C., or eight hundred years after Solomon was made king. The writer is believed to have been one in the service of the temple—a priest. The space can not be used here to dilate upon the doleful character of the book, the main purpose being to show that Solomon was not the writer of it, and that a fraud has been perpetrated upon the world by representing it as the work of Israel's brilliant king. Much could be said against the spirit and taste of the production, but it is unnecessary. Let it pass.

SONG OF SOLOMON, OR CANTICLES—This is also attributed to Solomon, but probably without justice or truth. Whoever wrote it wished to give it popularity by ascribing it to Israel's greatest king. Chadwick says: "As for the authorship of Solomon, it is hardly worth considering. On any theory of interpretation, natural or allegorical, it is equally impossible. He would have been the last man to write a drama celebrating the purity and faithfulness of a maiden whom he had tried in vain to add to his seraglio. And how absurd to think that he would make himself in an allegory the impersonation of the idolatrous enemies of Israel's righteousness and peace. The book was probably written late in the ninth, or early in the eighth century B. C., most likely in northern Israel, where Solomon was never a great favorite."

The drama or poem is a very amorous one, and in consideration of the time when it was written, and that it is an oriental production, it perhaps is not in very bad taste; but what connection it has with the Jewish scriptures, or any other sacred scriptures, is difficult of comprehension. And the complete

absurdity of the interpretation which Christians have attempted to give the amorous production, and the captions or headings which have been attached to it, like these, are without sense or reason: "The church's love unto Christ; She confesses her deformity [I am black, but comely], and prayeth to be directed to his flock; Christ directeth her to the shepherd's tents, and showing his love to her, giveth her gracious promises; The church and Christ congratulate one another, etc." There is no kind of warrant for attaching to this Eastern love song any such nonsense about Christ and the church. It is falsehood of the blackest kind. The writer of the song had no more knowledge of Christ, and made no more reference to him than to Napoleon Bonaparte or Brigham Young. It is sickening to see such duplicity practiced in a compilation purporting to be sacred and divine.

### THE PROPHECIES.

The Prophecies remain of the Old Testament books to be considered. They are sixteen in number, from Isaiah to Malachi. They are the oldest books in the Bible, though placed after all the others in the Old Testament. Isaiah ranks about fourth in chronological order. It is but just to say that the Prophets are the least apocryphal of any of the Old Testament books, though some of them were not written by the persons whose names they bear, while others were only partially so, the productions of the writers having in a loose, pell-mell sort of way been thrown together by the compilers without accuracy or propriety. This is another sad commentary upon the divinity of the Jewish scriptures, and the divine protection which it is represented attended the sacred writings. The productions of the men called prophets were regarded in the time they lived and afterwards as of far less consequence than since the advent of Christianity. Of the sixteen prophets whose writings are placed in the Hebrew canon, but two of them, Isaiah and Jeremiah, are ever mentioned in the historical writings of the Jewish nation—Kings and Chronicles.



Isaiah in style is more lofty than any of his brother prophets, but he is wild, discordant, erratic, and often without sense or meaning. The book ascribed to him was not written by one person. There were two or more writers who contributed in producing it; and nearly two hundred years intervened between the earlier and later writings; and this is but one of the illustrations, as observed, of the utter carelessness and inaccuracy practiced by the compilers of the Jewish scriptures.

The book bearing the name of Isaiah contains sixty-six chapters. The marginal date of the later writings as found in the Bible is given as 712 B. C., when it was not written till the time of the Babylonian captivity, nearly two hundred years later. This quotation, from the forty-fourth chapter, clearly was not written till after the Jews were in Babylon, and Isaiah had been nearly two hundred years in his grave: "That saith of Cyrus, he is my shepherd, and shall perform all my pleasure; even saying to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built; and to the temple, Thy foundation shall be laid; thus saith the Lord to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden to subdue nations before him, and I will loose the loins of kings to open before him the two-leaved gates, and the gates shall not be shut; I will go before thee," etc. It is the sheerest imposition to pretend that those words were written by Isaiah, who died about 700 B. C., and Cyrus was not on the stage till about 550 B. C. To pretend that it was a prophecy is intensely false.

Chadwick says: "Not more than half the book was written by Isaiah. Chapters xiii, 9, to xiv, 23; xl, 1 to 10; xxiv to xxvii; xxxiv to xxxix, are none of them Isaiah's. The last four of these chapters are evidently an editor's appendix to the original Isaiah. The two previous belong to the time of the captivity. And so do all the chapters after the thirty-ninth. 'Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God,' begins the fortieth chapter, and from this point to the end of the sixty-sixth chapter we have the words of some one writing two hundred years after the true Isaiah, probably at Babylon. Some of the earlier chapters, which are not Isaiah's, probably belong to the same author. The critics speak of him as the

Great Unknown, or as the Deutero-Isaiah. For a long time there has been a steadily increasing agreement among scholars in regard to his separate authorship, and now there is not a respectable scholar who is not convinced of it. Read the whole book and you will see the lines of separation. The true Isaiah and the Great Unknown are talking of entirely different things. Their standpoints are different; their styles are different; their aims are different. The great subject of the latter is the deliverance of the Israelites from their captivity, and their return to their own land, while in the true Isaiah this captivity does not even threaten on the remotest verge of the prophetic horizon. No wonder, seeing that it was still a hundred years and more in the future at the time of his death. You will see at once how fruitful of misconception must have been this printing as one book the writings of the two great prophets, one of the eighth and the other of the sixth century before Christ. You will see how much wonder must have been wasted over prophecies which were almost or quite contemporaneous with the events. You will see how little literary skill and conscience went to the editing of the Old Testament books, for this is not an isolated example, and how blasphemous it is to saddle the Almighty with the results of so much human imperfection."

Space will not be taken here to examine the prophecies attributed to Isaiah and said to refer to Jesus or the Messiah. It will be done to some extent when examining the book of Matthew in the New Testament. But this much may be stated as a fact: Not in one prophecy does Isaiah make the least allusion to Jesus. Most of what are called the Messianic predictions are by the false Isaiah, and are not Messianic at all. It is the true Israel which is described—those Jews who during their captivity were faithful to their national religion. A vast amount of deception and absolute falsehood has been used in connection with the prophecies attributed to Isaiah.

**JEREMIAH.**—In strict chronological order this writer would stand twelfth among the prophets, but in the Bible he stands second—another specimen of the inaccuracies which characterize the work. He lived more than one hundred years after Isaiah, his career beginning 626 B. C., and ending 584 B. C.

Less liberties were taken with the writings of Jeremiah than of Isaiah, but still he is not the author of all with which he stands credited. Chapters fifty, fifty-one, and fifty-two are decided by Bible scholars not to be his, and great confusion and irregularity mark a large portion of the book. It seems to be a medley of historical scraps, lamentations, and a kind of prediction. The incorrectness of his prophecies may be judged by his predicting that the captivity would continue for seventy years, when it was but fifty. Mark, also, his prophecy to King Zedekiah, in the thirty-fourth chapter: "Yet hear the word of the Lord, O Zedekiah, king of Judah, thus saith the Lord of thee: Thou shalt not die by the sword, but thou shalt die in peace; and with the burnings of thy fathers, the former kings which were before thee, so shall they burn odors for thee, and they shall lament thee saying, Ah, Lord, for I have pronounced the word, saith the Lord." The finale, however, proved the untruthfulness of the prediction. Zedekiah did *not* die in *peace*; odors were *not* burnt at his death. In chapter lii, it states that the king of Babylon slew the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes; then he put out the eyes of Zedekiah and bound him in chains and carried him to Babylon and put him in prison till the day of his death. A person not inspired could predict about as correctly as that. Again Jeremiah proved himself a false prophet when he gave out that the ten lost tribes of Israel would be restored. It never took place.

Jeremiah was a very gloomy man, as is evinced in his main book, as well as in his Lamentations, but he was shrewd enough to make friends with King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon, who showed him marked favors. The prophet, indeed, was judged by his own people as being false to them and with luring them on to enslavement by the king of Babylon. Of whatever importance his semi-insane writings might have been to his people at the time he lived, they are of very slight use to the present inhabitants of the globe. They could be spared with no material loss.

EZEKIEL in chronological order stands thirteenth among the prophets, but in the Bible he is placed third. He was a priest of Jerusalem and was carried captive to Babylon with

ten thousand others, eleven years before the destruction of Jerusalem. His prophetic career in Babylon continued twenty-two years. Ewald styles him "a writer rather than a prophet." He was noted for startling visions and sensational descriptions, somewhat in the style of Daniel and the Revelator. "Kuenen discovered in him a sort of Hebrew Calvin, severe and narrow." Chadwick says: "His book, like Isaiah's and Jeremiah's, was a record of his prophecies, *written out at the end of his life*. Other prophetic books have the same character. Naturally enough the prophet's memory of his prophecies sometimes got mixed a little with the actual events which followed them. It could not have been otherwise. We have reason to believe that Ezekiel's memory was particularly fallacious. At any rate, in judging of the prophecies, we ought never to forget that almost without exception they were written out long after they were uttered, and that afterward from time to time they were edited and re-edited again and again and *made to agree* with subsequent events. . . . When the temple was rebuilt, his plan, as furnished in his fortieth and succeeding chapters, was not followed. Its ground plan would have occupied the total area of the city. This again is one of the prophecies about which little is said by the apologists."

Ezekiel's distinct and positive prophecy, chapters xxvi and xxvii, relating to the total destruction of Tyre, was not fulfilled. Tyre existed for hundreds of years after he prophesied that the site of the city should be scraped like the top of a rock, and become a place only for the spreading of nets. Even down to the present time quite a town exists there. When, however, he or his editors had time to arrange his prognostications with the fulfilment of them, and by adjusting them so as to make one tally with the other, he might be reckoned a pretty fair sort of prophet; and a good many others, by the same process, might do equally as well, even if not inspired. That it was ever his province to read the events of the future, more than what other men may be able to do, is extremely doubtful.

Ezekiel has been censured by many as a coarse writer. His metaphors and figures border decidedly upon the vulgar. His

fourth, sixteenth, and twenty-third chapters are cases in point as well as many others. It is to be hoped that his writings were of great use to his people, and in his time, but of what particular value they have been to the world since, or are now, cannot be estimated with exactness.

DANIEL stands fourth in the Bible order among the sixteen prophets, but in chronological order he would be last; properly, however, he would not stand among them at all. The writer of the book was no prophet and was not Daniel at all, nor was the book written till nearly four hundred years after the time Daniel lived. It purports to have been written 537 B. C., and so the Bible marginal dates assert; but, as the Rev. J. W. Chadwick says, "There is not a respectable critic who disputes that it was written in the time of Antiochus Epiphanes, from 170 to 165 B. C. The writer's object was to strengthen the faithful among the Jewish people under the tyranny of Antiochus Epiphanes, and to encourage them with the hope of speedy deliverance. Even as an acknowledged fiction it was well adapted to its purpose. How much better as a veritable prophecy of the time of the captivity? This it professed to be. Speaking squarely, it was a *pious fraud*."

The book of Daniel was the last book admitted into the Jewish canon, and it got in with the greatest difficulty. It was never placed among the prophets by the Jews. As Chadwick says, "It was left for the Christians to perpetrate this piece of literary folly." But the remarkable visions which the book pretends were seen in Babylon by Daniel are all the merest fiction. The story of the three young men being thrown into the fiery furnace; of Daniel being thrown into the den of lions; of Nebuchadnezzar being turned out to grass, like an ox; of Daniel's remarkable visions of beasts coming up out of the sea, one "dreadful and terrible," with ten horns, iron teeth, etc.; the ram and he-goat; "a time, times, and the dividing of time," etc., etc., are all "bosh and nonsense." Those fictions have troubled the Christian world more, almost, than all else in the Bible. To thousands of nearly insane fanatics they have pointed out the sure end of the world and all sublunary things; and scores upon scores of times the exact date has been set when the general "smash-up" would

come, all upon the strength of the wild ravings of this false, lying Daniel. Chadwick again says: "No other book in the Old Testament has played a greater part in the development of Christian ideas. It was the great stronghold of the defenders of predictive prophecy in England, in the eighteenth century. But now its gates are broken down. Its wall is flat." This book has been thought to be *par excellence* more thoroughly inspired than any other book in the Bible, and hundreds of Bible worshipers have spent the midnight oil in poring over its mystic numbers of weeks and days to ascertain just when the end of the world was to come, when the saints would be taken up, bodily, into heaven; but this inspiration, these wonderful revelations, were all false; all the veriest deception and fraud. Of such material is composed what is called the "Word of God," and such do men and women worship.

HOSEA is the first of what are called the minor or short prophets. The marginal date says he wrote 785 B. C., but the critics think it was some forty years later, but that is a small matter. Correctly, he should stand second in order of time among the prophets, whereas he is fifth. He represents that the Lord commanded him to "go take a wife of whoredoms and children of whoredoms," "so he went and took Gomer, the daughter of Diblaim, which conceived and bare him a son; and the Lord said unto him, Call his name Jezreel," etc. Divines have long been at loggerheads as to whether Hosea really meant what he said to be taken as literal truth or it was a symbol that had some other blind meaning.

It, however, makes very little difference which way it is regarded. Those who choose to believe the creator and governor of the universe commanded one Hosea to take a wife and children of whoredoms have a right to do so, if they will not by imprisonment, torture, and death compel others to believe the same thing. It is generally admitted that Hosea wrote the short book ascribed to him, but he was not thought to be of sufficient consequence by the writers of Kings and Chronicles to even mention his name.

JOEL comes next. He wrote but three short chapters, in which he portrays the terrible anger and judgment of God.

There has been considerable dispute among Bible critics as to the time when the three chapters were written, some insisting that it was 800 B. C., and others that it was 600. Either figure will not be objected to in this place. Chadwick says: "His ideas are those of the period immediately preceding the captivity, especially his ideas of temple-service. He has an allusion to the garden of Eden, and this was not imported from Persia till some time in the seventh century." That settles it that he could not have written his three little chapters till after the seventh century before Christ.

AMOS follows Joel, with nine chapters. He stands No. 7 in the Bible order, when really he should be No. 1. It was thought he was prior to all the other prophets, and that he wrote about 787 B. C., as the Bible has it. But he says of himself that he was no prophet nor the son of a prophet, and as he ought to know, we are willing to take him at his word. His nine chapters are merely a wail, a turmoil of indignant grief that his God should be worshiped with lascivious rites, and that men cared more for empty ceremonies than for justice, mercy, and truth. He says that the Lord God showed him that grasshoppers and fire should be sent as judgments. It might have been so, and he also might have been mistaken.

OBADIAH, with one chapter of twenty-one verses, comes next. As those twenty-one verses are simply a denunciation against Edom, there is no necessity for one being much troubled by it in this age of the world.

JONAH and his big fish story is the next in Bible order. It is claimed that this book was written 862 B. C., but this is thought to be as false a claim as its fish story. The author is another Great Unknown. Nobody knows who wrote it, nor ever will know. The critics say it was written somewhere along in the fifth century—four hundred years after the time claimed for it—and as a protest against the narrowness and exclusiveness of Ezra and Nehemiah, Chadwick says truly, "It is a fiction, not a history, but a didactic fiction, meant to confute the notion that Yahweh was the God of the Jews only." Those who are pleased to accept the monstrous story of a man's being three days under water in the belly of a fish, and then being thrown up in good order on dry land, as the

word of God are not hard to be suited, and that class could just as easily accept the statement that Jonah swallowed the whale had it only been written in that way. Whether the book was written by a Jew or Gentile is a matter of much doubt. Those who "pay their money" can take their choice.

MICAH, with his seven chapters, follows Jonah. As he strongly denounced false prophets and deceivers, perhaps he ought to be sustained; so let it be granted that Micah was not a myth, and that he really wrote seven chapters somewhere about 750 B. C.

NAHUM, with three chapters and a total of forty-seven verses, comes next in Bible order. He is put down as having prophesied 713 B. C. But the critics say it is a hundred years out of the way. He lived in the time of King Josiah, 630 B. C. He probably belonged to the northern part of Palestine, and was taken captive by the Assyrians. His fulminations were wholly against Assyria, undoubtedly suggested by a threatened invasion of the Scythians; but as nothing which he predicted came to pass, his three chapters are not of immense value in the present age of the world.

HABAKKUK, with other three chapters and a total of fifty-six verses, next claims our attention. The marginal notes say he delivered those three chapters 626 B. C., but the critics make it thirty years later. His invectives were against the Chaldeans, the oppressors of the Jews. Their value to us is not particularly conspicuous.

ZEPHANIAH also wrote three chapters, containing fifty-three verses, about 630 B. C. Chadwick says of this small prophet: "The hordes of Scythians who awaken Nahum's hope of the destruction of Assyria awaken Zephaniah's fear of the destruction of Judah. But it was well deserved for her idolatry and sin. The Scythians would compass it, but a faithful remnant would be saved, and long enjoy a glorious prosperity. The destruction came full soon, but not, however, from the Scythians, and the glorious prosperity still awaits some Daniel Deronda to accomplish it."

HAGGAI, with two chapters containing thirty-eight verses follows next. He wrote after the captivity was over, and the



rebuilding of the temple had been commenced. He exhorted to zeal and faithfulness. Chadwick says of him: "His spirit is less moral than ecclesiastical. He is one of the least inspired of all the prophets, one of the most prosaic."

ZECHARIAH makes greater pretensions, but, unfortunately, he is to be denied the authorship of all but eight of his sixteen chapters. These he wrote about the time claimed, 530 B. C. He was a contemporary of Haggai, and shared in his zeal for rebuilding the temple, etc. The other eight chapters were written by some unknown person a century earlier. This is another instance of the carelessness or dishonesty attendant upon the compiling and arranging the Jewish scriptures.

MALACHI, with four short chapters, closes the prophets and the books in the Old Testament canon. He is claimed in the marginal notes to have flourished 397 B. C., but the critics believe this to be fifty years out of the way. Chadwick has this to say of this final prophet: "It is uncertain whether Malachi is a prophet's name, or his title. It means the 'angel,' or 'messenger' of Yahweh. There is no contemporary mention of any such prophet. He has not the old-time inspiration. The Jews considered him the last of the prophets. Apparently his prophecies were never spoken. He is significant as the first prophet who makes any mention of the Mosaic law," probably for the very good reason that the Mosaic law was unknown to the Jews until within a few hundred years of our era. Moses wrote no law. David wrote no psalms; Solomon wrote few or no proverbs; and many of the men called prophets wrote no part of the productions accorded to them, and little of what they did write were really prophecies.

A great deal has been said by Christians of the vast importance of the Jewish prophets, and in them they discover the wonderful power and wisdom of the Most High; but upon a close and critical examination this estimate will be found greatly exaggerated, so far as the importance to us in this age of the world is concerned. That they were of any marked benefit to their own people and the period in which they lived is not made as clear as could be desired. With all their efforts, with all their wailings, lamentations, sorrows, and prognosti-

ations, their people—God's chosen heritage—were subdued by neighboring nations and destroyed. The prophets did not prevent this destiny nor delay it. With such a number to speak and write for the divine author of all existence, it would seem that more good should have been accomplished.

Prophecy was borrowed by the Jews from the more civilized and enlightened nations which surrounded them. The Canaanites, the Chaldeans, the Egyptians, and other heathen nations, had their prophets long before the Jews had any. They learned that art from their neighbors as they did many others. The prophetic books, omitting Daniel (which justly cannot be admitted with the others), cover a period of about three hundred and fifty years; but these were years of trouble, decadence, and disaster on the part of the Jewish nation; and it is to be regretted that the prophets—the mouth-pieces for God—could do so little to stay the flood of destruction.

If, however, it is admitted that some of the prophecies were written by the persons whose name they bear, and at somewhere near the time attributed to them, it is still to be feared that the versions which we now have are not genuine, for at the time when Nebuchadnezzar and his Chaldean army took the Jews captive and carried them to his own city, Babylon, he destroyed not only their temple but their sacred writings kept therein, and this of course must have included the sacred writings of the prophets. If any copies of them by chance were in the hands of the priests or people, we have no way of knowing whether they were genuine or spurious. The chances are greatly in favor of the latter. Besides this destruction of the sacred writings by the Chaldeans, the Jews seem themselves to have joined in the work of destruction. This was admitted by the Christian Father St. Chrysostom, whom Simon, in his "Critical History of the Version of the New Testament," quotes thus: "The Jews having been at some times careless, and at other times profane, they suffered some of the sacred books to be lost through their carelessness, and have burnt and destroyed others." This is a most damaging admission. It is greatly to be feared, with all the mishaps and disasters to which the early Jewish sacred writings (if they had any) were exposed, that nothing remains of them now;

and it is quite probable that what is at present in existence called Jewish scriptures were written within two or three hundred years after the return from Babylon. With how much correctness the priests and scribes who reproduced them, or wrote them as original, were able to perform the task, the reader must be left to judge for himself.

### THE APOCRYPHA.

We have thus taken a brief view of the books forming the Old Testament canon, and find that, with the exception of a part of the prophets, not one of the books was written by the person claimed as writer, and scarcely one written at the time it is claimed it was written. A great amount of misrepresentation is here brought to light, and an exhibit made of the extensive errors which have been imposed upon the world. It is hardly necessary to review in detail the fourteen books composing the Apocrypha, inasmuch as they are not accepted as inspired by heaven, by the Protestant portion of the Christian church, which specially regards the Bible with worshipful veneration. In place of this some remarks of Chadwick on the Apocrypha will be given: "The books of the Apocrypha were not admitted into the Jewish canon, mainly because the destruction of the Jewish state in A. D. 70 naturally threw back the Jews with exclusive admiration on what had been accepted as canonical before that event. These books were then already knocking at the door of the Jewish canon, and would have been admitted but for the destruction of Jerusalem. To the canon of the Alexandrian Jews, whom this catastrophe did not seriously affect, they were admitted, and from them passed over into the keeping of the early Christian church. Though never quoted expressly in the New Testament their influence is often unmistakable, and by the early scholars of the church they are continually quoted as of equal authority with the Old Testament and those which have never been admitted into the Roman canon; Enoch, which is in the Ethiopic canon only, being even quoted in the New Testament, in the Epistle of Jude. The Council of Carthage, which decided on the canon-

icity of those which were again canonized at Trent, was the same council which decided on the canonicity of our New Testament books. It had as good reasons in the one case as in the other, and the Protestants who attach any value to its judgment of the New Testament writings are bound to attach equal value to its judgment of the Apocrypha. The arguments of Protestant divines against their canonicity are for the most part miserable make-shifts.

“The puerility of certain portions is charged upon the whole. They are not written in Hebrew, we are told, like the Old Testament books. No more is the New Testament, and for the same good reason. When it was written, Hebrew was not the language of the time and place where it was written. Some of the later Old Testament books are written in a different Hebrew from the earlier. As for internal characteristics, whatever militates against their value can be matched in the Old Testament. The most doubtful history is no more doubtful than that of Chronicles, and is less wilfully misrepresented. The angel of Tobit is no more fictitious than the angel of Jacob. The murder of Holofernes by Judith is paralleled by that of Sisera by Jael, and the general spirit of the book of Judith is not so savage and vengeful as that of Esther. But to those who set no artificial value on the Old Testament these comparisons are for the most part superfluous. To such the canon is but a list of books which for one reason or another came, in course of time, to be regarded as of remarkable and even supernatural importance. Remarkable we may allow; but to say supernatural we have no faintest warrant. The books of the Old Testament differ among themselves in value and significance. In the Apocrypha there are books which, if not equal to some in the Old Testament, are certainly superior to others. We could give up Esther and Ecclesiastes much better than the Wisdom of Solomon and Ecclesiasticus. The first book of Maccabees is a chapter which the epic of the centuries could ill afford to spare, while Chronicles, however interesting as a contribution to the history of opinions, has no such moral energy, and tells no such unvarnished tale of heroism and unwavering fidelity. The genius of Handel knew its own when it made

Judas Maccabæus the theme of one of his most glorious oratorios. High art is never narrow or sectarian, and therefore it has found in the Apocrypha a never-failing fountain of suggestion. Music and poetry and painting have discovered here some of their choicest themes, some of their grandest inspirations. Commend me to the artists, rather than to the theologians, as judges of what is most inspiring, and by consequence the most inspired."

## PROBABLE ORIGIN OF SEVERAL OLD TESTAMENT BOOKS.

As it is very clear by the brief examination made in the foregoing pages that a large proportion of the books comprising the Old Testament scriptures were not written by the persons and at the times which have been claimed for them, the question very naturally arises, When were they written, and by whom? This interrogatory cannot be decided positively, but rational conjectures can be made. A few facts are pretty well demonstrated.

1. No law of Moses was known to David, Solomon, and the later kings of Israel and Judah.

2. The law of Moses is not named or hinted at in either of the sixteen prophetic books, with the exception of Malachi, the last of all the prophets, and who lived nearest our own era.

3. Moses was practically unknown to the Jewish people during the reigns of David, Solomon, and the later kings.

4. With the exception of some of the prophets, none of what have been considered the older books in the Bible were known till after the return from the Babylonian captivity.

5. It is highly probable that most of the Old Testament canon was written after Ezra, Nehemiah, and their forty-two thousand fellow-countrymen returned from Babylon.

6. It is reasonable to conclude that the early history of the Jewish nation is involved in myth and uncertainty, and never was put in the form of history until after the captivity; or even were it done the books were destroyed by their captors.

7. During the fifty years the Jews spent in Babylon they learned much of history, art, civilization, ideas of cosmogony

and literature, from their more civilized, educated, and progressed captors.

8. It is not improbable, then—though Hilkiab the priest, and Shaphan, his scribe, claimed to have found a small writing called the book of the law in the temple in the early part of young king Josiah's reign (2. Kings xxii)—that Ezra and his compeers and scribes felt the necessity of a national history, national literature, and national sacred writings, and that these were absolutely produced by him and his priests and scribes, or their successors.

In connection with the pretended finding of the book of the Law in the temple, it will be remembered that Josiah was extremely young to reign as king, and that when the document was read to him it was not very strange that he became considerably agitated at such a discovery, and that he even "tore his garments" in his distress of mind.

There is something a trifle suspicious about the story of Hilkiab the priest finding the book of the Law in the temple. There is no account of such a book ever having been lost; it surely was not in the temple at the time Solomon dedicated it, and neither he nor his father David seem to have known aught of such a book. If it was found, somebody must have written it; and nobody more likely than Hilkiab himself or his scribe Shaphan. After they had written it, it would not have been at all difficult to have *found* it and then take it to the king. It probably was not a very elaborate book, for Shaphan appears to have read it to the young king at one interview, and it was afterwards read in public to the elders and the people. It might have been the Ten Commandments and something more, or it might have been a part of Exodus, a part of Leviticus, or a part of Deuteronomy, as many of the Bible scholars already named are of the opinion that those books were first written in fragments and not earlier than the time of Josiah.

In connection with what has been said about this claim of the shrewd priest, Hilkiab, that he had found a book of the Law, a few points may be further mentioned.

1. When Hilkiab found the book, instead of going to the king himself with such a remarkable treasure, as he should

have done, he sent his scribe, just as he probably would have done had he written it himself.

2. The probability is that it was written by Hilkiyah, or by the scribe under his direction. We are not told that it was in the handwriting of Moses, or in whose handwriting it was. Had it been written by Moses, Shaphan could not have read it, for in the eight hundred years that had elapsed since the time of Moses such changes must necessarily have occurred in the language, the use of words, and the style of writing, as to make the document quite difficult to decipher. Should a piece of writing, executed in England eight hundred years ago, be found now, it would take a pretty expert scribe to read it off easily. It would require a good deal of time to pick it out.

3. If the getting up of the book by Hilkiyah was a concocted plan, the king, being very young and inexperienced, would naturally be very easily deceived, and the prophetess Hulda could readily be persuaded to assist in the imposture. Such things have often been accomplished. We have no guarantee that Hilkiyah was a strictly honest man, or that he was not one who believed in using a little pious fraud to further a pious object.

It seems, further, that nothing was done toward collecting the books of the Old Testament together until the time of Ezra and Nehemiah. They are credited with gathering up the books of the Old Testament as sacred scriptures. In Nehemiah viii, an account is given of the people being assembled together, whereupon Ezra read to them what was called the Law of Moses. It could not have been a very lengthy book, for it was read at one time or one meeting. Whether this was the law that Hilkiyah the priest claimed to have found, or whether it was one that Ezra had written, does not fully appear. There are good judges of Hebrew literature who give the credit of the authenticity of the law and many of the books of the Old Testament to Ezra and his scribes; and say that before that time the books were not known to be in existence, and that the knowledge of them dates from that era, 445 B. C.

## THEORY OF BORROWED IDEAS.

The theory is in this wise: That during the fifty years of captivity (not seventy years as Jeremiah claimed), the Israelites, as observed, learned much from the Babylonians, and when King Cyrus permitted those to return to their own country who chose to do so and to rebuild their temple the Jewish people felt the need of a national history, and of sacred writings upon which to rebuild their religion, and this work was carried out by Ezra and his scribes, or their successors, as already hinted. It is claimed, to repeat, that the history of the Jewish nation previous to the captivity was largely mythical or unknown, and that it is to Ezra and his scribes that we are indebted for much that is called the sacred scriptures. It is asserted, also, that at this time much of what is called the Pentateuch was first written, including the cosmogony of the world, the creation of man, the tree of life, the fable of the serpent and the forbidden fruit, the fall of man, the deluge, etc. The account of those in the Bible is so nearly like the older Chaldean cosmogony and story—as within the last twenty years have been found on the sites of ancient Babylon and Nineveh—inscribed in cuneiform characters on earthen tablets, and which are demonstrated to possess an antiquity reaching a thousand years farther back than the period of the Jewish captivity, as to give, to say the least, great plausibility to the theory. There is no proof that the Jews had any such accounts of the creation, etc., before the captivity, while after that it is found, and it bears a striking resemblance to the traditions and inscriptions, as observed, of the country in which for half a century they were captives. That a man of talent, as Ezra undoubtedly was, with the force of scribes he had at his command, could produce or reproduce books that were claimed to have been lost, or that they could produce new ones, is not a matter of great doubt. Those books could have been written at that time just as easily as at any other. And as to how it may have been done may perhaps be learned from 2 Esdras (the Greek for Ezra) chapter xiv, 19–48. Esdras is represented as addressing the Lord thus:



19. Then answered I before thee and said:

20. Behold, Lord, I will go as thou hast commanded me, and reprove the people which are present; but they that shall be born afterward, who shall admonish them? Thus the world is set in darkness, and they that dwell therein are without light.

21. For thy law is burnt, therefore no man knoweth the things that are done of thee, or the works that shall begin.

22. But if I have found grace before thee, send the Holy Ghost into me, and I shall write all that hath been done in the world since the beginning, which were written in thy law, that men may find thy path, and that they which will live in the latter days may live.

23. And he answered me, saying, Go thy way, gather the people together, and say unto them that they seek thee not for forty days.

24. But look thou prepare thee many box-trees, and take with thee Sarea, Dabria, Selemia, Ecanus, and Asiel, these five which are ready to write swiftly.

25. And come hither, and I shall light a candle of understanding in thy heart, which shall not be put out till the things be performed which thou shalt begin to write.

26. And when thou hast done, some things shalt thou publish, and some things shalt thou shew secretly to the wise; to-morrow this hour shalt thou begin to write.

27. Then went I forth as he commanded, and gathered all the people together, and said,

28. Hear these words, O Israel.

29. Our Fathers at the beginning were strangers in Egypt, from whence they were delivered;

30. And received the law of life, which they kept not, and which ye also have transgressed after them.

31. Then was the land, even the land of Sion, parted among you by lot; but your fathers, and ye yourselves, have done unrighteousness, and have not kept the ways which the Highest commanded you.

32. And forasmuch as he is a righteous judge, he took from you in time the thing that he had given you.

33. And now are ye here, and your brethren among you.

34. Therefore if so be that ye will subdue your own understanding, and reform your hearts, ye shall be kept alive, and after death ye shall obtain mercy.

35. For after death shall the judgment come, when we shall live again, and then shall the names of the righteous be manifest, and the works of the ungodly shall be declared.

36. Let no man therefore come unto me now, nor seek after me these forty days.

37. So I took the five *men* as he commanded me, and we went into the field and remained there.

38. And the next day, behold, a voice called me saying, Esdras, open thy mouth, and drink that I give thee to drink.

39. Then opened I my mouth, and behold, he reached me a full cup, which was full as it were with water, but the color of it was like fire.

40. And I took it and drank, and when I had drunk of it, my heart uttered understanding, and wisdom grew in my breast, for my spirit strengthened my memory.

41. And my mouth was opened, and shut no more.

42. The Highest gave understanding unto the five men, and they wrote the wonderful visions of the night that were told, which they knew not; and they sat forty days, and they wrote in the day, and at night they ate bread.

43. As for me I spake in the day, and held not my tongue by night.

44. In forty days they wrote two hundred and four books.

45. And it came to pass when the forty days were fulfilled, that the Highest spake, saying, The first that thou hast written publish openly, that the worthy and unworthy may read it;

46. But keep the seventy last, that thou mayest deliver them only to such as be wise among the people.

47. For in them is the spring of understanding, the fountain of wisdom, and the stream of knowledge.

48. And I did so.

This quotation from Esdras is by half the Christian church accepted as sacred scriptures. By the process therein described, with five such able writers, who could write all day for forty days and eat bread all night, with such a fiery draught as Esdras drank, is it strange that two hundred and four sacred books could be produced? Seventy of them were to be kept secret, leaving one hundred and thirty-four to be given to the people. Whether the seventy finally became the Hebrew canon, or whether it was taken from the hundred and thirty-four, does not clearly appear; but there were enough of either to make up the canon and leave a good margin to double up, or to throw away, or to suffer to be lost.

### IMPROBABILITIES.

Whether there is anything in this statement of Esdras worthy of serious attention will not be decided here, but of this main fact there can be no question: After the Jews had spent fifty years in Babylon—perhaps the most progressed and civilized city at that time in the world—they were better able to write up what purported to be an early history of their race, the kings that had ruled over them, as well as what are regarded as sacred writings, than at any previous period. And probably Ezra and his scribes were tolerably competent for the task.

The early status of the Jewish nation is involved in myth and great uncertainty. There is so much of improbability and impossibility mixed up with the whole story that it is absolutely unworthy of credit. The narrative of their exodus from Egypt, and two or three millions of people, with all their cattle and live stock, subsisting for forty years in a burning, arid desert without water, a tree, a plant, or a spire of grass, their clothes never wearing out but growing with the growth of their children, is too monstrous for a sensible person to believe. The Jews are a branch of the Semitic or Arab race. Their natural home is in the vicinity of what is called Palestine. That when they were little more than wild nomadic savages they found there tribes—called nations—of a similar character, and after much fighting, conquered them and took their lands and homes from them, is not improbable. That they lived for several centuries under elders, judges, and military chieftains is not unlikely. That they ultimately established a monarchy can easily be conceded. But that a father and his sons, making in all seventy people, in a period of two hundred and fifteen years, or four generations, could increase to two or three hundred millions of people, so as to turn out six hundred thousand fighting men, is too monstrous to be believed.

It is also highly improbable, as Abraham was born within three hundred years from the reputed time of the flood, by which all the inhabitants of the world were drowned—as Shem, the oldest son of Noah, lived over two hundred years after Abraham was born—that in that comparatively short time people could have multiplied so rapidly on the earth as to found large nations, empires, and cities in Asia, as well as such a powerful nation as the Egyptians must have been before the lying Abraham went down there with his wife, and before his grandson Jacob went there with his twelve sons and their families, could have advanced as the Egyptians were in civilization, art, and literature, to build those stately pyramids, temples, and monuments, with the vast amount of inscriptions upon them, much of which still remains. Yes, it is extremely improbable that all that could have been accom-

plished within nine generations from the time when the earth was devoid of people.

It is very improbable if a people, amounting to two or three millions, were living in Egypt and finally left it in a day's time, in consequence of which the king of the country and his army were destroyed in the Red Sea, that no record should be made of it, that there should be no history of any kind of it, when the people of the country, the Egyptians, were particularly noted for their carefulness, minuteness, and exactness in recording everything that took place, even to the product of their farms and the number of eggs laid by their hens.

It is very improbable, of course, that the Red Sea should open, walling itself up on each side of a dry roadway, so as to allow a large army with cattle, etc., to pass through dry-shod, and drowning the pursuing army, and nobody ever know anything about it save the man who wrote the story a thousand years or more afterward.

It is very improbable that a small country like Judea, one hundred and forty miles long, with less than an average width of forty miles, should, under the reign of a father and his son, be able to emerge from a state of barbarism when they were little more than unorganized bands of robbers and brigands, without a capital, without revenues, and without a regular government, to be a powerful nation, able to turn out 1,570,000 men of war who could draw the sword, with an accumulation of national wealth so that on a single building—the temple—one hundred and ten feet in length, thirty-six in width, and fifty-five feet in height, they could lavish 8,000 talents of gold, equaling \$212,000,000, and 17,000 talents of silver, equaling \$31,671,000, making a total of \$243,671,000. The amount of gold and silver which David said he had prepared for this house of the Lord (1 Chron. xxii, 14) was 100,000 talents of gold and 1,000,000 talents of silver, equal in value to \$4,300,000,000 (a third more than the national debt of the United States, while his entire dominions were but a little larger than the state of Delaware); and yet they had no wood or timber within their country to build such a house, nor skilled workmen to do the work; and it

required 153,000 men, artisans and laborers, to work seven years to erect the building. (See 1 Chron. xxix, and 2 Chron. ii; also 1 Kings vi, and Bible tables as to the value of talents.)

It is very improbable that a nation at the eastern end of the Mediterranean Sea should arrive at such a state of wealth and magnificence and no historian of India, Chaldea, Egypt, Greece, or Rome know anything of it, though Herodotus, the great Grecian historian and traveler, lived soon after that time, and made two or three journeys into Syria, and wrote extensively of what he saw and heard. It seems he never knew of the wonderful nation of the Jews, their territory, their numbers, their great city of Jerusalem, their splendid temple, and their great and wise King Solomon, of whom it was said that people came to him "from all the kings of the earth, which had heard of his wisdom" (1 Kings iv, 34), and whose wealth and wisdom were said (1 Kings x, 23) to exceed all the kings' of the earth. Homer knew nothing of the Jews; Solon knew them not; Xenophon was ignorant of them; Borosus said not a word of them; Sanchoniathon mentions them not; Manetho was silent about them; Diodorus did not list their name; Herodotus never heard of them; Plato knew nothing of them. The Bible says the queen of Sheba heard of Solomon's great wisdom and glory, and visited his court to pay honor to him and admire him, but who this queen was, and where Sheba was, have never been settled. From these facts it looks, indeed, as though the Bible story about the early history of the Jewish nation, and all about their immense numbers, wealth, and magnificence, is purely mythical and unreliable. It is doubtful whether such men as Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Joshua, Samuel, David, and Solomon ever had an existence. Like William Tell of Switzerland, and the valorous army of Amazon warriors, and thousands of others, they might have been purely creatures of the imagination. Whether it was Ezra and Nehemiah and their scribes and composers that wrote these big stories, or whether, as some suppose, they were written at a still later period, at the time of the Maccabees, cannot be decided with any certainty. One thing, however, is well known, that

a man with a fertile imagination and good mental ability, like Walter Scott, Charles Dickens, Eugene Sue, Alexander Dumas, and Victor Hugo, can write about great numbers of characters who never had an existence. It is also well known that what passes for history may be purely fiction as really as an ordinary romance.

## FACTS RELATIVE TO THE OLD TESTAMENT BOOKS.

They were written in the Hebrew language—a very imperfect one—being a lot of consonants, without vowels or punctuation points, and consequently very difficult to translate correctly, or even to read correctly. Simon, in his “Critical History,” as quoted by the English writer, Cooper, says of the Hebrew words: “It is unquestionable that the greater part of them are equivocal and their signification utterly uncertain. Even the most learned Jews doubt almost everything about their proper meaning.” Bishop Marsh is also quoted as using these words: “The Old Testament is the only work which remains in the ancient Hebrew, nor have we anything like a lexicon or glossary, composed while it was yet a living language.” Another learned Hebraist says that “no two translators would agree in rendering any verb from the Hebrew.”

The learned and eminent Godfrey Higgins says, “I am quite certain that I shall be able to show—to prove—that every letter of the Hebrew language has four, and probably five, meanings.” Smith, in his Bible Dictionary, says: “The translators are often misled by the similarity of Hebrew words. In very many cases the errors may be thus traced to the similarity of some of the Hebrew letters.” Le Clere, in his “Sentim,” p. 156, affirms: “The learned merely guess at the sense of the Old Testament in an infinity of places, which produces a prodigious number of discordant interpretations.” The Christian Father St. Jerome bore testimony in the same direction. He said, “When we translate the Hebrew into Latin, we are sometimes guided by conjecture.” To what extent this guessing has been carried, a few instances will show.

In regard to the kind of wood of which Noah's ark was composed several diverse translations were made. Our version has it gopher wood; Onkilhos made it cedar; Castellus, juniper; Arabic commentators, box-wood; the Persian, pine; Bochart, ebony; while Dr. Geddes affirmed it to be wicker-work, and Dawson contended for bulrushes daubed with slime. Cooper says: "Up to the fifth century the Hebrew language was utterly destitute of any method of punctuation, as well as void of vowels—a mere mass of words without order or system. To ascertain the true signification was next to impossible." He quotes Du Pin to this effect: "The Hebrew alphabet is composed of twenty-two letters, as well as those of the Samaritans, Chaldeans, and Syreneans. But besides these letters, none of which is, at present, a vowel—and by consequence, they cannot determine the pronunciation—the Hebrews have invented points, which, being put under the letters, serve instead of vowels. These vowel-points serve not only to fix pronunciation, but also give the signification of a word, because the word being differently pointed, signifies things wholly different." These authorities show conclusively the great difficulty in obtaining correct translations from the ancient Hebrew.

### THE SEPTUAGINT.

The oldest and most noted translation of the Hebrew scriptures is called the Septuagint. It was translated 180 B. C., or as sometimes claimed, 280 B. C. It is said this translation into Greek was accomplished at Alexandria, Egypt, under Ptolemy Philadelphus, by seventy-two learned men, who understood both Hebrew and Greek. This was the principal version said to be used by the apostles and early Christian Fathers. It is the one from which later translations have been made, and was used in making what is called King James' translation. To show whether it is reliable or not, the opinions of various authorities quoted by Cooper will be given: 1. The Christian Professor Du Pin: "In short we must confess that there are many differences betwixt the Hebrew text and the version of the Septuagint, which arose

from the corruption and confusion that are in the Greek version we now have. It is certain that it hath been revised divers times, and that several authors have taken the liberty to add thereunto, to retrench, and to correct divers things." And again: "It is mere superstition to assert, as some authors do, that the Hebrew text which we have at present is not corrupted in any place, and that there is no fault, nor anything left out, and that we must indispensably follow it at all time. This is not only to speak without all evidence, and contrary to all probability, but we have every good proof to the contrary. For, in the first place, there have been differences betwixt the oldest of the Hebrew copies, which the Massorites have observed, by that which they call Keri, and Ketib, and putting one of the readings in the text and the other in the margin we have the different readings of the Jews of the East and the Jews of the West—the Ben Asher and the Ben Naphtali." 2. Bellamy, author of "The New Translation of the Bible," in his introduction denounces in unqualified terms the Septuagint version, and points out numerous errors and discrepencies of the most flagrant character. In Genesis, says he, xv, 11, there is a sentence, "he drove them away," which ought to have been, "he remained with them." In chap. vi, 6, "it grieved him at his heart" should have been, "he idolized himself at his heart," implying congratulation, rather than regret. In xxii, 16, "thus she was reproved," should be "thus she was justified," just the reverse. In Jeremiah xx, 7, "O Lord, thou hast deceived me, and I was deceived," should be, "O Lord, thou hast persuaded me, thus I was persuaded." A slight difference, it must be confessed. The learned Bellamy, after making other expositions, concludes by saying, "The authors of the Septuagint did not critically understand the Hebrew language." It will be seen those same errors are in our version. 3. Bishop Usher, of vast Biblical acquirements, is still more severe. Bellamy quotes him as affirming that the Septuagint is not only replete with the most serious errors, but that it is only a spurious copy! The real Septuagint was never circulated, being lost in the destruction of the Alexandrian Library, in which it was deposited. He says: "The Septuagint transla-



tion continually adds to, takes from, and changes the Hebrew text at pleasure. The original translation of it was lost long ago, and what has ever since gone by that name is a spurious copy, abounding in omissions, additions, and alterations of the Hebrew text." This cannot be very cheering to those who have unshaken confidence in the "Word of God" as it has come down to us.

Of the Latin version taken from the Septuagint, St. Jerome asks: "If they say the Latin copies are to be credited, let them tell me which, for there are almost as many different copies as there are manuscripts; and if the truth be searched for among so many, why should we not have recourse to the Greek original, in order to correct the faults that have proceeded either from the bad translations of the interpreters, or from unreasonable corrections that have been made by unskilful critics, and alterations that have happened through the carelessness of the copiers." The same Father, St. Jerome, stated that Origen, the famous Christian Father and opponent of the Infidel Celsus, wrote a version of the Old Testament, from which many of our modern copies have been taken. Jerome declared that in this translation Origen altered the Greek text most abominably. On this point Du Pin gives these words: "St. Jerome makes frequent mention of the additions, corrections, and subtractions made in the version of the Septuagint by Origen, and of the bars and asterisks he made use of for that purpose. 'When Origen,' says Jerome, 'saw there was less in the Greek than the Hebrew, he did supply it from the version of Theodotion, and put an asterisk or star to it to signify that this was to illustrate what was obscure.'" St. Jerome gives the information that this same Theodotion was an Infidel, and that his version was confounded with the Septuagint. Du Pin says: "By the carelessness of the transcribers, and sometimes of those who set them to work, the asterisks of Origen, being misunderstood, or entirely left out, in some places the additions of Theodotion were confounded with the version of the Septuagint, which moved Jerome to say that Origen had corrupted and confounded the Septuagint." From this it appears that in the version of Origen, from which numerous copies were

made, the words of the Infidel Theodotion were confounded with what are considered God's words. A sad medley indeed! To what straits must Christian worshipers be driven to thus have to accept the words of an Infidel as the utterances of omnipotent deity!

Curwen, in his published journal (London), gives a somewhat ludicrous account of what fell under his eye. He writes: "I saw in the British Museum the first Bible printed in vellum, and turning to the 91st Psalm v, 5, instead of 'Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night,' etc., I saw the following: 'Thou shalt not fear the bugs and vermin by night.'"

It should be known by all who feel any interest in knowing the truth that our version of the Jewish scriptures is simply a copy, in fact a copy of a copy of a copy; and that the oldest copy of the Old Testament in existence is only some nine hundred years old. What has been so fondly regarded as God's special word to man has been subjected to the whims and ignorance and carelessness of compilers, translators, and copyists; has met with numberless changes, interpolations, additions, and subtractions; and it is extremely doubtful whether Deity could recognize it as his own handiwork should he ever take the trouble to examine it. Even were it divine at first, of which—in sorrow it must be said—there is not the first particle of evidence, it has suffered so much violence from the hands of those careless or designing persons who have had the manipulating of it that it is now to all intents and purposes *the work of man*, and a pretty common production at that.

How sad to think of the quarrels and contentions that have raged over this heterogeneous compilation! What countless differences of opinion, what anger, what bickerings, have arisen as to the hidden meaning of "the Word!" How many heads have been puzzled over it! How difficult to solve the problems supposed to be secreted in its mysterious utterances! How have millions been deceived as to its origin, character, purpose, and worth! Yes, and how much better would it have been for the world had Cyrus retained the Jews in captivity, and thus prevented such a meaningless medley being

written and palmed off upon the world as the Great Letter from Almighty God to mankind!

### THE NEW TESTAMENT.

Having seen that but a small portion of the Old Testament was written by the persons who are said to have been the writers of it; that but little of it was written anywhere near the time when the events are said to have transpired, and that it presents not the slightest proof of having been penned by the finger of God or by his direction; that it has suffered terribly at the hands of compilers, copyists, and translators, it remains to make a brief examination of the books composing the New Testament, to see if they were written by the persons whom we are assured did write them, and if at the time they are claimed to have been written, and also whether they have met with mutilations, alterations, additions, and subtractions. If it is found that the gospel narratives of the birth, life, and teachings of Jesus were not written by Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, and that they were not written till one hundred and fifty years and more after his death, confidence in the probability, the trustworthiness, and the sacredness of the stories is terribly shaken, and all just and proper reliance upon them is utterly destroyed.

Whatever the mission and teachings of Jesus were, it is not even pretended that he himself committed a word of his doctrines to writing, or that he commanded or requested any of his disciples to make record of a word he uttered. It is the current opinion that the four gospels were written by eye and ear witnesses who were present with Jesus when his marvelous deeds were performed and his divine sentiments uttered, and consequently that they must be an immediate and correct record of his acts and sayings. This belief, however, is destined to be seriously damaged if anything like a thorough investigation is made of the question at issue. The shortest periods after the death of Jesus at which, by Christian writers, it is claimed that the gospels were written are from thirty-four to sixty years—time enough, at least, for the memory to fail, for much to be forgotten or but imperfectly remembered. Let

a person undertake to recall and transmit to writing a prolonged dialogue that was held or a discourse that was delivered a third of a century ago, and he will find the task attended with great difficulty. Such a report could not be relied upon as accurate, and could only be regarded as a dim recollection and an imperfect rendition of what was said. It would seem, if the sayings of Jesus were not made record of, if they were not committed to writing until thirty-four or forty or sixty years had passed away, that it could not have been believed that much importance attached to them or that the utterer of the sayings was really the Son of the King of Heaven, who came down to the children of the earth to deliver to them the gospel which was the only means by which they could be saved. It argues extreme negligence on the part of those witnesses. As life is so short and memory so uncertain, it seems culpable to allow from a third to over half a century to pass away before they performed their clear duty to record the important words their Lord had spoken. No subsequent officiousness or imposture on the part of friends and sympathizers could atone for the culpable neglect. The case is made still worse when it is found that even after all those years had passed away, the four evangelists made no record of those soul-saving words and deeds. If they did do so, there is not the slightest proof of it. Those who have most earnestly investigated the subject cannot find that any of the early Christian Fathers made the least mention of the gospels ascribed to Matthew, Mark, Luke, or John up to the last half of the second century, and, as some insist, not previous to the year 182 or 192—one hundred and fifty years after Jesus had closed his labors and left this world. It cannot be doubted, had either of the twelve apostles taken it upon himself to make a record of what he had seen from his master's hands and heard uttered by his master's lips, that the same would have been noticed, quoted from, and spoken of, again and again, by the Fathers, bishops, and elders who were their immediate successors. There were legends, traditions, and written accounts in abundance, and these were referred to and quoted by the early Fathers and writers, but not one of the four gospels which are now regarded as the only genuine

ones appears to have had an existence or to have been alluded to in any way until Irenæus introduced them near the close of the second century; and unfortunately his integrity and reliability are not above suspicion.

In speaking of the New Testament books the Rev. Mr. Chadwick (p. 187) says: "From the way in which the New Testament is commonly regarded, one would suppose that it came down from heaven, as the Koran of the Moslem fable did, in a single night; that it was written either by the hand of the Almighty, or at his immediate dictation. But what we find to be the truth is that for centuries after they were written the New Testament books were regarded as belonging to a different order from the Old. A Jew would have been shocked hardly more than a Christian at the idea of putting them on a level with Old Testament scriptures. Oral tradition was esteemed of greater value than the written gospels or epistles. Strangely enough the first mention of any part of the New Testament as scripture is within the limits of the New Testament itself, in the Second Epistle of Peter (iii, 16). But this epistle is the latest book of the New Testament, its date, as we shall see, about A. D. 170. After this references to parts of the New Testament as scripture grow more and more frequent, but the term is equally applied to other writings which were not finally incorporated in the New Testament. The earliest list of New Testament books that we come upon is that of the heretic Marcion, A. D. 144. It includes ten of Paul's epistles. Thirty years later all of these were still rejected by an important section of the church. Several lists date from the close of the second and the beginning of the third century. None of these contain all the books now in the New Testament, but they contain others not in it. Speaking of this period Dr. Davidson says: 'The infancy of the canon was cradled in an uncritical age and rocked with traditional ease. Of the three fathers who contributed most to its early growth, Irenæus was credulous, Tertullian passionate and one-sided, and Clement of Alexandria was mainly occupied with ecclesiastical ethics.' 'No analysis of the different books was seriously attempted. In its absence custom, accident, taste, practical needs, directed the tendency of

tradition.' 'Their decisions were much more the result of pious feeling biased by their theological speculations than the conclusions of a sound judgment.' In the year 332 A. D., the Emperor Constantine intrusted Eusebius with authority to make out a complete collection of the sacred writings for the use of the Catholic church. Apparently the list contained all that is now in the New Testament, except the Apocalypse. He thus admitted several books which he allows were controverted in his time—James, 2 Peter, Jude, 2 and 3 John. In other instances the tradition or opinion of the churches was the only ground of his decision. The Council of Laodicea, A. D. 393, is commonly credited with having accepted as canonical all of the books now in the New Testament except the Apocalypse, and no others. But the sixtieth canon of the council, which contains the decision, has been proved to be a forgery of much later date. The first Council of Carthage, A. D. 397, is in reality the first authentic instance of the acceptance of our present books, and no others, as canonical. But even then, the decision of the council did not represent either the agreement of the scholars or the unanimous opinion of the churches. Jerome and Augustine, the two most influential scholars of the time, were much divided. Many of the books thus voted in were almost universally rejected—the Epistle to the Hebrews in the Latin church, the Apocalypse in the Greek, second of Peter and Jude and James, and two of John's epistles. But even this brilliant *tour de force* did not settle the matter finally. Books voted out by the council were still read in the churches, and books voted in were still regarded with suspicion. And it must always be remembered that the same council which fixed the New Testament canon declared canonical the whole of the Old Testament Apocrypha as it is now accepted by the Roman Catholic church. The Protestant reformers were far from unanimity in regard to the rightful canonicity and value of the New Testament books. 'The fourth book of Esdras,' said Luther, 'I toss into the Elbe,' and he put the Apocalypse on the same level. The Epistle of James he considered 'a right strawy epistle.' Calvin denied the Pauline author-

ship of Hebrews, and the Petrine authorship of Second Peter, but allowed the right of both to be in the New Testament.

“Such is the story of New Testament canonicity. Such were the incidents and the vicissitudes to which the New Testament writings were subjected before they arrived at the position of supernatural and infallible authority. Nowhere along the line have we a particle of evidence of any supernatural guidance or illumination which enabled those who judged between these books and others to decide which were and which were not of superhuman origin. The most various motives contributed to the arrangement finally agreed upon. Some were prudential, others were superstitious. Few, almost none, were critical. The Roman Catholic assumes that there was supernatural guidance of the church to her decision. The Protestant, denying this—as well he may, for it has not a particle of evidence—is forced to the conclusion that the determination of the limits of infallibility and inspiration was left to be decided in the course of several centuries by men of dubious character and doubtful scholarship, or by the superstitions and the passions of the crowd. Surely such a conclusion ought to hush forever all the arrogant assumptions that are made upon this head, and all the petty taunts which orthodoxy hurls at those who feel obliged to go behind the superstitions and opinions of the early church to test every book by scientific methods, and to accord to each particular part so much of reverence and authority as it demands on its intrinsic merits.”

The epistles are admitted on all hands to be the oldest of the New Testament books, the most of them having been produced in the first century; and the majority of them were probably originally written by the person whose name they bear—particularly Paul—but numerous interpolations, additions, and changes have been made in them. The books, however, as with the Old Testament, will be briefly considered in the order in which they stand.

### THE FOUR GOSPELS.

The four gospels will necessarily have to be treated more or less together, particularly the first three, called the synop-

tical gospels, which bear considerable resemblance to each other. The fourth, that ascribed to John, is of an entirely different character, and will receive subsequent attention. The existence of the person Jesus, who, by over three hundred millions of the present inhabitants of the globe, is recognized either as the son of the Eternal Author of all things, or as that personage himself, is implied in several of the New Testament books, but outside of the gospels hardly an incident of his life is mentioned, and hardly a sentence said to have been spoken by him is recorded. Paul, who is claimed to have written his epistles within thirty years after the death of Jesus, quotes but a single sentence of six words, "Do this in remembrance of me" (1 Cor. ii, 25), said to have been spoken by him. Contemporaneous history has nothing to say of him. The noted passage in Josephus, whose history began after that of Jesus was ended, is now admitted by the best authorities to be an interpolation, utterly spurious. The allusion to him attributed to Tacitus, the Roman historian, is disposed of in the article on Jesus in the foregoing pages, and is shown to be spurious. There is no other mention made of him, in the way of detailing the events of his life, save what is contained in the four gospels and other gospels considered spurious. The four, with all their repetitions, occupy a few more than a hundred pages—one-fourth the amount used in many single-volume novels—and this is all that the world has to rely upon respecting this noted character, who is said to be "the fountain-head of love more tender, strife more keen, and hatreds more intense than have arisen from any other personal source."

#### EXTRACTS FROM "SUPERNATURAL RELIGION."

F. W. Newman, Emeritus Professor of University College, London, is understood to be the author of "Supernatural Religion," published anonymously in three octavo volumes in London (republished entire in one volume, of over eleven hundred compact pages, by the writer of this work), and therein he enters largely into the examination of the proofs in regard to the books comprising the New Testament. His is one of the ablest minds of the present age; his learning and continued



investigation entitle him to be considered second to no man living in relation to the origin of Christianity and the authenticity of the books upon which it is based. In treating the synoptic gospels he views at length and in the most fair manner the writings of the Fathers, and examines all they said touching the gospels and epistles in the New Testament canon. Space cannot be here taken to quote from this able and candid writer as fully as would be desirable, but a few paragraphs, at all events, will be given. He shows that the writers of the Epistle of Barnabas and the Pastor of Hermas, and other epistles believed to have been written in the fore part or the middle of the second century, and which came near being admitted as canonical, had no knowledge of the Gospel of Matthew as in the New Testament. He next devotes a chapter to Ignatius and his epistle, which he closes with this paragraph: "We must, however, again point out that, with the single exception of the short passage in the epistle to Polycarp, c, ii, which is not a quotation, differs from the reading in Matthew, and may well be from any other source, none of these supposed reminiscences of our synoptic gospels are found in the Syriac version of the three epistles. The evidential value of the seven Greek epistles is clearly stated by an English historian and divine: 'My conclusion is that I should be unwilling to claim historical authority for any passage not contained in Dr. Cureton's Syriac reprint.' We must, however, go much further and assert that none of the epistles have any value as evidence for an earlier period than the end of the second or beginning of the third century, if indeed they possess any value at all. The whole of the literature ascribed to Ignatius is, in fact, such a tissue of fraud and imposture, and the successive versions exhibit such undeniable marks of the grossest interpolation, that even if any small original element exist referable to Ignatius, it is impossible to define it or to distinguish with the slightest degree of accuracy between what is authentic and what is spurious. The epistles do not, however, in any case afford evidence even of the existence of our synoptic gospels."

He gives a hundred pages to the examination of the works of Justin Martyr, one of the ablest and most learned of the early

Fathers, who was put to death about the year 167. He says: "It is clear that the testimony of Justin Martyr is not of a nature to establish the date, authenticity, and character of gospels professing to communicate such momentous and astounding doctrines" as ascribed to Jesus. And further: "The determination of the source from which Justin derived his facts of Christian history has for a century attracted more attention and excited more controversy than almost any other similar question in connection with patristic literature, and upon none have more divergent opinions been expressed." "It is not necessary to enter into any discussion as to the authenticity of the writings which have come down to us bearing Justin's name, many of which are undoubtedly spurious, for the two apologies and the dialogue with Trypho, with which we have almost exclusively to do, are generally admitted to be genuine." "In these writings Justin quotes very copiously from the Old Testament, and he also very frequently refers to facts of Christian history and to sayings of Jesus. Of these references, for instance, some fifty occur in the first Apology, and upwards of seventy in the dialogue with Trypho, a goodly number, it will be admitted, by means of which to identify the source from which he quotes. Justin himself frequently and distinctly says that his information and quotations are derived from the 'Memoirs of the Apostles,' but except upon one occasion, when he indicates Peter, he never mentions an author's name. Upon examination it is found that with one or two brief exceptions the numerous quotations from the Memoirs differ more or less widely from parallel passages in our synoptic gospels, and in many cases differ in the same respects as similar quotations found in other writings of the second century, the writers of which are known to have made use of uncanonical gospels, and further, that these passages are quoted several times, at intervals, by Justin with the same variations. Moreover, sayings of Jesus are quoted from these Memoirs which are not found in our gospels at all; and facts in the life of Jesus and circumstances of Christian history derived from the same source, not only are not found in our gospels, but are in contradiction with them."

Of these Memoirs from which Justin quoted, our author says: "The title, 'Memoirs of the Apostles,' however, although most appropriate to mere recollections of the life and teachings of Jesus, evidently could not be applied to works ranking as canonical gospels, but in fact excludes such an idea; and the whole of Justin's views regarding holy scripture prove that he saw in the Memoirs merely records from memory to assist memory. His constant appeals to a written source show very clearly his abandonment of oral tradition; there is nothing in the name of the records which can identify them with our gospels." "Describing the religious practices amongst Christians, Justin states that at their assemblies on Sundays 'the Memoirs of the Apostles or the writings of the prophets are read as long as time permits.' This, however, by no means identifies the Memoirs with the canonical gospels, for it is well known that many writings which have been excluded from the canon were publicly read in the churches until very long after Justin's day. We have met with several instances of this kind. Eusebius mentions that the epistle of the Roman Clement was publicly read in most of the churches in his time, and he quotes an epistle of Dionysius of Corinth to Soter, the bishop of Rome, which states that fact for the purpose of showing that it was the custom to read it in the churches, even from the earliest times. Dionysius likewise mentions the public reading of the Epistle of Soter to the Corinthians. Epiphanius refers to the reading in the churches of the Epistle of Clement, and it continued to be so read in Jerome's day. In like manner the Pastor of Hermas, the Apocalypse of Peter, and other works excluded from the canon, were publicly read in the church in early days. It is certain that gospels which did not permanently secure a place in the canon, such as the Gospel according to the Hebrews, the Gospel according to Peter, the Gospel of the Ebionites, and many kindred gospels, which in early times were exclusively used by various communities, must have been read at their public assemblies. The public reading of Justin's Memoirs, therefore, does not prove anything, for this practice was by no means limited to the works now in our canon."

A great deal that our author says in relation to Justin is very interesting and instructive, but space precludes extended quotations. The closing paragraph only can further be given: "It is not necessary, however, for the purposes of this examination to dwell more fully upon the question as to what specific gospel now no longer extant Justin employed. We have shown that there is no evidence that he made use of any of our gospels, and he cannot, therefore, be cited even to prove their existence, and much less to test the authenticity and character of records whose authors he does not once name. On the other hand, it has been made evident that there were other gospels, now lost, but which then enjoyed the highest consideration, from which his quotations might have been and probably were taken. We have seen that Justin's Memoirs of the Apostles contained many facts of gospel history unknown to or contradictory of our gospels, which were contained in apocryphal works and in the Gospel according to the Hebrews; that they contained matter otherwise contradictory to our gospels, and sayings of Jesus not contained in them; and that his quotations, although so numerous, systematically vary from similar passages in our gospels. No theory of quotation from memory can account for these phenomena, and the reasonable conclusion is that Justin did not make use of our gospels, but quoted from another source. In no case can the testimony of Justin afford the requisite support to the gospels as records of miracles and of a divine revelation."

At the close of a chapter on the early Christian writer, Hegesippus, a contemporary of Justin, he says: "Tischendorf, who so eagerly searches for every trace, real or imaginary, of the use of our gospels and of the existence of a New Testament canon, passes over in silence, with the exception of a short note devoted to the denial that Hegesippus was opposed to Paul, this first writer of Christian church history, whose evidence, could it have been adduced, would have been so valuable. He does not pretend that Hegesippus made use of the canonical gospels, or knew of any other holy scriptures than those of the Old Testament; and on the other hand he does not mention that he possessed and quoted from the Gospel accord-

ing to the Hebrews. Nothing is more certain than the fact that in spite of the opportunity for collecting information afforded him by his travels through so many Christian communities for the express purpose of such inquiry, Hegesippus did not find any New Testament canon, or that such a rule of faith did not yet exist in Rome in A. D. 160–170. There is no evidence whatever to show that Hegesippus recognized any other evangelical work than the Gospel according to the Hebrews as the source of his knowledge, together with tradition, of the words of the Lord.”

Our author next devotes some thirty pages to Papias, Bishop of Hierapolis, another of the early Christian Fathers. It is true that Eusebius said that Papias was a man of very limited comprehension, but still he had capacity enough to hear of our four gospels and to testify of them had they been in existence at the time he lived. The space can only be afforded for Professor Newman's closing remarks about Papias: “Whatever books Papias knew, however, it is certain from his own express declaration that he ascribed little importance to them, and preferred tradition as a more reliable source of information regarding evangelical history. ‘For I held that what was to be derived from books he says, ‘did not so profit me as that from the living, abiding voice (of tradition).’ If, therefore, it could ever have been shown that Papias was acquainted with any of our canonical gospels, it could only have been with the accompanying fact that he did not recognize them as authoritative documents. It is manifest from the evidence adduced, however, that Papias did not know our gospels. It is not possible that he could have found it better to inquire ‘what John or Matthew, or any other of the disciples of the Lord, . . . say,’ if he had known of gospels such as ours actually written by them, deliberately telling him what they had to say. The work of Matthew which he mentions, being however, a mere collection of the discourses of Jesus, he might naturally inquire what the apostle himself said of the history of the master. The evidence of Papias is in every respect most important. He is the first writer who mentions that Matthew and Mark were believed to have written any works at all; but whilst he shows that he does

not accord any canonical authority even to the works attributed to them, his description of those works and his general testimony come with crushing force against the pretensions made on behalf of our gospels to apostolic origin and authenticity."

At the close of a chapter on the Clementines are these remarks: "We have digressed to a greater extent than we intended, but it is not unimportant to show the general character and tendency of the work we have been examining. The Clementine Homilies—written perhaps about the end of the second century, which never name nor indicate a single gospel as the source of the author's knowledge of evangelical history, whose quotations of sayings of Jesus, numerous as they are, systematically differ from the parallel passages of our synoptics, or are altogether foreign to them, which denounce the Apostle Paul as an impostor, enemy of the faith, and disseminator of false doctrine, and therefore repudiates his epistles, at the same time equally ignoring all the other writings of the New Testament—can scarcely be considered as giving much support to any theory of the early formation of the New Testament canon, or as affording evidence even of the existence of its separate books."

At the close of a brief consideration of the Epistle to Diognetus, formerly ascribed to Justin Martyr, and also to Apollon, Clement, Marcion, Quadratus, and others, he closes with these observations: "The Epistle to Diognetus, however, does not furnish any evidence even of the existence of our synoptics, for it is admitted that it does not contain a single direct quotation from any evangelical work." At the close of an examination of the writings of Valentinus, at the head of a heretical sect of early Christians, he says, "We have been compelled to devote too much space to Valentinus, and we now leave him with the certainty that in nothing does he afford any evidence even of the existence of our synoptic gospels."

He next says: "We must now turn to the great heresiarch of the second century, Marcion, and consider the evidence regarding our gospels which may be derived from what we know of him. The importance, and at the same time the

difficulty, of arriving at a just conclusion from the materials within our reach, have rendered Marcion's gospel the object of very elaborate criticism, and the discussion of its actual character has continued with fluctuating results for nearly a century.

“Marcion was born at Sinope, in Pontus, of which place his father was bishop, and although it is said he aspired to the first place in the church of Rome, the Presbyters refused him communion on account of his peculiar views of Christianity. He objected to what he considered a debasement of true Christianity by Jewish elements, and he upheld the teaching of Paul alone, in opposition to that of all the other apostles, whom he accused of mixing up matters of the law with the gospel of Christ, and falsifying Christianity, as Paul had himself protested. He came to Rome A. D. 139 to 142, and continued teaching for some twenty years. His high personal character and elevated views produced a powerful effect upon his time, and although during his own lifetime, and long afterwards, vehemently and with every opprobrious epithet denounced by ecclesiastical writers, his opinions were so widely adopted that in the time of Epiphanius his followers were said to be found throughout the whole world.” He recognized as his sources of Christian doctrine, besides tradition, a single gospel and ten epistles of Paul; none of the other books which now form part of the canonical New Testament were either mentioned or recognized by him. Newman says: “This is the oldest collection of apostolic writings of which there is any trace, but there was, at that time, no other holy scripture than the Old Testament, and no New Testament canon had yet been imagined. Marcion neither claimed canonical authority for these writings, nor did he associate with them any idea of divine inspiration. The principal interest in connection with the collection of Marcion centers in his single gospel, the nature, origin, and identity of which have long been actively and minutely discussed by learned men of all shades of opinion with very varying results. The work itself is unfortunately no longer extant, and our only knowledge of it is derived from the bitter and very inaccurate opponents of Marcion. It seems to have

borne much the same analogy to our third canonical gospel which existed between the Gospel according to the Hebrews and our first synoptic. The Fathers whose uncritical and, in such matters, prejudiced character led them to denounce every variation from their actual texts as a mere falsification, and without argument to assume the exclusive authenticity and originality of our gospels, which towards the beginning of the third century had acquired wide circulation in the church, vehemently stigmatized Marcion as an audacious adulterator of the gospel, and affirmed his evangelical work to be merely a mutilated and falsified version of the Gospel according to St. Luke. This view continued to prevail, almost without question or examination, till towards the end of the eighteenth century, when biblical criticism began to exhibit the earnestness and activity which have ever since more or less characterized it." After forty pages of exhaustive examination, criticism, and argument, he closes the chapter with these remarks: "At the very best, even if the hypothesis that Marcion's gospel was a mutilated Luke were established, Marcion affords no evidence in favor of the authenticity or trustworthy character of our third synoptic. His gospel was nameless, and his followers repudiated the idea of its having been written by Luke, and regarded even as the earliest testimony for the existence of Luke's gospel, that testimony is not in confirmation of its genuineness and reliability, but on the contrary condemns it as garbled and interpolated." He next introduces Tatian thus: "From Marcion we now turn to Tatian, another so-called heretic leader. Tatian, an Assyrian by birth, embraced Christianity and became a disciple of Justin Martyr in Rome, sharing with him, as it seems, the persecution excited by Crescens the Cynic to which Justin Martyr fell a victim. After the death of Justin, Tatian, who till then had continued thoroughly orthodox, left Rome, and joined the sect of the Encratites, of which, however, he was not the founder, and became the leading exponent of their austere and ascetic doctrines. The only one of his writings which is still extant is his 'Oration to the Greeks.' This work was written after the death of Justin, for in it he refers to that event, and it is generally dated between A. D. 170 and



175. Tischendorf does not assert that there is any quotation in this address taken from the synoptic gospels, and Canon Westcott only affirms that it contains a 'clear reference' to 'a parable recorded by St. Matthew,' and he excuses the slightness of this evidence by adding: 'The absence of more implicit testimony to the books of the New Testament, is to be accounted for by the style of his writing, and not by the unworthy estimate of their importance.' This remark is without foundation, as we know nothing whatever with regard to Tatian's estimate of any such books." After showing that "clear reference" was no reference at all, and with ten pages showing the groundless claims of those who try to prove the early existence of the synoptics he closes thus: "It is not necessary further to follow this discussion, for it in no way affects our question, and all critics are agreed that no important deduction can be derived from it. We allude to the point for the mere sake of showing that up to the last we have no information which throws further light on the composition of Tatian's gospel. All that we know of it—and what it did not contain—the places where it largely circulated, and the name by which it was called, identifies it with the Gospel according to the Hebrews. For the rest, Tatian had no idea of a New Testament canon, and evidently did not recognize as inspired any scriptures except those of the Old Testament. It is well known that the sect of the Encratites made use of apocryphal gospels until a much later period, and rejected the authority of the Apostle Paul; and although Tatian may have been acquainted with some of his epistles, it is certain that he did not hold the apostle in any honor, and permitted himself the liberty of altering his phraseology."

At the close of an examination of Dionysius of Corinth, he makes these remarks: "It is evident that there was no idea in selecting works to be read at the weekly assembly of Christians, of any canon of a New Testament. We here learn that the epistles of Clement and of Soter were habitually read, and while we hear of this and of similar readings of Justin's 'Memoirs of the Apostles,' of the 'Pastor of Hermas,' of the 'Apocalypse of Peter,' and other apocryphal works, we do

not at the same time hear of the public reading of our gospels."

After repeating the argument of Canon Westcott and others in favor of the synoptics in connection with Melito of Sardis, Claudius Apollinaris, Athenagoras, and others, he makes these remarks in connection with the first: "Besides the oration and the five Syriac fragments, we have two other works extant falsely attributed to Melito, one 'De Transitu Virginis Mariæ,' describing the miraculous presence of the apostles at the death of Mary, and the other, 'De Actibus Joannis Apostoli,' relates the history of the miracles performed by the Apostle John. Both are universally admitted to be spurious, as are a few other fragments also bearing his name. Melito did not escape from the falsification to which many of his more distinguished predecessors and contemporaries were victims, through the literary activity and unscrupulous religious zeal of the first three or four centuries of our era." He closes his examination of Athenagoras with: "The total absence of any allusion to the New Testament scriptures in Athenagoras, however, is rendered more striking and significant by the marked expression of his belief in the inspiration of the Old Testament. He appeals to the prophets for testimony as to the truth of the opinions of Christians; men, he says, who spoke by the inspiration of God, whose spirit moved their mouth to express God's will as musical instruments are played upon. 'But since the voices of the prophets support our arguments, I think that you, being most learned and wise, cannot be ignorant of the writings of Moses, or of those of Isaiah and Jeremiah, and of the other prophets, who, being raised in ecstasy above the reasoning that was in themselves, uttered the things which were wrought in them when the Divine Spirit moved them, the spirit using them as a flute-player would blow into the flute.' He thus enunciates the theory of the mechanical inspiration of the writers of the Old Testament in the clearest manner, and it would indeed have been strange, on the supposition that he extended his views of inspiration to any of the scriptures of the New Testament, that he never names a single one of them, nor indicates to the emperors in the same way, as worthy of their

attention, any of these scriptures along with the Law and the Prophets. There can be no doubt that he nowhere gives reason for supposing that he regarded any other writings than the Old Testament as inspired, or 'holy scriptures.' "

He also examines and refutes what has been said by the apologists in regard to reference claimed to have been made of Celsus in his "True Doctrine" as opposed by Origen. As Celsus' writings were carefully destroyed, all that is known that he said is by the quotations from him by Origen. At the close of the article the Professor says: "Celsus nowhere mentions the name of any Christian books, unless we except the book of Enoch; and he accuses Christians, not without reason, of interpolating the books of the Sibyl, whose authority, he states, some of them acknowledged."

He discusses with his usual ability and clearness the list of New Testament books attributed to Muratori, and called the canon of Muratori, which the apologists for the authenticity of the gospels claim as having mentioned the third synoptic. Its authority seems to be derived from some unreliable fragments attributed to Eucherius, Ambrose, and Chrysostom. In conclusion he says: "The facts of the case may be briefly summed up as follows, so far as our object is concerned. The third synoptic is mentioned by a totally unknown writer, at an unknown but certainly not early date; in all probability during the third century, in a fragment which we possess in a very corrupt version very far from free from suspicion of interpolation in the precise part from which the early date is inferred. The gospel is attributed to Luke, who was not one of the followers of Jesus, and of whom it is expressly said that 'he himself had not seen the Lord in the flesh,' but wrote 'as he deemed best,' and followed his history as he was able. If the evidence, therefore, even came within our limits as to date, which it does not, it could be of no value for establishing the trustworthiness and absolute accuracy of the narrative of the third synoptic, but on the contrary it would distinctly tend to destroy its evidence as the composition of one who undeniably was not an eye-witness of the miracles reported, but collected the materials long after as best he could."

After using the greater part of one of the original volumes, or three hundred and fifty pages in the American edition, in reviewing the claims of the apologists for the three synoptics in connection with all of the early Fathers, whom it is claimed more or less recognized the existence of the three synoptic gospels, as well as examining various epistles and writings claimed to aid in the same direction, he sums up the result in this language: "We may now briefly sum up the results of our examination of the evidence for the synoptic gospels. After having exhausted the literature and the testimony bearing on the point, we have not found a single distinct trace of any one of those gospels during the first century and a half after the death of Jesus. Only once during the whole of that period do we find any tradition even, that any one of our evangelists composed a gospel at all, and that tradition, so far from favoring our synoptics, is fatal to the claims of the first and second. Papias, about the middle of the second century, on the occasion to which we refer, records that Matthew composed the Discourses of the Lord in the Hebrew tongue, a statement which totally excludes the claim of our Greek gospels to apostolic origin. Mark, he said, wrote down from the casual preaching of Peter the sayings and doings of Jesus, but without orderly arrangement, as he was not himself a follower of the Master, and merely recorded what fell from the apostle. This description, likewise, shows that our actual second gospel could not, in its present form, have been the work of Mark. There is no other reference during the period to any writing of Matthew or Mark, and no mention at all of any work ascribed to Luke. If it be considered that there is any connection between Marcion's gospel and our third synoptic, any evidence so derived is of an unfavorable character for that gospel, as it involves a charge against it of being interpolated and debased by Jewish elements. Any argument for the mere existence of our synoptics based upon their supposed rejection by heretical leaders and sects, has the inevitable disadvantage that the very testimony which would show their existence would oppose their authenticity. There is no evidence of their use by heretical leaders, however, and no direct reference to them by any writer, heretical

or orthodox, whom we have examined. We need scarcely add that no reason whatever has been shown for accepting the testimony of these gospels as sufficient to establish the reality of miracles and of a divine revelation. It is not pretended that more than one of the synoptic gospels was written by an eye-witness of the miraculous occurrence reported, and whilst no evidence has been or can be produced even of the historical accuracy of the narratives, no testimony as to the correctness of the inferences from the external phenomena exists, or is now even conceivable. The discrepancy between the amount of evidence required and that which is forthcoming, however, is greater than under the circumstances could have been thought possible."

### THE FOURTH GOSPEL.

Prof. Newman, after a full and careful analysis of nearly one hundred pages (Am. edition) of what he terms the external evidence of the authenticity of what is called St. John's gospel, and patiently criticising the arguments and statements of the apologists, commences a chapter on the "Authorship and Character of the Fourth Gospel" with these remarks: "The result of our inquiry into the evidence of the fourth gospel is sufficiently decided to render further examination unnecessary. We have seen that for some century and a half after the events recorded in the work there is not only no testimony whatever connecting the fourth gospel with the Apostle John, but no certain trace even of the existence of the gospel. There has not been the slightest evidence in any of the writings of the Fathers which we have examined even of a tradition that the Apostle John had composed any evangelical work at all, and the claim advanced in favor of the Christian miracles to contemporaneous evidence of extraordinary force and veracity by undoubted eye-witnesses so completely falls to the ground that we might here well bring this part of our inquiry to a close. There are, however, so many peculiar circumstances connected with the fourth gospel, both in regard to its authorship and to its relationship to the three synoptics, which invite further attention, that we pro-

pose briefly to review some of them." He follows with some sixty pages of searching analysis and argument as to the authorship and character of the fourth gospel, but unfortunately space will not admit of many more quotations from him. In giving the opinions of able critics he says this: "The great majority of critics have fully admitted the impossibility of recognizing a common source for the fourth gospel and the Apocalypse of John. The critical question regarding the two works has, in fact, reduced itself to the dilemma which may be expressed as follows in the words of Lücke: 'Either the gospel and the first epistle are genuine writings of the Apostle John, and in that case the Apocalypse is no genuine work of that apostle, or the inverse.' After an elaborate comparison of the two writings, the same writer, who certainly will not be suspected of wilfully subversive criticism, resumes: 'The difference between the language, way of expression, and mode of thought, and doctrine of the Apocalypse and the rest of the Johannine writings, is so comprehensive and intense, so individual and so far radical, the affinity and agreement, on the contrary, partly so general, partly in details so fragmentary and uncertain, that the Apostle John, if he really be the author of the gospel and epistle—which we here advance—cannot have composed the Apocalypse either before or after the gospel and the epistle. If all critical experience and rules in such literary quotations do not deceive, it is certain that the evangelist and Apocalypticist are two different persons of the name of John,' etc. De Wette, another conservative critic, speaks with equal decision. After an able comparison of the two works, he says: 'From all this it follows (and in New Testament criticism no result is more certain than this) that the Apostle John, if he be the author of the fourth gospel, and of the Johannine epistles, did not write the Apocalypse, or, if the Apocalypse be his work, he is not the author of the other writings.' Ewald is equally positive: 'Above all,' he says, 'should we be in error as to the descent of this work (the gospel from the apostle, if the Apocalypse of the New Testament were by him. That this much earlier writing cannot have been composed by the author of the latter is an axiom which I consider I have

already so convincingly demonstrated that it would be superfluous now to return to it, especially as, since then, all men capable of forming a judgment are of the same opinion, and what has been brought forward by a few writers against it too clearly depends upon influences foreign to science.' We may, therefore, consider the point generally admitted, and proceed very briefly to discuss the question upon this basis. The external evidence that the Apostle John wrote the Apocalypse is more ancient than that for the authorship of any book of the New Testament excepting some of the epistles of Paul. This is admitted by critics who ultimately deny the authenticity of the work."

Near the close of the chapter our author uses this language: "We have seen that, whilst there is not one particle of evidence during a century and a half after the events recorded in the fourth gospel that it was composed by the son of Zebedee, there is, on the contrary, the strongest reason for believing that he did not write it. The first writer who quotes a passage of the gospel with the mention of his name is Theophilus of Antioch, who gives the few words, 'In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God,' as spoken by 'John,' whom he considers amongst the divinely inspired, though even he does not distinguish him as the apostle. . . . The first writer who distinctly classes the four gospels together is Irenæus; and the reasons which he gives for the existence of precisely that number in the canon of the church illustrate the thoroughly uncritical character of the Fathers, and the slight dependence which can be placed upon their judgments. Says Irenæus:

"But neither can the gospels be more in number than they are, nor on the other hand, can they be fewer. For as there are four quarters of the world in which we are, and four general winds, and the church is disseminated throughout all the world, and the gospel is the pillar and prop of the church and the spirit of life, it is right that she should have four pillars on all sides breathing out immortality and revivifying men. From which it is manifest that the Word, the maker of all, he who sitteth on the cherubim and containeth all things, who was manifested to men, has given to us the gospel, four-formed but possessed by one spirit; as David also says, supplicating his advent, 'Thou that sittest between the cherubim, shine forth.' For the cherubim also are four-faced, and their faces are symbols of the working of the son of God. . . .

and the gospels, therefore, are in harmony with these amongst which Christ is seated. For the Gospel according to John relates his first effectual and glorious generation from the father, saying, 'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God,' and 'all things were made by him, and without him nothing was made.' On this account also this gospel is full of all trustworthiness, for such is his person. But the gospel according to Luke, being as it were of priestly character, opened with Zacharias the priest sacrificing to God. . . . But Matthew narrates his generation as a man, saying: 'The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.' and 'the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise.' This gospel, therefore, is anthropomorphic, and on this account a man, humble and mild in character, is presented throughout the gospel. But Mark makes his commencement after a prophetic spirit coming down from on high unto men, saying: 'The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, as it is written in Isaiah the prophet,' indicating the winged form of the gospel; and for this reason he makes a compendious and precursory declaration, for this is the prophetic character. . . . Such, therefore, as was the course of the son of God, such also is the form of the living creatures; and such as is the form of the living creatures, such also is the character of the gospel. For quadiform are the living creatures, quadiform is the gospel, and quadiform the course of the Lord. And on this account four covenants were given to the human race. . . . These things being thus; vain and ignorant, and, moreover, audacious are those who set aside the form of the gospel, and declare the aspects of the gospel as either more or less than has been said."

Of such childish reasoning as this our author says: "As such principles of criticism presided over the formation of the canon, it is not singular that so many of the decisions of the Fathers have been reversed. Irenæus himself mentioned the existence of heretics who rejected the fourth gospel, and Epiphanius refers to the Alogi, who equally denied its authenticity, but it is not needful for us further to discuss this point. Enough has been said to show that the testimony of the fourth gospel is of no value toward establishing the truth of miracles and the reality of divine revelation." The reason given by Irenæus why there should be just four gospels—no more and no less—seems particularly puerile and ridiculous. A man who could talk in that way must be either too weak-minded to distinguish a spurious gospel from a genuine one, or he would readily herald a spurious production of his own, or of some other person. It is particularly suspicious that a man capable of such arguments should be the first one to give the knowledge to the world that the gospels named after Mark, Matthew, Luke, and John had been



written; and that when a century and a half had elapsed since the person was dead whose life and acts the so-called gospels described. The worshipers of the Bible have reason to regret that the first notice taken of the four gospels should be in such a senseless manner; and when had they been in existence hundreds of abler minds should already have called attention to them.

Whoever was the author of the fourth gospel, it was one who had become somewhat acquainted with Greek philosophy, particularly as propounded by Plato. The idea of "Logos" or "The Word" forming a part of the Trinity is decidedly Platonic, and not Hebraic or Judaic. There is an evident intent on the part of the writer to introduce, and weave into his narrative—if such it may be called—the views and doctrines which had obtained recognition in Græce.

#### FROM "THE CREED OF CHRISTENDOM."

R. W. Greg, in his "Creed of Christendom"—one of the ablest and most candid works upon the Bible and the merits of supernaturalism that have been written—arrives at very similar conclusions with Prof. Newman. Upon the subject of the four gospels (p. 153, Truth Seeker edition), he says: "The current idea respecting the nature of the gospel history is that the four evangelists were eye-witnesses (or the amanuenses of eye-witnesses) of the events which they relate; and that we have, in fact, embodied in their narratives four independent and corroborative testimonies to the words and deeds of Christ. Their substantial agreement is appealed to in proof of their fidelity, and their numerous and circumstantial discrepancies are accepted as proof of their independence. Let us examine what foundation can be discovered for this current opinion. Have we any reason to believe that all the evangelists, or any of them, were companions of Christ—eye and ear witnesses of his career? And if not, what does critical science teach us of the probable origin of the four gospels?"

"The first gospel has come down to us under the title of the Gospel of, or according to, St. Matthew; and the tradition of the church is that it was written (probably about A. D. 68) by

Matthew, the publican, one of the twelve apostles, the same who was called by Jesus while 'sitting at the receipt of custom.'" This is distinctly stated by several of the early Fathers as the received opinion or tradition—as Papias (A. D. 116), Irenæus (A. D. 178), Origen (A. D. 230), Epiphanius (A. D. 368), and Jerome (A. D. 392). (Papias, whose information on this as on other matters seems to have been derived from John, who is called the 'Presbyter,' an elder of the church at Ephesus, simply says, 'Matthew wrote the divine oracles in the Hebrew tongue, and every man interpreted them as he was able.' Irenæus says, 'Matthew, then, among the Jews, wrote a gospel in their own language, while Peter and Paul were preaching the gospel at Rome.' Origen and Jerome both state that—according to the tradition come down to them—the first gospel was written by Matthew, the publican, in Hebrew.) All these Fathers, however, without exception, expressly affirm that Matthew wrote his gospel in the Hebrew language, whereas the gospel which we receive as Matthew's is written in Greek; and not only have we no account of its having been translated, and no guarantee of such translation being a faithful one, but learned men are satisfied from internal evidence that it is not a translation at all, but must have been originally written in Greek. Our present gospel, therefore, cannot be the gospel to which the Fathers above cited refer. It would appear simply that Matthew did write a history, or rather a *memorabilia* of Christ, but that this was something quite different from our gospel. This notion is confirmed by the fact that the Ebionites and Nazarenes, two Christian sects, possessed a Hebrew gospel which they considered to be the only genuine one, and which they called the Gospel according to Matthew. It appears, however, to have been so materially different from our first gospel as entirely to negative the supposition of the latter being a translation from it. The only external testimony, then, which exists to show that Matthew the apostle wrote a gospel shows at the same time that our first gospel is not the one which Matthew wrote. External evidence, therefore, gives us no reason to believe that it was the production of an eye-witness; and it is worthy of remark that the author nowhere names himself, nor claims

the authority of an eye-witness. Internal evidence goes further, and we think effectually negatives the notion."

Among the internal evidences, which he offers that our first gospel is not by Matthew, are :

1. Many events are recorded in it at which Matthew was not present, and some at which none of the disciples were present, yet they are narrated with the same particularity and confidence. As instances he gives the incarnation, the story of the magi, the temptation, the transfiguration, the agony and prayer in Gethsemane, the denial of Peter, the dream of Pilate's wife, the conversation between Judas and the priests, and that between the priests and the soldiers about the missing body of Jesus. He adds: "It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that if the writer was not present at the colloquy of Pilate with the chief priests about the security of the grave of Jesus, neither was he present at the feeding of the five thousand, or the calming of the waves."

2. The abruptness of the transitions, the fragmentary style of the narrative, and the entire absence of all those details, as to the mode and object of the frequent journeys indicated, which would be expected from a companion, he says, "all point to the conclusion that the writer was a compiler, not an eye-witness."

3. Frequent double narratives of the same events, which indicate the confusion of a man compiling from fragmentary materials, rather than from what he knew and had seen himself.

4. "If," he says, "as the great majority of critics imagine, Mark and Luke had Matthew's gospel before them when they wrote their own, it is certain that they could not have regarded him as an eye-witness or a very accurate authority, as they do not hesitate both to retrench, to deviate from, and to contradict him. Moreover, the proem to Luke's gospel must, we think, by all unbiased minds be regarded as fatal to the hypothesis of the authors of any of the gospels then in existence having been either disciples or eye-witnesses. It is clear from that that although many histories of Christ have been extant, none of them had any peculiar or paramount authority."

5. "The author of the first gospel scarcely appears to have been acquainted with any portion of Christ's ministry except that of which Galilee was the scene."

As to the authenticity of Mark's gospel he says: "The second gospel, like the first, bears no author's name; but by Papias and Irenæus, and (following them) by the universal tradition of the church, is attributed to Mark, a friend and fellow-traveler of Peter, Barnabas, and Paul, who is several times mentioned in the New Testament. Papias says expressly that he was neither a hearer nor a follower of Christ, but compiled his gospel from information obtained from Peter, whose 'interpreter' he is said to have been. Papias gives the 'Presbyter John,' supposed to have been an elder of the Ephesian church, as his authority. Mark, then, it is certain, was not an eye-witness. Nor have we any reason, beyond similarity of name, to believe that the writer of the second gospel was the same Mark who is mentioned in the Acts as the companion of Paul and Barnabas (not of Peter, by the way), nor the same who is mentioned in 1 Peter v, 13, as his son. Mark was one of the commonest of Roman names; and it is probable that the idea of the identity of the three Marks was an imagination of Papias merely.

"Neither was the author of the third gospel an eye-witness. His proem merely claims to set forth faithfully that which he had heard from eye-witnesses. Irenæus is the first person who distinctly mentions Luke as the author of this gospel."

As to the fourth gospel our author arrives at the same opinion as did the author of "Supernatural Religion," that the Apostle John did not write it. He cites the later opinion of Strauss and Renan to the same effect; and of Mr. J. J. Taylor, who also decides that it was not written by the apostle. Mr. Greg says, in addition: "One argument against the supposition of John having been the author of the fourth gospel has impressed my mind very forcibly. It is this, that several of the most remarkable events recorded by the other evangelists at which we are told by them that only Peter, James, and John were present, and of which, therefore, John alone of the evangelists could have spoken with the distinctness and

authority of an eye-witness, are entirely omitted—we may say ignored—by him. Such are the raising of Jairus' daughter, the transfiguration, the agony in Gethsemane. Now, on the assumption that John was the author of the fourth gospel—either had he not seen the works of the other evangelists, in which case he would certainly not have omitted to record narratives of such interest and beauty, especially that of the transfiguration; or he had seen them and omitted all notice of them because he could not confirm the statements; for we cannot imagine that he did not record them in consequence of finding them already recorded, and seeing nothing to alter in the relation—as an eye-witness, he would certainly, had they been true, have given them at least a passing word of confirmation, and we find that he does on more than one occasion relate events of less moment already recorded in the other gospels, as the feeding of the five thousand, the anointing of Jesus' feet, etc. But all the events said to have been witnessed by John alone are omitted by John alone! This fact seems fatal either to the reality of the events in question or to the genuineness of the fourth gospel. Thus much, however, seems certain and admitted, that if the gospel in question were the genuine composition of the Apostle John, it must have been written when he was at least ninety years of age—when his recollection of events and conversations which had passed sixty years before had become faint and fluctuating, when ill-digested Grecian learning had overlaid the simplicity of his fisherman's character and his Judaic education—and the scenes and associations of Ionia had overpowered and obscured the recollections of Palestine. In this case, also, as in that of Matthew, we may remark, the evangelist relates events long passed, and at which he was not present, as minutely and dramatically as if they had occurred yesterday and in his presence."

He further says: "Of the first three gospels we know that two, and we believe that all three, were not the productions of eye-witnesses, The question then arises, In what manner and from what materials were they composed? . . . The numerous and irreconcilable discrepancies observable in these three evangelists preclude the supposition of their having all

drawn their information from one and the same source—while the still more remarkable points of similarity and agreement, often extending to the most minute verbal peculiarities, entirely forbid the idea of their having derived their materials from independent and therefore mutually confirmatory sources.” Mr. Greg occupies fifty pages on the subject of the “Fidelity of Gospel History,” in which he shows marked disagreements, discrepancies, and contradictions between the four gospels, which decidedly invalidate their reliability—every word of which is worthy of being quoted here did space permit, but his arguments and statements will have to be left unnoticed. In a subsequent chapter he proves beyond the possibility of refutation :

“1. That the apostles differed from each other in opinion and disagreed among themselves.

“2. That they held and taught some opinions which we know to have been erroneous.

“3. That both in their general tone, and in some important particulars, their teaching differed materially from that of Christ as depicted in the synoptical gospels.” But it is impossible to find room for much that he says, though of the greatest value and truthfulness.

## DISCREPANCIES IN THE GOSPELS.

Many of these were pointed out in the article on Jesus Christ, which the reader will do well to turn to and read in connection with what is said here. There are also many more discrepancies and contradictions that can well be referred to here. Among the most noticeable is the genealogy of Jesus as given by Matthew and Luke, the only two evangelists who attempt it. They undertake to show that Jesus is a direct descendant from King David, and they do this by giving the genealogy from David to Joseph, the husband of Mary ; but who is represented as having no more blood relationship to Jesus than Mohammed. Dishonesty is here most apparent to begin with. If Joseph was not the father of Jesus, why give his genealogy? And

could Jesus descend from David through a step-father? But waiving this, Matthew and Luke differ widely as to the genealogy itself. Matthew says there were twenty-eight generations between David and Joseph, while Luke says there were forty-three. Can both be truthful? If one is true is not the other false? If one is false may not both be also? They disagree, likewise, entirely as to the line through which the descent came, David and Joseph being the only two names in common. But inasmuch as the paternity of Jesus is claimed to be supernatural, that God, or the Holy Ghost, was his father, the mentioning of Solomon, Joram, Amon, Eliakim, Sadoc, Eleazer, and all the others, as his forefathers, is manifestly absurd.

Matthew and Luke, also, are the only ones of the evangelists who say anything of the miraculous conception of Jesus, though it was, if true, one of the most wonderful events that ever occurred in the world, and is the foundation on which Christianity rests. But even they do not narrate it alike. Matthew has it that the mystery of Mary's being likely to become a mother without the aid of Joseph was explained to the latter in a dream, and from that statement this dream would seem to be all the supernatural explanation that was made of the marvelous occurrence. Luke knew nothing of Joseph's dream, but was better informed about a vision which Mary had, at which time she was told what should happen to her.

Matthew says Mary was found to be with child of the Holy Ghost. How it was found, who found it, and why the parentage was decided to be by that invisible, shadowy personage he does not tell us—only that Joseph dreamed it out and became satisfied. Luke says that Gabriel told Mary that the Holy Ghost, the third member of the Trinity, should come upon her, and the power of the Highest, the first member of the Trinity, should overshadow her. The disagreement between the two statements is easily seen. As Matthew does not claim to be inspired, nor one able to know what people dream, the question has often been asked how he could know what Joseph dreamed before Jesus was born, and seventy years—according to the lowest conjecture made—before the narrative was

written? Also, as Luke does not claim to write by inspiration nor to be an adept in visions, how came he to know this particular vision, when confessedly he never saw Jesus and probably not his mother? How should Matthew and Luke know more about this unnatural affair than Mark and John? And how can the last two be justified in wholly ignoring the miraculous conception? Is not the fact that the explanation of Mary's conception was made only to herself and her husband a suspicious incident? Could it have been made to other persons would it not have been more satisfactory? These queries can hardly be satisfactorily answered.

There is a marked discrepancy relative to the teachings of Jesus. Matthew seems to throw a large part of his moral instructions into the Sermon on the Mount, while Mark has very little of it, and Luke scatters the same teachings through his entire book. From this fact it is clear that the accounts cannot be accurate records of events in the order in which they transpired. The Sermon on the Mount is a remarkable one, and in the main beautiful, but if Matthew is correct in his report, why did not Mark, Luke, and John make the same kind of reports? If Jesus did not deliver all that sermon on the mount, or hill-side, as Matthew affirms, is he to be justified for his false representations?

The discrepancy between Matthew and Mark as to the casting out of devils from a wild man, and sending them into two thousand swine, has been noticed. Matthew says there were two of the wild men, Mark says one. Both could not have been correct. Right here is a strong proof of the ignorance and superstition of the times when these gospels were written. Much is said about invalids and unfortunate persons being possessed of devils. It seems to have occupied a considerable part of the time of Jesus to cast out the devils that were brought to him. He is said to have cast out seven from Mary Magdalene alone. Matthew mentions one case of casting out devils; Mark, four; Luke, three; John, none. Then everybody believed in devils entering into people and staying there; and when persons acted strangely and talked wildly they were said to have a devil. Now people know better. If a person is insane, has lost his reasoning power, or is an



epileptic patient, it is known that it comes from an injury or some diseased condition of the system. None but the most ignorant think of curing insanity by exorcising devils. The stories about these devils and of the recognition they made of Jesus was doubtless told to establish the conviction that he was the son of God; but is it not a pitiful expedient to state that the existence of God's son was first recognized by insane and imbecile persons, devoid of reason and sense? If well-regulated brains could not recognize the fact, is it likely that lunatics and simpletons would be any more able to ascertain it?

The accounts of the miracles performed by Jesus differ widely in the four gospels. Some secondary ones are mentioned by two or three of the evangelists, while others, more important, are only mentioned by one writer. For instance, Matthew gives the astonishing information that at the crucifixion "the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent; and the graves were opened; and many bodies of saints which slept arose and came out of their graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many." The other three evangelists have not a word to say about this remarkable affair. If there was such an earthquake, and if dead bodies were reanimated and walked forth from their graves, not only Mark, Luke, and John ought to have known it and made mention of it, but tens of thousands of others should have known it also, and it should have been recorded in profane history as well as sacred. But as nobody knew anything about such an occurrence save Matthew, it is fair to suppose he dreamed it or was guilty of great untruthfulness.

John narrates that Jesus converted water into wine at a marriage feast. This would seem to be poor business for a God to be engaged in, as the guests were already much intoxicated. A good temperance lecture would have been more fitting from one who came solely to do good and set a good example. But if that was Christ's first miracle, and it was merely done to show his power, Matthew, Mark, and Luke should have mentioned it. If they knew it and kept silent about it they are not faithful historians. If they had no

knowledge of it, it is extremely probable that the event never occurred, and that it was simply the result of John's active imagination.

The same remark will apply to the astonishing event of raising Lazarus from the dead when he had been in his grave so long that decomposition had commenced. This is said to have occurred near Jerusalem. The disciples were with him when at Jerusalem; they should have known all about this wonderful miracle. But Matthew has not a word to say about it; Mark is as silent as the grave on the subject; and Luke, though he wrote from hearsay altogether, seems never to have heard a word about Lazarus being brought to life. It looks very suspicious, and it is to be feared that the author of the Gospel of St. John was not as truthful as he should have been.

### PROPHECIES REFERRING TO JESUS.

The claim is very strongly made that in the prophets of the Old Testament a Messiah is foretold, who in after times was to appear in Judea and occupy the throne of David, and re-establish his kingdom forever. The writer of the narrative attributed to Matthew showed a decided penchant for forcing a connection between what he called prophecies and certain events he narrated as fulfilments. It will be found, however, upon examination, that his representations in this line were entirely untruthful—that in not a single instance did the words of the prophets he quoted have the slightest reference to or connection with Jesus, or of the events connected with his ministry.

The order followed by Paine will be adopted here, and some ideas also. The first case to be noticed is Matt. i, 22, 23: "Now, all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel; which being interpreted is, God with us." The asserted prophecy is in Isaiah vii, 14, 15, 16. The fulfilment was the Virgin Mary and Jesus. The harmony of

the two is seriously damaged, however, by the fact that what Isaiah said was in no sense a prophecy, and had no possible reference to Mary or Jesus. By referring to Isaiah it will be seen that the chapter relates to an interview between Ahaz, king of Judah, and Isaiah, relative to an impending danger from an expected attack from Rezin, king of Syria, combined with Pekah, king of Israel. Ahaz was greatly alarmed, but Isaiah endeavored to assure him that his enemies should not prevail over him, and suggested that he ask for a sign. This, however, the king declined to do, lest he should tempt the Lord; whereupon Isaiah replied: "Is it a small thing for you to weary men, but will ye weary my God also? Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign. Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel. Butter and honey shall he eat, that he may know to refuse the evil and choose the good; for before the child shall know to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land thou abhorrest shall be forsaken of both her kings." This language referred to Ahaz and his troubles, and nothing else. How absurd then to pretend that the child referred to was not to be born till seven hundred years after Ahaz was dead! The solution is found in the second and third verses of the next chapter, where the prophet says: "I took unto me faithful witnesses to record, Uriah the priest, and Zechariah the son of Jeberechiah. And I went unto the prophetess; and she conceived and bare a son." In the eighteenth verse of the same chapter he says again: "Behold, I and the children whom the Lord hath given me are for signs and for wonders in Israel." This is a plain case, and it is only by violence and dishonesty that it can be distorted to have any reference to Mary and her child by the Holy Ghost. The word rendered "virgin" simply means in the Hebrew a young woman.

The second case is in Matt. ii, 1-6, the answer of the chief priests and scribes to Herod, in reference to a prophecy that out of Bethlehem in Judea should come a governor that should rule Israel. The prophecy alluded to is in Micah v, 2, and refers to a military chieftain who should deliver Israel from the Assyrians. It cannot reasonably be construed to

mean Jesus, for Jesus was no governor; he did not rule over Israel, and he did not lay waste the land of Assyria with the sword. Micah was talking about trouble with the Assyrians. At the time of Jesus the Jews had no trouble from the Assyrians, but it was the Romans who oppressed them. If this was a prophecy relative to Jesus it was an untruthful one.

The third case refers to another dream of Joseph's, relative to fleeing into Egypt with his wife and child to escape Herod's cruelty (chap. ii, 13-15): "Arise, and take the young child and his mother and flee into Egypt, and be thou there until I bring thee word." Matthew says this was "that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Out of Egypt have I called my son." The prophecy which Matthew pretended fitted the Egyptian residence is found in Hosea xi, i: "When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt. As they called them, so they went from them; they sacrificed unto Baalim and burnt incense to graven images." It can be seen at a glance that Matthew was here guilty of prevarication. Hosea uttered no prophecy, but alluded to the Israelites leaving Egypt and being guilty of idolatry. No person in the future was alluded to. Besides Matthew is the only one of the evangelists who has anything to say about Joseph, wife, and child fleeing into Egypt. Possibly he fabricated the statement to be able to work in another prophecy, which he was so fond of doing.

The fourth case is in connection with the slaughter of the innocents by Herod, a most cruel proceeding, by the bye, and Matthew was the only one who knew aught of it. Chapter ii, 17, 18: "Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying, In Rama there was a voice heard, lamentation and weeping and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted because they are not." The reference to Jeremiah is in chapter xxx, 15. The language is in the past tense—no prophecy at all—and refers to the troubles environing the Jews at the time of their overthrow by Nebuchadnezzar, and their captivity in Babylon. It had no more reference to Herod and his times than to the Wyoming Indian massacre or the Mountain Meadow

Mormon slaughter. Besides there is extreme doubt whether Herod ever ordered the slaughter of little babes. Neither of the other gospel writers alludes to it; Josephus says nothing about it; neither does anybody else, save Matthew.

The fifth case grew out of another dream of Joseph's. Matthew is immense on dreams, prophecies, and earthquakes. This time Joseph dreamed that Herod was dead and he must return from Egypt, but nevertheless, fearing to do so, he turned aside into parts of Galilee. Matthew says (chapter ii, 23), "And he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, He shall be called a Nazarene." It will be noticed Matthew says "spoken of by the prophets," thus implying that two or more prophets had said, "He shall be called a Nazarene." But he falsifies; there is no prophet in the Bible who uses such language. Matthew's fondness for prophecies carried him quite too far. His zeal exceeded his truthfulness. The word Nazarene was not in use till a long time after the old prophets wrote. The writer of Matthew possibly had in his mind the words said to have been spoken to the mother of Samson (Judges xiii, 5) respecting her son: "The child shall be a Nazarite (*i. e.*, one bound by a vow, whose hair was forbidden to be cut) unto God from the womb." But even this could not with any truth apply to Jesus, for he was under no such vow, and we have no information that his hair was never cut. It may be well to notice here the marked discrepancy between Matthew and Luke as to the original residence of the parents of Jesus; Luke speaks of them as living at Nazareth before the birth of Jesus; Matthew, as having left Bethlehem, the birthplace of their child, to go to Nazareth, only after that event and from peculiar considerations. It is very damaging to writings, insisted upon to be inspired and infallible, to abound in such contradictions.

Matthew's sixth prophecy fulfilment is in chapter iv, 12-15. The words of Isaiah referred to are in Isaiah ix, 1, 2. It is hardly worth the room to quote the two passages. Those who will take the trouble to look up both places will find that the writer of Matthew was guilty of decided dishonesty in detaching parts of a verse, where even there was no comma,

thus destroying the sense, for the sake of making an apparent fulfilment. The words of Isaiah referred to events that had already occurred, and were in no sense a prophecy.

The seventh case is in Matthew viii, 16: "When the even was come, they brought unto him many that were possessed with devils; and he cast out the spirits with his word, and healed all that were sick, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities and bare our sicknesses." More devils and more fulfilling of prophecy! If the casting out of devils was a good occupation, it would seem that Jesus should have engaged in it for the good that resulted from it regardless of what had been said by a prophet seven hundred years before. To cast out devils simply to fulfil a prediction would seem an insufficient motive. The Old Testament writers had no devils; they knew nothing about devils, and said nothing about devils. Consequently Isaiah did not prophesy anything about devils. Matthew is the first writer in the Bible that engages in the devil business, and he seems to have considerable fondness for them. The passage in Isaiah that Matthew alluded to is in chapter liii, 4: "Surely he hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows." He was speaking in the past tense, of something that had then occurred, and it was in no sense a prophecy; nor had it the slightest reference to devils or to casting them out. Isaiah evidently was mourning the death of a friend, of whom he wished to speak kindly. He made no allusion to a person who was to come upon the stage several centuries afterward.

For the eighth case, see Matt. xii, 14 to 21: "Then the Pharisees went out and held a council against him, how they might destroy him. But when Jesus knew it he withdrew himself; and great numbers followed him and he healed them all; and he charged them that they should not make him known; that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying: Behold my servant, whom I have chosen; my beloved, in whom my soul is well pleased. I will put my spirit upon him, and he shall show judgment to the Gentiles. He shall not strive nor cry, neither shall any man hear his voice in the streets. A bruised reed shall he not

break, and smoking flax shall he not quench, till he sends forth judgment unto victory. And in his name shall the Gentiles trust." The quotation from Isaiah is in chap. xlii, 1-4. Isaiah's language is obscure, and it is difficult to decide whom he was talking about. If this chapter was by the false Isaiah, and was written in the time of captivity, as probably it was, it applies better to Cyrus than to Jesus. It is not true of Jesus that he did not cry, nor that his voice was not heard in the streets, that he did not lift up his voice, and cause it to be heard, for he did all of these. He cried unto all to repent and believe in him; his voice was heard in the street, on the highways, and other public places. So if it was meant for a prophecy of him it is not a true one; and it is only a forced construction that makes even an apparent connection between Isaiah and Matthew. If prophecy is a genuine talent or accomplishment, and a good prophet can foretell character and events with accuracy, it would seem that Isaiah did not understand his business as well as he ought to. He did not describe his man correctly. More likely the fault was in Matthew in forcing a connection which did not exist.

Matthew's ninth discovery of prophecy and fulfilment is in this wise: "And when they drew nigh unto Jerusalem, and were come to Bethphage, unto the Mount of Olives, then sent Jesus two disciples, saying, Go into the village over against you, and straightway ye shall find an ass tied, and a colt with her; loose them and bring them unto me. And if any man say aught unto you, ye shall say, The Lord hath need of them; and straightway he will send them. All this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, Tell ye the daughter of Sion, Behold, thy king cometh unto thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass" (Matt. xxi, 1-5). It was quite possible that the two animals were thus brought to Jesus, for nothing is more natural than that the colt should follow its mother, even though it were an ass; but it is very unlikely that Jesus would undertake to ride a young colt of an ass, or that he would in that public place attempt to perform a two-horse or a two-ass feat, when the one, the mother, was quite sufficient for his purpose; though

Matthew places him on both the mother and the young colt, and says all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, etc. His statement is evidently absurd and untrue. Mark speaks of the ass but says nothing of the colt; Luke mentions the ass, but no colt; John, likewise, tells about the ass, but not a word of the foal or colt, or about Jesus riding two asses at once. It is very evident that Matthew added the young ass to fit what Zechariah had said, chap. ix, 6, which passage has reference to the return of the Jews from their captivity in Babylon, the prophet being one of the number. His words are, "Tell ye the daughter of Zion, Behold thy king cometh unto thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass, and *a colt, the foal of an ass.*" The second mention of the animal is obviously a mere common poetical reduplication, such as is so often met with in Hebrew poetry. But Matthew did not understand it, and thought he must have Jesus riding both mother and young colt, to fulfil the prophecy, and hence he placed his master in that most awkward position of riding a female ass and its young colt at the same time, and hence his disagreement with the statement of the three other narrators. It would seem better that a prophecy should go unfulfilled than to perpetrate a falsehood, and in this instance it is to be feared Matthew made himself more an ass than the young colt was. Instead, too, of Jesus mounting the ass to show humility and meekness, it was just the reverse; it was an occasion of hilarity and display. He was making a triumphal entry into Jerusalem, and he authorized his disciples to go and take a man's property, without consent, to assist in the pageant, while some of his admirers spread their garments in the road, and others cut down branches from the trees and strewed them in the way, the multitude crying, "Hosanna to the son of David," evidently expecting Jesus would soon be their king. Had it been his object to exhibit meekness and humility he would have accomplished it more effectually by going on foot than by riding one ass or two asses. There seems, also, to be a discrepancy in the conduct and professions of Jesus. At one time he charges those upon whom he had performed cures to tell no man, seeming desirous of attracting no attention, while



soon after, on the occasion of this grand entry into Jerusalem amid shouting and singing on all hands, he seemed desirous of attracting all the attention possible.

This is the tenth case: "And behold, one of them which was with Jesus [meaning Peter] stretched out his hand, and drew his sword, and struck a servant of the high-priest, and smote off his ear. Then said Jesus unto him, Put up again thy sword into its place, for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword. Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels? But how then shall the scriptures be fulfilled that thus it must be. In that same hour said Jesus to the multitude, Are ye come out, as against a thief, with swords and with staves for to take me? I sat daily with you teaching in the temple, and ye laid no hold on me. But all this was done that the scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled" (Matt. xxvi, 51-56). Matthew being able to find no words among the prophets that would fit this case, it is evident, to subserve his favorite amusement of matching prophecies and fulfilments together, that he was here under the necessity of making a general vague allusion to all the prophets, as though they had all been fulfilled at once. He points out no particular prediction bearing upon the case, for the simple reason that there was none, so he made a loose, indefinite claim that meant little or much as the case required.

Paine very justly thinks the statement of Peter's carrying a sword quite improbable; first, because the Jews at that time being held in subjection by the Romans, it is very unlikely that men in humble position, like Peter, would be permitted to carry a sword; second, if Peter had cut off the ear of the high-priest he would immediately have been arrested and sent to prison; third, it is unlikely that Jesus allowed his disciples to carry swords.

The eleventh claim to prophecy and fulfilment is found in Matt. xxvii, 3-10: "Then Judas, which had betrayed him, when he saw that he was condemned, repented himself, and brought again the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, saying, I have sinned in that I have betrayed innocent blood. And they said, What is that to us? See

thou to that. And he cast down the pieces of silver in the temple and departed, and went and hanged himself. And the chief priests took the silver pieces and said, It is not lawful for to put them into the treasury, because it is the price of blood. And they took counsel and bought with them the potter's field, to bury strangers in. Wherefore that field was called the field of blood, unto this day. Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying, And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of him that was valued, whom they of the children of Israel did value, and gave them for the potter's field, as the Lord appointed me." Here is another of Matthew's gross misrepresentations. The words of Jeremiah which he refers to were spoken in a reply to King Zedekiah, who had thrown Jeremiah into prison for predicting against himself, the king, and in favor of Nebuchadnezzar. The king asked in these words: "Wherefore dost thou prophesy and say, Thus saith the Lord, Behold, I will give this city into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he shall take it," etc. Whereupon Jeremiah replied thus: "The word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Behold Hanameel, the son of Shallum, thine uncle, shall come unto thee saying, Buy thee my field, that is in Anathoth, for the right of redemption is thine to buy it. So Hanameel, mine uncle's son, came to me in the court of the prison, according to the word of the Lord, and said unto me, Buy my field, I pray thee, that is in Anathoth, which is in the country of Benjamin, for the right of inheritance is thine, and the redemption is thine; buy it for thyself. Then I knew that this was the word of the Lord. And I bought the field of Hanameel, mine uncle's son, that was in Anathoth, and weighed him the money, even seventeen shekels of silver" (Jer. xxxii, 6-10)

Now, in the name of all that is reasonable and true, what connection is there between that transaction of Jeremiah with his cousin, in the matter of a piece of real estate, and the throwing down by Judas of the thirty pieces of silver and then hanging himself? or of the priests using the money to buy a burying-ground for strangers? There is not the slightest resemblance between the two cases in any particular

save that in each case a piece of land was purchased, and silver given in payment. The amount of money paid was quite unlike in the two cases; in the one case thirty pieces, and in the other seventeen shekels. Jeremiah made no more allusion to Judas and his money than to Captain Kidd and his money; and Matthew's attempt to connect them is extremely far-fetched and dishonest. There is in Zech. xi, 12, a mention made about thirty pieces of silver being the price of something, but what is very difficult to tell. It, however, bears no analogy to the case spoken of by Matthew. In the case that Zechariah is talking about, the thirty pieces of silver is a goodly price, probably what the article was worth, and was approved of by the Lord; while in the case of Judas it was the price of blood, and the bargain did not meet the approbation of the Lord; the transaction was repudiated and the money refused admission into the treasury when refunded. One case was the very opposite of the other, and in addition Matthew made no allusion to the words of Zechariah. There is another serious discrepancy between the two different stories told of Judas. Matthew says he threw the money down in the temple and went and hanged himself, whereas the writer of the book of Acts gives a very different account. Peter, in chapter i, 17-19, is said to have stood up in the midst of the disciples and said: "Men and brethren, this scripture must needs have been fulfilled which the Holy Ghost by the mouth of David spake before concerning Judas, which was guide to them that took Jesus. For he was numbered with us, and had obtained part of this ministry. Now this man purchased a field with the reward of iniquity; and falling headlong he burst asunder in the midst, and all his bowels gushed out, and it was known to all the dwellers at Jerusalem." Thus, if Matthew told the truth, the writer of Acts clearly told a falsehood, and *vice versa*. Possibly neither of them told the truth. The statement that David had said anything about Judas was surely untrue, for he never even mentioned his name or alluded to him.

Matthew's twelfth case is in chap. xxvii, 35, "And they crucified him and parted his garments, casting lots, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, They

parted my garments among them, and upon my vesture did they cast lots." This is a quotation from Psalms xxii, 18: "They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture." As the Psalms are anonymous productions it is impossible to tell who wrote the twenty-second. Possibly it was David, but probably not; but whoever it was, he simply was making a wail of his own troubles and sorrows, and was not speaking for the Lord, or making the least reference to the crucifixion of Jesus. This is only another instance of the great straits the New Testament writers were driven to, to make it appear that a prophecy had been made and fulfilled.

In the book of Mark a lesser number of prophecies and fulfilments are named. It, however, opens with one: "The beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the son of God; as it is written in the prophets, Behold I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee" (Mark i, 1, 2). What is called the prophecy is from Malachi, iii, 1, "Behold, I will send a messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me." Mark thought the words applied to John the Baptist, but they seem to apply equally well to any "messenger" (and God seems to have plenty of them), and there is nothing to show that John the Baptist or Jesus was thought of. A prediction of Jesus or his times should have been made in clear and unambiguous language that could not be misunderstood. There is no evidence that Malachi had the least reference to Jesus or John. And even if he had, it is impossible to see how the world could be benefited by such vague and indefinite allusions. In the third verse of the same chapter, Mark continues the recital of the word of the prophets, thus: "The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight," and applied it to John the Baptist. The quotation is not in Malachi, but in Isaiah xl, 3, 4, which reads thus: "The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill be made low." The third verse seems to

be an injunction to somebody to make a road or highway, but it applies to John the Baptist no more than to any other person. He was not a road-maker, nor did he straighten paths. It is not a prophecy but a command. The fourth verse may be called a prophecy, but it is one of the kind that never was fulfilled and never will be. Every valley has not been exalted—not one, even, has been; every mountain and hill has not been made low. None have been, unless it was a very small hill indeed. It is a kind of indefinite random-talking, and if it has any meaning, no one can possibly tell what it is.

Mark alludes to the riding on the ass, but alludes to no prophecy. He also speaks of Christ's garments being parted by lot, as was the custom with executioners, but not a word about any prophecy being fulfilled. He speaks about Jesus being crucified between two thieves, and says that "the scripture was fulfilled, which saith, And he was numbered with the transgressors (chap. xv). But what kind of a pointing out of Jesus was that? Thousands of people have been numbered with transgressors. Even the writer of these pages is now numbered with transgressors, but nobody will insist that the Old Testament prophets made any reference to him; but just as much as to Jesus.

Mark concludes his book with a prophecy: "And these signs shall follow them that believe: In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick and they shall recover" (xvi, 17, 18). But unfortunately this prophecy has never been fulfilled. Believers for eighteen hundred and fifty years have been just as susceptible to poisonous serpents, and other deadly poisons, as unbelievers. If there is a true believer that disputes this, the matter can be easily tested by his handling a poison cobra, or a rattlesnake, or by taking a few drops of prussic acid, or not more than three grains of strychnine. If his belief prevent the action of these, the witness will doubtless be ready to give due credit to the virtue of believing. But until belief can show some such superiority over unbelief, boasting is hardly

in order. As, however, the last seven verses in the book of Mark are admitted by the ablest critics and judges not to have been written by the same writer as the rest of the gospel, and consequently the words just quoted were not spoken by Jesus, neither Mark nor Jesus should be held responsible for the failure in the fulfilment of the prophecy.

Luke does not deal much in prophecy fulfilment. He speaks of the espousal of Joseph and Mary, but makes no reference to any prophecy in connection with it, as Matthew did. He speaks about the ride on the ass, but no prophecy about that. He mentions John the Baptist, but no prophecy in connection with him. Also in other respects there are serious discrepancies between them. Matthew makes Herod to die while Christ was a very young child. Luke makes Herod alive after Jesus was thirty years of age. Matthew takes Jesus and his parents into Egypt very soon after the child's birth; but Luke says nothing about his going into Egypt, but virtually contradicts it, for he says (chap. ii, 21): "And when eight days were accomplished for the circumcising of the child, his name was called Jesus, . . . and when the days of her purification [Mary's] according to the law of Moses [forty days] were accomplished, they brought him to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord," after which, according to verse 39, same chapter, "And when they had performed all things according to the law of the Lord, they returned into Galilee, to their own city, Nazareth;" but nothing about Egypt. There is some obscurity between Matthew and Luke about Herod; Matthew calls him king, and Luke tetrarch, or governor. As the country was at the time a province of the Roman empire, no king ruled over it. Herod was not a king, but simply a governor under the Roman power. Matthew says Jesus was born when Herod was king, but Luke says he was born when Cyrenius was governor of Syria, to which government Judea was annexed, and according to this Jesus was not born in the time of Herod. When, however, it is remembered that neither of the books ascribed to Matthew and Luke was written by them, that no one knows whom they were written by, that we have no proof of such books being

in existence before the latter part of the second century, and that they necessarily were written by persons who knew little or nothing of the things about which they wrote, but made narratives from traditions and legends and unauthorized statements, it perhaps is not strange that they related things very differently and incorrectly. It all goes to prove that what are called the gospels are only human productions, and justly have no claim to be considered divine, or as having been authorized by the God of the universe.

The writer of the Gospel according to John deals very lightly in prophecies. He speaks of the ass, the casting lots for the garments of Jesus, but connects no prophecy therewith. In chapter v, 46, however, he makes Jesus to say, "For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me, for he wrote of me." But neither Jesus nor John tells what Moses wrote about Jesus. In Acts iii, 22, is this: "For Moses truly said unto the fathers, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you, of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you." Here is a gross imposition by somebody. By turning to Deut. xviii, 15, it will be seen that these were about the last words said to be spoken by Moses before his death, and the successor he alluded to was Joshua; and he had no more reference to Jesus than to John Calvin or Joseph Smith. Moses never wrote a word about Jesus one way or the other.

In chapter xix, 32-36, at the crucifixion, John uses this language: "Then came the soldiers, and brake the legs of the first [one of the thieves], and of the other which was crucified with him. But when they came to Jesus and saw that he was dead already, they brake not his legs. . . . For these things were done that the scripture should be fulfilled, A bone of him should not be broken." The passage called a prophecy here referred to is in Exodus, chapter twelve. By reading the entire chapter it will be seen that it is entirely in reference to the institution of the passover, and the slaying of the first-born of Egypt, with instructions relative to the eating of certain animals. Verse 46 reads in this way:

“In one house shall it be eaten; thou shalt not carry forth aught of the flesh abroad out of the house; neither shall ye break a bone thereof.” These instructions relate entirely to the keeping of the passover, and it is only by the most monstrous distortion and exaggeration that they can be made to bear the slightest connection with Jesus. The writer of Deuteronomy did not make the faintest allusion to Jesus. The writer of John was as wide of the truth as the writer of Matthew had been.

At the close of the book of John an assertion is made that Matthew would with difficulty surpass, and which throws prophecy into the shade; it is this: “And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written.” That is a very extravagant supposition, it must be confessed. As the ministry of Jesus did not continue but about eighteen months, and all the things which he could possibly do in that length of time could be recorded in one good-sized volume, and as the world could easily contain billions of times more books than the hundreds of millions of books it contains to-day, the excessive untruthfulness of this statement or supposition can be easily appreciated. How any person can place confidence in such untruthfulness is indeed a matter of great marvel.

The most remarkable prophecies in the Old Testament which are said to refer to the advent of Jesus Christ into the world have now been considered, and it is quite astonishing how slight a foundation the claims have to rest upon, although so much has been said by divines and other earnest believers of the marvelous foretellings of the old prophets in reference to the coming of the son of God. In not one of the quotations we have given, and in not one of the so-called prophecies of the birth and ministry of Christ, is there the slightest allusion made to the son of Mary. It is all a positive fabrication and fraud. In every instance the subject of the language employed had reference to events that had happened or were about to happen in the country and in the times in which they were written. And



here falls hopelessly to the ground the great proofs of the divinity of Jesus, as well as the immense value of the ancient prophets. It is possible that those writings were of some value at the time and in the age when written, but if they are of any special benefit to the present race of mankind it is not easy of perception. Had it been the wish of Divinity to make a prediction of some remarkable event in relation to the life and ministry of Jesus, and which should demonstrate the truth of prophecy, why was not foretold the remarkable resurrection of the dead body of Jesus and of his subsequent ascent into heaven in the sight of thousands who easily could have been induced to witness the remarkable phenomenon? That could have been made such a convincing proof as no man could have doubted. But, unfortunately for the world, nothing of the kind was done. There is nothing but misrepresentation upon which to build the frail fabric of Old Testament prophecy and fulfilment.

Jesus himself is represented as uttering prophecy. He is said to have explicitly predicted his own sufferings and death. Matthew has five such instances (xii, 40; xvi, 21; xvii, 9, 22, 23; xx, 17, 19; xxvi, 2, 3); Mark, four (viii, 31; ix, 9, 10, 31; x, 33; xiv, 28); Luke, four (ix, 22, 44; xviii, 32, 33; xxii, 15); John, three (ii, 20, 22; iii, 14; xii, 32, 33). Those in the first three gospels are mostly definite and positive. Here is a sample: "Behold, we go up to Jerusalem; and the son of man shall be betrayed unto the chief priests and unto the scribes, and they shall condemn him to death, and shall deliver him to the Gentiles to mock, and to scourge, and to crucify him; and the third day he shall rise again" (Matt. xx, 18, 19). The mention in John of his death and resurrection is more vague and uncertain; but language so positive as given by Matthew could hardly be misunderstood; still it is seen, after the arrest and execution of Jesus, the disciples were perfectly in the fog as to what the result would be, showing conclusively that if Jesus had given utterance to the words just quoted, they had utterly failed to appreciate them or understand them. Shortly after these predictions were made the disciples were disputing among themselves which should be the greatest in their coming dominion, glory-

ing in the idea of thrones, and asking their master for seats on his right hand and on his left in the kingdom about to be established (Matt. xix, 28; xx, 21; Mark x, 37; Luke xix, xxii, 30; xxiv, 21). When Jesus was arrested in the garden of Gethsemane, they first attempted resistance and then "forsook him and fled," and so completely were they scattered that one of the Sanhedrim, Joseph of Arimathea, was under the necessity of taking charge of the body after crucifixion and providing it with decent burial. The disciples showed great want of proper attention, which they would not likely have been guilty of had they expected their master to rise in three days and be with them again. The women exhibited more devotion to the executed Messiah; they "watched afar off," and brought spices to embalm his body. This they assuredly would not have done had they believed that he would be alive and well again in three days. When these women reported the resurrection of Jesus to his disciples they treated the report as an idle tale, "and they believed them not." They had belief that Jesus would return to them. The conversation between the two disciples on the way to Emmaus is proof, perfectly conclusive, that the conception of a resurrection had not entered their thoughts; and, according to John, when Mary found the body gone, she believed the gardener had taken it. A resurrection was the most distant thing in her mind. All this shows beyond any reasonable doubt that none of the disciples and followers of Jesus had the least expectation that their master could rise from the dead, either at the expiration of three days or at any other time.

In this connection a definite conclusion is forced upon us. If Jesus really foretold his death and resurrection in the terms ascribed to him it is perfectly inconceivable that his disciples should have misunderstood him; for words could hardly be more definite and positive than he is reported to have repeatedly addressed them. It cannot for a moment be admitted that they so soon could have forgotten them; it would preclude their afterward remembering them so as to record them so explicitly. It is possible they might have disbelieved his arrest and execution, but after these had been

accomplished they must inevitably have had confidence in his predictions, and then looked for the promised resurrection; or at the very least the promise must have recurred to them when they found a portion of his prophecy had been so minutely fulfilled. These predictions ascribed to Jesus could not have been uttered by him. They were doubtless affixed to the narrative a hundred or a hundred and fifty years after Jesus was crucified, and were added to it to increase belief in his divinity and his remarkable gift of prophecy. Any other conclusion must make his followers mere simpletons. This view is the more probable from the fact that Jesus is repeatedly represented as affirming that his approaching sufferings and their glorious termination must take place in order that the prophecies might be fulfilled (Matt. xxvi, 24, 54; Mark ix, 12; xiv, 49; Luke xiii, 33; xviii, 31; xxii, 37; xxiv, 27). The passion of the evangelists for representing everything connected with Jesus as the fulfilment of prophecy explains why they should have sought, after his death, for passages which might be supposed to prefigure it, and why these accommodations of prophecy should, in process of time, and of transmissions, have been attributed to Jesus himself. But if it is assumed, as generally it is, that these references to prophecy really proceeded from Christ in the first instance, we are landed in the inadmissible, or at least in the embarrassing and unorthodox, conclusion that he interpreted the prophets erroneously, for in none of them is there any allusion to his sufferings and death.

Greg says in connection with this subject: "One of these references to prophecy in Matthew has evident marks of being an addition to the traditional words of Christ by the evangelist himself. In Matt. xvi, 4, we have the following: "A wicked and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given unto it but the sign of the prophet Jonas." The same expression is recorded in Luke xi, 29. . . . But when Matthew repeats the same answer of Jesus in answer to the same demand for a sign, he adds the explanation of the reference: "For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly, so shall the son of man be three days and three nights [which Jesus was not, but

only one day and two nights] in the heart of the earth." There is not the slightest probability that Jesus spoke these words. He would not thus indorse such an improbable and impossible fable as that of Jonah being three days and three nights in the belly of a fish without losing his life. Besides if he did say so the result, inasmuch as he was but two nights and one day in the tomb, prove his prophecy greatly at fault.

The prophecies which Jesus is said to make of his second coming (Matt. xxiv; Mark xiii; Luke xvii, 22, 37) are badly mixed up with those of the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus, which it is the perplexity of theologians to explain. The clear meaning of the language employed is that the second coming of Christ would follow immediately ("immediately," "in those days") the destruction of the holy city, and within the lifetime of many of those present: "Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass away till all these things be fulfilled" (Matt. xxiv, 34); "There be some standing here which shall not taste death till they see the son of man coming in his kingdom" (Matt. xvi, 28); "Verily I say unto you, Ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel till the son of man be come" (Matt. x, 23); "If I will that ye tarry till I come, what is that to thee?" (John xxi, 23.)

If Jesus really spoke these words he proved himself a most untruthful prophet, for the advent of his second coming did not take place before those present had tasted death, and even down to the present time 1,850 years have elapsed and that prophecy remains unfulfilled. The predictions as to the destruction of Jerusalem were not written till after the event transpired, when there was no difficulty in making the prophecy tally with the fulfilment. The near end of the world was a current opinion, but it did not come, though Jesus was made to predict it, and that accounts for the hit in one case and the miss in the other. Had Jesus been a true prophet he would have made a hit in both cases. The word "elect," which is thrown into the statements of both Matthew and Mark, twice repeated, makes it morally certain that Jesus spoke not those words, for the word, in the sense there used, was unknown in the time of Christ. A clear case of manufactured "word of God."

## ACTS OF THE APOSTLES.

Space can be afforded for but very brief remarks relative to the remaining books of the New Testament. The book called the Acts of the Apostles follows after the four gospels. Renan styles it "the Christian Odyssey." While it purports to be an account of the acts of the apostles it has little to say about any save Peter and Paul. The others are only incidentally mentioned. The first twelve chapters are mainly devoted to Peter, after which Paul becomes the most important personage. Luke has been credited with being the author of the book, but there are no proofs that such is the truth. There are, on the other hand, some evidences that the same person did not write both Luke and Acts. In Luke the ascension of the risen Jesus is put on the day of his resurrection. Acts puts it forty days after. The first says it was at Bethlehem, the second from the Mount of Olives. If both had been written by the same hand, more consistency of statement would doubtless have been observed. Acts abounds in the most startling miracles, and of such a character as to defy intelligent credibility. The gospel miracles are tame and simple compared with them. The discrepancies between Acts and other books are unfortunate. In Acts, soon after Paul's conversion he is said to have to go to Jerusalem, where he commenced preaching Christianity. In Galatians Paul himself says he did not go to Jerusalem for three years, but went into Arabia. In Acts xv, an account is given of a council held in Jerusalem to which Paul and Barnabas were sent from Antioch. Paul, in Galatians ii, gives a very different account. In Acts it is decreed that even Gentiles must abstain from meats offered to idols, while Paul in his epistles to the Corinthians says directly to the contrary. Acts mentions a visit of Paul between this council and the first. Paul distinctly implies to the contrary. In Acts the gift of tongues is a remarkable gift of the Holy Ghost; with Paul it is unmeaning, unintelligible gibberish. The account in Acts of the arrival of Paul in Rome is entirely different from what Paul says about it in his epistle to the Romans. In the first,

Christianity is virtually unknown, in the second a flourishing church is in existence. At the time of Paul's vision and conversion his companions are represented as hearing and as not hearing the voice of Jesus. Annas, the high-priest, is represented as a Sadducee. It is known it was not so. The account of Simon Magus is full of doubtful particulars. The existence even of such a character is doubtful. In the second century he was identified with Paul.

Chadwick says: "In short the narratives in Acts will seldom bear examination. They everywhere abound in mutual contradictions and internal incongruities." The speeches, though often rich, are extremely doubtful, and cannot be regarded as historical. A most suspicious peculiarity about the speeches is, they are all alike. Peter, Stephen, and Paul all speak the same thoughts, in almost the same language. Chadwick says, "Peter was a Jewish Christian, and he talks Pauline Universalism. Paul's speeches have in no single instance the ring of his epistles. The Greek and Roman historians put made-up speeches of their own into the mouths of generals and emperors. The writer of Acts, little imagining that he is writing a considerable section of an infallible Bible, follows their example. Comparing the language of the speakers with his own, we find it is the same. They have his tricks of style, his turns of expression, and his conciliatory type of thought." According to Acts Paul began his preaching at Jerusalem among his countrymen, and only with reluctance did he turn from them to preach to the Gentiles. Everywhere he is represented as seeking the Jews first and turning from them upon compulsion, from their rage or from divine interposition. Paul's own averments are diametrically opposed to this. Nor do his representations agree any better with those of this book in regard to his relation to the other apostles concerning his work among the Gentiles. His own representations are that his work was original, undertaken of his own accord, and carried on according to his own judgment; while in Acts his Gentile work is said to be carried on under the supervision of the Jerusalem party. Paul of Acts and Paul of his own epistles are wholly different characters, and so it is all the way through. There are perhaps scores of disagree-

ments and contradictions between Acts and other New Testament books which cannot be particularized here. But there are far too many errors to justify the claim of infallibility.

Who the author of Acts is, or when it was written, are wholly unknown. Prof. Newman, after giving the book a critical examination, says: "Confining ourselves here to the actual evidence before us, we arrive at a clear and unavoidable conclusion regarding the Acts of the Apostles. After examining all the early Christian literature, and taking every passage which is referred to as indicating the use of the book, we see that there is no certain trace even of its existence till towards the end of the second century; and whilst the writing itself is anonymous, we find no authority but late tradition assigning it to Luke or to any other author. We are absolutely without evidence of any value as to its accuracy or trustworthiness, and, as we shall presently see, the epistles of Paul, so far from accrediting it, tend to cast the most serious doubt upon its whole character. . . . Our position, therefore, is simply this: We are asked to believe in the reality of a great number of miraculous and supernatural occurrences which, obviously, are antecedently incredible, upon the assurance of an anonymous work of whose existence there is no distinct evidence till more than a century after the events narrated, and to which an author's name—against which there are strong objections—is first ascribed by tradition toward the end of the second century. Of the writer to whom the work is thus attributed we know nothing beyond the casual mention of his name in some Pauline epistles. If it were admitted that this Luke did actually write the book, we should not be justified in believing the reality of such stupendous miracles upon his bare statement. As the case stands, however, even taking it in its most favorable aspect, the question scarcely demands serious attention, and our discussion might at once be ended by the unhesitating rejection of the Acts of the Apostles as sufficient or even plausible evidence for the miracles which it narrates." "The phenomena of the Acts of the Apostles become very intelligible when we recognize that it is the work of a writer living long after the occurrences related, whose pious imagination furnished the apostolic

age with an elaborate system of supernatural agency, far beyond the conception of any other New Testament writer, by which, according to his view, the proceedings of the apostles were furthered and directed, and the infant church miraculously fostered."

## THE EPISTLES.

These must be disposed of briefly. They are admitted on all hands to be the most authentic of any of the New Testament writings, while some of them are totally discredited by prominent judges and leaders in the church, to wit: Paul's Epistle to the Hebrews, the two epistles to Timothy and to Titus. Hebrews does not claim in the text to be the work of Paul. The other ten epistles were early conceded to be his, though in later times Ephesians, Colossians, Philippians, Philemon, and Thessalonians have also been impeached. "Ephesians fares the worst," says Chadwick, "Colossians next. Many who accept First Thessalonians reject the Second. Even the authenticity of Romans, Corinthians, and Galatians has been denied by Bruno Bauer. . . . The nominal epistles of Paul may properly be classed under four heads—those certainly Pauline, Romans, Corinthians, Galatians; those doubtfully Pauline, in the order of their doubtfulness, from more to less, Ephesians, Colossians, Philippians, Second Thessalonians, Philemon, First Thessalonians; those almost certainly not Pauline, the two to Timothy and one to Titus; one very certainly not the apostle's, the Epistle to the Hebrews." The ablest critics accord four epistles to Paul with considerable certainty and the remaining ones with greater or less doubt, and believe they were written from 55 to 65 A. D. In reality, however, but little is known with certainty about it, and perhaps it does not make a very great difference who the author is. There is no proof that the writer or writers were inspired, and there is very little claim in the books that they were. They are simply doctrinal and sectarian letters to churches and individuals, and they depend upon argument to enforce their position rather than the absolute dictum of "Thus saith the Lord." It is evident they were written by a zealous, even



violent, fanatic and almost bigot. The doctrines inculcated in them, as salvation by faith, the resurrection of the body, etc., will not be discussed here; space will not permit it. Defects, however, are very apparent in them and can easily be pointed out. Paul had the same right to entertain views of his own that every other person by right possesses, but he had no more power to declare the will and purposes of God to man than had Pope Alexander VI., Torquemada, Luther, Calvin, Cardinal McCloskey, or the Rev. Howard Crosby. He was a man with strong prejudices and strong convictions, and was far from being infallible. Every person has the option to take his views for just what they consider them worth, and there we will leave him.

Of the remaining seven epistles very little need be said. Some of them are admitted to be genuine and some are stoutly denied by the critics. The epistle of James is discredited. Luther called it a "strawy epistle," probably because it advocates good works rather than faith alone. Opinion is divided on the two epistles of Peter. Many urge the unauthenticity of both of them, while others claim the first to be genuine. The time when written is variously estimated from 46 to 64 A. D. The second epistle is not by Peter and was not written till toward the close of the second century. Great uncertainty, however, as to authenticity hangs over the entire matter. The short epistle of John stands much in the same condition. The third is universally denied, while many try to claim authenticity for the first two. Much doubt exists on the subject which can hardly be removed. The greater probability is that John wrote neither of them. Jude is pretty universally discarded; but as it is only a single chapter of twenty-five verses, it matters but little whether it was written by Jude or some one else.

### BOOK OF REVELATION.

This insane medley has distracted the heads of many weak people. Luther said of it that it was fit to be thrown into the Elbe, and if he had been able to throw into the Elbe all the copies of it in existence, it doubtless would have been well

for the world. Dr. South said of it, "It either finds a man mad or makes him so." Calvin wrote a commentary on other books of the Bible, but declined Revelation. Here he showed his good sense. How a sensible man could spend his time in writing a commentary on such wild, unmeaning ravings about "beasts," "scals," and "trumpets" is hard of comprehension. If it was written by inspiration, it assuredly was a crazy variety. One thing is very evident, and that is that the writer of it expected the fulfilment of the astounding predictions to be at a very early date after they were written. Such expressions as these indicate that fact: "For the time is near at hand;" "The things which must shortly come to pass;" "He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly," etc.

Disputes have raged high as to who the writer of the erratic work was. It is stoutly insisted that the Apostle John wrote it, while others as strongly deny it. It is claimed with very good reason that if John wrote Revelation he did not write the fourth gospel; both could not have been the product of the same person. Some strongly urge that it was written by John the Presbyter, and others that the writer is wholly unknown. To this opinion we have arrived. It matters not very much who wrote it, and it would not have mattered greatly had it not been written at all. It has not done the world a particle of good, but has made many much crazier who were crazy enough before in all conscience. If such jargon is the "word of God," the word can easily be dispensed with.

### COOPER ON THE NEW TESTAMENT.

Next will be laid before the reader several terse and pointed quotations touching the New Testament books from Robert Cooper's "Thirteen Lectures on the Bible; or, Inquirer's Text Book," republished from the London edition by J. P. Mendum, Boston. A few repetitions of remarks already quoted may be noticed:

"The first time any allusion is made to the gospels was by the Christian Father Irenæus, in the year 182, that is nearly

one hundred and fifty years after the time of Christ. Dr. Lardner maintains that the five books of Irenæus against heresies, in which this reference is made (vol. iii, chap. i), could not be published earlier than this date. Tillemont and Massuett, two great French Christian writers, think the more probable date of this publication was 192."

"Had these books been in existence prior to this period it is exceedingly strange they are not mentioned by any of the apostolic Fathers who lived at or immediately subsequent to the time of Christ, nor by the earlier Christian Fathers, who flourished at the close of the first and commencement of the second century. It is admitted on all hands that they are not named by the apostolic Father Barnabas, who lived in the year 71; nor by Clemens Romanus, who flourished A.D. 96; nor by Hermas, who lived in the year A.D. 100; nor by St. Ignatius, who lived in the year 107; nor Polycarp, 108; Papias, 116; Justin Martyr, 140; Tatian, 172; nor by Hegesippus, so late as the year A. D. 173."

"Who was this Irenæus upon whose veracity so much depends? Why a 'Christian Father,' and one of the most ignorant and credulous of that superstitious, cunning, and I will add dishonest, class of men. . . . At this moment I shall only quote a brief passage from the 'De Script. Interpret.' (p. 73), of the celebrated Dr. Whitby, where he is alluding to the conduct of Irenæus and Papias. The Doctor complains bitterly of their having 'handed down the actions of the apostles and their disciples from paltry rumors and dubious reports, and as having scandalously deluded the world with fables and lying narrations.' If such were the general practices of Irenæus, what authority have we that these four gospels, said by him to be written by Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, are not, like the rest of his productions, 'mere fables and lying narrations?' We have every occasion to believe, indeed, that such is the fact, especially when we remember the extraordinary reasons he assigns for there being four and only four gospels inspired. His reasons are, 'because there are but four quarters of the world, and every cherubim has four faces!' Strange animals those cherubims, unquestionably, but what a reason! How worthy of a priest! Every

cherubim has four faces, *ergo*, there are only four inspired gospels. What logic! How convincing! How unanswerable! How worthy of the book they are written to support!"

"At the time Irenæus introduced these four gospels to the world it is notorious there were many other gospels in circulation which were held in high esteem by the majority of the early Christians. By what means, then, did Irenæus determine that these four gospels alone were genuine and the rest spurious? Did the cherubims with four faces enlighten him? Be that as it may, such an important question could not be determined except by one of enlarged intellect, erudition, and perspicacity. And was Irenæus such a man? Confessedly not. On the contrary, he was weak and credulous, and, as Dr. Whitby says, 'in the habit of writing fables and lying narrations.' It is evident, therefore, the authority of Irenæus upon this vital point is worth just as much as his logic.

"To show you the great difficulty attending this portion of our inquiry, and the very unsatisfactory manner in which it was decided, I will quote from the fourth volume, p. 260, of 'The Introduction to the Scriptures,' second edition, by the Rev. J. H. Horne: 'The accounts left us,' says he, 'by ecclesiastical writers of antiquity, concerning the time when the gospels were written or published, are so vague, confused, and discordant, that they lead to no certain or solid determination. The eldest of the ancient Fathers collected the reports of their own times and set them down as certain truths, and those who followed adopted their accounts with implicit reverence. Thus tradition, true or false, passed on from one writer to another, without examination, until at last it became too late to examine them to any purpose.'"

"I have affirmed that many of the rejected gospels were held in high consideration, not only before but subsequent to the sanction of our present canon. Nay, many learned men of recent times have had strong predilections in favor of these discarded books, considering them as genuine as any of our canonized version. Listen to the opinion of the learned Dr. Whiston, in his 'Exact Time' (p. 28). He has declared that no less than twenty-seven of these books are genuine. 'Can any one,' says he, 'be so weak as to imagine Mark and Luke

and James and Jude, who were none of them more than companions to the apostles, to be our sacred and unerring guides, while Barnabas, Thaddeus, Clement, Timothy, Hermas, Ignatius, and Polycarp, who were equally companions of the same apostles, to be no authority at all?' The Rev. J. Martineau, in his 'Rationale of Religious Inquiry,' observes: 'If we could recover the gospels of the Hebrews and that of the Egyptians, it would be difficult to give a reason why they should not form a part of the New Testament; and an epistle actually exists by Clement, the fellow-laborer of Paul, which has as good a claim to stand there as the Epistle to the Hebrews or the Gospel of Luke. If none but the works of the twelve apostles were admitted, the rule would be clear and simple; but what are Mark and Luke, who are received, more than Clement and Barnabas, who are excluded?' And Archbishop Wake actually translated from the Greek the apostolic fathers of the first century, viz., St. Barnabas, St. Clement, St. Ignatius, St. Polycarp, and St. Hermas, and strongly recommended them to the Christian world as 'inspired' and 'containing an authoritative declaration of the gospel of Christ to us.' (See Wake's Apostolic Fathers.) The learned Bishop Marsh positively avers that 'it is an undoubted fact that those Christians by whom the now-rejected gospels were received, and who are now called heretics, were in the right in many points of criticism, where the Fathers accused them of wilful corruption.'

"I now approach a most material portion of our inquiry. From the era of Christ until the latter end of the fourth century there was no authorized collection of the writings of the New Testament. All was doubt and dispute for the first three hundred years, during the very time everything should have been certain and satisfactory. If it was all doubt fifteen hundred years ago, can it be all certainty now?

"About the middle of the third century, however, Origen, the celebrated Christian Father—a man who had almost unlimited power in the church—thought proper to make a selection from the great number of books then current among the Christians. The selection included the canon in circulation at this day. Through the dominant influence Origen possessed

in the church at this period his selection soon became popular, and in the year 363 was declared by the Council of Laodicea to be the only 'genuine scriptures.' It is more than probable, had not Origen made this selection and possessed such supreme influence among the Christians of his day, that our present canon would have been forgotten, like many of the now-rejected books.

"Is it not very extraordinary that a book like the New Testament, claiming to be of divine origin, should have remained so long in obscurity and at last only saved from eternal oblivion through the presumption of a cunning and despotic priest, and finally determined to be genuine by the mere *dicta* of a council of priests equally deceitful and arbitrary as himself? This simple fact is alone sufficient to convince any unprejudiced mind that the Bible has no more to do with Deity than 'Gulliver's Travels.' "

"An important question here suggests itself. How did this Council of Laodicea decide that our present canon of the New Testament is the true word of God? Did they receive a special message from heaven upon the subject? No, indeed, but this vital matter was decided solely by vote. Decided as a town council might decide upon a police force, or the House of Commons upon a tariff. It might have happened the majority had voted against our present authorized version and in favor of some of the rejected books. And what then? Why that which we now esteem the word of God would have been denounced, as were the repudiated copies, as mere 'fables and lying narrations,' and we should now have been promulgating as the holy word that which was then declared to be false and spurious. William Penn, the celebrated Quaker, in arguing that the Bible cannot be the rule of faith and practice, says: 'I demand of our adversaries if they are well assured of those men who first collected, embodied, and declared them (the scriptures) authentic, by a public canon which we read was in the Council of Laodicea, held three hundred and sixty years after Christ.' 'I say how do they know that these men rightly discovered true from spurious? Now, sure it is that some of the scriptures taken in by one council were rejected by another for apoeryphal, and that

which was left out by the former for apocryphal was taken in by the latter for canonical. Now, visible it is that they contradict each other, and as true that they hath erred respecting the present belief' (Penn's Works, vol. i, pp. 302-304, London, 1782)."

"Now, I aver most fearlessly that they [the council] were not men so distinguished and estimable. They were, on the contrary, excessively bigoted, prejudiced, and credulous—indissolubly wedded to their own crotchets. Their conduct, indeed, in those holy councils would have disgraced a pot-house.

"These are bold assertions and require very distinct proof. I will at once adduce it. I shall first quote from an eye-witness upon the authority of the Christian writer, Tindal, on page 195 of his book entitled 'Rights of the Christian Church: 'St. Gregory Nazianzen,' says he, 'in his letter to Procopius, tells him that he fled all assemblies of bishops because he never saw a good and happy end of any council, but that they did rather increase than lessen the evil; that the love of contention and ambition always overcomes their reason. Pretty men to determine questions of such vital moment. Listen further to the words of the pious Nazianzen. He reiterates his determination of never going to any council, because nothing is to be heard there but geese and cranes, who fight without understanding one another.' A unique, pious, and rational assembly this, truly! How characteristic of the priestly system! We are here informed by one who was present at these councils that there was nothing to be heard but 'geese and cranes,' and it is upon the decisions of animals like these that the authenticity and genuineness of our Bible rest. O Christians, when will you be ashamed of your credulity? Little do these 'geese and cranes' know the deference you pay to their rational and enlightened dicta!

"Listen, again, to the opinions of Tindal as to the character of those 'pious' assemblies. Alluding in particular to the memorable Council of Nice, held in 327, at which the Emperor Constantine presided, he observes: 'And if the accusations and libels which the bishops at the Council of Nice gave in of one another to the emperor were now extant, in all probability we

should have such rolls of scandal that few would have much reason to boast of the first Ecumenical Council, where, with such heat, passion, and fury, the bishops fell foul on one another, insomuch that had not the emperor by a trick burnt their church memorials, probably they must have broke up in confusion! After that council was over, the bishops made so great a bustle and disturbance, and were so unruly, that the good emperor was forced to tell them 'that if they would not be more quiet and peaceable for the future, he would no longer continue his expedition against the Infidels, but must return to keep them in order.' 'Indeed,' says Tindal, 'the confusion and disorder were so great amongst them, especially in their synods, that it sometimes came to blows, as, for instance, Dioscorus, bishop of Alexandria, cuffed and kicked Flavianus, patriarch of Constantinople (at the second synod of Ephesus), with that fury that within three days after he died!' " Just think of it! These were Christian bishops of the early Christian church, who had met together to decide most important matters for God and the people! Such men assumed the authority to determine for the masses what should be accepted as the word of God, which they must believe or go to hell.

"Listen still further. You have heard of their bigotry and violence. A word as to their honesty and consistency. Tindal, speaking of this subject, observes: 'For though they are almost obstinate as to power, they are most flexible as to faith, and in their councils complimented the emperor with whatsoever creeds they had a mind to; and never scrupled to recant what they had before enacted, or to re-enact what they had before recanted. Nay, so very variable were they that St. Hilary, bishop of Poitiers, says that "since the Nicene Synod we do nothing but write creeds; that while we fight about words, while we raise questions about novelties, while we quarrel about things doubtful and about authors, while we contend in parties, there is almost none that is Christ's. We decree every year of the Lord a new creed concerning God; nay, every change of the moon our faith is altered.'" "

"The following fact, mentioned by Pappius, in his 'Synodicum of the Council of Nice,' is, however, worth all the pre-



ceding, valuable and curious though they be. Pappius informs us of the manner in which the true gospels were selected from the false at that memorable council. This was done, says he, 'by placing all the books under a communion table, and, upon the prayers of the council, the inspired books jumped upon the table, while the false ones remained under.' " What a test of truth, indeed! What a proof of inspiration! Who can longer doubt the authenticity of the scriptures?

" After the Council of Laodicea, in the year 363, there were two other great councils, one in the year 406 and the other in 680. The council of 406 rejected several books deemed canonical by the council of 363, but the council of 680 again restored them to the canon. Thus were the 'sacred writings,' the 'word of God,' tossed, like a battledoor, from sect to sect, and altered as the spirit of faction might dictate. From this period (close of the seventh century) to the fifteenth, when printing was invented, the 'word of God' remained in pious seclusion. It was locked up in monasteries in the exclusive possession of monks. The people were forbidden to read it. If they were detected in such an 'impious' act they were punished most severely. The priesthood at this period, therefore, had every opportunity to do what they liked with the Bible—to alter, add, or omit, just as it was most convenient. So greatly, in fact, were the priesthood afraid of the people reading the Bible that a bill was actually introduced into Parliament to prohibit any one reading the scriptures except those who were authorized."

"The New Testament, published by the learned Evanson in 1807, contains only the Gospel of St. Luke, Acts, ten of Paul's epistles, and Revelation, and even those are said to 'abound with manifest and numerous interpolations.' The gospels of Matthew, Mark, and John he contemptuously rejects as 'spurious fictions of the second century.' The Swedenborgians admit only four gospels and Revelation. The German Baptists and the followers of Servetus do not receive the Gospel of St. Matthew; and the learned Prof. Bauer, in 1803, denounced it as an actual 'forgery.' The Second Epistle to Timothy, and Titus, were rejected by Dr. Eichorn, and the First Epistle to Timothy, 1807, by Dr. Schleiermacher

the celebrated German. The Gospel of St. John was rejected in 1820 by Dr. Bretschneider, and the first chapter of Matthew and Luke are denounced by the Unitarians, in the 'Monthly Repository,' as 'absolute falsities!' The Catholic Bible, say the Protestants, abounds with innumerable gross errors, and in a great number of places exhibits the most shocking barbarity of style and the most impenetrable obscurity with respect to the sense of the inspired writers. Yet this Bible was pronounced authentic by a decree of the Council of Trent. The Protestant Bible in return is denounced even so lately as 1816, by the pope of Rome, as 'pregnant with errors;' and the old Protestant Bible is repudiated by the critic Broughton, who was himself a Protestant, as 'perverting the text of the Old Testament in eight hundred and forty-eight places, and causing millions to reject the New and to run into everlasting flames.' As to the present version, 'its translation,' say the learned Catholics, 'ought to be abhorred to the depths of hell!'"

Speaking of mistranslations, he says: "A ludicrous case of false translation appears in Mark x, 25, where, according to the learned, the word in the original means a *cable rope*, not a *camel*. In the notion of a cable going through the eye of a needle, an association of ideas is preserved, but the other meaning is forced and ridiculous. Calmet, the famous Bible critic, declares that the seventh and eighth verses of the fifth chapter of John's first epistle 'are not in any ancient Bible.' This interpolation was an impudent stroke to support the Trinity. Cappellus informs us that he was thirty-six years in writing the books in which he detects the numerous errors and frauds in the Protestant Bible. That learned English divine, Dr. John Mill, assures us that thirty years' researches, upon the New Testament alone, enabled him to detect the enormous number of eighty thousand different readings of that book. Could anything match the stupidity and monstrous credulity of calling such a work inspired and infallible? It appears that the favorite maxim of Christians, 'Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself,' has been considered by some writers to be an interpolation. The great Christian Father, Origen, in his commentary on Matthew's gospel, speaking of this

sentence, is forced to admit that 'if indeed there was no disagreement in other copies it would be irreligious to suspect that expression was interpolated, and not pronounced by our Savior. But now, alas! what with the blunders of transcribers, what with the impious temerity of correcting the text, what with the licentiousness of others, who interpolate or expunge just what they please, it is plain the copies do strangely disagree.' "

"It has actually been proved by a record in the Cronicon of Muis that a general alteration of the four gospels took place in the sixth century by order of the Emperor Anastasius, who decreed 'that the holy gospels, as written, *Idiotis Evangelistis*, are to be corrected and amended.' This fact is mentioned by Scaliger, and Dr. Mill vouches for the truth of the record, and says that Messala was consul at the time. Well might the New Testament be compared to Lord Chancellor Eldon's silk stocking, that was darned all over with worsted until there was no silk remaining; so, in like manner, it is now impossible to say with certainty what this book was originally, by whom, when, or where its component parts were written, or how many alterations, additions, contradictory translations, and forged interpolations which, from time to time, it has undergone.

"I shall sum up with the following startling observations of the distinguished Christian Le Clerc. He curiously observes, in his 'Disquisition on Inspiration,' p. 27: 'There is no heresy in rejecting a book of the Jewish canon, as neither is it to reject one of our own; at least the Protestants have not called Luther a heretic for saying that the Epistle of James 'is an epistle of straw,' no more than they have many of the learned for not receiving the Second Epistle of Peter, which a famous critic (James Scaliger) styles "a fiction of some ancient Christian misemploying his leisure time." The Jewish Sanhedrim may easily have received into their canon books that had no divine authority.' "

"It is necessary I should here inform you, in order to explain how much depends upon the veracity of these holy Fathers, that the originals of the New Testament are irrecoverably and absolutely lost. We find, on referring to the "Intro-

duction to the New Testament," by Michaelis, the famous German professor, as translated by Bishop Marsh, that the most ancient manuscripts of this portion of the word of God were written so lately as the sixth century—that is, nearly five hundred years after the time the originals are said to have been composed. The originals of the New Testament, indeed, have not been seen, says Michaelis, by any writer extant, nor do they record that any one of their contemporaries had seen them. The 'holy Fathers' themselves do not profess to have seen the originals. Prof. Michaelis further observes: 'None of the most early Fathers, as Ignatius, or Tertullian, appeal to the originals, or had seen them.' And Prof. Du Pin, in his 'History of the Canon,' etc., remarks: 'We do not find that the two greatest men of the church, I mean Origen and St. Hierom, who had searched the ancient copies of the scriptures with so much care and diligence, and have visited so many churches in the East, have ever spoken of the originals of the New Testament, written with the hands of the apostles, which they would not have failed to do if there had been any in their times.' Again he observes: 'But it hath been made to appear elsewhere that it is no wonder that the primitive Christians, who had not a regular body of a state in which they lived, and whose assemblies were, on the contrary, furiously disturbed by the Jews and pagans, had lost the originals of their books.' 'Nay,' says he, 'in the primitive ages there was no talk of reading the scriptures in their originals; any copy whatever, provided it were used in the orthodox churches, might be relied upon, as if it had been the first original, written with the hands of the apostles. The Rev. Dr. Campbell, in his work on the four gospels, p. 117, observes: 'The autographs (the originals), it is acknowledged on all hands, are nowhere to be found. What we have in their stead are the copies of copies—through how many successors it is impossible to say—which were originally taken from these autographs.'"

Rev. Dr. Hug, in his "Introduction to the New Testament," goes further. "He actually affirms that 'it is probable there could have been no autographs of the New Testament at all.' Since then the originals of the New Testament are absolutely

lost, and, according to Michaelis and Du Pin, have not been seen by any writer extant, or any of their contemporaries, it is manifest we have nothing to depend upon but the copies these holy men have presented to us. I repeat, therefore, it is a question of vital importance—the question, indeed—to ascertain if these men are worthy of credit.

“Now, I unhesitatingly denounce them as persons unworthy of belief, whose testimony at this period would not be received by any court of law in Christendom upon the most frivolous case imaginable. Deliberately do I aver that imposture and deception were their common practice. They esteemed dissimulation and falsehood as excellences to be imitated, not as vices to be despised. To deceive the people they considered a positive virtue. Not only did they think such infamous practices necessary to the success of religion, but actually honorable to it! In short, if there were at any time one body of men, as public teachers, more deceitful, dishonest, and despicable than another, they are the class of whom I am now speaking—the class upon whom the Christian world depend for the genuineness of their scriptures. This may be considered a rash declaration. Let them, however, who labor under such an apprehension listen to the proof. I shall first quote from the most able ecclesiastical historian of modern times, Mosheim. In his ‘Ecclesiastical History,’ part ii, chapter iii, he makes use of the following extraordinary language: ‘The interest of virtue and true religion suffered yet more grievously by the monstrous errors that were almost universally adopted in this century (the fourth), and became a source of innumerable calamities and mischiefs in the succeeding ages. The first of these maxims was that it was an act of virtue to deceive and lie when by that means the interest of the church might be promoted; and the second, equally horrible, though in another point of view, was that errors in religion, when maintained and adhered to after proper admonition, were punishable with civil penalties and corporeal tortures. The former of these erroneous maxims was now of long standing; it had been adopted for some ages past, and had produced an incredible number of ridiculous fables, fictitious prodigies, and pious frauds, to the unspeakable detri-

ment of that glorious cause in which they were employed. And it must be frankly confessed that the greatest men and most eminent saints of this century were more or less tainted with the infection of this corrupt principle, as will appear evident to such as look with an attentive eye to their writings and actions. We would willingly except from this charge Ambrose and Hilary, Augustine, Gregory, Nazianzen, and Jerome; but truth, which is more respectable than these venerable Fathers, obliges us to involve them in the general accusation.' He further observes: 'At a time when he [Hermas] wrote, it was an established maxim with many of the Christians to avail themselves of fraud and deception if it was likely they would conduce toward the attainment of any considerable good.' 'And it was considered,' says he again, 'that they who made it their business to deceive, with a view of promoting the cause of truth, were deserving rather of commendation than of censure!'"

Casaubon, a French Protestant, says: "It mightily affects me to see how many there were in the earliest times of the church who considered it a capital exploit to lend to heavenly truth the help of their own inventions in order that the new doctrine might be received by the wise among the Gentiles. These officious lies, they said, were devised for a good end." Le Clerc, assenting to the opinions of Casaubon, observes that "dissemblers of truth are nowhere to be met with in such abundance as among the writers of church history."

"We will now speak of individual cases of deceit and imposture. The preceding quotations are only in general terms. First, of the holy Father Origen. This man had immense influence among the Christians of his time. He lived in the third century. It was Origen who collected our present canon of the New Testament, and upon whose *ipse dixit* the Council of Laodicea adopted it as the 'word of God.' What then was the character of this person from whom we receive our present scriptures? Bishop Horsely, in his reply to Priestley, stated that Origen 'was not incapable of asserting in argument what he believed not, and that a strict regard for truth in disputation was not one of the virtues of his character.' The bishop further adds: 'Time was when the prac-

tice of using unjustifiable means to serve a good cause was openly avowed and Origen himself was among its defenders.' ”

Next is Irenæus. Dr. Whitby accuses him and Father Papias “as having scandalously deluded the world with fables and lying narrations.” Mosheim says of Justin Martyr: “Much of what Justin says is wholly undeserving of credit.” “St. Jerome, who stands very high among the early Fathers, and author of the Vulgate, or Latin translation of the Bible—the translation now adopted by the Catholics—very positively says: ‘I do not find fault with an error which proceeds from a hatred toward the Jews, and a pious zeal for the Christian faith’ (Oper., tom. 4, p. 113).” “Gregory Nazianzen, surnamed the ‘Divine,’ candidly admitted to Father Jerome that ‘a little jargon is all that is necessary to impose upon the people. The less they comprehend the more they admire! Our forefathers and doctors of the church have often said, not what they thought, but what circumstances and necessity dictated to them.’ Bishop Heliodorus, in his ‘Romance of Theagnes and Charicles,’ modestly says: ‘A falsehood is a good thing when it aids the speaker, and does no injury to the hearers.’ And St. Synesius, early in the fifth century, declared: ‘The people were desirous of being deceived. We cannot act otherwise respecting them.’” St. Hermas, one of the fellow-laborers of St. Paul, wrote a gospel from which the following passage is taken: “O Lord, I never spoke a true word in my life, but I have always lived in dissimulation and affirmed a lie for truth to all men, and no man contradicted me, but all gave credit to my words.” To which exclamation the holy angel to whom Hermas was addressing himself replied, “As the lie was up now he had better keep it up, and as in time it would come to be believed, it would answer as well as truth. ’

Paul himself, as is well known, was an advocate of deception and falsehood, as the following quotations from his epistles will affirm: “But be it so, I did not burden you; nevertheless, being crafty, I caught you with guile” (2 Cor. xii, 16); “For if the truth of God hath more abounded through my lie unto his glory, why yet am I also judged as a sinner?” (Rom. iii, 7); “For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the

more. And unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law; to them that are without law, as without law (being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ), that I might gain them that are without law. To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak; I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some" (1 Cor. ix, 19-22). When Peter so stoutly and repeatedly denied all knowledge of his master he showed quite as little regard for the truth.

Again Cooper: "I purpose to show that even supposing our remarks in reference to the Fathers, from whom we receive the scriptures, were incorrect, we are still not justified in accepting the Bible as they offer it to us, as the true 'word of God.' And why? Because they have so altered it to suit their convenience—to promote party or sectarian purposes—that there is no possibility of detecting the genuine from the spurious. And hence the Bible, as we now read it, is as likely to lead us from as to the truth, and therefore altogether inoperative for the great purpose for which it is designed—the salvation of mankind. The first authority I shall adduce in confirmation of this opinion is Prof. Michaelis. He considers that 'no one will deny that the early Christians, who differed from the ruling church, have altered the New Testament in numerous examples, according to their peculiar tenets,' and 'so much so,' says the Rev. Mr. Nolan, in his 'Inquiry,' p. 460, 'that little confidence could be placed in any edition.' The Rev. T. H. Horne admits in the second volume of his 'Introduction to the Scriptures,' that all manuscripts, the most ancient not excepted, have erasures and corrections; nor was this practice confined to a simple letter or word. The Rev. Mr. Pope, in his treatise on the 'Miraculous Conception,' affirms that 'the Cambridge and Alexandrian manuscripts swarm with corruptions and interpolations.' Celsus, says Origen, charges the early Fathers with having three or four different readings of the same text, or as he expresses it, 'they altered the gospel three or four different times, as if they were drunk, and when pressed by their adversaries, recurred to that reading which best suited their purpose.' Origen,



himself admits, says Du Pin, 'there is a great discrepancy between the copies, which must be attributed either to the negligence of the scribes, or to the audacious perversions of others, or to those who correct the text by arbitrary additions or omissions, who oftentimes have put in and left out as they thought it most convenient.' Here we are told by one of the Fathers themselves that matters were 'put in or left out' of the Bible, just 'as it was most convenient.' This shows how much we have to depend upon the Fathers for the correctness of the 'word of God.' Du Pin remarks, and he is very high authority: 'It cannot be said that no fault has crept into the scriptures by the negligence or inadvertency of the transcribers, or even by the boldness of those who have ventured to strike out, add, or change some words which they thought necessary to be omitted, added, or changed.' Necessary, indeed! Then we must believe that God had said that which he ought not to have said, and omitted saying that which he ought to have done, or in other words, priests know better than God what should be in the Bible!

"Listen to the words of James, the librarian of the University of Oxford, a warm partisan of Protestantism. In his work on 'The Corruption of the Scriptures,' p. 272, he says: 'Let us pass a step or two further, and inquire whether they have not corrupted the Bible in like sort, or worse rather, if it be possible, a degree of impiety beyond the degrees of comparison, and yet so plainly to be proved against the papists as he that hath but one eye to see shall plainly discover it, and thence be induced to suspect the abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel the prophet, sitting in the holy place, and admiring himself as it were above the Holy of Holies. He shall observe the infinite varieties, contrarieties, and contradictions, and oppositions, between two Bibles set forth by two popes, within two years; both commanded to be read and followed upon such forms as are mentioned in the briefs. You shall see the popes breathe hot and cold, say and unsay the same thing twice, and, in fine, they have truly verified the Bible to be a nose of wax, plied and wrought into fashion for their own advantage. A shame it is that any Christian should presume to add or take away aught from the word of

God; yet, oh, intolerable fraud, not any simple Christian or layman, but the bishop of Rome, chief pastor of the church, sole judge of all controversies, whose lips should preserve knowledge, and his tongue speak no deceit, hath audaciously presumed to add and take whole sentences, to change the words of the holy writ into a clear contrary meaning; to make, as it were, white black, and black white!

“The celebrated Unitarian ‘Reply to Dr. Magee,’ published in 1183, says: ‘This text is an impious forgery. It appears to be little less than blasphemy to retain it in a book which is represented to be inspired.’ Similar charges are made by the Unitarians against all the verses in the first chapter of Luke after the fourth. The whole of the second chapter is denounced as ‘spurious,’ and only ‘to serve the purpose of certain sects.’ The same with the first chapter of Matthew, after the 17th verse, and the whole of the second. These passages inculcate the doctrine of the miraculous conception, which is denied by the Unitarians.”

“The celebrated Methodist, Dr. Adam Clarke, in his commentary on the Bible, protests against those passages in the third chapter of Genesis which declare that Eve was tempted by a serpent. He asserts it was a monkey and not a serpent that tempted her. Mr. Bellamy declares that the story in the Old Testament about Balaam and his ass is a complete misinterpretation and ought to be ‘immediately revised.’ He concludes his remarks upon the subject as follows: ‘Really it is time you should get rid of such childish notions. To say any more on such absurd conclusions would be a waste of time. Depend upon it that whatever they may do now, asses never spoke in the days of Balaam.’”

“According to the Unitarian version there are no less than one hundred and fifty thousand readings of the scriptures, all of which are more or less different. And this book, about which such innumerable and serious differences exist, and that, too, against the most learned of our race, is the only book which is to guide us to everlasting truth and joy. I am apprehensive it will prove a blind guide, for if there are so many contradictory readings as declared by the Unitarians,

it will be one hundred and forty-nine thousand nine hundred and ninety-nine to one if we have the right one.

“Let me give you one internal proof that the gospels are not genuine, or are grossly interpreted. In Matthew xviii, 17, we find : ‘ If he neglect to hear the church let him be unto thee as a heathen man and a publican.’ These words are said to have been spoken by Jesus and recorded by Matthew ; but at the time of Jesus and Matthew the word ‘ church ’ had not come into use. There was no church yet established. It is a Greek word. The assembly of the people of Athens styled itself *eccle-sia*. This expression was only adopted by the Christians in process of time, when they had attained a kind of government.” Jesus could not have used such a word, and Matthew could not have written it. It is clearly one of the many interpolations that were written by the Fathers, priests, transcribers, and interested parties.

Terse and cogent quotations from this author might be given at greater length, all of which are damaging to the idea of the inspiration and divinity of the scriptures, but probably enough have been quoted for our present purpose.

## BIBLE IMPROBABILITIES AND IMPOSSIBILITIES.

Nothing is more sure than that the persons who wrote the Bible knew very little of what are now termed scientific truths ; very little about the size and shape of the earth ; very little of the number, magnitude, and distance of the heavenly bodies, and very little of many facts in nature which almost every schoolboy now well understands. This glaring truth proves either that the writers of the book could not have been inspired by heaven, or that the being who inspired them was as ignorant of the simple facts connected with his own work as the writers themselves. It is extremely humiliating to think that the Architect of the Universe did not know that the earth is round and revolves daily upon its axis, and circles yearly round the sun ; that it is among the smallest spheres composing the universe, and that it has been in existence hundreds of millions of years ; together with thousands of other facts in nature which every well-informed man—to say

nothing of gods—ought to well understand. It is far more respectful to Deity to not consider him so ignorant, but rather that those who have assumed to write for him acted entirely without his authority, and were guilty of grossest hypocrisy and falsehood.

Mr. Graves, in his "Bible of Bibles," makes the assertion that there are in the Bible nine thousand errors or statements more or less in opposition to nature and the plain teachings of science. Probably the statement is not exaggerated; we shall not take the time to count them all, but propose to enumerate some of the more patent and bare-faced improbabilities and impossibilities which are scattered through what is called God's holy word. This will be done without stopping to make comments and show up the absurdities. We will begin at the beginning but will omit many of minor importance.

Here are some of the improbabilities and impossibilities :

1. That the earth was brought into existence or form five thousand eight hundred and eighty-four years ago, and that before that time there were no heavens, no earth, no anything; or, if any earth, it was "without form, and void."

2. That light could exist without any body of matter to generate and disseminate it.

3. That light and darkness, as entities, can be mixed together and then separated, like corn and beans.

4. That there could be morning and evening without sunrise and sunset, or any sun to give light.

5. That the firmament is a solid or material substance for dividing the waters above it from those below it, and that it could sustain a vast body in the upper regions and prevent its falling to the earth. And that rain was produced by opening windows in this firmament.

6. That the dry lands appeared by the waters "gathering themselves unto one place," instead of the lands occupying the highest position.

7. That the earth could bring forth grass, herbs, trees, and all kinds of vegetation, perfecting seeds and fruits, before any sun existed.

8. That the earth is older than the sun.

9 That if it required five days to make this little world, eight thousand miles in diameter, and stock it, it was out of all proportion to create the sun, 860,000 miles in diameter, and which every minute throws out heat equal to what could be produced by 11,000,000,000 tons of coal; Jupiter, 85,000 miles in diameter, Saturn 79,000 miles in diameter; and over one hundred other planets, large and small, in our system, besides all the innumerable suns and stars, in one day.

10. That the sun was made expressly for the use of the earth, when there are, as observed, over one hundred bodies, great and small, in the solar system which obtain their light from the central orb.

11. That there was no animal life existing in the waters until after vegetation and fruits were brought to full perfection.

12. That winged fowls were brought into existence before reptiles and creeping things.

13. That when God gave the herbs of the field to animals for food, he made no provision for carnivorous animals. Are we to understand that lions, tigers, hyenas, and wolves fed on burdock and mullen? And did the fish in the waters also feed on herbs?

14. That Deity became fatigued and had to take a rest. Does he rest any more on one day than another?

15. That plants and trees could be perfected without rain.

16. That the earth could be watered by a mist going up from it.

17. That man was formed of crude earth or dust.

18. That mention should be made of the Garden of Eden in one account and be utterly ignored in the other.

19. That God should create a tree of knowledge to cause the death of his creatures, and that he should have placed certain destruction before them.

20. That knowledge ever grew on trees in the form of fruit.

21. That four distinct rivers should have their source in one place.

22. That in the first account the animals were made before man, and in the second, man before the animals.

23. That when God made the animals he needed to call upon Adam to give them names.

24. That having made all the animals male and female it did not occur to God that a female of the human species would also be proper.

25. That he should have needed a second thought to remind him of what he should have been fully aware at first.

26. That he should be under the necessity of putting Adam to sleep to extract a rib.

27. That a rib, being a pound or less of phosphate of lime, should be the proper material of which to create a woman containing one hundred and fifty pounds of primary elements.

28. That a serpent or snake should be able to thwart and circumvent the plans and purposes of the Omnipotent Creator.

29. That the snake knew more and was more subtle than all other animals.

30. That a snake could use human language and be able to converse with grandmother Eve.

31. That while the snake was ruining the first human pair as well as their immense progeny forever, God should be entirely ignorant of what was going on, and the entire mischief be accomplished before he had the least suspicion of it. Was he asleep?

32. That simply eating nice, fair-looking fruit, which God had made and provided, should be sufficient ground for causing the damnation of man and woman, and countless billions of their descendants, especially when a word of warning had not been given the woman.

33. That God should have placed the fruit within man's reach if he did not wish him to partake of it.

34. That eating of the fruit should open their eyes to see their nakedness, which they could not see before.

35. That fruit-eating should induce a necessity for aprons.

36. That Adam and Eve could hear the voice of God walking in the garden.

37. That God should select the cool of the day for his voice to walk out, more than any other time.

38. That he should need to call to them to find where they were.

39. That after God cursed the snake he had any different mode of traveling than before. Did not the snake always go upon his belly?

40. That God should insist that snakes should eat dust, and they not do it.

41. That God should curse the ground because Adam and Eve ate one of his apples.

42. That thorns and thistles were not in existence before the fruit was eaten.

43. That God made coats of skins for our first parents. Who killed the animals and skinned them?

44. That God should have been partial to Abel and his offerings, and thus have given grounds for the first murder to be committed.

45. That Cain should be fearful that every one that found him should slay him, when his father and mother were the only ones living besides himself.

46. That Cain should need a mark set upon him to keep people from finding him.

47. That Cain could find a wife, when his mother was the only woman living.

48. That he should build a city when there were none to dwell in it save himself.

49. That Enoch was translated to the invisible world, body and all.

50. That Methuselah should live nine hundred and sixty-three years, and the rest of the antediluvians nearly as long.

51. That God's sons took the daughters of men for wives and then produced a hybrid race—a race of giants.

52. That God got discouraged with his earthly enterprise and repented that he ever engaged in it.

53. That he came to the decision to destroy man from the face of the earth, and also all animal and vegetable life, which had not sinned.

54. That the earth which God himself had made was corrupt before him.

55. That God set Noah at building an ark as per instructions.

56. That as there are eight thousand species of birds, and Noah had to take fourteen of each kind—2,067 species of

quadrupeds, or beasts, and two of each of the unclean kinds, and fourteen each of the clean kinds; of reptiles 656 species, with an army of ants, beetles, flies, flees, bugs, musquitoes, wasps, bees, moths, butterflies, spiders, scorpions, grasshoppers, locusts, myriapods, canker worms, and almost an endless number of other crawling, wriggling, creeping, flying insects, etc., as well as snails, worms, centipedes, grubs, in all to the number of some two million—a vessel three hundred cubits (five hundred feet) long, fifty cubits (eighty feet) broad, and thirty cubits (fifty feet) high would be large enough to accommodate such an extensive cargo of live stock.

57. That all these forms of life could be induced to congregate to the locality where the ark was built and hold themselves in readiness to enter when the door was opened.

58. That the polar bear from the arctic regions, the reindeer from the frozen north, the lions and tigers from the tropics, the kangaroo from Australia, the sloth, an exceedingly slow traveler, from South America, with all the rest from all latitudes and climes, including all the insects and worms—which hardly ever make long journeys—should be able to make the trip and arrive just in time and all be ready to go in together at the right moment, and in good military order.

59. That antagonistic animals—wolves and lambs, lions and kids, foxes and geese, cats and mice, dogs and woodchucks, hawks and chickens—should associate together in perfect friendliness and good will, the strong carnivorous beast of prey never attacking the weak and defenseless.

60. That Noah and his sons should be able to gather food sufficient to feed these millions of animated beings for the period of thirteen months (the length of time they were housed). What a world of fodder it must have required for the elephants, rhinoceroses, camels, horses, asses, cattle, sheep, goats, llamas, giraffes, and all the rest of those kinds of animals! Forty such vessels would be needed for the food alone, and one thousand men to gather it.

61. That the carnivorous animals—three thousand species—the lions, tigers, wolves, etc., could live over a year without the appropriate food for them. (There is no account of its being provided.)



62. That the nine hundred species of animals called fly-catchers, which live on flies and other insects, could find their proper food thirteen months thus boxed up.

63. That the two hundred and fifty kinds of birds known as bee-catchers, which live principally on bees, could get along over a year without food.

64. That the animals called ant-eaters, whose food is ants alone, could find their appropriate food, or fast comfortably, for thirteen months.

65. That birds of paradise, which feed on cockroaches, could get along three hundred and ninety-five days without them.

66. That the monkey and other animals which require fresh fruits from day to day could succeed in obtaining their usual supplies in Noah's big box.

67. That the birds and animals which feed on insects could get along without difficulty during that protracted voyage.

68. That the animals, birds, worms, etc., which require fresh leaves and flowers every day for their food, could succeed in finding their appropriate diet with Captain Noah.

69. That such animal life as is sustained by honey alone would be able to dispense with bee-hives and their contents for thirteen months.

70. That those animals which live on live fresh fish could have found no difficulty in drawing their regular rations.

71. That it must have taken several thousand hogsheads full of fresh water to supply that vast menagerie for thirteen long months shut up in an air-tight, hot, sweltering coop. It would seem to require several arks alone to carry water; for, as all the water on the earth was salt, from the ocean, it would not answer for table use and cooking purposes.

72. That after God had closed them all in, and had shut the door, they could have lived fifteen minutes without air or light. It must have been very uncomfortable for the white bears, grizzly bears, and Esquimaux dogs.

73. That it would have been absolutely impossible for Noah and his family to attend regularly to feeding such a vast number of animals.

74. That it would have required at least a hundred men to clean up the excrement and filth that would constantly be voided by millions of animals, especially as there was no way to get rid of it only by taking it up and throwing it out of the one small window in the roof. How badly it must have smelt in there.

75. That there must have been some danger from the rattlesnakes, cobras, copperheads, moccasins, vipers, scorpions, tarantulas, etc.

76. That skunks or polecats, with the musk-ox and other stinking animals, must have been a trifle unpleasant as *compagnons du voyage*.

77. That it must have made a terrible din when all the animals set up a bellowing, braying, howling, screaming, roaring, chattering, hissing, neighing, snorting, buzzing, etc., when calling to Noah, Shem, Ham, and Japhet to come and feed them.

78. That water from the atmosphere or anywhere else in connection with this globe could be forthcoming to cover the earth to the tops of the highest mountains, 29,200 feet, or five miles above the level of the sea.

79. That the clouds over the entire face of the earth could continue to pour down rain day and night for forty days, at the rate of seven hundred and thirty feet per day, thirty feet and five inches per hour, or six and a half inches per minute! It must have been a damp time indeed!

80. That after that amount of water had fallen, it possibly could have disappeared in so short a time, and that it could find a place to stow itself away. Evaporation would seem to be impossible, as the atmosphere could not sustain a thousandth part of it.

81. That as the ark landed at a point seventeen thousand feet above the ocean level, and above the altitude of perpetual frost, the tender animals could possibly have lived an hour after leaving the sweltering ark.

82. That the animals could possibly sustain life after emerging from the ark when there was nothing to be found to eat—the animals all dead, and all vegetation necessarily in the same condition.

83. That if the presence of Noah and his sons prevented the carnivorous animals, the lions, tigers, wolves, vultures, eagles, hawks, etc., from devouring the sheep, kids, hares, poultry, etc., while in the ark, the former would not at once have preyed upon the latter when all were out looking for something to eat.

84. That a rainbow had never been seen till after the flood.

85. That a man like Noah, who had been in such close communion with God, should have become an inebriate so soon after he ceased to be a sea-captain.

86. That because one of Noah's sons made sport of the old man's indecent exposure of his person, himself and his posterity should be cursed and doomed to perpetual slavery.

87. That Noah's descendants should undertake to build a tower over five miles high, so that another flood could not submerge it.

88. That God should be disconcerted at such an undertaking to the extent of confounding their language and causing many new tongues, when he should have known that when they had builded two or three miles high the cold would become so intense that they would be compelled to quit work.

89. That the Lord should many times appear personally to Abraham, and repeatedly make stupendous promises, which, by the bye, were never fulfilled.

90. That a faithful man like Abraham should descend to prevarication and falsehood on sundry occasions.

91. That God should need to come down to earth, and look around like a man, to ascertain if what he had heard from Sodom and Gomorrah was true.

92. That fire and brimstone could rain from the atmosphere and destroy two cities.

93. That it could be possible for a woman to become a pillar of salt, and then remain for centuries without dissolving with repeated rains.

94. That a "faithful" man like Lot should indulge in drunkenness and then commit incest with his two virgin daughters.

95. That Sarah, when past ninety years of age, should become a mother, and for the first time.

96. That a good man like Abraham should turn his own son and its mother out in the desert to perish.

97. That God should need to make the experiment of commanding Abraham to sacrifice his dear son, to know whether the faithful man would comply or not.

98. That Abraham should willingly prepare his beloved boy for the altar without saying a word to evade such an unnatural act.

99. That Jacob could, with God's help, cheat his father-in-law out of his stock by means of peeled and streaked rods.

100. That the Lord should stop to wrestle with Jacob the better part of a night.

101. That the sons of Jacob should conspire to kill their young brother Joseph and finally sell him into slavery.

102. That Joseph from being a slave should come to be the second greatest man in the great Egyptian nation.

103. That the stock of Jacob and his twelve sons should in four generations, or two hundred and fifteen years—according to marginal dates—increase so rapidly as to become two or three millions of people, able to turn out six hundred thousand men able to draw the sword. It would require each mother to bear one hundred children, and none to die till old.

104. That God should assume the appearance of fire, and thus in a bush present himself to Moses.

105. That if God wanted Moses to go and lead his people out of Egypt he should seek to kill him in a hotel.

106. That if God really wanted his people to leave Egypt he should repeatedly harden Pharaoh's heart to prevent his letting them go.

107. That Moses and Aaron, and the Egyptian magicians, could change rods into serpents and then change them back again.

108. That all the water in Egypt should be turned to blood, and that twenty millions of people should be able to live with no water.

109. That the land should be completely filled with frogs so that they should even get into the kneading-trough, espe-

cially when there was no water in the country. There must have been a great stench when they all died.

110. That the dust of Egypt could be changed to lice.

111. That endless swarms of flies should be sent by God upon Egypt.

112. That this should be followed by a grievous murrain upon all the cattle and sheep in the land.

113. That by the sprinkling of a few handfuls of dust, boils and blains should break out upon man and beast in all the land.

114. That upon Moses stretching forth his hand God should send thunder and hail upon all the land, so that fire should run along the ground, and that all men and beasts not under shelter should be destroyed.

115. That all the flax and barley in Egypt should be smitten.

116. That these evils should be followed with endless swarms of locusts which destroyed every living thing spared by the hail, darkening the air and the earth.

117. That Moses by stretching forth his hand could bring a dense darkness upon the land, so that for three days people could not rise up nor see each other.

118. That all the first-born of Egypt, not less than 200,000 persons, and cattle in proportion—though they had been killed before—were slain, to induce the king to yield—God had so hardened his heart.

119. That God should authorize his children to be grossly dishonest and borrow from the Egyptians their jewelry, their valuables, and their wearing apparel, knowing they never could return them.

120. That such a vast body of two or three millions of people, including women and children, should be able to pack up bag and baggage, scattered as they must have been nearly the whole length of Egypt, and get out of the country with all their cattle and all their possessions in one night.

121. The luggage of such a body of people must have been immense. Their tents, of which they could not have got along with less than two hundred thousand, and which were probably made of skins, were a heavy item; their knead-

ing troughs another. As they had sixty miles to travel over dry land to reach the Red Sea, it is a marvel how they accomplished their hasty exit. If they went ten in a rank they made a column over a hundred miles in length. The head of the army must have reached the Red Sea before the rear ranks left Egypt.

122. That the Red Sea should part, leaving a dry roadway for this vast body of people to pass through dry shod, the water standing walled up on either side while the passage was made, ready to rush back and drown the Egyptians when they had advanced to just the right point.

123. That if the Israelites had six hundred thousand men of war, they should not have made a manly resistance against their oppressors rather than tamely submit to degrading servitude so long, and suffer such cruelties and indignities.

124. That if such a great number of people should leave Egypt, and also the king and his vast army be destroyed, the Egyptians should make no record of this extraordinary event, especially when they were so particular to record the most common events of life, even to the products of their farms and the number of eggs laid by their hens.

125. That three millions of people, and probably more cattle and sheep, should be able to exist for forty years in an arid desert, devoid alike of vegetation and water.

126. That such a great number of people should be sustained half a century by manna daily sent from heaven. Is it to be understood that the cattle and sheep were also fed on manna?

127. That the clothing of the people did not wear out for forty years, and that it grew with the growth of the body.

128. That during the lifetime of one individual, Noah's oldest son Shem, who lived thirty years after the death of Abraham, the inhabitants of the earth should have increased so rapidly as to found large and populous empires in China, India, Persia, Burmah, Thibet, Chaldea, Assyria, Arabia, and Egypt, and that civilization, art, and literature should have made such rapid strides as was evinced in many of these countries in so short a period.

129. That the physiognomy of these different nationalities in that short space of time should become so varied, marked, and distinct as was portrayed on the monuments of Egypt, Chaldea, etc., the Ethiopian being as dark then as now; while since that time the colors, conformations, and peculiar characteristics of the various nationalities have changed very little.

130. That the two hundred and fifty births per day which must have taken place with two or three millions of people (to say nothing of the deaths), must have been something of an inconvenience to so large a body of people making a forced march to escape from their enemies and oppressors.

131. That the last night of the Israelites in Egypt must have been a very busy one, for the passover had to be kept. The women were ordered to borrow jewels and valuables of the Egyptians, the packing up had to be done, and that vast body of people, with all their flocks and herds, had to make their exit from the country.

132. That a pillar of cloud should for years go before the Israelites by day, and a pillar of fire by night. Such pillars have not been known since.

133. That God should have amused himself by taking the wheels from the chariots of the Egyptians, that they might drown with more certainty.

134. That the Egyptians should have had horses for their chariots after all their live stock had been killed by the plagues.

135. That when Moses stretched forth his hand the waters of the Red Sea should immediately begin to move and return to their place, and that the Egyptians, their horses and chariots, should be so completely overwhelmed that not one escaped.

136. That this army of Israelites and their live stock could live day after day where there was no water they could drink.

137. That the branches of a tree should make the bitter waters of Marah perfectly sweet and palatable

138. That the manna should spoil when kept over night during the week, but would keep perfectly sweet thirty-six hours over the seventh day if gathered on the sixth.

139. That those who gathered very little manna should have just the same amount as those who gathered a large quantity.

140. That the manna should fall regularly six mornings in the week, but none at all on the seventh day.

141. That though this manna would keep but a few hours without stinking and becoming full of worms, Aaron should have gathered an omer of it to keep for generations to exhibit to his descendants.

142. That when the people and cattle were famishing for the want of water, of which there was none, Moses should have been able to produce a munificent supply by striking the rock in Horeb.

143. That by Moses holding up his hands on the top of a hill the armies of Israel should thereby be enabled to triumph over the Amalekites.

144. That the Lord should wish to keep his people painfully tramping for forty years through the desert and the wilderness to reach the land of promise, when a few days of direct travel would have brought them there.

145. That Jethro, the priest of pagan Midian, should have been able to give Moses instructions how to judge and preside over the people, instead of getting the same from God, who was daily with him.

146. That God should come down in a thick cloud on Mount Sinai, amidst thunders, and that the voice of his trumpet should be so loud as to make all the people tremble.

147. That God should descend in fire upon the mount, and the mount take fire and smoke like a furnace in consequence, quaking fearfully.

148. That the Lord should send hornets before his people, or propose to do so, to drive out the Hivite, the Hittite, and the Canaanite.

149. That Moses and Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel should go up on to the mount and see the God of Israel and a paved work of sapphire stone under his feet.

150. That Moses and Joshua spent forty days and forty nights in Mount Sinai with the Lord, in the midst of devouring fire.



151. That the people, who only a month or two before had hurriedly left Egypt in the night, where they had been in the most abject slavery, should have with them in the desert gold silver, brass; blue, purple, scarlet, and fine linen; goats' hair, rams' skins dyed red, badgers' skins, shittim wood, oil, spices, sweet incense, onyx stones, etc., to present to the Lord, and that he should place great value on all those things.

152. That the Lord, the Creator of the universe, should give explicit directions about making an ark or box four and a half feet long, two and a half wide, and two and a half deep, for himself to dwell in.

153. That the Israelites out in the desert, just escaped from slavery, should have facilities for executing fine mechanical work of various kinds, as making cherubims of beaten gold, rings of gold, a mercy seat, a table, dishes, bowls, spoons, candlesticks, artificial flowers, lamps, tongs, snuff dishes, etc., mostly of gold, curtains of fine-twined linen, blue and purple, and much else of "cunning work."

154. That out there in the desert they should have lumber of which to make the ark, mercy seat, tables, altars, tabernacle—with twenty boards each on the north and south sides, and six boards each on the other two sides, with many other boards, bars, staves, etc. Is it to be supposed they carried a lumber yard with them?

155. That they should have gold with them in such quantity as to make so many vessels, utensils, candlesticks, lamps, caskets, rings, images, etc., etc., besides overlaying all the boards, staves, the ark, mercy seat, etc., with gold, and still have enough left over for Aaron to make a calf of gold.

156. That they should have brass with which to make pans, lavers, shovels, basins, flesh hooks, fire-pans, grates, rings, and many other holy vessels and apparatus.

157. That they should have silver enough to use in such profusion as described in Exodus xxvii.

158. That they should have fine-twined linen in such quantities and of brilliant colors with which to make many hundred feet of fine hangings for the tabernacle, courts etc.

159. That they should have with them a quantity of pure olive oil for lamps, extensive anointing of the tabernacle, Aaron and his sons, the people, and all other purposes.

160. That they should have emerald, agate, diamond, beryl, amethyst, sapphire, sardius, topaz, carbuncle, jasper, and other precious stones.

161. That the Architect of the universe should give minute instructions about the slaughter of animals for sacrifice, and about sprinkling the blood on the altar, on the horns, and round about, and also on the tip of Aaron's right ear and upon the tip of the right ear of his sons, on the thumbs of their right hands, on the great toes of their right feet, on their garments, etc., etc.

162. That the burning of fat, entrails, dung, hides, hoofs, and hair of animals should make a sweet and agreeable odor or savor in the nostrils of the Lord; and that he should insist upon the burning.

163. That the people should have a supply of sweet spices, stacte, onycha, galbanum, myrrh, cinnamon, cassia, calamus, frankincense, for perfuming oil for anointing and incense-burning.

164. That the Deity, who was able to make the sun and moon, all the planets of the solar system, and thousands, and perhaps millions, of other suns and worlds besides, in one day, should require forty days to write his commandments on tables of stone for Moses to carry with him from the mount down to the people.

165. That God has a finger suitable for writing, engraving, and etching on stone.

166. That Aaron, the high-priest and brother of Moses, who had been up on the mount and seen God, and who knew that his brother was up there holding communion with God, should so soon and so thoroughly forget his fealty as to make an idol of gold in the form of a calf for the people to worship, instead of the true God he had seen with his own eyes, and whose voice he had heard with his own ears.

167. That this high-priest of the only true God should be so anxious to make an idol for the people to worship that he should command the women to break up their golden ear-

rings and the earrings of their daughters for this diabolical purpose.

168. That the God of love and mercy, when he saw what his high-priest Aaron had done, should say to Moses "Let me alone, that my wrath may wax hot against them, and that I may consume them."

169. That Moses should by smooth words and persuasion be able to show God his folly and restore him to good humor when he had become so very angry.

170. That Moses, who had just been able to control God's anger, which was about to lead him to consume two or three millions of people, should himself, at the sight of a golden calf and the sound of rejoicing, fly into such a passion as in his fit to throw down and break the tables of stone which it had taken God forty days to engrave.

171. That Moses could burn the mass of gold, in the form of a calf, in the fire and reduce it to a fine powder, and that when he strewed this powder upon the water it should mix with or dissolve in it, so that the people were forced to drink it.

172. That in consequence of the error Aaron the high-priest had committed, the God of compassion and love should give such a command as this: "Put every man his sword by his side and go in and out from gate to gate throughout the camp, and slay every man his brother, and every man his companion, and every man his neighbor;" and that pursuant to this heavenly order the sons of Levi should have slain three thousand men.

173. That after God had become placated he should still send a plague upon the people, "because they made the calf which Aaron made."

174. That even after that God should distrust his own temper, and decide to send one of his angels to lead his people to the land flowing with milk and honey, "lest he should consume them on the way."

175. That Moses should be able to see God in the tabernacle and talk with him face to face.

176. That when Moses asked God to show him his "glory" he should exhibit to him his "back parts."

177. That when God and Moses engraved the second pair of tables on the mount, Moses should be able to work forty days without tasting food.

178. That when Moses went down from the mount his face should shine so as to frighten the people.

179. That Moses should have been able to gather the whole congregation of the people, from two to three millions in number, before the door of the tabernacle, when the tabernacle itself was but eighteen feet in width, and when, allowing two feet in width and eighteen inches in depth for each individual, the column of two million five hundred thousand would extend back the width of the tabernacle a distance of seventy-five miles.

180. That the court of the tabernacle must have been insufficient to accommodate the congregation, as it contained but 1,692 square yards after the size of the tabernacle itself was deducted, affording standing room for not more than five thousand people.

181. That Moses must have found it difficult to address the whole congregation of two or three millions of people so as to be well understood, when ten thousand are as many as any speaker of these times can make hear distinctly in the open air.

182. That as the camp of the Israelites must have been at least a mile and a half in diameter in order to be anywise comfortable, it must have been pretty onerous labor to carry the offal and refuse matter without the camp and bring in the wood, water, etc. It must also have been a long way for men, women, and children to go without the camp to attend to the ordinary calls of nature.

183. That the labor of the two priests, Aaron and Ithamar, killing all the animals for sacrifice and burning them, besides carrying out all the ashes, offal, and refuse of the animals, must have been very heavy upon them. If the camp was six miles in diameter—half the size of the city of London—the labor must have been proportionably greater.

184. That the other duties of Aaron and his two sons, making all the burnt-offerings on a single altar, nine feet square—a burnt-offering and a sin-offering at the birth of

every child, two hundred and fifty a day being but a moderate estimate for so prolific a people, thus making five hundred sacrifices per day for the births alone—must have been enough to utterly break them down.

185. That if half the women on the occasion of child-bearing offered pigeons instead of lambs, it would require one hundred thousand pigeons annually for that purpose alone. Where could the supply be obtained?

186. That as at the keeping of the second passover before Sinai, one hundred and fifty thousand lambs must have been killed—one for each family—and the three priests had to sprinkle the blood of them from their own hands, and the killing had to be done between two evenings, and the sprinkling of the blood had to be done in about two hours, and the whole in the court of the tabernacle, the sacrifice of the lambs averaging twelve hundred and fifty per minute, and the sprinkling of blood averaging four hundred per minute for each priest, must have kept them rather busy.

187. That as the priests had to eat a large portion of the burnt-offerings and all the sin-offerings—of pigeons alone two hundred and fifty per day, or more than eighty for each priest—they must have been kept comfortably full; besides, it is difficult to see when they could find time to do the eating.

188. That a God of fine taste and feeling could have taken pleasure in such a slaughter and sprinkling of blood.

189. That celestial fire or unnatural fire should fall upon the altar and from before the Lord, and consume the offerings and the fat.

190. That because Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, put the wrong kind of fire in their censers, there should come fire out from the Lord and consume them to death.

191. That God should require mothers upon the bringing forth of a child to make offerings for atonement, but nothing from the fathers.

192. That God should declare mothers unclean seven days upon giving birth to a male child and require her to continue in the blood of her purifying three and thirty days; whereas if it was a female child she must be unclean fourteen days

and continue in the blood of her purifying sixty-four days, thus showing his prejudice against females.

193. That the ceremony of sending a scapegoat forth into the wilderness or desert loaded with the sins of the people should really make any difference in the eyes of God relative to the offenses the people had committed.

194. That God should require, in case a man cohabited with a bond-maid, that the woman should be scourged, but prescribe no punishment at all for the man.

195. That God should find it necessary to make a law with a penalty of death to keep his beloved chosen people from cohabiting with their parents and beasts.

196. That the dust of the tabernacle floor added to holy water and given to a woman to drink should be a truthful test as to whether she had committed adultery, when her husband had become jealous of her and made complaint against her.

197. That there should have been no similar recourse for a wife towards a husband when she had grounds to be jealous of him.

198. That the fire of the Lord should break out in the camp, and consume those in the uttermost parts of it, because the people had made some complaint; and that Moses could stop it by prayer.

199. That the anger of the Lord should become greatly kindled because his children, after living on manna for two years, should tire a little of it, and long for fresh meat.

200. That a wind from the Lord should bring quails from the sea in such quantities that they covered the earth three feet and a half deep or a day's journey of thirty-three miles, in all directions about the camp—an area of some 3,400 square miles, the quails amounting to 6,225,200,000,000 bushels, and sufficient for four good-sized counties or twenty-four townships.

201. That in consequence of these quails the people should stand up constantly for two days and a night, or thirty-six hours.

202. That as the average amount for each person in the camp was 2,088,000 bushels, and as it would have required

each man, woman, and child to eat at each meal about 620 bushels, the Lord, while the flesh was yet unchewed in the people's mouths, should be so unkind as to let his wrath kindle against them and smite them with a very great plague, and thus not only destroy their pleasure but cause them great pain and distress besides.

203. That the Lord should become so angry at Aaron and Miriam as to cause him to smite the latter with leprosy because they had passed a few words about Moses marrying an Ethiopian woman.

204. That it was not a merciful thing to curse children to the third and four generation for the offenses committed by their great-grandfathers.

205. That the earth should open its mouth and swallow Korah, Dathan, Abiram, all their goods and effects, and those who appertained to them, because they had murmured against Moses and Aaron, and that after the swallowing the earth should again close its mouth and resume its normal position.

206. That a fire should come out from the Lord and consume 250 men because they offered incense.

207. That on the following day the Lord should have become more angry than usual and say unto Moses, "Get you up from among this congregation, that I may consume them as in a moment."

208. That thereupon God at once sent a fierce plague among his chosen people, and before Moses and Aaron could take means to stay his anger and the plague, 14,700 of his people were destroyed.

209. That Aaron, taking a stand between the dead and the living, with a censer, should soothe and pacify God and stop the plague.

210. That the ashes of a red heifer, including skin, flesh, bones, and dung, should possess any more efficacy than those of a heifer of any other color.

211. That when the people and cattle were perishing with thirst, and upon Moses smiting twice the rock Meribah, water should come out abundantly so that the entire people and beasts had all they wanted.

212. That because Moses and Aaron failed to sanctify God on this occasion before the people, God decided to not let them enter the promised land.

213. That it was rather cruel in God and Moses to order the old priest Aaron up on Mount Hor, strip off his garments, and leave him to die there alone and unattended.

214. That because God's people complained of their manna diet he should send fiery serpents among them and cause the death of many of them.

215. That as a remedy for these snake bites God should command Moses to make a brazen serpent and elevate it on a pole, and that every one who looked upon it should recover from their bites.

216. That after God had instructed Balaam to go with the princes of Moab, and Balaam rose in the morning and saddled his ass to go, God should become angry at him for going, and send an angel to stand before him as an adversary and prevent his progress.

217. That the ass should be able to see the angel with a sword in his hand, but Balaam not.

218. That when Balaam smote his ass three times to turn her in the way, she should speak human language and remonstrate with him for his cruelty.

219. That upon this the eyes of Balaam were also opened so they could see as much as his ass; after which he was told to go on where he had started for, and that notwithstanding Balaam's faithfulness to speak the word God gave him he should be slain soon afterward.

220. That God should command Moses to take the heads of the people and hang them up before the Lord against the sun, that the fierce anger of the Lord might be turned away.

221. That the order should thereupon be given to the judges of Israel to slay every one his men that were joined to Baal-peor.

222. That at that time God should send a plague and cut off 24,000 of his people.

223. That upon Phinehas the priest taking a javelin and running through the bodies Zimri, an Israelitish man, and



Cozbi, a Midianitish woman, who were committing adultery together, the plague was stayed.

224. That as the last deed of Moses' life God should command him to avenge the children of Israel upon the Midianites, a peaceable people, the nation of his wife, Zipporah; and that he should send twelve thousand armed men against them; and that these should slay the five kings of Midian and all the males, without losing a man, and take all the females captive, and as a booty 675,000 sheep, 72,000 beef cattle, and 61,000 asses; each Israelite being required to kill four men in battle, carry off eight captive women and children, and drive home sixty-seven head of cattle.

225. That when Moses learned that the women and children had not been slaughtered he became exceedingly angry and said: "Have ye saved all the women alive? Kill every male among the little ones, and kill every woman that hath known man by lying with him; but all the women children that have not known a man by lying with him, keep alive for yourselves."

226. That in pursuance of this bloody, inhuman order not less than fifty thousand women and children were killed in cold blood, and thirty-two thousand young virgins reserved to satisfy the lusts of the murderers of their fathers and mothers and little brothers; and all "as the Lord had commanded Moses."

227. That the Lord should take his share of all the property of which the Midianites had been so cruelly robbed, not even sparing thirty-two of the virgins, which was the Lord's share; and that to make everything all right and satisfactory with God the Israelites brought of the spoils of which they had robbed the Midianites gold chains, bracelets, rings, earrings, and tablets for an atonement, amounting to 167 shekels.

228. That such a command as this could proceed from the loving Father of all men: "If thy brother, or the son of thy mother, or thy son or thy daughter, or the wife of thy bosom, or thy friend, which is as thine own soul, entice thee secretly, saying, Let us go and serve other gods which thou hast not known, thou, nor thy fathers; namely, of the gods of the

people which are round about you, nigh unto thee, or far from thee, from one end of the earth even unto the other end of the earth; thou shalt not consent unto him, nor hearken unto him; neither shalt thine eye pity him, neither shalt thou spare him, neither shalt thou conceal him; but thou shalt surely kill him; thine hand shall be first upon him to put him to death, and afterward the hand of the people. And thou shalt stone him with stones."

229. That the following command does not seem particularly merciful or heavenly: "When thou comest nigh unto a city to fight against it then proclaim peace unto it. And if it shall be it make thee answer of peace and open unto thee, then shall it be that all the people that is found therein shall be tributaries unto thee, and they shall serve thee. And if it will make no peace with thee, but will make war against thee, then thou shalt besiege it. And when the Lord thy God hath delivered it into thy hands thou shalt smite every male thereof with the edge of the sword. But the women and the little ones, and the cattle and all that is in the city, even unto all the spoil thereof, shalt thou take unto thyself, and thou shalt eat the spoil of thine enemies which the Lord thy God hath given thee. Thus shalt thou do to all the cities that are very far off from thee, which are not of the cities of these nations. But of the cities of these people which the Lord thy God doth give thee for an inheritance thou shalt save nothing alive that breatheth."

230. That it is or is not becoming in a merciful, loving Deity to exclude from his congregation persons mutilated in helpless infancy, the innocent child born out of wedlock, those who had met with certain accidents; and to order parents to have their stubborn sons stoned to death when perhaps the parents were most in fault.

231. That when the Lord took Moses up on Mount Nebo, even to the top of Pisgah, and showed him the promised land all the way to Dan, and all the land of Judah, he would not permit Moses to enter it; and that after Moses lay down and died God buried him so carefully in the valley of the land of Moab that no man was ever able to find his grave.

232. That there is no account of thirty-eight years of the wanderings and sojournings of the children of Israel on their way from Egypt to Canaan, and that after a little more than two years from the time they left Egypt, and after they had removed from Sinai to Paran, no more account is given of their journeyings and adventures until they reached the region of Mount Hor, the land of Moab, near the borders of Canaan. It is singular that in respect to so large a share of the history of their travels in the desert and the wilderness, perfect silence should be maintained. What a great amount of interesting incidents are thus lost to the world!

233. That when Joshua became the leader of the people, and they drew nigh to the river Jordan, the river parted for them, the waters heaping up on the upper side like a dam, and allowing all the Israelites to pass over on dry ground in the midst of the river, as the Red Sea had parted for them forty years before.

234. That the manna which had fallen regularly six days in the week for forty years should cease as soon as they crossed the Jordan and obtained the old corn of the country.

235. That when the army of Israel for seven successive days had marched around the city of Jericho, and when on the last day the people raised a shout, and the priests blew their trumpets, the walls of the city fell without any further effort, when God's people utterly destroyed men, women, and children by the edge of the sword, save Rahab the harlot and her family.

236. That because at the sack of Jericho Achan coveted for his own use a Babylonish garment, two hundred shekels of silver, and a wedge of gold, and hid them in the earth, the Lord should be so much displeased as to make the warriors of Israel cowardly when they went to attack the city of Ai, and cause them to turn their backs and flee before the people of the city.

337. That as soon as these valuables were placed in the possession of the Lord, and Achan stoned to death, the Lord became quite amicable again.

238. That the Gibeonites, by a game of deception and lying tales, were able to deceive Joshua, who had the Lord to tell him and advise him in all things.

239. That when the Israelites were assisting the Gibeonites to fight against the five kings, the Lord cast down great stones from heaven and killed vast numbers of the warriors.

240. That on that occasion, because the day was not long enough to make the slaughter of the enemy as great as desired, Joshua spoke to the sun and the moon thus, "Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon; and thou, moon, in the valley of Ajalon," when they immediately obeyed him, and moved not for nearly the length of a day, and the chosen people of God avenged themselves to their hearts' content against those who were fighting in defense of their homes and their families.

241. That inasmuch as the sun and moon were thus delayed the length of a whole day, making that day as long as two days, the inhabitants of other nations and in other countries knew nothing about it nor spoke of the remarkable phenomenon.

242. That the valor of the Israelites under the leadership of Joshua was so great as at all times to be triumphant and to conquer the city of Jericho, the city of Ai, the kings of Jerusalem, Hebron, Jarmuth, Lachish, and Eglon, the Amorites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Jebusites, the Hivites, the people of Makhedah, Libnah, Lachish, Gezer, Debir, Kadesh-barnea, Gaza, Hazor, Madon, Shimron, Achshaph, Hormah, Arad, Adullam, Tappuah, Hopher, Aphek, Lasharon, Taanach, Megiddo, Jokneam, Carmel, Dor, Gilgal, Tirzah, etc., putting all to death by the edge of the sword, not leaving alive a soul that breathed, and frequently burning the cities. But when it is remembered that the whole territory thus conquered was less than six thousand square miles, or about two-thirds the size of the state of Vermont, and that the fighting men of Israel numbered six hundred thousand, it will be seen how small the conquered nations must have been, and that the victories of the Israelites were by no means very extraordinary.

243. That after the death of Joshua, Judah and Simeon kept up the warfare against the Canaanites, the Perizzites, and other nations, and that the Lord was with them and "drove out

the inhabitants of the mountain, but could not drive out the inhabitants of the valley because they had chariots of iron."

244. That by instructions from God, Gideon should select his army of those who lapped water like a dog, thus reducing thirty-two thousand to three hundred, and with the number thus selected he was able to completely overthrow the Midianites—the last man of whom, by the bye, was killed in the time of Moses.

245. That the victory should be accomplished by blowing trumpets and breaking pitchers.

246. That the young Samson was able to kill a roaring lion with his naked hands.

247. That Samson should be fleet enough to catch three hundred foxes and tie firebrands to their tails, and thus set fire to the cornfields of the Philistines.

248. That he was able to carry away the gates of the city of Gaza, posts and all.

249. That with the jawbone of an ass he slew one thousand Philistines.

250. That God should cleave a hollow place in the jawbone from which water gushed forth and quenched Samson's thirst.

251. That when the fair but false Delilah cut off his hair all his remarkable strength left him, but that when his hair grew again his great strength returned with it, though they had taken out his eyes.

252. That when brought to the temple of the Philistines he could seize two pillars at one time and throw down the temple and kill thousands of the Philistines.

253. That evil men of Benjamin should lewdly and vilely kill the concubine of the Levite, in consequence of which a bloody war arose between the Benjamites and the other tribes by which in three days forty thousand Israelites and twenty-five thousand Benjamites were killed.

254. That the presence of the ark of the Israelites should cause the idol Dagon to fall over on its face, and that on the following night the same result was repeated with the addition that the idol's head and hands were taken off.

255. That in consequence of the presence of the ark the residents of Ashdod, Gath, and Ekron were sorely smitten with emerods and a deadly destruction.

256. That when to send the mischievous ark back to the Israelites it was put into a new cart and a pair of cows were yoked to it, they should leave their young calves and without a driver take the ark to the Jews, the people it belonged to.

257. That when the ark thus came to Beth-shemish, and the men of Israel who were working in a harvest field gathered round the ark and one or two of them raised the lid of it, God smote unto death 50,070 men on the spot.

258. That such a great number of men should be employed in a harvest field, or even a score of them.

259. That the Lord should cause his prophet Samuel to command Saul to go and smite the Amalekites and utterly destroy them, slaying man, woman, infant, and suckling, oxen, sheep, camels, and asses, which command Saul fulfilled; but because he saved King Agag and some of the best of the sheep, oxen, and fatlings the Lord should become very angry and decide to depose Saul from the throne.

260. That the holy man Samuel should take King Agag of the Amalekites and hew him to pieces before the Lord.

261. That after Samuel had privately anointed David king of Israel the spirit of the Lord should depart from Saul and an evil spirit of the Lord take its place.

262. That the stripling David should be able to go out before the army of the Philistines and slay their giant champion Goliath with a sling.

263. That at the request of Saul the Witch of Endor raised Samuel from the dead.

264. That while David was conveying the ark from Kirjath-jearim to his own city, because Uzzah, solicitous about the safety of the ark, raised his hand to steady it lest it fall from the cart, God should smite him dead on the spot.

265. That a holy man like David, who was "the man after God's own heart," should be so vile as to commit adultery with Bathsheba, wife of Uriah, and then basely cause the cuckold husband to be put to death by purposely placing him in the front of the battle.

266. That during the forty years of David's reign, his little kingdom, less than forty miles by one hundred and forty, should advance from a state of poverty and disorganization, a little better than barbarism and brigandage, to an army of a million and a half of fighting men, and wealth to the amount of 100,000 talents of gold and 1,000,000,000 talents of silver, equaling 4,347 tons, and in value \$4,297,700,000, which he said he had accumulated, but which is considerably more than he turned over to his successor.

267. That God should have moved David to number the people, and then become so angry in consequence as to cause the death of seventy thousand men. It would seem that God was so incensed against the people that he moved David to the act that he might have an excuse for the display of his vengeance.

268. That in one place the statement should be made that it was the Lord that moved David to number the people, and in another that it was Satan, by which we are to conclude that both are one or that one of the statement in God's word is false.

269. That there should be a discrepancy of 270,000 men of war in the two statements; it being hard to think both can be correct.

270. That as holy and divine a man as David is represented to be—one always after God's own heart—should be so blood-thirsty and cruel, and should show such pleasure in torturing prisoners of war as to put them under saws of iron, axes of iron, and roasting them to death in brick-kilns; and that even on his death-bed he should still show his vindictive and murderous nature by enjoining his son and successor, Solomon, to put to death his faithful old general Joab, whom he was too cowardly to make an attack upon.

271. That Solomon, who had a special gift of wisdom from God, and who was therefore called the wisest man that ever lived, should have no more good common sense than to have one thousand women in his seraglio, seven hundred of whom were called wives, and three hundred concubines; also that he should so far forget the God who had given him such

wonderful wisdom as to build altars and set up idols in high places to other gods, the enemies of his own God.

272. That such a man should be the one whom God selected to build a great and holy house to his own name and for himself to dwell in.

273. That the kingdom of Israel had not timber enough in its own dominion to build a house 110 feet long, 36 wide, and 55 high (and a porch 18 by 36 feet), and that another kingdom had to be called upon to furnish it.

274. That the great nation of the Jews had not mechanics and artisans requisite to build such a house, and that their pagan neighbors had to be hired to come and erect it.

275. That 153,000 mechanics and laborers, and 550 Jewish overseers, should be seven years in building a house of the dimensions given, when fifty mechanics of any of our modern cities could erect such a house in six months.

276. That upon the completion of the temple and the removing into it the wonderful ark, the Lord should be pleased with the sacrifice of so much animal life to him—"sheep and oxen that could not be numbered for multitude"—and upon the dedication of the temple 22,000 oxen and 120,000 sheep. What a taste for blood he must have!

277. That such a remarkably wise, rich, and powerful king as was Solomon, whose income in gold, per year, was 666 talents, of the value of \$18,000,000, and who had built a magnificent temple, upon which he had used gold and silver to the value of \$245,000,000, besides the large amount of brass, iron, and precious stones; who boasted 1000 wives and concubines, and who had more wisdom than any other man who ever lived—as the Bible says, he "exceeded all the other kings of the earth for riches and wisdom"—that such a great king should be wholly unknown to the Egyptians, the Chaldeans, the Grecians, the Romans, and all nations who wrote history, that Berosus, Xenophon, Herodotus, Diodorus, Plato etc., should know nothing of him or his reign of forty years, nor speak a word of him, though Herodotus, the historian and traveler, was twice through Syria about the time of his career.



278. That so soon after the magnificent reign of the great Solomon, and upon his son Rehoboam taking the crown, the kingdom should divide and ten tribes revolt, and take Jeroboam for their king, never to be united again.

279. That upon Jeroboam's putting forth his hand it immediately became withered, so he could not pull it in again, and that it was restored by the prayer of a prophet.

280. That by the prophecy of Elijah there was no rain or dew for three years.

281. That while Elijah was hidden by the brook Cherith, the ravens daily brought food to him, bread and flesh, both morning and evening.

282. That while he boarded with a widow woman her handful of meal in a barrel and her cruse of oil were not lessened, though used from daily.

283. That Elijah restored the widow's son to life after he had died.

284. That in the grand praying contest with four hundred and fifty of the priests of Baal, for fire from heaven to light the altar, the priests of Baal should utterly fail, though they cried and howled terribly, and cut themselves with knives, while at the first effort Elijah brought the fire, which not only burnt the bullocks, but the wood, the stones, and twelve barrels of water.

285. That upon Elijah's casting himself upon the ground with his head between his knees, and praying, he brought on a profuse rain—the first in three years.

286. That Elijah, single-handed, was able to slay these 450 priests of Baal.

287. That while he was fleeing to escape the anger of Jezebel, cake and water were brought to him by an angel.

288. That after that meal he was able to walk forty days and forty nights without food or sleep. As he could easily walk out of the kingdom in less than a day, he must have been able to get a long distance from the power of Jezebel in forty days and nights if he was a good walker.

289. That Elisha, the successor of Elijah, should use twelve yoke of oxen to plow with, and that he should immediately

leave them in the field when Elijah called upon him to follow him.

290. That Elijah should be willing that Elisha should return and kiss his mother good-bye.

291. That by the advice of the prophets King Ahab was able to overthrow Ben-hadad of Syria, and thirty-two other kings, with great slaughter, and upon their return afterward 100,000 of the Syrians were slain in one day, and 27,000 more of those who fled to the city Aphek, by a wall which fell upon them.

292. That when King Ahaziah sent a captain and fifty men to bring Elijah to him, the prophet was able to call down fire from heaven and consume them all.

293. That he was able to repeat this feat on another captain and fifty men.

294. That Elijah was taken up bodily to heaven in a chariot and horses of fire after parting the river Jordan with his mantle.

295. That Elisha could with Elijah's mantle part the waters of the river Jordan and walk over dry-shod.

296. That because some children made sport of Elisha's bald head the Lord should send two she-bears out of a wood and tear forty-two of the children.

297. That Elisha should be able by pouring oil from one vessel into another to increase it to the extent of many gallons, thus helping a widow woman to pay a debt. What a useful man he would be in an oil manufactory!

298. That a large, fine woman, who had an aged husband, and who wished a child, and who caused a chamber to be built for Elisha adjoining her house, should by his aid and prophecy get a son, notwithstanding the great age of her husband.

299. That when this son, somewhat grown, had died, Elisha should be able to restore him to life.

300. That Elisha in time of famine was able to neutralize the effects of poisonous herbs in making pottage.

301. That he could feed one hundred men without decreasing his supply.

302. That Elisha was able to cure Naaman of leprosy.

303. That because his servant Gehazi was dishonest with him he could cause the leprosy of Naaman to fall upon him so that instantly he became "a leper as white as snow."

304. That Elisha could make an axe of iron rise from the bottom of the river Jordan and float upon the surface of the water.

305. That by prayer Elisha caused the eyes of a young man to be opened so that he could see a mountain full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha.

306. That Elisha was able to smite a whole army of Syrians with blindness, and then restore their sight again at pleasure.

307. That the Lord by a species of deception caused the Syrian army to hastily leave their camp in the night, and their rich treasures of gold, silver, and raiment, and that in their flight they cast away garments, vessels, etc.

308. That Elisha could foretell that Ben-hadad, king of Syria, would die and Hazael would become king.

309. That the bones of Elisha, after he had been a long time buried, should have the remarkable power to restore dead men to life, whose body merely touched them.

310. That while the remarkable deeds performed by Elijah and Elisha are so fully narrated in Kings, nothing is said about them in Chronicles, though the reigns of the kings who ruled in their time are fully given, Elijah's name being mentioned once, but Elisha's not at all; and nothing about the three years without rain or dew, nothing about Elijah slaying 450 prophets of Baal, nothing about his calling down fire from heaven, burning up a bullock, stones, and water, as well as a hundred and two men; nothing about his wonderful ascension to heaven in a chariot of fire, and nothing about Elisha and his numerous great feats.

311. That the Lord should allow Shalmaneser, king of Assyria, to carry off ten of the twelve tribes of Israel into captivity, never to return, and to become utterly lost, so that nothing is known as to what became of them.

312. That Abijah, king of Judah, with 400,000 men, should in one day slay 500,000 men of the army of 800,000 under Jeroboam, king of Israel, and that God should thus take

sides against his own people, and that such a small country could turn out such armies and be able to sustain such a loss.

313. That on another occasion the Lord should be on the other side, when the army of Israel under Pekah slew of the army of Judah in one day 120,000 valiant men. Thus it was men of God against men of God.

314. That by the prayer of Isaiah the motion of the sun should be reversed, so that its shadow on the dial of Abaz was moved backward ten degrees, and that if such a thing ever occurred no other people in the world knew aught of it.

315. That by prayer also the life of Hezekiah was prolonged fifteen years.

316. That when the Assyrians came against Israel, the angel of the Lord should in one night smite them so effectually that in the morning 185,000 of them found "they were all dead corpses."

317. That in the reign of Josiah, Hilkihah the priest found in the temple a book of the Law, unknown to David and Solomon, and which had not been seen for eight hundred years, and probably never before, and that the hearing of the book should make the king rend his clothes.

318. That God should allow the pagan king, Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon, to take captive King Jehoiakim of Judah and 10,000 of God's people, and all the treasures of the house of the Lord, and all the vessels of gold Solomon had made; and afterwards take captive King Zedekiah, and slay his sons, put his eyes out, carry him captive to Babylon to die in prison, also to burn the house of the Lord in Jerusalem, destroy the sacred writings, carry away the fire-pans, bowls, and the vessels of gold, break up the pillars of brass, the brazen sea, and carry the people captive to Babylon.

319. That Daniel should be able to repeat a remarkable dream to King Nebuchadnezzar (after the latter had forgotten it entirely); also the interpretation of the same.

320. That Nebuchadnezzar should make a golden image one hundred and ten feet high and eleven feet broad.

321. That because Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego would not bow down to this image the king caused them to be thrown into a fiery furnace, made seven times hotter than

usual, but that they were not burnt at all, and not even a thread of their garments touched or a hair on their heads scorched, though the men who threw them into the furnace were destroyed by the great heat.

322. That Daniel was able to interpret another very remarkable dream of Nebuchadnezzar, by which the king's great discomfiture was foretold.

323. That the King Nebuchadnezzar should be driven into the field with the beasts, and to eat grass like oxen, his hairs becoming like eagles' feathers and his nails like birds' claws for a year.

324. That at the time of Belshazzar's feast a hand without any visible arm or body to guide it came forth, and in the sight of the king wrote mysterious words upon the wall of the banquet house, which words Daniel was able to interpret.

325. That when Daniel for continuing to pray to his God was cast into a den of lions they touched him not because an angel had closed their mouths.

326. That in the book of Esther the name of God is not once mentioned nor alluded to, but it contains an extravagant account of a Jewish woman who prostituted herself to King Ahasuerus of Persia, in the place of Vashti, his queen, because the latter would not come forth when he and his guests were in a debauch. Also of the service, in consequence of her favor with the king, which she was able to do to the people of her nation by having their great enemy Haman hung on the gallows he had erected for Mordecai, Esther's uncle, while the latter was advanced to the highest position in the kingdom next to the king. It is a fiction.

327. That Satan, the enemy of God, should meet with God's sons when they came to present themselves before the Lord, and that God and Satan entered into friendly conversation and made a bargain about bringing sore afflictions upon the righteous man Job, whom God thought was more perfect and upright than any man living, and that by the consent of God Job's seven sons and three daughters were destroyed, also his seven thousand sheep, three thousand camels, and five hundred yoke of oxen, five hundred she asses, and a great household, and all to test the old man's patience.

328. That God should again hold conversation with Satan and give him permission to afflict poor Job with the most grievous boils, "from the sole of his foot unto his crown," and with other bodily ills, and that day after day the excellent man was thus most cruelly afflicted, insomuch that he was fain to sit down in the ashes and grieve, while his pretended friends tormented him with their ceaseless condemnation of him.

329. That in no other part of the Bible are those sons of God alluded to, neither as to where they came from or whither they went; and that none of the persons or places named in the book of Job have the slightest connection with any other places or persons named in the Bible.

330. That God at length was able to see the great wrong Satan and himself had done to the man Job, and to make some amends he gave him ten more children—how he furnished them, however, or where they came from not being stated—besides blessing the latter end of Job more than his beginning, giving him in return fourteen thousand sheep, six thousand camels, one thousand yoke of oxen, and one thousand she asses.

331. That the amorous composition about the bodily charms of a certain young woman, said to be written by Solomon, called his Song, should be construed as having any reference to Christ and the church, when in the song itself not the slightest reference is made to either.

332. That Ezekiel's formula for making bread, in chapter iv, should be considered as the word of God.

333. That the twenty-third and other chapters of Ezekiel should be thought nice reading for Sunday-schools and all young readers.

334. That the Lord should command his prophet Hosea to take a wife of whoredoms.

335. That because Jonah evaded the command of God and did not go to Nineveh to prophecy, the vessel in which he took passage from Joppa should encounter a fearful tempest and he be determined by lot to be the cause of it, though he himself all the time was unconsciously fast asleep in the side of the ship.

336. That when in consequence of his causing the tempest he was at his own suggestion thrown overboard, a fish which God had prepared should swallow him whole and he live under water in the fish's belly for three days and nights, when he was thrown up on dry land as safe and sound as ever.

337. That after Jonah was thus snatched from the greatest perils, and had concluded to go to the great city of Nineveh where God had sent him, Jonah should become angry because the people repented and God concluded to spare them.

338. That Jonah being a foreigner, and of course not speaking the language of the Ninevites, should be able to make himself understood by them and make them repent in sackcloth, in which both man and beast were clad.

339. That Jonah in the few days he prophesied in the city should be able to be heard by all the people in a large city three days' journey across or around it.

340. That the people of the city who had never heard of Jonah's God before, nor his language, should become so alarmed that the king not only dressed in sackcloth himself, but issued an order that all men and beasts should be dressed in the same. What a quantity of sackcloth must have been required!

341. That sackcloth can have the effect of assuaging God's anger and making him of an amiable disposition.

342. That men and beasts could live if they abstained from food and drink as the king of Nineveh commanded.

343. That Jonah retired in disgust to the east side of the city to watch and see what God would do, when the latter caused a gourd to grow up in a single night to shade the prophet, but the following morning prepared a worm to kill the gourd, leaving Jonah in a very disconsolate state of mind, wishing even that he were dead.

344. That the heathen king Cyrus of the Persians should be chosen of the Lord to have the temple at Jerusalem rebuilt, and that for this purpose he sent Ezra, Nehemiah, and forty-two thousand Jews back to their own country after being fifty years in Babylon instead of seventy as Jeremiah had prophesied.

## APOCRYPHIA.

[The Apocryphal books are printed in all the larger Bibles, and are believed by half the Christian church to be as much the word of God as the other books, which opinion is doubtless correct.]

345. That Ezdras, after returning to Jerusalem and having numerous visions, dreams, conversations with angels, etc., should receive a commission from the Lord to take five scribes and rewrite or reproduce the sacred writings that had been lost in consequence of the captivity, or to write others to take their place.

346. That to prepare him for the work he was required to drink a draught which seemed like water, but of the color of fire, and as soon as it was swallowed his heart uttered understanding; wisdom grew in his breast, and his spirit strengthened his memory, from that time his mouth being opened and shut no more.

347. That he took his five scribes into the field, where they wrote for forty days, and ate bread for forty nights, and produced two hundred and four books—seventy to be kept secret for the wise, and one hundred and thirty-four to be published openly for other people.

348. That nations of dragons shall come out of Arabia with chariots, and that they shall gain the ascendancy; and that many stars shall fall to the earth, with flying swords, fire, and hail, with plagues, widowhood, poverty, famine, pestilence, destruction, death, etc., etc.

349. That while Tobit slept by the wall of the court-yard, after attending a funeral, his eyes being opened, the sparrows muted warm dung in his eyes and made him blind. (He would have done well to close his eyes when he slept as well as his mouth.)

350. That when Tobias, son of Tobit, was journeying to Ecbatane, a fish leaped out of the river and would have devoured Tobias had not the angel Raphael, who was with him, said, "Take the fish," when Tobias did so; and the angel said, "Open the fish and take the heart, the liver, and the gall, and put them up safely," when the young man obeyed, and they roasted the fish and ate it.



351. That when Tobias reached his uncle Raguel's, according to the advice of the angel he married his cousin Sara, though she had been given in marriage to seven different men, each of whom died on the marriage night, and when they retired with her to the nuptial couch; but Tobias, by the advise of the angel, burnt perfumes with the heart and liver of the fish, by which the devil was driven away, which had caused the death of the seven other men, so that he fled to the uttermost parts of Egypt, leaving Tobias and Sara to pass the night safely and pleasantly together.

352. That upon the return of Tobias to his father Tobit, by instructions from the angel, he rubbed the fish's gall on his father's eyes, by which his blindness was at once removed. After which the great angel Raphael returned to the throne of God, he being one of the seven principal holy angels of the Lord.

353. That when the great army of Nabuchodonosor, of 182,000 men, led by his great general Holofernes, had made a triumphal march from Assyria toward the west, subduing all the nations he met, when they arrived at the borders of Judea and camped near Bethulia, and were about to cause the surrender of Israel, the comely widow Judith, with her handmaid, should be able to enter the camp of Holofernes and so completely deceive him that when he had drunken freely she cut off his head and carried it away with her, whereby the Assyrians became thoroughly demoralized, and fled in despair in every direction, the Israelites pursuing them, slaughtering them badly, and securing much valuable booty.

## THE NEW TESTAMENT.

354. That Matthew, in giving the genealogy of Jesus to show that he descended from David, should give the genealogy of Joseph whom he immediately declares was not the father of Jesus.

355. That when Matthew asserts Mary was found to be with child by the Holy Ghost, he did not say who found it, or how.

356. That Joseph by a dream should become perfectly satisfied that the child was begotten by the Holy Ghost.

357. That it is mysterious, as Matthew did not write his narrative, at the shortest claimed time, till sixty years after Jesus was born, how he could narrate a dream Joseph might have had before Jesus was born.

358. That the begetting of a child by a ghost of any kind is an extremely doubtful matter and requires something more tangible than a sixty-year-old dream, told by an unreliable writer, to substantiate it.

359. That the magi, or wise men of the East—pagan worshipers—should know anything about the birth of Jesus, or that they should trouble themselves to come hundreds of miles to see a new-born infant.

360. That a star should so far deviate from the ordinary service of stars as to lead the wise men to the stable or cave where Jesus was said to be born.

361. That King Herod should become so alarmed at hearing that a child had been born that night which might possibly supplant him some day that he slew all the children in Bethlehem two years old and under.

362. That Matthew should have known this when neither of the other evangelists says a word about it, nor Josephus who wrote fully of Herod, nor any other writer or historian.

363. That the birth of the infant should make the least commotion in Jerusalem or elsewhere.

364. That the chief priests and scribes could tell Herod anything about where the child was to be born. According to Luke, Joseph and Mary were residents of the city of Nazareth, and stopping a few days in Bethlehem would not constitute them Bethlehemites, so that the allusion which Matthew makes to a prince coming out of Bethlehem has no just application to Jesus.

365. That Joseph in consequence of another dream took the mother and child and fled into Egypt, and remained there till he had another dream to return, when neither of the other gospel writers says a word about it, and Luke explicitly says they were in Nazareth of Galilee.

366. That Matthew should write this statement to make it appear that thereby a prophecy was fulfilled, when no prophecy was made, and the allusion was wholly to the children of Israel being called out of Egypt.

367. That when Jesus was baptized by John the Baptist a dove from heaven lighted upon the head of Jesus, and a voice from heaven was heard speaking audibly.

368. That Jesus should be led by the good spirit into the wilderness, to remain forty days and forty nights without food, for the purpose of being tempted by the devil.

369. That the devil should have the power to take him up into the holy city and place him on a pinnacle of the temple, and afterward convey him to the top of a mountain so high that from the top of it he could see all the kingdoms of the world. Query: How high does a mountain have to be to enable a person from it to see on the opposite side of the globe? Query No. 2: Did the person who wrote this story know anything about the rotundity of the earth? Query No. 3: How did Matthew obtain his information as to what conversation passed between Jesus and the devil?

370. That Matthew should say that Peter and Andrew were the first two disciples chosen, whereas John says it was Philip and Nathanael.

371. That Matthew should place in Christ's Sermon on the Mount the greater part of his moral instructions and aphorisms, while the other evangelists scatter them through his ministration, not alluding to any Sermon on the Mount, and that Matthew should be able to report the sermon so fully when he was not present and had not been called as a disciple.

372. That Jesus could restore to health the servant of the centurion without seeing him or being near him.

373. That Jesus could calm a tempest at sea by a word.

374. That Matthew should say there were two wild or insane men among the tombs from whom Jesus cast out numerous devils, while Mark and Luke say but one, and John is entirely silent. Query: Could both statements be correct?

375. That it could be possible for two thousand devils to get into one man, or even two men, or enough to fill two thousand swine (the number stated by Mark). The world

will ever be left in doubt whether there were two thousand devils in one man, or whether devils are capable of dividing, each of them occupying from ten to fifty swine, as the case may require.

376. That people eighteen hundred and fifty years ago should think every lunatic, epileptic, cataleptic, and insane person had one or more devils in possession of him. People in these days have learned better, and there is cause of congratulation that devils, like gods, are not nearly as numerous as they used to be.

377. That insane people, or those who had a devil or two in them, were the ones to recognize the divinity of Jesus and testify to it. It is uncertain whether it is because their judgment and perception is better than other peoples', or that it was thought by the writer of legends that that kind of testimony would be most effective.

378. That Jesus raised from the dead the daughter of the ruler by simply taking her by the hand.

379. That another woman by touching his garment was cured of a troublesome disease.

380. That he cured two men of blindness at the same time by simply touching them.

381. That a dumb man with a devil, or a man with a dumb devil, was cured and made to talk.

382. That on another occasion he cast out of a man a blind and dumb devil so that the man both spake and saw.

383. That Matthew should narrate about King Herod having John the Baptist beheaded after Jesus had some time been preaching and healing, when in his second chapter he says King Herod died while Jesus was a young infant. Two King Herods were never heard of.

384. That five thousand people were fed to the full with five loaves and two small fishes, with ten times as much food left over as there was at the beginning.

385. That Matthew and Mark should tell this story about the miraculous feeding of the multitude twice over. Did they think repetition would make it seem more credible?

386. That Jesus walked from the shore to the middle of the sea on the boisterous waves, and that Peter did the same until

he became afraid of the waves, and would have perished had not Jesus rescued him.

387. That large numbers of sick people, with all manner of diseases, were cured by touching the hem of Jesus' garment.

388. That he cast another devil out of the daughter of a Canaanitish woman without being near her or the devil.

389. That Matthew should be able to narrate the particulars of the transfiguration on the mount, when Moses and Elias appeared, when he was not present, while John, who he says was present, has not a word to say about it.

390. That Jesus easily cast a devil out of a young man who fell often into the fire and into the water, and on whom his disciples failed, because they had not faith equal to a grain of mustard seed.

391. That Peter by instruction from Jesus went to the sea, cast a hook, and from the mouth of the first fish caught took a piece of money with which to pay tribute.

392. That Jesus should authorize his disciples to go and take an ass and colt without permission from the owner.

393. That Matthew should say it was an ass and its colt, and that Jesus rode both of them at the same time, thus making him perform a two-ass act, when the other evangelists say it was only a colt, and said he rode one beast only. Matthew's anxiety to show that Jesus thus fulfilled an obscure prophecy, which in fact was no prophecy at all, or at least had no reference to Jesus, led him to make this misstatement.

394. That Matthew on some twelve different occasions should say in his narrative, "This was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet," when in every instance he was mistaken, no prophecy having been made that had the slightest reference to Jesus or his times. Thus Matthew's zeal in showing up prophecy fulfilments led him to make several misstatements.

395. That the first thing Jesus did after entering Jerusalem was to go to the temple and rudely attack the money changers and those who sold doves for sacrifices, upsetting their tables, and scourging and driving them from the temple.

396. That being hungry, Jesus should approach a fig-tree in the time of year when not in bearing, and because he found no figs upon it get angry and curse it so it died.

397. That Jesus, in foretelling the signs and wonders that should take place at his second coming, and at the end of the world, among which the sun should be darkened, the moon cease to give light, and the stars fall from heaven, said in connection, "Verily I say unto you, this generation shall not pass till all these things shall be fulfilled," since that generation all passed away and many hundreds of others since, and yet those things have not taken place at all, and in all probability will not in thousands of generations to come.

398. That Matthew should be able to write particularly about the bargain between Judas and the chief priests as to the price for betraying his master, about what he and they said when he returned the money to them, about the style of Jesus' prayer when he was by himself in Gethsemane, about the examination before Caiphaz and the chief priests, also before Pilate, what Pilate's wife had dreamed, when he was not present in either case, nor any of the other disciples. Is it not a fair conclusion that the writer of Matthew frequently drew upon his imagination for his facts?

399. That as Jesus explicitly foretold to his disciples that he would be arrested, tried, convicted, executed, and resurrected in three days, they should have had so little realization of what was to take place, for they discussed among themselves as to what position they should hold in his temporal kingdom; and when he was arrested they forsook him and fled; and it seems but one went to the place where he was examined, and he positively denied knowing anything about Jesus; few or none attended the crucifixion; they attended not to his burial, and had it not been for Joseph of Arimathea perhaps he would not have been buried at all. They showed not the first indication that they expected him to rise from the dead, and would not believe it when told that he had risen, and treated the statement as idle tales. The women even, who showed more affection and faithfulness to him than did the men, watched him from a distance, and brought spices, etc., to embalm him, which they would not have done had

they any expectation that he would rise from the dead. The conclusion to be arrived at is that either Jesus did not make the prediction alluded to, or that his disciples did not believe a word he said about it.

400. That there should be so many discrepancies between Matthew and the others about the crucifixion, when it took place, what the inscription was placed over his head, what was given Jesus to drink, what hour it took place, the number of angels in the sepulcher, their position, etc., etc. Matthew and Mark say the crucifixion took place at Golgotha; Luke says Calvary. Matthew says the inscription was, "This is Jesus the King of the Jews;" Mark, "The King of the Jews;" Luke, "This is the King of the Jews;" John, "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews." Matthew says they gave Jesus to drink vinegar mingled with gall; Mark, wine mingled with myrrh; Luke, vinegar straight; John, vinegar and hyssop. These little items may not be of much consequence, but in matters of great moment it is well to be accurate.

401. That at the time of the crucifixion the sun should be darkened for three hours.

402. That the veil of the temple should be rent in twain, earthquakes take place, the graves open, and the dead saints be reanimated, and they walk forth into the city. It is noticeable, however, that Matthew is the only one that deemed it worth while to notice so trivial a matter as the dead coming out of their graves and being alive again. Was not Matthew repeating somebody's dream?

403. That Matthew, who was usually so minute and particular in his descriptions, so fond of mentioning the devils that were cast out, etc., deemed the ascension of Jesus into heaven as too trivial a matter to notice. Mark simply says, "He was received up into heaven," giving no intimation of how or when. Luke says he led his disciples out as far as Bethany, "and he was parted from them and carried up into heaven." John, like Matthew, thinks the little affair unworthy of mention. If such an ascension, in broad daylight, really did take place would not Matthew and John have been likely to devote three or four lines to noticing it?

404. That Matthew should know what the chief priests said to the soldiers when they gave them money to say the disciples of Jesus had stolen his body away. The trouble with Matthew is he is too able and willing to tell all about that which he had no means of knowing, and to say nothing of things he ought to have known and described.

405 That according to Mark the press was so great to bring the sick to Jesus, and the crowd so dense, that the roof of a house had to be taken off to let the sick down where he was.

406. That Mark should have known nothing of the Sermon on the Mount, but instead of mentioning it he narrates about the wild man among the tombs (according to Matthew, two men) who contained devils enough to fill two thousand swine. Matthew places this transaction after the Sermon on the Mount. It would, perhaps, be gratifying to some to know whether two thousand devils is the maximum number one man can contain. It is, perhaps, not strange that the people wished Jesus to depart from those coasts when they saw the destruction of so many hogs.

407. That both Matthew and Mark in narrating the miraculous feeding of five thousand persons in a desert place should say the people were told to sit down on the green grass. Is it usual for grass to grow in deserts? John says there was much grass in the place.

408. That Mark, in narrating how Jesus walked on the waves to the midst of the sea, should say nothing of Peter's attempt to walk on the water and sinking into it, especially as he is claimed to be a companion and special friend of Peter, and to have written from his dictation.

409. That Mark should say that James and John asked Jesus for a seat by him in his kingdom, one on his right hand and the other on his left, while Matthew says it was their mother who made the request.

410. That Mary Magdalene should have seven devils in her to be cast out, the greatest number mentioned in any person save the wild man among the tombs. It is not stated which can contain the greatest number of devils, man or woman.



411. That Jesus should have doomed men to hell for not believing, when belief rests wholly on evidence and not on choice.

412. That belief upon Jesus should enable persons to safely handle the most poisonous serpents and drink the most deadly poison without injury. The last seven verses of Mark, however, in which these two allusions are made, are decided by the best critics to be spurious additions and not in the original copies of the gospel.

413. That, according to Luke, Elizabeth, who was barren, besides her husband and herself being well stricken in years, should conceive in her old age.

414. That Gabriel, an angel of the Lord, should appear to the husband and converse with him about the child his wife should bear. Angels meddle not with such things now.

415. That the husband, Zacharias, should be stricken dumb by the angel because he was slow of belief about his aged wife having a child—the child afterward becoming John the Baptist.

416. That six months afterward Gabriel appeared to a young virgin, named Mary, in Nazareth and informed her that the Lord was pleased with her and that the Holy Ghost should come upon her, and the power of the Highest overshadow her, and in consequence she should conceive and have a child to be named Jesus.

417. That Luke should have been so well informed as to how Elizabeth and Mary became pregnant, when he was not present and does not claim to write by divine direction, but that he narrated what he had heard and what was a matter of rumor.

418. That when Mary, soon after the visit from Gabriel and the Holy Ghost, went to see her cousin Elizabeth, the unborn John the Baptist (only six months conceived) should be conscious of the visit, and leap for joy in the womb, and also that Luke should have known of it.

419. That Zacharias, who had been dumb for nine months as a punishment for not being quicker to believe, was restored to hearing as soon as the young Baptist was circumcised and named John.

420. That Luke should say Jesus was born in a stable or laid in a manger, while Matthew has it in a house, and others state it was in a cave.

421. That if Jesus was born on the twenty-fifth day of December, as is claimed, the shepherds at that season of the year should be out in the pastures with their flocks. If the story about the shepherds is true, his being born in December is untrue, and per consequence the Christmas holidays kept in memory of this birth are improperly celebrated and little better than a falsehood. The opinion is doubtless correct that Christians selected the twenty-fifth of December as the birthday of their God because the same day—when the sun is said to be born and to commence to rise in the heavens—had been for a thousand years magnificently celebrated by several pagan nations.

422. That an angel appeared to these shepherds and told them about this miraculous birth of the Lord, and that Matthew, Mark, and John should know nothing of it.

423. That these shepherds when they made a hurried visit to the stable found Joseph, Mary, and Jesus, all three lying in the manger.

424. That the inquisitive and communicative Luke, as well as Mark and John, should know nothing about the magi or wise men coming from the East with a star for a pilot, and that Matthew, Mark, and John knew nothing about the shepherds.

425. That Luke should positively state that when Jesus was eight days old he was circumcised, and in forty days, when the days of purification were accomplished, he was taken to the temple in Jerusalem to present him to the Lord, while Matthew, with greater or less truth, says Joseph, Mary, and Jesus fled into Egypt to avoid the slaughter of Herod, and that they remained there till Herod was dead; and all this, too, to fulfil a prophecy which was no prophecy at all.

426. That Luke, who was expert enough to find out how women conceived and by whom, when unborn babes leaped, etc., should not have learned of Herod's slaughtering all the innocents in Bethlehem two years old or under, or of the flight into Egypt.

427. That the pretended genealogy of Jesus by Luke should be wholly unlike that by Matthew, both in the line of descent and the number of generations, agreeing only in the fact that it was Joseph's genealogy attempted to be given in both instances, and no more Jesus' than it was John the Baptist's or Pontius Pilate's.

428. That Luke should accord to the devil extra ability, not only in taking Jesus into a high mountain and showing him all the kingdoms of the earth, but that he did it "in a moment of time."

429. That whereas Matthew had the devil take Jesus first to the pinnacle of the temple, and then to the exceeding high mountain, Mark and Luke reversed it and had them visit first the mountain and the pinnacle afterward.

430. That by instructions from Jesus, as to when to cast the net, Simon Peter, who had been fishing all night without any "luck," was enabled to make a draught of such an enormous quantity of fishes as to break the nets, and to nearly sink two ships; and that Luke is the only one who mentions this fish story.

431. That though Jesus publicly performed many remarkable deeds and numerous astonishing miracles, he should so frequently charge those cured and those present to say nothing about it, and to speak of it to no man. There would seem to be a kind of dishonesty about this, particularly as Luke says, "So much more went there a fame abroad of him."

432. That inasmuch as what is termed the law of Moses enjoined a strict observance of the Sabbath, condemning to death those who even picked up a few chips or sticks on that day, Jesus should never say a word enjoining its observance, but on the contrary do himself about the same on that day as other days.

433. That Luke should state that Jesus chose his twelve disciples before he pronounced his "beatitudes," while Matthew places it afterward. Which is correct? Is either?

434. That Jesus brought a dead man to life, the son of a widow, in the city of Nain, while being carried on a bier to his grave, by simply touching the bier and speaking to him,

and that Luke is the only one to report it. Where was Matthew?

435. That Luke should be the only one to report the washing of Jesus' feet, by Mary Magdalene, with her tears, wiping them with the hair of her head, and kissing them without ceasing. As he seemed to like it so well the other reporters should have mentioned it.

436. That Jesus should speak harshly or disrespectfully of his mother when she came to see him. Should he have done that by the "Mother of God?"

437. That Luke has it that Peter, James, and John went to sleep during the transfiguration of Jesus on the mount, while Matthew and Mark seem not apprised of that fact. Possibly John slept so soundly that he did not witness the remarkable phenomenon of the appearance of Moses and Elias, for, as observed, he says nothing about it in his gospel.

438. That Luke should state that Jesus sent out seventy disciples to preach, while the others mention but the twelve.

439. That when a Pharisee politely asked Jesus home to dine with him, the latter should offend his host by sitting down to eat without washing, and should also indulge in invectives against the man at whose table he was eating, and those of his friends, using such terms in reference to them as these: "Fools," "Hypocrites," "Ravening and wickedness" "Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?"

440. That Jesus cured a woman who was doubled together, and had been for eighteen years, so she "could in no wise lift herself up;" recorded only by Luke.

441. That Luke should have been the only evangelist who knew that Jesus delivered the parable of the prodigal son, or that the others, knowing, declined to mention it.

442. That Luke should report Jesus to have said: "He that hath no sword let him sell his garment and buy one." It is wholly unlike the tenor of his (Jesus') teachings.

443. That Luke should be the only one to report that Jesus put on the ear again of the servant of the high-priest, after Peter had stricken it off with his sword.

444. That Luke should say that it was in the presence of Jesus that Peter three times denied him, and that thereupon Jesus turned and looked upon him, while Matthew and Mark state that Jesus was not in the same room with Peter at the time.

445. That Luke should be the only one to make the statement that Pilate, when Jesus was brought before him, turned him over to Herod, tetrarch of Galilee, who chanced to be in the city, and who mocked and made derision of Jesus, and that on that day, Pilate and Herod, who had long been enemies, became friends again. The other three gospels say nothing of this.

446. That Luke should be the only one to state that one of the two malefactors crucified with him called upon Jesus to remember him when he came into his kingdom, and that Jesus answered, "To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise;" whereas Matthew and Mark state that both thieves reviled him, and John simply states that two others were crucified with him, but neither says they were thieves or malefactors, nor that they reviled him.

447. That Luke should make Jesus' last words, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit;" while Matthew and Mark have it, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" while John, "It is finished."

448. That Luke has a different statement from the others as to who visited the sepulcher after the resurrection, that Peter and Joanna went there, whom the others name not; and that on the way to the village of Emmaus, Cleophas and Jesus had quite a long conversation together, not named by the others.

449. That only Luke states that Jesus ate fish and honey, or any food, after his resurrection.

450. That the style of the fourth gospel is wholly different from the other three, and is evidently written by one familiar with Greek literature and philosophy, while the first three are Judaic—and more a polemic than a narrative.

451. That John, though he has more to say than either of the others about the divinity of Jesus and about his really being God, has nothing at all to say about his being begotten

by God or the Holy Ghost. Is it to be supposed that John was ignorant of this important feature in the system?

452. That the fourth gospel is the only one making John the Baptist to say to Jesus, "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world."

453. That John is the only one of the four evangelists who knew that Jesus attended a marriage feast at Cana, and that he there converted water into wine, or at least he is the only one who mentions it. As it was Jesus' first miracle, is it not reasonable that the other three ought to have known it? As they knew it not and named it not, are we under obligations to believe John's isolated statement?

454. That Jesus should have been guilty of making an intoxicating beverage for his fellow-men full of injurious properties, and that, too, after they were already intoxicated.

455. That Jesus should have used at a public assemblage this disrespectful language to his mother: "Woman, what have I to do with thee?" Was it a proper example to set the young?

456. That as John says this wine miracle caused his disciples to believe in him, and as Matthew was one of his disciples, it is very singular that Matthew should not have mentioned the miracle that gave him faith.

457. That John is the only one of the four evangelists that makes mention of Nicodemus and his stealthy visit to Jesus by night, or who mentions the second birth.

458. That John is the only one to state the remarkable conversation between Jesus and the woman of Samaria, at the well.

459. That only John mentions the miracle of Jesus in healing the impotent man—thirty-eight years an invalid—at the pool of Bethesda.

460. That John is the only one who mentions that many of the disciples of Jesus forsook him and walked no more with him.

461. That John should be the only one to mention that Jesus ever wrote a word, and then on the ground and of no consequence, and Luke the only one to mention that Jesus

ever read a word, and that when he read from the law in the synagogue in Galilee in the early part of his career.

462. That Jesus with a mixture of spittle and clay cured a man who had been blind from his birth. John only knew this.

463. That Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead after he had been in his grave four days, and already so decomposed that he stank. And that this most wonderful of all the miracles of Jesus is not mentioned by any save John, though it is said it was in the presence of his disciples, and Matthew was one of them. If such a remarkable event did take place would not Matthew, Mark, and Luke have known of it, and most surely have mentioned it? By their not doing so are there not excellent grounds for doubting the truthfulness of John's incredible story?

464. That John should say Mary anointed the feet of Jesus, while the other evangelists explicitly say it was his head. While it may be immaterial on which extremity the precious ointment was placed, are both statements true?

465. That only John speaks of Jesus washing the disciples feet.

466. That only John speaks of Jesus, when arrested, being taken to Annas.

467. That only John says Pilate asked Jesus, "What is truth?"

468. That only John says the mother of Jesus witnessed his crucifixion.

469. That only John says one of the soldiers pierced Jesus' side with a spear.

470. That only John mentions that Nicodemus brought one hundred pounds of myrrh and aloes to embalm Jesus' body.

471. That John should represent Jesus as appearing to his disciples many times, and for many days after the resurrection, whereas the other evangelists speak of his ascension taking place immediately.

472. That John, like Mark, should think the ascension of Jesus into heaven of insufficient consequence even to allude to it.

473. That John should omit to mention nearly all the miracles performed by Jesus, narrated by the other three; that he should omit the Sermon on the Mount, and much of his other sayings which the others gave, and that while he puts many words into the mouth of Jesus they are entirely unlike those mentioned by Matthew, Mark, and Luke.

474. That while Matthew gives twelve parables uttered by Jesus, while Mark repeats three, and Luke sixteen, John neither repeats one nor alludes to one; but of riddles, enigmas, and incomprehensible sayings—totally unlike those given in the other gospels—a plentiful supply. The parables given by Matthew and Luke are unlike, those of the latter being generally much the shorter.

475. That John should mention five different visits of Jesus to Jerusalem, while Matthew, Mark, and Luke mention but the one. This is a marked contradiction, hard to reconcile with the theory that all wrote truthfully. Either the writers of the first three gospels were very incorrect historians, or John's totally different narrative is unreliable. That all were inspired by heaven and all truthful is perfectly preposterous.

476. That as the other evangelists tell us that John was present at the raising of Jairus' daughter, the transfiguration, the agony in Gethsemane, as already mentioned, it is more than singular that the fourth gospel is totally silent upon the subject. This being the fact, it is fair to conclude that it certainly was not written by the Apostle John. It is a damaging fact that all the events said to be witnessed by John alone are omitted by John alone.

477. That as the first gospel was in all reasonable probability not written by Matthew nor by an eye-witness of the events and teachings narrated, as the second and third gospels are confessedly not by eye-witnesses, and as they are filled with discrepancies, contradictions, and differences, their authenticity must inevitably be doubted. They are evidently fragmentary, irregular, and made up by unknown writers from unauthorized and irresponsible legends and traditions.

478. That Luke and John should state that Satan or the devil entered into Judas and caused him to betray Jesus, while



Matthew and Mark say nothing of Satan in connection with the traitor.

479. That the last verse in the fourth gospel—stating that if all the things which Jesus did were written, the world itself could not contain the books, inasmuch as there are millions of times as many books already in the world as would be required to contain millions of times as many deeds as Jesus performed, and as the world could contain millions of times as many books as it now has—is obviously preposterous and false.

480. That the assertion in Matthew on the part of Jesus that Peter was the rock on which he would build his church, and that to him he would give the keys of heaven, and whomsoever Peter bound on earth should be bound in heaven, and whom he loosed on earth should be loosed in heaven, is an improbable statement, inasmuch as Peter, from his impetuosity, instability, and falseness, was an unfit person to have intrusted to him the eternal destiny of mankind; and again, because the word “church,” which Jesus is said to have used, was not at that time brought into use; and again, because Mark, who, as before observed, is held to be the particular friend of Peter, and to have written from information obtained from him, gives no account of the high compliments and confidence thus bestowed upon his friend.

481. That of the devils cast out by Jesus, and which acknowledged the Messiahship of Jesus, once mentioned by Matthew, four times by Mark, and three times by Luke, John should have nothing to say, though reputed to be more constantly with Jesus than any other person.

482. That as the language of the fourth gospel is mythical, enigmatical, obscure, and even confusing, the conclusion is almost inevitable that if Jesus spoke the words there ascribed to him he wished to be unintelligible and not be understood.

483. That in the Acts of the Apostles it should be claimed that Jesus was with his disciples forty days between his resurrection and ascension, when Mark and Luke do not claim more than a single day, and John names “eight days”—and perhaps two or three more are implied—that he was seen of his disciples after his resurrection, saying nothing, as we have

seen, about an ascension. Matthew mentions one appearance to two Marys, of one to the disciples, but says nothing of an ascension to heaven.

484. That it should be maintained that the body of Jesus was raised from the dead, or that it was taken up into heaven. The accounts of his resurrection, and of his appearances after his death, as we have seen, are contradictory and unsatisfactory, far more like an unreliable ghost story than the history of real events. Matthew says he appeared first to the two Marys, and afterward to the eleven disciples *into* a mountain in Galilee, but the appearance could not have been very satisfactory for Matthew says "some doubted." Probably they had good occasion to doubt. Mark says Jesus appeared first to but one Mary, and "that afterward he appeared in another form to two disciples as they were walking into the country," but when the two told it to the others, no credence was given to their story. Mark states also that another appearance was made to the eleven when they were at meat. All he says of an ascension is, "He was received up into heaven," but he does not pretend his body rose up into the air, or ascended in any way. Luke says Jesus first appeared to Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and other women with them; and on the same day to two, one of whom was Cleophas, while on the way to Emmaus; but he could not have looked natural to them for they did not know him, and it was not until they had talked with him a long time, and he stopped with them in a village and brake bread with them, that he showed himself in such a way that they recognized him, when he immediately "vanished out of their sight"—a regular ghost story. The two seem to have returned at once to Jerusalem and reported to the other disciples what they had witnessed, when they heard that Jesus had appeared to Simon; and while they were talking, Jesus again appeared in the midst of them, and partook, or seemed to, of fish and honey. Of the ascension, Luke says, as we have seen, "And he led them out as far as to Bethany, and he lifted up his hands and blessed them; and it came to pass, while he blessed them he was parted from them and carried up into heaven." It would appear from the narrative that he

led them out to Bethany and "parted from them" immediately after he had taken supper with them, and that it was probably in the evening, and perhaps dark. The whole is just about as explicit as ghost stories usually are. John states that Jesus first showed himself to Mary Magdalene but she did not recognize him, and thought he was the gardener. When he spoke to her, however, she knew him, but he would not let her touch him as he had not yet ascended to his father. On the same evening, he suddenly appeared in the midst of his disciples who were assembled in a room with the doors closed. After eight days John says he appeared to them again when the doors were shut; and still again at the sea of Tiberias where his disciples were fishing, but they did not know him until he had directed them where to cast their net, when they caught a remarkable draught of fishes, when John first recognized him, and then Peter. They went ashore, cooked some of the fish, and Jesus handed them food. No ascension spoken of. The writer of Acts has an entirely different story. Jesus was with his disciples, as stated, forty days, at times. The most he said to them was about the Holy Ghost—the writer of Acts, by the bye, has much to say about the Holy Ghost—"And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld him, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight." As they looked up they saw two men in white apparel (two other ghosts, of course). Paul in speaking of the appearances of Jesus after his death, has still a different story; he names six appearances—to Peter, to the eleven, to more than five hundred, to James, to all the apostles, and finally to Paul himself. It is to be regretted, however, that Paul's statement is poorly sustained, and as he was not there, he only speaks by rumor. Thus we see no two of the writers agree in very many particulars. Their statements conflict badly, as ghost stories usually do, and are therefore utterly unreliable. The appearance of Jesus was as that of a spirit is claimed to be, and not a real body. The only semblance to a body is where Luke says he told them to feel his feet and hands and the hole in his side; but it probably is as easy for the hands to be deceived by a ghost as the eyes and ears. If a ghost can be seen and heard, why

not felt? Others may tell what became of the body of Jesus; but a thousand things could have happened to it far more probable than that it raised from the dead and ascended into the upper atmosphere. It may be stated in this connection that the Gnostics, a numerous sect of Christians in the second century, strenuously maintained that Christ was at no time anything but a spirit, and never had a real body. This much can be truly said: Among all the different and contradictory statements, very little is presented in the Jesus story that is worthy of credence or confidence.

485. That the Judas story should be so differently told in Acts and by Matthew and the other evangelists. Matthew says Judas repented of what he had done in betraying Jesus, returned to the chief priests, offered them the thirty pieces of silver they had given him for his treason, and when they refused it he threw it down before them and went out and hanged himself. In Acts it says he purchased a field with the money, after which, "falling headlong, he burst asunder in the midst, and all his bowels gushed out." It would be difficult to make two statements more contradictory. A falsehood was assuredly told by one or more of the Bible writers.

486. That cloven tongues as of fire should have appeared to the disciples on the day of Pentecost, which sat on each one of them, when they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spoke in other tongues, which tongues, by the bye, Paul regarded as unmeaning gibberish.

487. That the words put into Peter's mouth that these demonstrations were a fulfilment of a prophecy by Joel seems far-fetched. The so-called prophecy was that the Lord would pour out his spirit upon all flesh, when sons and daughters should prophesy, the old men dream dreams and the young men see visions, when wonders would appear in the earth, blood, fire, and pillars of smoke. When the sun would be turned into darkness and the moon into blood. The claimed fulfilment of a crazy prediction was a weak one. No old men dreamed dreams, no prophesying, no blood, no fire or pillars of smoke, the sun did not become darkness, nor was the moon turned to blood. Joel's wonderful prophecy has not been fulfilled, and probably will not be for some time yet in the future.

488. That Peter cured a man lame from his birth by taking him by the hand. That country must have been very plentifully supplied with persons lame, blind, and possessed of devils to enable so many such cures to be performed.

489. That Ananias and Sapphira should be suddenly struck dead for keeping a part of the money for which they had sold a piece of property, and not giving it all to the apostles, though pretending they had given all. If every false pretense and lie had been followed by the same results the world would have been depopulated long ago.

490. That the angels opened the prison doors and set the apostles at liberty who had been imprisoned. Angels are not doing that kind of unlocking nowadays, or possibly the writer of these pages would not at present be behind bolts and bars.

491. That the persecuting Saul should be suddenly smitten to earth while journeying, a light from heaven seen, and a voice heard, thereby converting him into the Apostle Paul. The discrepancies in the story, however, are unfortunate. In the first statement it is not said whether the light was seen by Paul's companions as well as by himself. Paul in his speech in Jerusalem says it was. The writer of Acts affirms the companions of Paul heard the voice. This Paul in his speech to the Jews expressly contradicts.

492. That Peter cured Eneas of palsy who had been bed-ridden eight years.

493. That Peter raised Tabitha from the dead. Raising people from the dead has been claimed for nearly all the founders of all new religions in the world, and on many occasions. Such falsehoods are easily told, and were once easily believed. It is far easier to tell of one hundred raised from the dead than to raise one.

494. That an angel should take Peter out of prison and free him from chains and fetters, and not treat others in the same way.

495. That Paul healed a club-footed man, a cripple from his birth.

496. That Paul and Silas were released from prison by an earthquake sent for their special benefit.

497. That when some vagabond Jews undertook to cast out devils in the name of Jesus and Paul, the devils turned upon them and tore off their clothing.

498. That Paul restored Eutychus to life, who had fallen out of a third story window and killed himself.

499. Passing over the Epistles of Paul, filled with his theories and doctrinal notions, several of which epistles are decided by able critics to be not genuine; the Epistles of Peter, the second of which is pronounced spurious; the three Epistles of John, the last of which at least was not written by John; the Epistle of Jude, which is unequivocally pronounced not genuine, all of which are susceptible to criticism, we come to the book of Revelation—wild, erratic, and visionary—which Luther thought only fit to be thrown into the Elbe, which Calvin thought too little of to write a commentary upon, making this an exception among all the books in the Bible, and which Dr. South said would make a man crazy if he was not so already. It purports to be written by John, by some believed to be him who was a disciple of Jesus, which, however, many others totally deny. A sensible man can make nothing of it. None but one partially insane can appreciate it or understand it.

500. A vision of the son of man was seen “in the midst of seven candlesticks, clothed with a garment down to the foot, girt about the paps with a golden girdle. His head and hair white like wool, as white as snow, and his eyes were as a flame of fire; and his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace, and his voice as the sound of many waters. He had in his right hand seven stars; and out of his mouth went a sharp two-edged sword.”

501. The vision of the four beasts, each with six wings, and full of eyes before and behind, that were around the throne from whence proceeded lightnings, thunderings, the beasts resting not day nor night, saying Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was and is, and is to come. Then the four and twenty elders fall before him that sat on the throne, etc. This doubtless is very edifying to those who have any idea of what it means.

502. The vision of a white horse, a red horse, a black horse, a pale horse, the falling of the stars of heaven to the earth, the departing of the heavens as a scroll, etc., etc., is rather deep for ordinary minds.

503. The four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, is perhaps clear to those who know just where the corners of the earth are.

504. When a third part of the sea became blood, when a third part of the creatures in it died, and a third part of the ships were destroyed, when a great star fell from heaven, when a third part of the sun and moon was smitten, a third part of the stars darkened, it must have been a discouraging time for mariners and astronomers.

505. The seven vials of God's wrath which the seven angels found out could not have made a very enjoyable time. Vial No. 1: Noisome and grievous sores upon the men who had the mark of the beast. No. 2: The sea became as the blood of a dead man, and every living soul died in the sea. No. 3: The rivers and fountains of water became blood. No. 4: The sun was given power to scorch men, and it scorched men with fire. No. 5: The vial was poured upon the seat of the beast, their kingdom full of darkness, and they gnawed their tongues for pain. No. 6: The river Euphrates was dried up, and unclean spirits like frogs came out of the mouth of the dragon. No. 7: There were voices, and thunders and lightnings, and a greater earthquake than ever since man lived existed upon the earth. The clouds fled away and the mountains could not be found. Appalling times indeed!

506. The angel who stood in the sun must have been formidable. He cried in a loud voice to the fowls in the midst of heaven, "Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God, that ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses.

507. The binding of the great dragon, the devil, for a thousand years, and casting him into the bottomless pit, was undoubtedly a fortunate circumstance. It was much the way the Fenris wolf in Norse mythology was served, and if he went clear through it is perhaps all the better.

508. The great white throne, from the face of him who sat on it the heavens and earth fled away, and could find no place to go to, must have been an imposing panorama to a looker on. About that time the books were opened, and then another book; and it is cheering to be assured that death and hell gave up their dead, and that both were cast into the lake of fire. It was said this was the "second death," and let us hope it may be the last.

509. The woman which the highly-favored revelator saw must have been a character. She was clothed with the sun, she had the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars; and she was with child, and travailed in pain to be delivered. Let it be hoped everthing resulted favorably with her.

510. The great red dragon, however, must have surpassed the woman. That he was a wonder in heaven who can doubt? for he had seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns on his heads; and his tail drew a third part of the stars of heaven and cast them upon the earth. The earth is to be pitied. Just think of what a condition it must have been in with a third of the stars of heaven piled upon it, and many of them thousands and millions of times longer than itself!

511. That red dragon after that star performance got after the woman and stood before her ready to devour her child as soon as it was born, but luckily it was caught up into heaven and the woman safely escaped to the wilderness. Let us breathe easier.

512. Let us all rejoice that that old dragon received his just deserts. Michael the commander in chief of the celestial forces declared war against him. Michael and his angels fought the dragon and his angels. How numerous the killed and wounded were is not stated, but we are glad to be assured that Michael won the victory and obtained the belt. He cast the old dragon and his angels out and into the earth, where it is ardently hoped he will ever remain. Bravo, Michael!

513. The dragon, however, seems not to have been cast so far into the earth but that he got on to the surface and annoyed the woman again. He was wroth with her and cast



out of his mouth water as a flood after her, with a view of washing her entirely away; but the earth kindly opened its mouth and swallowed the flood which the dragon had thus cast out; and the woman was presented with a pair of wings, and may she always be able to keep clear of that dragon!

514. One bad woman is described. She was arrayed in purple and scarlet, and decked with gold and precious stones. She sat on a scarlet colored beast, and the kings of the earth committed fornication with her, and she made the inhabitants of the earth drunk with the wine of her fornication. She was fond of the blood of the saints, and got drunk on it. But she came to grief, as all bad people ought to; she stopped making the nations drunk, and quit drinking herself, and finally fell away entirely.

515. The description of the New Jerusalem is the best of all. It descended out of heaven; it had the glory of God; its light was like the light of a jasper stone, clear as crystal; its wall was great and high, and had twelve gates; the gates had twelve angels, named for the twelve tribes of Israel. The city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles. It was four-square, and the length and breadth just equal with the height, and measured twelve thousand furlongs each way. It was made of pure gold, like unto clear glass, and the wall was of jasper. The first foundation of the wall was jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, chalcedony; the fourth, emerald; the fifth, sardonyx; the sixth sardius; the seventh, chrysolite; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, a topaz; the tenth, a chrysoprasus; the eleventh, a jacinth; the twelfth, an amethyst. The twelve gates were twelve pearls. The streets of the city were of pure gold and transparent as glass. In this city was the river of the pure water of life, and on either side of the river grew the tree of life which bore twelve kinds of fruit, ripening every month. The leaves of the tree possessed very healing properties and cured all the nations. There was no night there, and the sun and candles were equally unnecessary; and, the best of all, there is to be no more curse there. As the city is large enough to accommodate all, perhaps we can do no bet-

ter than to engage a house or apartments there, if the rent is not too dear.

If at the beginning of the book of Revelation, instead of assuming it was written by John, it had said it was written by the inmate of an insane asylum, the statement would have passed for truth. Its value may be judged by the correctness of its predictions. In the first verse it says all these things "must shortly come to pass." How long a time "shortly" is, is perhaps not definitely known. Probably some seventeen hundred years have passed away since those wonderful visions and revelations were written but the stars have not been cast down upon the earth, and it is safe to presume that as many as seventeen hundred years more will pass away before it takes place.

### CONTRADICTIONS OF THE BIBLE.

A portion of the improbabilities, impossibilities, and absurdities of the Bible have been enumerated—a small portion only. Next will be considered a few of its contradictions. There are hundreds of them, historical, moral, theological and speculative, but space will be taken for only a few of them. The following are from a valuable little work called "Self-Contradictions of the Bible." First, those of a historical character will be noticed:

According to Gen. i, 25, 26, 27, man was created after the animals; but Gen. ii, 18, 19, says man was created first.

Gen. vii, 1, 2, 5, says God commanded Noah to take clean beasts into the ark by sevens, whereas in the same chapter, 8, 9, it says Noah took in the clean beasts by twos.

Gen. viii, 22, says while the earth remaineth, seed time and harvest shall not cease; whereas Gen. xli, 54, 56, says seven years of dearth came, and the famine was all over the face of the earth.

Ex. iv, 21, and Ex. ix, 12, says God would harden and did harden the heart of Pharaoh, but Ex. viii, 15, says Pharaoh hardened it himself.

Ex. ix, 3, 6, says all the cattle of Egypt died, but Ex. xiv, 9, says Pharaoh pursued the Israelites, with horses and chariots, and overtook them.

John i, 29, 34, says John the Baptist recognized Jesus as the Messiah when he first saw him coming, but Matt. xi, 2, 3, tells a different story, that John sent to Jesus to inquire whether he was the one that should come.

Matt. xi, 14, says John the Baptist was Elias; but John i, 21, expressly says he was not Elias.

Matt. i, 16, says the father of Joseph, the husband of Mary, was Jacob; Luke iii, 23, says it was Heli.

Gen. xi, 12, says Arphaxad was the father of Salah; Luke iii, 35, 36, says Sala was the son of Canaan which was the son of Arphaxad.

Matt. ii, 14, 15, 19, 21, 23, says Jesus, when a new-born babe, was taken into Egypt; Luke ii, 22, 39, denies this positively, and says he was in Nazareth in Galilee.

Mark i, 12, 13, says immediately after his baptism Jesus was driven by the spirit into the wilderness and was tempted forty days; but John ii, 1, 2, says on the third day after the baptism there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee, and that Jesus was there.

Matt. v, 1, 2, says Jesus preached his first sermon on a mountain, but Luke says it was in the plain.

Mark i, 14, says John was in prison when Jesus went into Galilee, but John iii, 22, 23, disputes it and says John was baptizing in Enon, and was not yet cast into prison.

In Mark vi, 8, 9, the disciples were commanded to take a staff and sandals; but in Matt. x, 9, 10, they were commanded to not take staves or sandals.

Matt. xx, 30, says two blind men besought Jesus; Luke xviii, 35, 38, says it was one blind man.

Matt. viii, 28, says two men coming out of the tombs, full of devils, met Jesus; Matt. v, 2, says it was but one man.

Matt. viii, 5, 6, says a centurion besought Jesus to heal his servant, but Luke vii, 3, 4, says it was not the centurion that besought Jesus, but messengers, the elders of the Jews, whom he sent.

Mark xv, 25, says Jesus was crucified at the third hour; John xix, 14, 15, says it was not until the sixth hour.

Matt. xxvii, 44, and xv, 32, says the two thieves reviled Jesus; Luke xxiii, 39, 40, says only one reviled him.

John xiii, 27, says Satan entered into Judas while at supper; Luke xxii, 3, 4, 7, says it was before supper.

John xx, 1, says but one woman came to the sepulcher; Matt. xxviii, 1, says two came; Mark xvi, 1, says three came; Luke xxiv, 10, says there were more than three.

Mark xvi, 2, says it was at sunrise that they came to the sepulcher; John xx, 1, says it was yet dark.

Luke xxiv, 4, says two angels were seen at the sepulcher, and standing up; Matt. xxviii, 2, 5, says but one angel was seen, and he sitting down.

John xx, 11, 12, says two angels were seen within the sepulcher; Mark xvi, 5, says but one angel was seen within the sepulcher; while Matt. xxviii, 2, says but one angel was seen, and he outside the sepulcher.

Matt. xxviii, 8, and Luke xxiv, 9, say the women went and told the disciples of Christ's resurrection; but Mark xvi, 8, insists that they did not go and tell the disciples nor any other man.

John xx, 3, 6, 10-12, says the angels appeared after Peter and John visited the sepulcher; but Luke xxiv, 4, 8, 9, says the angels appeared before Peter alone visited the sepulcher.

John xx, 14, says Jesus appeared to Mary Magdalene only; Matthew xxviii, 9, says it was the two Marys, while Luke xxiv, 1-11, says he appeared to neither of the Marys.

Matt. xii, 40, says Jesus was to be three days and three nights in the grave; but according to Mark xv, 25, 42, 44, 45, 46, and xvi, 9, he was but one day and two nights.

According to Acts i, 8, 5; and ii, 1, 4, the Holy Ghost was bestowed at Pentecost; but John xx, 22, says the Holy Ghost was bestowed before Pentecost.

Matt. xxviii, 10, says the disciples were commanded immediately after the resurrection to go into Galilee; whereas Luke xxiv, 49, says that immediately after the resurrection they were commanded to remain in Jerusalem.

According to Luke xxiv, 33, 36, 37, and John xx, 19, Jesus first appeared to the eleven disciples in a room at Jerusalem; but Matt. xxviii, 16, 17, says it was on a mountain in Galilee.

Acts i, 9, 12, says Jesus ascended from Mount Olivet; Luke xxiv, 50, 51, says it was from Bethany; Mark xvi, 14, 19, says he was "received up," but states not where. Matthew and John do not even say he ascended or went up at all.

Acts ix, 7, says Paul's attendants heard the voice, and stood speechless; Acts xxii, 9, says they heard not the voice, and xxvi, 14, says all were prostrate.

Gen. xii, 5, says Abraham departed to go to Canaan, but Heb. xi, 8, says Abraham went not knowing where.

Gal. iv, 22, says Abraham had two sons; Heb. xi, 17, says he had but one.

Gen. xxv, 1, says Keturah was Abraham's wife; 1 Chron. i, 32, says Keturah was Abraham's concubine.

Gen. xxi, 2, Rom. iv, 19, and Heb. xi, 12, say Abraham when a hundred years old begat a son by the interposition of Divine Providence, while Gen. xxv, 1, 2, says he begat six children when over one hundred years old without any assistance from Providence.

Josh. xxiv, 32, says Jacob bought a sepulcher of the sons of Hamor; Acts vii, 16, says Abraham bought it.

Gen. xiii, 14, 15, and xvii, 8, says God promised the land of Canaan to Abraham and his seed as an inheritance; but Acts vii, 5, and Heb. xi, 9, 13, deny this *in toto*, and say that Abraham had had no such inheritance, and had received no such promise.

1 Kings xvi, 6, 8, says Bassha died in the twenty-sixth year of Asa; 2 Chron. xvi, 1, says he was alive in the thirty-sixth year of Asa.

2 Chron. xxii, 1, says Ahaziah was the youngest son of Jehoram; 2 Chron. xxi, 16, 17, says Ahaziah was not the youngest son of Jehoram, but that Jehoahaz was.

2 Kings viii, 17, 24, 26, says Ahaziah was twenty-two years old when he began to reign, being eighteen years younger than his father; 2 Chron. xxi, 20, and xxii, 1, 2, says Ahaziah was forty-two years old when he began to reign, being two years older than his father.

2 Sam. vi, 23, says Michal had no child; 2 Sam. xxi, 8, says Michal had five children.

2 Sam. xxiv, 1, says the Lørd tempted David to number the people; 1 Chron. xxi, 1, says Satan did it.

2 Sam. xxiv, 9, says there were 800,000 warriors of Israel and 500,000 of Judah; 1 Chron. xxi, 5, says there were 1,100,000 of Israel and 470,000 of Judah, an error of 270,000—bad counting or bad history.

2 Sam. xxiv, 10, says David sinned in numbering the people, whereas 1 Kings xv, 5, says he never sinned save in the matter of Uriah's wife.

2 Sam. x, 18, says David slew seven hundred Syrian charioteers and forty thousand horsemen; 1 Chron. xix, 18, says it was seven thousand charioteers and forty thousand footmen.

2 Sam. xxiv, 24, says David paid for a threshing floor fifty shekels of silver; 1 Chron. xxi, 25, says he paid six hundred shekels of gold.

1 Sam. xvii, 4, 50, says David was the slayer of Goliath; 2 Sam. xxi, 19, says Elhanan, the son of Jaare-origim, a Beth-lehemite, slew Goliath. The words "brother of," which were not in the original, were supplied by the translators to save a falsehood, thereby adding another falsehood to the list.

Next will follow some of the contradictions of a theological character:

Gen. i, 31, says God was pleased with what he had made; Gen. vi, 6, says he repented that he made man, and was grieved at his heart.

According to 2 Chron. vii, 12, 16, God dwells in chosen temples, while Acts vii, 48, says he dwells not in temples.

1 Tim. vi, 16, says God dwells in light, whereas 1 Kings viii, 12, Psalms xviii, 11, and xcvii, 2, say he dwells in darkness.

According to Ex. xxxiii, 11, 23, xxiv, 9, 10, 11, Gen. iii, 9, 10, xxxii, 30, and Isa. vi, 1, God is seen and heard, and men have seen his face; but according to John i, 18, v, 37, Ex. xxxiii, 20, and 1 Tim. vi, 16, that is pronounced false, for they say no man hath seen God at any time, and that no man can see him.

In Ex. xxxi, 17, Isa. xliii, 25, and Jer xv, 6, it says God gets weary and needs rest; but Isa. xl, 28, says he never gets tired and never rests.

According to Prov. xv, 3, Psalms cxxxix, 7-10, Job xxxiv, 21, 22, God is omnipresent, and sees and knows all things; but according to Gen. xi, 5, xviii, 20, 21, and iii, 8, he is not omnipresent, and does not see and know all things.

Acts i, 24, Psalms xliv, 21, and cxxxix, 2, 3, say God knows the hearts of men; but this cannot be true, for Gen. xxii, 12, Deut. vii, 2, and xiii, 3, represent him as trying to increase his knowledge in that direction by an effort to find out what is in their hearts.

Jer. xxxii, 27, 17, and Matt. xix, 26, assert that God is all-powerful; but Judges i, 19, admits that this is a mistake, as "he could not drive out the inhabitants of the valley, because they had chariots of iron."

By believing Num. xxiii, 19, Ezekiel xxiv, 14, Mal. iii, 6, and James i, 17, God is unchangeable, and never varies or turns; but if we accept Gen. vi, 6, Ex. xxxiii, 1, 3, 17, 14, 1 Sam. ii, 30, 31, 2 Kings xx, 1, 4, 5, 6, and Jonah iii, 10, we find he is not only changeable, but that he often changes, varies, and repents.

Deut. x, 18, 19, xxxii, 4, Gen. xviii, 25, Psalms xcii, 15, Ezek. xviii, 25, and Rom. ii, 11, would have us believe that God is just and impartial; but Gen. ix, 25, Ex. xx, 5, Deut. xiv, 21, 2 Sam. xxiv, 17, Matt. xiii, 12, and Rom. ix, 11, 12, 13, assure us to the contrary, and show God to be unjust and partial.

Rom. xv, 33, and 1 Cor. xiv, 33, say that God is a God of peace; but Ex. xv, 3, Ps. cxliv, 1, and Isa. li, 15, assure us to the contrary, and say he is a "man of war," a "Lord of hosts," and one who delighteth in fighting.

1 Chron. xvi, 34; Lam. iii, 33; Ps. xxv, 8; cxlv, 32; Ezek. xviii, 32; 1 Tim. ii, 4; 1 John iv, 16, and James v, 11, would have us believe that God is always kind, merciful, and good; but Deut. iv, 24; vii, 16; Josh x, 11; 1 Sam. vi, 19; xv, 2, 3, and Jer. xiii, 14, dispute this, for they explicitly state that he is merciless, pitiless, ferocious, destructive, vindictive, and cruel.

Ps. xxx, 5, and ciii, 8, assert that God is slow to get angry, and when he does that it lasts but for a moment; but Num. xxxii, 13; xxv, 4; Jer. xvii, 4; Ps. vii, 11, and Ex. iv, 24,

destroy this pleasant allusion, for they testify that God's anger is easily kindled; that its recurrences are frequent; that it is very fierce and endures for a long time.

If Ex. xxix, 18, 36; Lev. i, 9; xxiii, 27, and many other passages, are to be believed, God not only commands and approves of burnt-offerings, sacrifices, and holy days, but the smell of burning animal tissue is a sweet savor to him, in which he takes great delight; but Isa. i, 11, 12, 13; Ps. 1, 13, 14; Jer. vi, 20; vii, 22, and other passages, contradict it, and say that God disapproves of burnt-offerings; that he takes no pleasure in them, calling them "vain oblations." He wants no more burnt-offerings of rams, the fat of fed beasts, and no longer delights in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he-goats. He says: "No more vain oblations; incense is an abomination unto me; the new moons and Sabbaths, the calling of assemblies, I cannot away with; it is iniquity," etc.

In Deut. xii, 30, 31, God forbids human sacrifice, but accepts and even commands it in other places. (See Gen. xxii, 2; Lev. xxvii, 28, 29; 2 Sam. xxi, 8, 9, 14; Judges xi, 30-39.)

James i, 13, says positively that God tempts no man; but, unfortunately, Gen. xxii, 1; 2 Sam. xxiv, 1; Job ii, 3; Jer. xx, 7, and Matt. vi, 13, falsify it, and say just as positively that God does tempt men.

Num. xxiii, 19, and Heb. vi, 18, say God cannot lie, while Jer. vi, 10; xiv, 18; Judges ix, 23; 1 Kings xxii, 23; Ezek. xiv, 9, and 2 Thess. ii, 11, say that he does lie, and that he sends lying spirits to deceive his children.

Gen. vi, 5, 7, tells us that it was the wickedness of man that caused God to destroy him; but in Gen. viii, 21, God says he will not destroy man though he is wicked.

Rom. i, 20, says God's attributes are revealed in his works; but Job xl, 7, and Isa. xi, 28, speak to the opposite and tell us there is no way of finding out God.

From Deut. vi, 4, and 1 Cor. viii, 4, we infer there is but one God; but from Gen. i, 26; iii, 22; xviii, 1, 2, 3, and 1 John v, 7, we are as strongly induced to believe there are a plurality of gods.



Here follow some of the contradictions in moral precepts :

In Ex. iii, 21, 22, and xii, 35, 36, God commands his people to practice dishonesty, fraud, and robbery, while in Ex. xx, 15, and Lev. xix, 13, he forbids it.

In 1 Sam. xvi, 1, 2 ; Josh. ii, 4, 5, 6 ; James ii, 25 ; Ex. 1, 18-20 ; 1 Kings xxii, 21, 22 ; Rom. iii, 7 ; 2 Cor. xii, 16, and Num. xiv, 34, lying is approved, sanctioned, and commanded ; whereas in Ex. xx, 16, Prov. xii, 22, and Rev. xxi, 8, it is forbidden and denounced.

Ex. xxxii, 27, and 2 Kings x, 11, 30, killing human beings is sanctioned and commanded ; but in Ex. xx, 13, and 1 John iii, 15, it is discountenanced and forbidden.

Gen. ix, 5, 6, says the shedder of man's blood must die ; but Gen. iv, 15, says to the contrary.

Ex. xx, 4, positively forbids the making of images, but Ex. xxv, 18, 20, positively commands it.

In Gen. x, 25, Lev. xxv, 45, 46, and Joel iii, 8, slavery and oppression are approved and enforced ; but in Isa, lviii, 6, Ex. xxii, 21, xxi, 16, and Matt. xxii, 10, they are discountenanced and forbidden.

In Matt. vi, 28, 30, 31, 34 ; Luke vi, 30, 35 ; and xii, 33, providence is enjoined and made a virtue of ; but in 1 Tim. v, 8, and Prov. xiii, 22, it is condemned and regarded as a crime.

Eph. iv, 26 ; 2 Kings ii, 24 ; and Mark iii, 5, anger is approved ; In Eccl. viii, 9 ; Prov. xxii, 24, and James 1, 20, it is disapproved.

In Matt. v, 16, good works are to be performed so they can be seen of men ; In Matt. vi, ii, 1, the contrary is enjoined.

Matt. vii, 1, 2, forbids judging others ; but 1 Cor. vi, 2, 3, 4, and v, 12, says judge not others.

Matt. v, 39, and xxvi, 52, teach non-resistance ; but in Luke xxii, 36, and John 11, 15, resistance and aggression are approved.

Luke xii, 4, says be not afraid of those that kill the body ; but according to John vii, 1, he was himself afraid of those who kill the body.

In 1 Kings viii, 22, 54, and ix, 3, public prayer is sanctioned ; but in Matt. vi, 5, 6, it is disapproved.

In Luke xviii, 5, 7, and xi, 8, importunity in prayer is commended; but in Matt. vi, 7, 8, it is condemned.

In Num. vi, 5, and Judges xiii, 5, wearing of long hair by men is sanctioned; but in 1 Cor. xi, 14, it is condemned.

In Gen. xvii, 10, circumcision was instituted; but in Gal. v, 2, it is condemned.

According to Gen. ii, 3, Ex. xx, 8, and other places, the Sabbath is sanctioned and enforced; but in Isa. i, 13, Rom. xiv, 5, and Col. ii, 16, it is repudiated.

Ex. xx, 11, says the Sabbath was instituted because God rested on the seventh day; in Deut. v, 15, it is enjoined because God brought his people out of Egypt.

In Ex. xxxi, 15, and Num. xv, 32, 36, death is the penalty for breaking the Sabbath, even in the slightest degree; but in John, v, 16, Matt. xii, 1, 2, 3, 5, Jesus disregarded the Sabbath, broke it, and justified the act.

In Matt. xxviii, 19, baptism is commanded; in 1 Cor. i, 17, 14, it is not commanded.

In Gen. ix, 3, 1 Cor. x, 25, and Rom. xiv, 14, every kind of animal meat is allowed for food; in Deut. xiv, 7, 8, many kinds are prohibited.

In Num. xxx, 2, Isa lxxv, 16, Gen. xxi, 23, 24, 31, Heb. vi, 13, and Neh. xiii, 25, oaths are sanctioned; in Matt. v, 34, they are forbidden.

In Gen. i, 28, ii, 18, Matt. xix, 5, and Heb. xiii, 4, marriage is approved and sanctioned; in 1 Cor. vii, 1, 7, 8, it is disapproved.

In Deut. xxi, 10-14, and xxiv, 1, freedom of divorce is permitted; in Matt. v, 32, it is restricted.

Num. xxxi, 18, Hosea i, 2, and iii, 1, 2, 3, sanction adultery; but Ex. xx, 14, and Heb. xiii, 4, forbid it.

Lev. xx, 17, and Deut. xxvii, 22, denounce cohabitation with a sister; but Gen. xx, 11, 12, and xvii, 15, 16, approves and sanctions it.

According to Deut. xxv, 5, a man may marry his brother's widow; but according to Lev. xx, 21, he may not.

In Luke xiv, 26, hatred of kindred is enjoined; but in Eph. v, 25, 29, and 1 John, iii, 15, it is condemned.

According to Prov. xxxi, 6, 7, Deut. xiv, 26, 1 Tim. v, 23, Ps. civ, 15, and Judges ix, 13, intoxicating beverages are recommended; but in Prov. xx, 1, and xxiii, 31, 32, they are condemned.

According to Rom. xiii, 1, 2, 3, 6, Matt. xxiii, 2, 3, 1 Pet. ii, 13, 14, and Eccl. viii, 2, 5, obedience to rulers is enjoined, they being God's ministers to punish evil doers; but according to Ex. i, 17, 20, Dan. iii, 16, 18, vi, 7, 9, 10, Acts iv, 26, 27, Mark xii, 38, 39, 40, and Luke xxiii, 11, 24, 33, 35, it is not our duty always to obey rulers, who sometimes punish the good and receive damnation therefor.

In Gen. iii, 16, 1 Tim. ii, 12, 1 Cor. xiv, 34, and 1 Peter iii, 6, woman's rights are denied; in Judges iv, 4, 14, 15, v, 7, Acts ii, 18, and xxi, 9, woman's rights are affirmed.

Col. iii, 22, 23, and 1 Peter ii, 18, enjoin obedience to masters, while Matt. v, 10, 1 Cor. vii, 23, and Matt. xxiii, 10, forbid obedience only to God.

Mark iii, 29, says there is one sin—blasphemy against the Holy Ghost—which can never be forgiven; Acts xiii, 39, says all that *believe* are justified from *all* things.

Next will follow some of the contradictions relative to speculative doctrines.

John x, 30, and Phil. ii, 6, say Christ is equal to God. John xiv, 28, and Matt. xxiv, 36, say Christ is *not* equal to God.

John v, 22, 30, says Christ judged men; John viii, 15, and xii, 47 say he judged *no man*.

Matt. xxviii, 18, and John iii, 35, say Jesus was all-powerful. Mark vi, 5, asserts, virtually, that he was *not* all-powerful.

Luke xvi, 16, Rom. vii, 6, and Eph. ii, 15, say the law was superseded by the Christian dispensation; but Matt. v, 17, 18, 19, says the law was *not* superseded by the Christian dispensation.

According to Luke ii, 13, 14, i, 76, 79, and Isa. ix, 6, Christ's mission was peace; but Matt. x, 34, and Luke x, ii, 49, say his mission was *not* peace.

John v, 33, 34, says Christ received not testimony from man; John, xv, 27, asserts directly to the contrary.

John viii, 18, 14, says Christ's witness of himself is true, but John v, 31, says, "If I bear witness of myself, my witness is not true."

John xix, 7, makes the Jews to say it was lawful for them to put Jesus to death; but John xviii, 31, makes them say the reverse, that it was not lawful.

Ex. xx, 5, and 2 Sam. xii, 14, assert that children are punished for the sins of their parents; while Ezek, xviii, 20, and Deut. xxiv, 16, say children are not punished for the sins of their parents.

According to Rom. iii, 20, Gal. ii, 16, iii, 11, 12, and Rom. iv, 2, man is justified by faith alone; but James i, 21, 24, and Rom. ii, 13, say man is not justified by faith alone.

John x, 28, and Rom. viii, 38, 39, say it is impossible to fall from grace. Ezek. xviii, 24, Heb. vi, 4, 5, 6, and 2 Peter ii, 20, 21, say *it is possible* to fall from grace.

1 Kings viii, 46, Prov. xx, 9, Eccl. vii, 20, and Rom. iii, 10, say no man is without sin; 1 John iii, 6, 8, 9, says Christians are sinless.

1 Cor. xv, 52, Rev. xx, 12, 13, and 1 Cor. xv, 16, say there is to be a resurrection of the dead, while Job vii, 9, Eccl. ix, 5, and Isa. xxvi, 14, say positively there is to be no resurrection of the dead.

Prov. xi, 31, says reward and punishment are bestowed in *this* world; but Matt. xvi, 27, 2 Cor. v, 10, and Rev. xx, 12, say they are bestowed in the *next* world.

Job iii, 11, 13-17, 19-22, Eccl. iii, 19, 20, and ix, 5, 10, say man is annihilated at death; but Matt. xxv, 46, Rev. xx, 10, 15, xiv, 11, and Dan. xii, 2, say a part of the human race is to exist in endless misery.

According to 2 Peter iii, 10, Heb. i, 11, and Rev. xx, 11, the earth is to be destroyed; but Ps. civ, 5, and Eccl. i, 4, say it is *never* to be destroyed.

Prov. xii, 21, and 1 Peter iii, 13, say that no evil shall befall the godly; but Heb. xii, 6, and Job ii, 3, 7, imply that evil does befall the godly.

Prov. xii, 21, Ps. xxxvii, 28, 32, 33, 37, Ps. i, 1, 3, Gen xxxix, 2, and Job xlii, 12, say that worldly good and prosperity are the lot of the godly; but Heb. xi, 37, 38, Rev. vii,

14, 2 Tim. iii, 12, and Luke xxi, 17, say that worldly misery and destitution are the lot of the godly.

Mark x, 29, 30, Ps. xxxvii, 25, cxii, 1, 3, Job xxii, 23, 24, and Prov. xv, 6, say worldly prosperity is the blessing and reward of righteousness; but Luke vi, 20, Matt. vi, 19, 21, Luke xvi, 22, vi, 24, and Matt. xix, 24, pronounce worldly prosperity a curse, and say it is a bar to future reward.

Matt. xi, 28-30, and 1 Peter iii, 13, say that the Christian yoke is easy; but John xvi, 33, 2 Tim. iii, 12, and Heb. xii, 6, 8, testify differently, and say the Christian yoke is *not* easy.

Gal. v, 22, says the fruit of God's spirit is love and gentleness; but Judges xv, 14, 15, and 2 Sam. xviii, 10, 11, say directly to the contrary, and that the fruit of God's spirit is vengeance and fury.

According to Job xxi, 7, 8, 9, Ps. xvii, 14, lxxiii, 3, 5, 12, Eccl. vii, 15, and Jer. xii, 1, the wicked prosper and have longevity; but according to Job xviii, 5, 12, 18, 19, Eccl. viii, 23, Ps. iv, 23, Prov. x, 27, Job xxxvi, 14, and Eccl. vii, 17, prosperity and long life are denied to the wicked.

Luke vi, 20, 24, and James ii, 5, say poverty is a blessing; but Prov. x, 15, Job xxii, 23, 24, and xlii, 12, say riches are a blessing, while Prov. xxx, 8, 9, says that neither poverty nor riches is a blessing.

Prov. iii, 13, 17, says wisdom is a source of enjoyment; but Eccl. i, 17, 18, says wisdom is a source of vexation, grief, and sorrow.

Prov. xxii, 1, says a good name is a blessing; but Luke vi, 26, says a good name is a curse.

Eccl. iii, 1, 4, and viii, 15, says laughter is commended; but Luke vi, 25, and Eccl. vii, 3, 4, condemn it in the strongest terms.

Prov. xxii, 15, teaches that the rod of correction is a remedy for foolishness; Prov. xxvii, 22, says, "Though thou shouldst bray a fool in a mortar . . . yet will not his foolishness depart from him."

James i, 2, says, "Count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations;" but Jesus prayed (Matt. vi, 13), "Lead us *not* into temptation."

2 Peter i, 19, says prophecy is sure ; Jer. xviii, 7-10, v, 31, vi, 13, says prophecy is *not* sure.

Gen. vi, 3, says man's life was to be one hundred and twenty years ; Psalms xc, 10, says seventy years.

Matt. xi, 2-5, John iii, 2, and Ex. xiv, 31, say miracles are a proof of divine mission ; but Ex. vii, 10-12, Deut. xiii, 1-3, and Luke xi, 19, deny it, and say miracles are *not* a proof of divine mission.

Num. xii, 3, says Moses was the meekest man on the face of the earth ; but Num. xxxi, 15, 17, shows him to be one of the cruelest men ever on the earth.

2 Kings ii, 11, says Elijah was taken up into heaven ; John iii, 13, says, "No man hath ascended up into heaven."

2 Tim. iii, 16, says all scripture is inspired ; but 1 Cor. vii, 6, v, 12, and 2 Cor. xi, 17, admit that some scriptures are *not* inspired.

Many other contradictions found in the Bible might be quoted, but here are enough to convince those who can be convinced at all that the book is far from being harmonious, consistent, and truthful, and that it abounds in cross-assertions, disagreements, and positive contradictions.

## PATRIARCHS AND PROPHETS.

It may not be amiss to take a very brief view of the leading characteristics of the most prominent holy men mentioned in the Bible as God's peculiar favorites, with whom he was on the most intimate terms, and who are most often held up to those of the present age as patterns of godliness and good works, for their character and conduct help materially in forming a just estimate of the book in which they figure conspicuously. If the book speaks too highly of its most important personages, and upon examination they are found to be men of bad character and reprehensible conduct, the book should materially decline in general estimation as a moral guide and record.

NOAH shall be the first in the catalogue. He was principally distinguished in five directions : first, as a ship carpenter ; second, as a sea-captain : third, as a successful conductor

of the most extensive menagerie ever gathered together; fourth, a man who drank too much wine and got so intoxicated as to lie in a drunken stupor with his person improperly exposed; fifth, in cursing the descendants of his own son to perpetual slavery because the son laughed at him as he lay drunk on the ground.

ABRAHAM was called "the Father of the Faithful," and is so regarded yet. He is the reputed father of all the Jews, the great-grandfather of Judah, from whose tribe Jesus' step-father descended, consequently in a particular sense the progenitor of Christ and also the father of Christianity and Christians. It seems Jehovah was on very intimate terms with Abraham, calling upon him frequently, holding conversations with him, making great promises to him, and sometimes even eating and sleeping with him. They partook of veal, griddle cakes, and parched corn together, and Abraham even washed Jehovah's feet. Abraham ought to have been a very good man. Was he? It does not appear that he was. He was unfortunately addicted to telling falsehoods. When he was seventy-five years of age and his wife Sarah sixty-five, in consequence of provisions being scarce in his country they went to Egypt, and Sarah was so attractive in her mature years that Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, fancied her, and wished her for a wife, or to take the place of one. Abraham seems to have anticipated this, and instead of telling the king that Sarah was his wife he falsified and said she was his sister. If she was his sister he had done worse than lying to live so long with her as a wife. He however said not a word against Pharaoh's taking her into the palace, and when she was restored to him again he very willingly pocketed the price of his wife's honor, or at least went away much richer in sheep, oxen, asses, camels, and servants; he was also after this little transaction much richer in silver and gold. But as a matter of justice God punished Pharaoh and his household for the wrong that had been done, though wherein the household had been in fault and deserving of punishment is not stated. It can hardly be denied that Abraham, in that Pharaoh and Sarah business, acted the part of a timorous, contemptible hypocrite. Neither did he grow better as he grew

older; some twenty-five years later, when he was nearly a hundred, and Sarah ninety, he journeyed south to Gerar, and either forgetting what he experienced in Egypt, or remembering it too well, he told King Abimelech the same falsehood about his wife that he told Pharaoh, and notwithstanding Sarah's great age Abimelech took her into about the same relation that Pharaoh had done, without a word of remonstrance from Abraham. The mistake was discovered by the king, and Abraham was again made richer by this dishonorable transaction. Abraham's crime of falsehood was made worse by his causing Sarah to falsify also.

God had long promised that Sarah should bear Abraham a son, but the promise being slow of fulfilment Abraham took his bondwoman, Hagar, as a bosom companion, and she bore him Ishmael, when he was eighty-six years of age. Sarah doubtless was troubled with jealousy, and she treated Hagar so unkindly that that bondwoman ran away before the child was born. But she was only a slave and God persuaded her to return and submit herself to Sarah. At length the long deferred promise of a child by Sarah was fulfilled. When Abraham was one hundred years old, and Sarah ninety, Isaac was born. Soon after this Sarah persuaded Abraham to send Hagar and her child away, and to the eternal disgrace of the old man be it said he turned his own child and its mother from his door out into the wilderness or desert, where they inevitably must have perished had not God interfered in their behalf.

Abraham's attempt to take the life of his son Isaac is looked upon differently by different persons. Some praise the deed as most meritorious; others condemn it as unnatural and monstrous. He seemed to not have a word of objection to offer to the terrible deed, but went about it as complacently as though Isaac had been a ram. We are told to believe that God ordered Abraham to this extreme violence against human nature as an experiment to find out what course Abraham would pursue; but whether it was commendable or not, the old man's false nature showed itself here. When he left his home for the purpose of putting his son to death he uttered a falsehood to his servants saying, "I



and the lad will go yonder to worship, and come again to you." If at that time he did not expect to bring the lad back with him he was guilty of a positive untruth. If he knew the boy would return with him, the whole story is false and valueless. He even deceived his own son, who inquired relative to the lamb for the sacrifice. His most marked characteristics were duplicity and hypocrisy.

LOT was Abraham's nephew. He was called "righteous Lot," and was deemed too upright a man to be burnt up in Sodom and Gomorrah, so God called him out. But the righteous man's first act was to get drunk and commit incest with his two virgin daughters. If the people of Sodom and Gomorrah did any worse than this "righteous" man did, they probably deserved the brimstone God sent them.

ISAAC was another of the faithful fathers, but he did not greatly distinguish himself, except in practicing the same kind of deception his father was noted for. When the men of the plain asked him about his wife he lied and said, "She is my sister." But a game of deception nearly equal to it was later played upon him when he was made to believe Jacob was his first-born.

JACOB followed closely in the footsteps of his father and grandfather. A more false, unscrupulous, sordid, selfish, cowardly trickster is hard to conceive. He was a cunning knave without manly feeling. He took a mean and unmanly advantage of his brother when in a state of great hunger, and for a mess of pottage swindled him out of what was considered a treasure of very great value. Had Jacob possessed the affection and generosity of an ordinary savage, and his twin brother come in from the fields, wearied and famishing to the point of death, saying, "Feed me, I pray thee, for I am exceedingly faint," he would freely have given his hungry brother the desired food without the slightest reward; but he had not the magnanimity to appease his noble-hearted brother's hunger with a bowl of soup, but exacted for it Esau's birthright.

This cruel wrong was intensified further on. When Isaac became old and blind, and wished to be prepared for death, he sent his first-born son into the field to hunt some venison for

a savory dish he was fond of. Esau departed with alacrity, when Rebekah and Jacob concocted and executed a villainous fraud. Rebekah prepared a veal stew to deceive the blind old man, and the false Jacob presented himself for the blessing which belonged to his brother; and when the blind man said, "Who art thou, my son?" Jacob lied to his father and said, "I am Esau, thy first-born." Isaac was not altogether deceived, and inquired how he had secured the venison so quickly. With another lie Jacob replied, "Because the Lord thy God brought it to me." Isaac was still doubtful, partially recognizing Jacob's voice, and feelingly inquired, "Art thou my very son Esau?" and the future father of God's chosen people most falsely said, "I am." And then he received the blessing so highly esteemed, and to which he had no right. He deeply wronged his aged father and his own generous brother. And the same kind of base dishonesty marked his subsequent career. Esau very naturally felt aggrieved and indignant, and threatened Jacob's life. The latter, being a coward, readily followed his mother's advice and left home and repaired to his uncle Laban in Haran. Here he engaged to serve seven years for the hand of Rachel, the youngest and most comely daughter, but it was "diamond cut diamond" between Jacob and his uncle; and when the nephew was evidently under the influence of intoxicating drink taken at the feast the uncle palmed Leah upon Jacob instead of Rachel. Between the intoxication and darkness Jacob did not discover the cheat till morning; but he made a new bargain for Rachel and served seven years longer.

He and his uncle eventually made an arrangement about dividing the live stock. Jacob by a sharp trick and a species of fraud became owner of the better and larger share of his uncle's herds and flocks. At length he wished to return to his own land, and instead of saying to his uncle in a manly way what his purposes were, "he stole away unawares," when his uncle was absent at sheep-shearing, taking his wives, children, flocks, herds, and goods. And to crown the whole, Rachel, worthy companion of such a man, stole her father's gods, and when he pursued them she sat upon them and lied to her father, saying she had them not. Jacob's bigamy and

adultery need not be dwelt upon. It was common with God's chosen people in those days, and though he gave them many instructions on immaterial points, he seems not to have discountenanced bigamy or adultery.

Jacob, feeling both guilty and cowardly, feared his brother Esau, whom he had wronged, and he therefore sent a large present as a peace-offering; and, fearing justice, he took the precaution to divide his flocks and herds, so that in case Esau took a part all need not be lost. It was at this time that the celebrated wrestling-match between God and Jacob came off, in which Jacob is said to have acquitted himself creditably; but as the information respecting it probably came from Jacob himself, it cannot be less than extremely apocryphal. Esau, in meeting Jacob so cordially and forgiving the wrongs of former years, proved himself far more noble and magnanimous than his brother. It is doubtful if Jacob ever showed such generosity as Esau exhibited. The stories of his twelve sons, of Joseph's being sold into slavery and taken to Egypt, where he became the second magnate of the kingdom; of Jacob's sons going there to buy corn, and of their all moving into Egypt, where in less than twenty years Jacob died, need not be dwelt upon. We know enough about Jacob, however, to realize that he was designing, cowardly, and unscrupulous. Of Jacob's sons, the heads of the twelve tribes, considerable might be said; but though some of them were guilty of disreputable deeds, let us hope they were an improvement upon their father.

MOSES is the next prominent figure. He was the great-grandson of Levi, was born in Egypt, and was said to have been adopted by Pharaoh's daughter, who found him floating on the river Nile in a basket of wicker work, where he had been deposited to avoid being put to death as per Egyptian orders. How his brother Aaron and all others escaped is not stated. Little is known of the early life of Moses. The first deed the Bible narrates of him is the murder of an Egyptian with whom he had a dispute. It seems not to have been done in the heat of passion, for he looked cautiously "this way and that" to see there were no witnesses when he slew him, and hid him in the sand. After this he deemed it pru-

dent to leave the country and go to Midian, where he married a daughter of a priest named Reuel, or Jethro, whose flocks and herds he tended for forty years. When about eighty years of age God appeared to him in the form of a burning flame in a bush and conversed with him and sent him to lead his people out of Egypt, though the narrative says God "sought to kill him on the way."

After a series of ten unheard-of wonders or miracles in the form of plagues, during which all the cattle of Egypt were killed two or three times over, and all the first-born males of the land put to death, Moses succeeded in getting the two or three millions of people out of Egypt in a single night. When they arrived at the Red Sea it very accommodatingly opened, a dry roadway being formed, while the water was walled up on each side, enabling the vast body of people and cattle to pass through safe and dry. We will not, however, repeat all the wonders ascribed to Moses, the object being rather to examine into his character. He certainly exhibited great dishonesty in commanding his people to despoil the Egyptians of their jewelry, apparel, and other valuables, upon a false pretense, when he knew the goods would not be returned. He is said to have been the meekest of men, but a recital of his conduct shows the very opposite. He was arbitrary, imperious, cruel, and relentless. True, he seems to have exercised a wonderful influence over God, in soothing him when angry and persuading him to abandon his rash purposes, but he lost his own temper and showed great anger. When he came down from the mount with the tables of stone God had engraved, and when he saw the calf Aaron had made, is an instance of his hasty temper. He threw down the tables and broke them, more like a spoiled child than a man of great meekness and prudence. Three thousand of the people were put to death on that occasion, just for one calf.

Moses seemed to increase in cruelty and mercilessness as he increased in years. His conduct to his brother Aaron in taking him up on Mount Hcr, stripping him of his clothing, and leaving him there alone to die, was indeed an unnatural and heartless act; as was his treatment of the Midianites in sending an army to kill all the males, burn their cities, and seize all

their flocks and herds—a total of 808,000 head—besides gold, silver, and other valuables. The worst of all was the order to kill in cold blood all the male infants, all the women who had known man by lying with him—thought to amount at least to 50,000 persons—and to reserve 32,000 young girls and virgins to be used for the gratification of the lusts of his men! Nothing more horrible and utterly fiendish has ever been recorded of any despot or murderous monster. Some of his laws and commands are also of a cruel and merciless character. But it is claimed that he did everything by the command of God, and that the latter is responsible for all the cruel deeds alluded to. Between him and his deity, however, the children of Israel had a very sorry time indeed.

AARON was not a man of mark. He showed himself unfaithful to his God, whom he had seen face to face, and whom he readily forsook and led the people into idolatry, making the golden calf for them to worship. He may have been less talented than his “meek” brother, and was undoubtedly far less tyrannical, merciless, and cruel.

JOSHUA was emphatically a man of blood and slaughter. It seemed to be his delight to attack nations and cities, to put men, women, and children to death by the edge of the sword, taking their homes and all their property. Few generals have left so bloody a record.

DAVID is the next great Jewish general and king—the great glory of the Jewish nation, the especial favorite with God, being emphatically denominated “the man after God’s own heart.” After killing the giant Goliath—nine and a half feet high—with a sling, and Samuel anointing him king, he came promptly into notice: “the spirit of the Lord came upon him,” but his record is not by any means faultless. He did many things which a truly good man would scorn to be guilty of. The manner in which he obtained his first wife, Michal, Saul’s daughter, was peculiar, if not extremely delicate. Saul named a hundred foreskins of the Philistines as the price of his daughter, but David was fond enough of the killing business to make the number two hundred. The deed and the count remind one of the American savage counting up the scalps of his victims. Saul became jealous of David,

who to save his life fled to Naioth. David lived in exile for some time. Saul made fruitless efforts to catch him. After this he led a precarious life for some time. He gathered a band of desperadoes about him, lived a sort of brigandish life, sometimes levying "black-mail" on farmers and others. Having applied to farmer Nabal to make compensation for permitting the farm to go unrobbed, which command was not complied with, David resolved to murder the farmer and his household, to be avenged of his wicked reluctance to submit to his demands. As a compromise, however, David accepted the person of farmer Nabal's wife Abigail. As a striking coincidence it may be stated that Nabal died within ten days from that time and Abigail became one of David's numerous wives. With six hundred men he went and lived under the protection of Achish, king of Gath, who befriended him, but whom David repaid by levying war against him. He subsequently ignominiously offered his services to the Philistines, against his own country, but they were not accepted. The Amalekites attacked his town, Ziklag, and carried off property, but maltreated and killed none. David, however, was far less merciful; he pursued them, recaptured the spoil, and spared not a man of them save four hundred, who escaped on camels. In consequence of the death of Saul, David took the throne of Judah, while Ishbosheth, Saul's son, was made king of Israel, but he being soon assassinated, David ruled over both Israel and Judah.

One fine evening, from the top of his house, David spied his neighbor Bathsheba taking a bath, at which his passions became so aroused that he brought about an adulterous connection with her; and when she showed signs of becoming a mother, he sent for her husband Uriah (who was fighting in David's army) to come home and remain a few days that he might be the putative father of Bathsheba's child. But the soldier was too loyal to his king to sleep at home, and he laid every night at the king's door. David was thus foiled, and after having seduced the wife of his faithful soldier, he sent him back to the army, with a letter to his general, Joab, to place him in the front of the battle where he would be sure to be killed, thus virtually adding premeditated murder to seduc-

tion, for Uriah was killed as per his orders. To licentiousness and murder he added gross cruelty to his captured prisoners of war. He killed them without mercy or necessity; he placed them under saws and harrows of iron, and roasted them in brick kilns. His cruelty hardly knew any bounds.

His robbing Mephibosheth, a poor cripple, the son of his friend Jonathan, was an unfeeling and ungenerous act. His murder of five step-sons and two brothers-in-law, to gratify a malignant grudge toward the house of Saul, was characteristic of the man. His injunction on his death-bed to his son Solomon to effect the death of his faithful old soldier Joab, whom he dared not to encounter himself, showed the meanness of his character. He has by his admirers been regarded as a devout psalm-writing and psalm-singing saint, but it is not likely that he either wrote or sung many psalms; his licentiousness, bloodshed, and cruelty occupied his chief attention. If God was greatly pleased with such a man, it speaks badly for his taste.

SOLOMON was one of the greatest libertines the world has produced. He kept more females in his seraglio than any man on record. His special gift of divine wisdom did not suffice to keep him true to his religion and his God. He erected altars to the pagan gods of the neighboring nations, and encouraged their worship. He lived in sensual extravagance and luxury, and died an exhausted, disappointed, disgusted, and unhappy debauchee and *roué*. After his death his kingdom became divided, and ten-twelfths of it, after a few unsuccessful reigns, was captured and lost.

The PROPHEETS were far from being perfect men. Elijah took pleasure in causing the death of his competitors in the service of Baal, killing four hundred and fifty at one time, and calling fire from heaven and burning over a hundred men at another time. He was a vindictive, cruel man. Elisha, his successor, was not unlike him. Among his first acts as a man of God was to call two she-bears out of the wood, which tore forty-two children, and simply for calling him a bald-head. Isaiah was wild and erratic, dealing in language and figures hard to understand. Jeremiah was accused of being false to his own people, and of selling himself to Nebuchad-

nezzar. Ezekiel and Daniel had wild, strange, and unmeaning visions. Hosea admitted he took a wife of whoredoms. It is not improbable some of the prophets were good men, but the principal Bible patriarchs and heroes cannot be justly classed as remarkably good men; and if the Bible is to stand on the merits and excellence of its heroes and saints, its character cannot be very exalted.

### BIBLE OBSCENITY.

It cannot be truthfully denied that the Bible contains more coarse narratives and indecent language than any other book in circulation. There was once a meeting in Holland, of clergymen, teachers, and others, to consider some means by which to suppress obscene literature. The great German philosopher and writer, Goethe, was present, and he was asked if he was in favor of the scheme proposed. "By all means," said he; "let us begin with the Bible." He had good grounds for that advice. In suppressing works of obscenity the Bible should be the first book in the list. It is not the purpose here to quote the obscene chapters and verses alluded to, for one reason, that they would very likely be distasteful to the reader, and for another, that it might subject the writer to another prosecution and imprisonment. He is now serving out a sentence ostensibly for mailing "obscene literature"—a small polemic pamphlet on marriage and the relations of the sexes, in which there is not an obscene word, and not one-hundredth part of the indecency that the Bible contains. Some of the subjects, however, will be named and places given where they are to be found, so that those who wish to see just what the Bible contains in this line can look them up at their leisure.

The account of Lot's incest with his two daughters is given in Gen. xix. For Jacob's intercourse with his wives and handmaids see Gen. xxx. The ravishment of Dinah by Shechem is given in Gen. xxxiv. The adulterous and incestuous connection between Judah and Tamar is narrated in Gen. xxxviii. For Joseph and Potiphar's wife see Gen. xxxix. For the law of purifying after childbirth turn to Lev.



xii and xv. Unlawful marriages and unlawful lusts, Lev. xviii and xx. Priests' marriages, etc., Lev. xxi. Law for jealousy, Num. v. Adultery of Zimri and Cozbi, Num. xxv. Virgins to be kept for the use of the soldiers and priests, Num. xxxi. Tokens of virginity, etc., Deut. xxii, and xxiii, 1, 13, 17. The Levite and his concubine, Judges xix, Ruth i, 11, 12; 1 Sam. i, 2, 14; ii, 22; xxv, 22; 2 Sam. vi, 20, 22. David and Bathsheba, 2 Sam. xl; 2 Sam. xii, 11, 12. Ammon and Tamar, 2 Sam. xiii; 2 Sam. xiv, 22. David and Abishag, 1 Kings i; 1 Kings xvi, 11; xxi, 21; and 2 Kings xviii, 27; Esther ii, 12, 14; Job xxxi, 10, 15. David bewailing his diseased condition, Ps. xxxviii; Prov. v, 19, 20; vii, 18, 19. For decidedly amorous literature see Solomon's Song in full, Isa. iii, 17; viii, 3; xxvi, 17; xlvi, 2, 3, xlix, 1, 2, 15; Jer. ii, 20; iii, 1, 2, 6, 9, 13; xiii, 27; xxxi, 27. Ezekiel's bread-making, Ezek. iv; xviii, 6. Whoredoms of Aholah and Aholibah, Ezek. xxiii; Hos. i, 2; ii, 2, 4, 5; iv, 14, 18; ix, 1, 14; Mal. ii, 3.

The parts of the Bible here alluded to are by no means all that may be classed with the indecent portions, but by the time a person has looked these up and read them he will be prepared to acknowledge that no book of his acquaintance has half so much that is indecent and unfit to be read by young and old.

### SUMMING UP.

These remarks must be drawn to a close, although there is much more that can be said in the same direction. Far more space has already been occupied in this examination than was intended. But we trust a strong case has been made out against the Jewish and Christian scriptures, and in summing up these conclusions it is confidently claimed :

1. The Bible is a human production, and was written by men of ordinary capacity, who did not exceed in beauty of style, depth of knowledge, and purity of purpose the average writers of the present day.

2. It is wholly unknown who the great majority of the writers were or when they wrote.

3. Very few of them even claimed to be inspired.
4. The writings possess no intrinsic proofs of inspiration.
5. Very few of the books were written by those to whom they are credited, or at the time it is claimed they were written:
6. The writers were ignorant of the most common truths of nature and science. They thought\* the earth was a flat, stationary body, having "ends," "corners," "foundations," "pillars," etc.; that the sun passed around it or over it every day, that it was the center of the universe, and the principal portion of it.
7. Its writers knew little or nothing of geography, geology, astronomy, chemistry, and many other sciences now pretty well understood by even the youth of our land.
8. It abounds in errors, improbabilities, absurdities, impossibilities, contradictions, indecencies, and falsehoods.
9. It imparts very little information of a useful or practical character, but is largely made up of crude accounts of wars, bloodshed, marrying, begetting children, concubinage, rapes, adulteries, sacrifices, ceremonies, and crude superstition.
10. If it possessed a value at any former age of the world, and to the people among whom it was written, it has greatly ceased to be of marked value in this age of the world, and to the people of this country.
11. That the original copies have been lost many hundreds of years, and all that have existed for fifteen hundred years and more are copies of copies and transcripts of transcripts, into which many modifications have carelessly or purposely entered.
12. The councils and convocations of bishops and priests which assumed to decide which books were of divine origin and which not, were not men of remarkable ability, information, or morality, and were no more able to form a correct conclusion as to which books should compose the canon than ordinary men of our own times. On the other hand, they were contentious and disorderly, sometimes resorting to blows. No man is under any obligation to accept the dictum of any council that has taken action touching the book.
13. Thousands of errors of copyists, errors of translators, etc., are known to exist. King James' translation was pub-

lished in 1611. In 1711 it was corrected by Bishops Tenison and Lloyd, thousands of errors having thus been discovered and expurgated. In 1669 Dr. Blayney corrected a multitude of errors, reformed the text in many places, and rectified several material errors in chronology. More recently "the British and Foreign Bible Society, after having circulated millions of copies, have declared that a faithful examination of it gives rise to serious doubts whether it can be truthfully called the word of God." The American Bible Society in 1847 appointed a committee of its members to prepare a standard edition of King James' version, free from typographical errors. They prepared such an edition, correcting, as they stated, twenty-four thousand errors, but so alarmed did they become at the attacks made upon it that it was withdrawn; and the American Bible Society continues to this day to print and send over the world a book as "the word of God" containing, by their own admissions, twenty-four thousand errors. The Bible Revision Committee, at present remodeling and improving the "word of God," in England, are said to have reported one hundred and fifty thousand errors of one kind and another in the current version. When they will have completed their labors it will be so changed from the one in use that it is questionable whether the most ardent Bible-worshippers will be disposed to accept it as their revered "word of God."

14. The Bible is not calculated to give a true or exalted idea of the character of the Supreme Power in the universe, but represents him as a fickle, changeable, anthropomorphic, revengeful, cruel, unlovable being, inferior in many respects to some of the principal pagan gods described in the foregoing pages.

15. The Bible, shown to be, to Protestant Christians at least, a ~~rich~~—an object of veneration and worship—is so full of imperfections and fallibilities that it ranks but little higher than the mythical and imaginary gods worshiped by the various nationalities as treated in this volume, and should be valued only for its being a relic of antiquity and of the superstitions of by-gone ages.



## CONCLUDING REMARKS.

In the foregoing pages, though a large number of gods and goddesses have been brought to the attention of the reader, they are in reality but a small part of the deities which man has invented and worshiped in past ages, and which a portion of mankind are still worshiping in the present age.

The tendency in nearly all countries where the devising of gods has been a lively pursuit has been to increase the number of these imaginary divinities. It has been said of Hindoostan, which has evinced a wonderful industry in this direction, and has kept it up longer than any other nation, that the total number of her gods, big and little, is not less than two millions. Even on Mount Olympus, in Greece, during the comparatively short time the gods flourished there, it was claimed that the total number, including of course many of inferior caliber, reached thirty thousand.

The study of the gods and religions of the ancients is an extensive one, and shows through what almost interminable depths of error and misapprehension poor man has waded for thousands of years, with the nameless vagaries, chimeras, myths, and baseless imaginings which his ill-informed mind has conceived. In looking back as far as our knowledge of the race extends toward the time when primitive man gradually emerged from the depths of savagism and barbarism, it is seen that in making gods and devils there has hardly been an intermission, and he has been constantly cudgeling his brains to see how he could please and placate them after he had found them.

Man's gods and religions had their origin in fear and ignorance, and these have led him a hapless chase for thousands of years. He saw the operations of nature all around him, both in loveliness and in fury, and unable to form a correct conception of it, he imagined all possible errors and absurdities. Wherever he saw action or motion he supposed some invis-

ble being dwelt there who produced the movement, and who also delighted in causing the beholder either pleasure or pain. Thus man in his ignorance and in his fears located a god, a devil, or a spirit, in every breeze; in the clouds, in the moving leaves of the trees, in the waving grass, at every waterfall, every river, every lake, in the ocean, in the woods, in the groves, in the shady dells, in the zephyrs, in the gales, in the hurricanes, in the north wind, in the south wind, in the east wind, and the west wind; in day and night, in morning, noon-day, and evening; in spring, summer, autumn, and winter; in the burning rays of the sun, in the midnight darkness, in every whirlwind, in every glen, dell, and cavern; in the lightning, the thunder, and the tornado. Every element and force of nature was thus personified, and every locality was placed under the control of these invisible gods or demons. In this way a crude, mistaken nature-worship became established, and was the basis of all the divinities of which man was capable of conceiving. He found that the burning rays of the sun, the storm, tempest, and hurricane, the bleak wind and frosts of winter, caused him pain and discomfort, and these he readily believed to be under the control of unfriendly gods or demons, whom to keep from causing him harm he must needs placate and appease by any devices, rites, ceremonies, sacrifices, and oblations, within his conception and control.

In the world around him he saw the opposing forces of light and darkness, heat and cold, life and death, and it was very natural for him to regard them as controlled by antagonistic personages—contending gods and devils. The sun, the source of light and life, of plenty and happiness, was readily regarded as the great supreme god of beneficence, mercy, and love; while darkness and cold were monsters of evil, or devils of the largest proportions—the direst enemies to the great and good god, and to the human race. These gods and devils were in ceaseless conflict, and of course must be the most relentless enemies to each other. In this way man, from age to age, peopled the air, the surface of the earth, and the regions below it with innumerable good and bad beings, which he called gods, devils, izeds, devas, gnomes, genii, gorgons, fates, furies, harpies, naiads, spirits, fairies, gob-

lins, giants, dwarfs, elves, hulders, tralls, witches, and an almost endless class of similar impossible beings, existing wholly in the imagination, no man having ever seen any of them at any time.

Grievous and interminable evils have grown out of this imperfect appreciation of nature, this ignorance and fear. Could man have had correct views of the forces of nature, and of the laws which control the universe, it would have saved him a world of terror and wretchedness. Could he have understood that every event that takes place in the world is directly the result of a natural cause; that no result was ever produced except by a natural cause; that nothing is moved or manipulated by invisible gods or devils, it would have added inconceivably to his happiness. He would then have studied nature, and let his mind run far less on the impossible creations of his fancy. Here was unmistakably the greatest error which man made in the outset of his existence. He overlooked the great truth that universal nature is governed by natural, irrevocable laws, which no fancied spirit or devil has the least power to interfere with. Had he not started so far amiss he would in time probably have at least partially understood that the universe comprehends and contains every form and existence—matter and force; that it fills immensity; that there is no room within it or without it for extraneous, supernatural beings, good or bad.

He could have learned that all its operations are equally simple and easy—the courses of the heavenly bodies through space as the falling of an apple from a tree; the evolution of a globe from its primitive state to a condition suitable for the production of life as the germination of a kernel of wheat, and each in harmony with the whole.

Had man pursued realities more and phantoms less, he would have learned that all existences are parts of the universe; that matter and force are alike inherent in it, and cannot be separated from it; that it requires no demons, or spirits, or even gods, to keep it in action—no superintendents to keep it from going amiss; he would have acquired a fund of important truths, and have escaped a hell of fear, terror, and painful apprehension. Man made the mistake to suppose

that the vast universe, with its thousands of suns, systems, and constellations working in perfect harmony with its own laws must needs 'ave a designer and creator to bring it from non-existence, or chaos, into existence; to convert it from nothing and void into an immensity of something, or substance and force, and to keep it from relapsing back into its original condition of non-existence and confusion. As though the universe is not in itself infinite and eternal, and far more capable of acting regularly and in harmony with its own laws than with the aid of any Brahma, Chang-ti, Ormuzd, Osiris, Zeus, Baal, Chemosh, Allah, Jupiter, Odin, Jah, Mumbo Jumbo, or any number of imaginary gods, or all of them together.

The universe being the sum total of all existence, there being nothing independent of it; in many of its forms and combinations it being tangible, palpable, visible, it is not strange that man saw in it ample room for his contemplation, adoration, and study; but the great pity is, to repeat, that a belief in the gods and demons should ever have so beclouded his mind as to lead him into such depths of error and darkness. It has required a great deal of time to get rid of these mistaken bases of calculation and the creations of the imagination, and for such men as Bruno, Copernicus, Kepler, Newton, Humboldt, Darwin, Spencer, Haeckel, Huxley, Tyndall, Draper, and other men of that class, and grasp and clearness of mind and investigation, to come upon the stage, and teach the world important truths about the powers, potencies, and possibilities of the grand old universe, in place of the myths, figments, and fancies which have so long occupied the minds of mankind, and which unfortunately hold still too firm a hold in the world. Could the idea of supernaturalism have escaped the mind of man entirely, could he have regarded everything as a part of the universe, and consequently perfectly natural, real, and true; could he have been content to study this world more and the mythical worlds less; had he studied himself and his relations to the world around him, with all that pertains to his welfare, here and now, instead of gods and devils, inconceivably better would it have been for his happiness and prosperity.



Instead of living a happy, peaceful life in harmony with all around him, man has lived in constant dread and terror of the angry, malicious gods and devils. How to secure their good will, and how to prevent the visitation of their vengeance and cruelty has been his sorest trouble. To facilitate this difficult task and to save him the constant trouble of offering up prayers and sacrifices, he has for these thousands of years delegated a considerable share of this labor to a class of his fellow-men called priests, whom he supposed had more influence with the gods than himself, and who for a reasonable consideration were willing to act as proxies, mediators, and go betweens to establish and retain friendly relations with the celestial aristocracy in the world above the clouds. This priesthood very naturally became a privileged class, and claimed advantages and prerogatives not accorded to their fellow-men. They held their services and intercessions with the invisible powers to be of the greatest value to man, and for these services they levied heavy exactions upon their fellow-men. As they were believed to control the gods they easily became the rulers of men. They assumed arrogant airs, and pretended to know far more about the will and purposes of the gods than all the world besides. These they pronounced with great authority, and enforced their injunctions with the utmost priestly unction. Thus great advantages accrued to them, and their rule became exacting and oppressive. Their favor and influence were courted on all sides, and obsequious honors were paid them. In this way they have been enabled to play upon the fears and ignorance of their fellow-men; not only to give them great power, but to enable them to live upon the labors of their fellows, to array themselves in furs and fine linen; to enjoy an immunity from toil, and to be regarded as a superior class of beings.

This rule of priestcraft has cost man largely of the products of his labor, and has fastened upon the world the numerous systems of religions and creeds which the world has sustained. Every system of religion, from the lowest forms of fetichism to the more elevated mythologies, has abounded in priests who have boasted of the superiority and majesty of their special gods, and the great influence they themselves were able to wield

over them. Priestcraft has been, indeed, a heavy incubus upon the world, and the effects have been brought down to our own times, and it still retains a strong hold upon mankind. Much has yet to be done before the evil will be removed. The truths of science have to be extensively promulgated over the world, and the harmonious laws of the universe have to be much better understood than they yet are by the average inhabitants of the world. But the sun of scientific truth has assuredly arisen, its bright, life-giving rays are spreading over the earth, and ultimately, it is to be hoped, will enlighten all lands.

A marked peculiarity of the gods is that they have in all cases patterned closely after their makers. This has been true as regards civilization, taste, morality, and refinement. If, as is seen in the foregoing pages, the makers of the gods were but slightly advanced in intelligence, if their reasoning powers were dull and ill-developed, their gods possessed the same characteristics. If the god-makers were warlike, aggressive, and tyrannical, so were their gods. If they were fond of slaughter, massacres, and bloodshed, their gods exhibited the same traits. If they were degraded, so were their gods; if they were beastly, so were their gods; if they were gluttonous, so were their gods; if they were heartless, so were their gods; if they were revengeful, so were their gods; if they were murderous, so were their gods. On the other hand, such nations as were mild in character, and disposed to live in peace with their fellow-men, had mild and peaceful gods. So whatever qualities and dispositions the nations possessed who devised the gods, were imparted to their handiwork. By knowing the character of a people, there was no difficulty in deciding the kind of gods they worshiped.

While the basis of all the mythologies of the past ages was nature-worship—a personification of the elements in existence—the various systems have been modified by the peculiar characteristics and mental caliber of the originators of the myths. Thus with savages, their gods and their religion are crude and repulsive. In the Hindoo system the abstract and metaphysical qualities for which they are peculiar are distinctly marked in their deities and religious notions. In the

Grecian system their excess of human impulses, their ardor, their impetuosity, their ideality, their warm, glowing natures, and their love of the beautiful were clearly portrayed in their deities. The Norsemen were rugged, hardy sons of the bleak north, inured to combating with the fiercer elements of nature; their gods show it distinctly, and their religious system is like themselves and the tempestuous, rugged country where they dwelt. "Thunder to them was not mere electricity; it was the god Donner (thunder), Thor—god also of the beneficent summer heat. The thunder was his wrath, the gathering of the black clouds the drawing down of his angry brows." And thus it is with all the mythological systems with which the world is familiar. The principle of all is much the same, while the intellectual advancement of the people, and their peculiarities and idiosyncrasies, make up the variations. Mythic gods are in character much alike, and are diversified in keeping with the diversities of their designers.

Between all the systems of mythic divinities there are numerous features in common :

1. They all have a priesthood to interpret for them and to announce their will to the people.
2. They all deal in supernaturalism and miracles, citing the performance of innumerable impossibilities, like the production of offspring without a natural father, restoring dead people to life, unnatural and impossible transformations, and setting aside the laws of the universe in all conceivable ways.
3. All the gods have demanded sacrifices of animal life, and a majority of them of human life also.
4. Prayer and oblations have been demanded by all.
5. Altars and temples have been required by all or nearly so.
6. They have been impetuous, passionate, warlike, and revengeful.
7. Ambition and a desire to triumph over all opposing gods have been common characteristics.
8. Absolute submission from mankind has been insisted upon by all the supreme deities.
9. All the systems have found devils or antagonistic gods as essential as the more benignant deities.

10. They have been principally anthropomorphic in conception, being enlarged men and occupying one point only in the universe at a given time, thus leaving all remaining space without their presence.

11. All the systems are replete with crude and absurd vagaries and monstrosities, more creditable to the capacity of children than the developed intellect of mature men and women.

12. All are transitory in their nature and existence. While some of the gods have held sway for five thousand years, with some modifications and improvements, others have passed away in less than half that time. The nature-worship which led to their production must ultimately lead to a more correct appreciation of nature and her laws.

In point of greatest truthfulness there must long remain a diversity of opinion among the worshipers of each deity. Every devotee must be accorded the right to maintain the most exalted opinion of his own national god. He is perhaps excusable, until he has better information, for believing that all other gods are false, while his alone is true. To a disinterested observer, error seems conspicuous alike in all. None are conceived in accordance with the now well-understood powers and capabilities of the universe. All were founded in error, and all must give way to the unchangeable truths of the eternal universe.

All are about equally erroneous. Brahma and Ormuzd were dreams of the early mind, the same as Osiris, Baal, Allah, Zeus, Jah, Odin, Taaoroa, and the numerous processions that followed in their wake. The universe requires the aid of one just as much as of another, and is perfectly independent of each and all. They are all equally powerless to help mankind in making his journey of life; all serve to delude the searcher after truth; all have been a hindrance to the progress of the human race, and can well be spared to take their place with the myriads of dreams and vagaries which have passed through the brain of man.

That the systems of mythology, as well as the various religions of the world, have been more or less borrowed by one nation from another there cannot be a doubt. The Aryan tribes,

in all probability, furnished the most original religious notions of any race of men; and their views went far to give form to many religious systems which sprung up after they had left their Asiatic homes, and carried their civilization and their mythological ideas to their newer homes in Europe. It is not easy to decide positively the priority between the most ancient nationalities and mythologies, but that one nation borrowed from another, and that all the systems of the world have been made up from those which preceded them, is true—as with language, civilization, mechanical arts, etc.

Thousands of the minor myths have passed away, as well as many of the major ones. The gods and demons, great and small, are steadily taking their departure, leaving mankind to study the real and the true. In the language of Prof. J. W. Draper, (p. 413, *Intellectual Development of Europe*): “All these delusions which occupied the minds of our forefathers, and from which not even the powerful and learned were free, have totally passed away. The moonlight has now no fairies; the solitude no genii; the darkness no ghost, no goblin. There is no necromancer who can raise the dead from their graves—no one who has sold his soul to the devil and signed the contract with his blood—no angry apparition to rebuke the crone who has disquieted him. Divination, agromancy, pyromancy, hydromancy, chiromancy, augury, interpreting of dreams, oracles, sorcery, astrology, have all gone. It is three hundred and fifty years since the last sepulchral lamp was found, and that was at Rome. There are no gorgons, hydras, chimeras, no familiars, no incubus or succubus. The housewives of Holland no longer bring forth sootekins by sitting over lighted chauffers. No longer do captains buy of Lapland witches, favorable winds; no longer do our churches resound with prayers against the baleful influence of comets, though there still linger in some of our noble old rituals forms of supplication for dry weather and rain, useless, but not displeasing reminiscences of the past. These delusions have vanished with the night to which they pertained, yet they were the delusions of fifteen hundred years.”

In a word, the world is already learning that it can get along better without gods and devils than with them. Man is

gradually coming to the knowledge that the gods have cost him a heavy sum and have done little or nothing for him in return. He is more and more becoming conscious of the grave truth that it is better for him to devote his time, attention, talents, and energies towards improving this world, increasing the happiness of himself and of those around him—to make his heaven here and now—than to cudgel his brain and make himself unhappy in providing for a world of which he has no knowledge, and in appeasing, placating, and worshiping gods which have no existence save in the imaginations of ignorant and superstitious people. He is becoming satisfied that if there is a continued life after this, there is no better way to prepare to enter into it than by making this life happy, deriving all the true enjoyment from it possible, and by making earth a veritable heaven so far as in his power.

To enable the reader to understand the character of the deity believed in by the writer, in contradistinction to the gods treated of in the foregoing pages, an invocation to his god, written two or three years since, will be inserted here :

### INVOCATION TO THE UNIVERSE.

O Substance and Spirit of the Universe! In a feeling of awe and sincere reverence we would address ourselves to thee. We feel and believe that thou art the only Eternal, Infinite, Omnipotent, Omnipresent, Supreme, and Self-existent Power. There is none greater than thee, there is none above thee, there is none below thee, there is none beyond thee, there is none outside of thee, there is none beside thee, for thou art the MOST HIGH, the ALL IN ALL. Thou dost include and comprehend all forms of existence, all forms of being, all forms of force, all forms of life. Thy realm is limitless; thy extent is boundless.

All worlds, all stars, all spheres, all suns, all systems, all constellations, are contained in thee, and move and act in keeping with thy eternal laws. We recognize thy presence and thy power in and from the grandest orb that revolves in space to the tiniest mote that floats in the sunbeam. We see

thee in all that has existence, and without thee nothing can exist. In thee all life begins; in thee all life extends. All entities emanate from thee, and must ever remain in thee.

As eternal as duration art thou; as limitless as space thou art. Thou always didst exist through all time; thou always must exist through all extent. No bounds can be set to thy domain. Farther than the mind can think, farther than thought can soar, dost thou exist. Wherever space is, art thou.

We are part of thyself. Our origin, our parentage, and our existence are solely in thee, and must ever be. Thou art the great Uncaused Existence. Thou hadst no designer, no creator, no overseer. Thou art the Source of all sources, the Cause of all causes, the Force of all forces, the Life of all life.

Thou art as much superior to all the gods which man has devised as the immense vault of heaven is superior to the merest point in space. Brahma, Ormuzd, Fohi, Osiris, Mithra, Indra, Baal, Zeus, Jupiter, Odin, Thor, Jehovah, Allah, Mumbo Jumbo, and the almost endless list of man-made gods, fade into insignificance in thy presence, and shrivel into utter nothingness in comparison with thee.

We adore thee, Most Glorious Universe, and we feel grateful for our connection with thee. We are grateful for all the powers, potencies, and possibilities that exist in thee. We venerate every form and expression of thy existence, whether in the mountain of granite, the beds of clay, the strata of gravel, the laminated rocks, the stratified carboniferous deposits, the sand, the oceans, the lakes and river of limpid water, the gushing springs and generous fountains, the life-giving atmosphere that surrounds the earth, the oxygen, the hydrogen, the nitrogen, and all the primates that make up thy substance. We are duly grateful for all the aerial and ethereal forms of matter and force, including electricity, magnetism, and all the subtle fluids, forces, attractions, affinities, which ever permeate thee and are parts of thy existence. We are grateful for these sources of organized life, as are seen from the minute green-mold that forms on cheese up to the state-liest monarchs of the forest; from the invisible monad, scores of which disport in the minutest drop of water, to the levia-

thans of the Northern Ocean: from the tiniest insect that the eye cannot perceive, to the majestic elephant; from the mite up through all the intervening gradations to intellectual man. All these forms of life alike have their source in thee, for there is no other source whence they can emanate.

We revere the system of suns and revolving spheres which stud the blue vault of space, and move in harmony with thy eternal laws, and to whose extent there can be no end. We duly appreciate the glorious light and heat which these millions of blazing suns are ever dispensing through the broad expanse of thy realm, diffusing organized life in all directions. Especially do we revere our own glorious orb of light in this solar system; from it we receive warmth, life, health, and blessings innumerable.

We view with profound admiration thy grand mountains, thy beautiful valleys, the undulating landscapes, the broad plains and prairies, the somber forests, the pleasant groves, the teeming meadows, the luxuriant fields, the grand old oceans, the expansive lakes, the smaller sheets of water, the majestic rivers, the lovely streams, the grand cataract, the laughing cascade, the sparkling springs, the gentle rill, the violent storm, the lightning flash, the reverberating thunder, the rushing wind, the gentle breeze, the portentous clouds, the descending rain, the silent dew, the re-appearing sun, the beautiful rainbow, and every expression alike of thy power and beauty. We admire the ever-recurring seasons as they pass—lovely spring, genial summer, fruitful autumn, and even frosty winter. All are alike manifestations of thy power—all parts of thy grand economy.

We view with admiration every form of animal and vegetable life, but most grateful of all are we for the existence of the human race, our brothers and sisters in the great and grand family of humanity.

We are grateful for the pleasures and enjoyments which existence affords us, and we desire to acquire such knowledge of thy laws as will enable us to shun the ills and disorders which we might otherwise fall into.

We are grateful for the riches which science is conferring upon the world, and with which she is blessing our race. We



regard her teachings with more veneration than we do all the myths and fables that have come down from the dark ages of superstition. To science we hopefully look for still greater light to lead the sons and daughters of men to higher degrees of knowledge, and to enable them to secure a greater degree of happiness and to confer a greater amount of good.

We revere the steady and reliable light which reason imparts, and hail it as the surest guide to mankind while making the journey of life.

We venerate the genius of truth, and desire ever to walk in her lovely paths. If we have truth with us, the mysticisms and errors which have so long cursed the world can have no blighting influence upon us. In truth is confidence, freedom, and happiness. Let us woo the spirit of truth; let us strive to secure her constant attendance and seek ever to walk in her cheering light.

We are grateful for all the good that exists in the family of man; for the spirit of devotion to the welfare of the race which thousands have evinced. Believing that the greatest amount of happiness we can attain is derived by conferring benefits upon our fellow-beings, we desire to make the performance of kind acts and good deeds to our brothers and sisters in the great family of humanity the governing principle of our lives. We desire to see this great family grow wiser, purer, better, happier; and to encouraging the good and discountenancing the opposite to this great brotherhood of man may the best energies of our lives be devoted.

May we strive to occupy our proper position in the scale of existence, while performing the journey of life. May we wisely gather up the treasures which nature has so bountifully scattered on every hand, and may we learn to perform the worthiest of all labors, to practice the greatest of all arts—*making ourselves and those around us happy.* AMEN.



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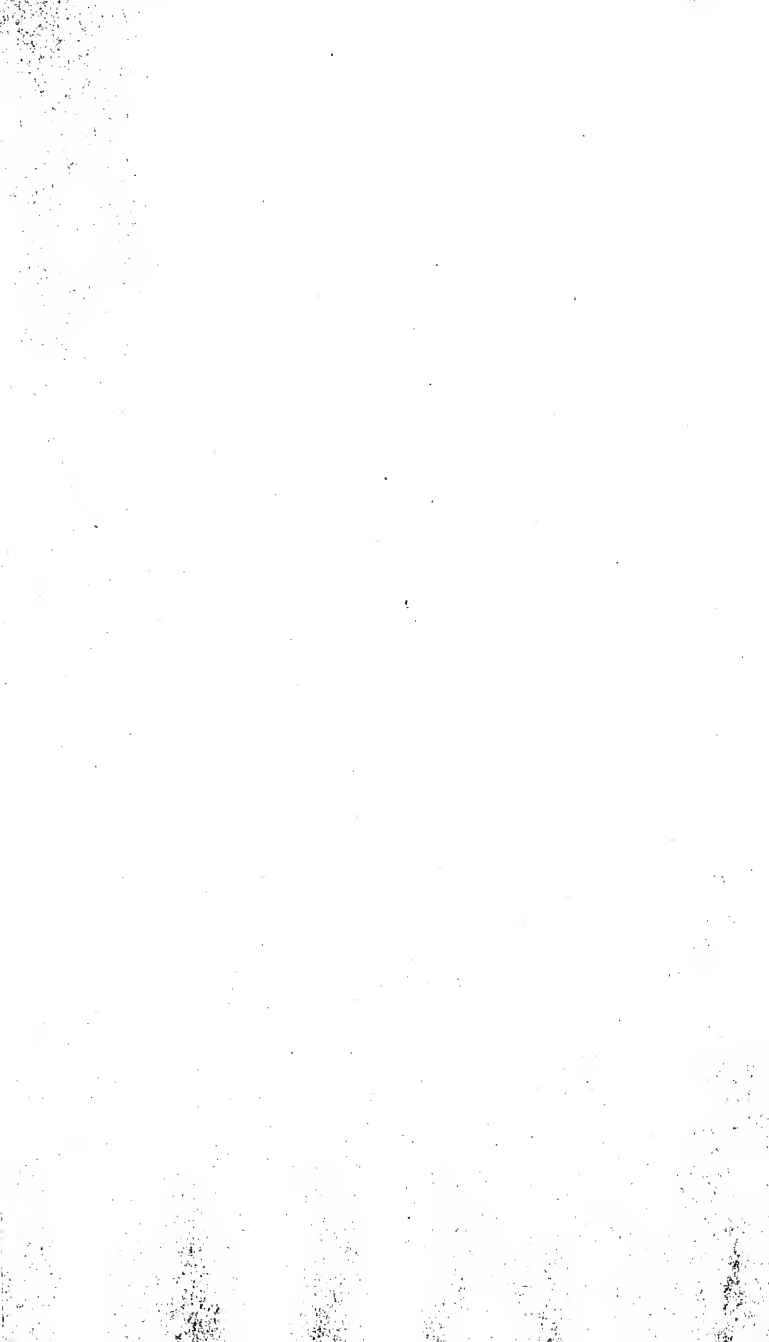
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