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ARTICLE IV.

A LACUNA IN SCHOLARSHIP.

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III.

AT the end of the preceding paper attention was called to one of the stock arguments of the higher critics, and its unreliability and inadequacy were exposed. The wonder is that any one ever placed such an interpretation on the passage in question; for common sense and Hebrew usage are at one in the matter, and the form of the narrative there found is typically Jewish. The same characteristics still appear in the mental processes of men of that race, and any one can test the matter for himself if he will only cultivate the acquaintance of some one of its members who has an active mind and is given to expressing his ideas freely. A modern training is likely to affect results in individual instances; but the experience will prove interesting and instructive, and if the person selected has had the benefit of a distinctly Jewish training it will prove illuminating.

With regard to the passage referred to (Genesis i. and ii.), it may be objected that the case offers merely a chance infelicity such as any one is liable to be guilty of, and that the critics should therefore not be held to so strict an accountability as to be blamed for the outcome. Unfortunately, the infelicity is typical of their whole position; for practically everything that they have done has been equally lacking in thoroughness and equally liable to mislead. I will not say to

deceive by falsifying results through intentional bias on the part of investigators. This point is made clear by certain considerations which have never been squarely faced by any of the critics. The opportunity has been before them for about four years, and it has recently been renewed with some emphasis. They do not seem anxious to embrace it.

These considerations — there are others — are included in the Canons of Validity, which were first definitely formulated in a paper of my own, published in the *BIBLIOTHECA SACRA* for January, 1913. Others had mentioned the main underlying principles at different times and in different ways; but no one had ventured to group them as canons that must be met. They had accordingly remained, up to that time, simply the unformulated and isolated opinions of different authors. That condition was now ended effectually, and a definite challenge to the critical cohorts was issued by the throwing of this gauntlet into their very teeth.

Following the canons, in the article in which they appeared, there were interrogations as to whether the critical theory could meet the test offered by each individual canon; for they were considered seriatim, the decision in every instance being in the negative. It would seem, therefore, only just that the critics should show in some way why the conclusions there reached ought not to be accepted, and it would also seem that, to do this, they must by some means make it appear that the canons are either false or not pertinent; but up to the present time, so far as I can discover, no notice whatever has been taken of the challenge by any member of the critical school.

The justice and pertinency of the resulting strictures have repeatedly been recognized by others, and within a year, observing the unanimity with which the matter has been ignored by those connected with the said school, as well as the discreet

silence that has been maintained by all its members concerning the canons in question, another writer has renewed the challenge in like detail by covering the same general ground in the same general way.

By a change of characterization he has brought out the fact that sound thinking demands the recognition of the precepts laid down in my own paper and now admirably restated in his. For convenience, the two are here reproduced as originally published, except for slight variations in the typographical arrangement, the headings, in each instance, having been embodied in the text. The second list was also not paraphrased.

THE CANONS
OF
VALIDITY.¹

Magour.

1. No explanation of a difficulty can be regarded as satisfactory, if it produces other difficulties worse than itself.

2. No theory can be received as tenable, unless it offers a better solution for the problems involved than any other hypothesis that has been suggested in the premises.

3. No hypothesis can claim to be pertinent, if it can be shown that such a supposition is not necessary as a means of accounting for the facts.

4. No rejection of known and well-established principles of textual criticism can be permitted to take place for the sake of bolstering up a proposition of any sort or kind.

THE GENERAL LAWS OF LOGIC
WITH WHICH THE RADICAL METH-
ODS HAVE TO COMPLY.²

Noble.

1. No explanation of a difficulty that creates greater difficulties is satisfactory.

2. No theory that fails to provide a better solution for a problem than other hypotheses is tenable.

3. No hypothesis, if not necessary as explanation of facts, is relevant.

4. No rejection of established methods and principles of textual criticism, in order to buttress historico-literary criticism, is permissible.

¹ *Bibliotheca Sacra*, vol. lxx. pp. 66 f.

² *L. c.*, vol. lxxiii. p. 405.

5. No proposition can assume to be final, if it has not taken cognizance of all the facts, including what may be termed the infinitesimals.

6. No assumption of reliability in results, where the foundation upon which those results rest is constantly shifting, can be justified by appeals to plausible contentions which do not harmonize with other pertinent considerations.

7. No canon can be accepted as sound, unless it is possible to get results that tally with known facts, when the said canon is applied to modern writings that exhibit the characteristics shown by those for which it was originally intended.

5. No proposition that fails to consider *all* factors, even infinitesimals and imponderables, is final.

6. No assumption of reliability in results, when the foundation is repeatedly removed, is justifiable through plausible contentions that disagree with relevant considerations.

7. No canon that, when applied to modern books possessing the characteristics of the works for which the criterion was devised, yet fails to secure results tallying with known facts, is sound.

It will be seen that the two sets of principles are in substantial agreement and that each is perfectly fair to the critics. One excels in brevity, the other in explicitness. Possibly the shorter is the better of the two. That can be left for others to decide. The important thing is not the verbal form but the practical content of the canons themselves. The thought embodied in the varying phraseology is the thing that counts, and that thought must certainly be reckoned with. Printed in this double form the critics cannot overlook it, and, having once seen it, they must either take up the gauntlet or face the charge that they dare not.

When my own version appeared, I did not feel disposed to press the matter, not being a theologian, even if it did seem to me that no avenue of escape was left for those who accept the critical theory. Others, however, have been good enough to endorse my position and pronounce my contentions sound;

and, now that Dr. Noble, a trained theologian, has joined me with a vigorous presentation of the same general challenge, I feel justified in calling attention to certain things, apart from the fact that the whole problem is a linguistic one having nothing whatever to do with theology even if it does involve some features of psychology.

Either Dr. Noble and myself are right or else we are wrong. From this conclusion there is no escape. But if we are wrong there ought to be some one with sufficient acumen to discover wherein we are wrong and with sufficient knowledge of English to make the fact clear. It is not within the bounds of possibility that we should really be wrong and yet succeed in presenting our side of the matter with such plausibility that no one can be found who is able to formulate such an answer to our contentions as will be successful in pointing out the particular thing or things erroneously set forth. It is therefore allowable to demand of the critics that they show us, even if we do not come from Missouri, in what single point or in what several points we are at fault in our proposed tests of the soundness and accuracy of their conclusions.¹

If our assumptions are all wrong, then the critics have an excellent case. If, however, they are sound, the critics must either demolish our arguments and find a loophole of escape from our canons or they must confess the hypothetical character of all their work and the hollowness of their pretensions. Let it once be admitted that our claims are legitimate and correctly formulated, and it will follow inevitably that the critics have no case whatever, since their theory cannot meet a single

¹If it were not "contrary to my mild and gentle nature," as "Tom" Reed used to put it, I should be tempted to openly defy the higher critics, singly and collectively, and dare them to undertake the task of meeting the canons herein published, or, indeed, any part of them; for I feel perfectly certain that they cannot do so, and that none of them will ever dare to try it.

one of the proposed canons and come off unscathed. It is not necessary to take my word for it or Dr. Noble's word for it. All that is required is an honest effort to apply the tests to the theory itself with some detail.

To fail to do so is a lacuna in scholarship; for no view that is new and necessarily subjective can be regarded as sound, unless it not only survives the severest tests that can be applied to it but also shows itself able to meet them on even terms and overcome objections. This the critical theory has signally failed to do. It maintains itself by an assumed superiority which disdains the views of any but its own advocates and then arrogates to itself the "responsible scholarship" of the civilized world. Such a course of action is pure "bluff" and nothing else. We ought to realize that fact and act accordingly. It has succeeded, however, beyond all reason and is still succeeding in some quarters, although it is being "called" with increasing frequency by those who look deep enough into the matter to see through it. The time cannot be far distant when it will go the way of all other similar pretensions.

When that day arrives, the canons formulated above will not have to be discarded. They will have to be met: The fact is, that if they cannot be met truthfully and successfully, then any disposition to cling to the discredited critical theory constitutes another lacuna in scholarship, and it is of a marked and conspicuous sort. That, however, is not all; for what has been done in the formulation of these canons and the issuing of this challenge is but a drop in the bucket of the opposition. Such men as Dahse, Wiener, Rupprecht, Green, Orr, and Kyle, not to mention a host of others, have issued other challenges that have not been answered and that cannot be answered. It is incumbent upon those who accept critical methods and critical results, if they are honest, to remove our difficulties.

In this connection it may not be out of place to quote a most interesting paragraph from a letter that was evidently written by a man somewhat given to thinking for himself. This is what he says:—

“It is my own conviction that in science as much as in politics this is a fight for freedom. The country in which V. smashed the apparatus put up by one of his underlings to test a question which V. had not suggested, or where F. could not write the results of his researches on ‘all or none’ until he left the university of X., where Y. was professor and held opposing views; the country where ‘*Es ist leicht zu sehen*’ and ‘*Man muss annehmen*’ take the place of observation, and the professors set up a hierarchy of science—that sort of place will be more and more a drag on the real progress of science, though it may believe, as many folk in other countries seem to believe too, that masses of papers at 40 marks per Drückbogen can take the place of observation and originality.” (Keith-Lucas in *Atlantic Monthly* for Oct., 1916, p. 546.) Immediately thereafter he says: “I fear German *scientism* as much as German *militarism*, and I believe the origin of both is the same.”¹

Here is food for thought. Have the scholars of this particular nation reached such an eminence as supermen that their mere opinion, delivered *ex cathedra*, outweighs the deliberate conclusions of other men, even though these are reached by the most painstaking and laborious research? That appears to have become a tacit assumption on their part, and it underlies all their studied indifference to anything and everything that men not of their school may think or say. This may sound severe; but how else can such an attitude of mind be accounted for and how else can it be justified? Assuredly such modesty

¹With this may be put another writer's candid statement:—“The sound qualities of good faith and of scientific equity . . . have been gradually replaced ‘by a bumptious chauvinism in which bluff keeps company with ridiculous boasting and which makes them deprecate the value of others to exalt their own merits to the seventh heaven.’” (Alvan F. Sanborn, “The German's Mental State,” *Boston Evening Transcript*, Sat., May 1, 1915.)

as this ought to receive the homage plainly demanded of an admiring world! Is that what English-speaking clerics expect, when they ape the views if not the manners of these cocksure leaders?

Going back, now, to what was said in the first of these papers, do the above quotations refute the statement, "those men are not seeking for the truth: they are supporting a theory," or do they rather serve by way of confirmation? If the latter alternative is taken and the statement admittedly holds good in science and philology, is it beyond the pale of reason to suppose that it may also hold good in the domain of theology so-called, since higher criticism still passes for a branch of theological studies? It is not even tainted with theology, in reality, except by way of perversion, and that fact should be remembered. What, then, are the probabilities? Are the critics seeking the truth with an open mind or are they supporting a theory with a closed one? What do the facts indicate?

Do the critics welcome anything that does not harmonize with their own peculiar views? Do they even read such things?—unless compelled to do so. Report has it that theological students are actually advised not to read or study any conservative author, but to confine their investigations strictly to the teachings of the critical school. Is that true? If it is, they confess by this very act that they have no case.

When we took up the critical study of Homer in my course at the Johns Hopkins University, Professor Gildersleeve gave us every opportunity to learn all that we could concerning the theory of Wolf and his followers. He did more than that. He even stated their position himself and then told us why he could not accept it. When it came to the formulation of his own belief in the matter, he was extremely modest though very

explicit, and he admitted frankly that he stood practically alone.

What was the result? We studied both sides of the matter, we weighed the evidence, and in the end we agreed with him! That was in the late eighties. Meanwhile, the world has gradually come round to his point of view, Wolf's theory has been not only discredited but also exploded, and, so far as Homer is concerned, higher criticism is both dead and buried. The obsequies were private. Why do not the advocates of higher criticism practice the same candor and intellectual honesty?

The very fairness of Professor Gildersleeve compelled us to listen to all that he had to say. Is it any wonder that, although I decided to major in Sanskrit for the added severity in mental discipline, I could not refrain from completing the full three years of seminary work required of a man majoring in Greek — an extra year of experience in the Latin Seminary was also added to balance things — and never lost an opportunity to get the benefit of his criticisms?¹ With such a leader, so it seemed to me, a doctor's degree ought to become a secondary matter; for the important thing was evidently this — the mental training to be had by association with such a master mind. I acted accordingly.

Some thought me foolish. They were after the degree, and they wanted it at a bargain if it could be had. Possibly I was

¹ These were to be had by accepting "critical exercises" in the Seminary. Seven papers of that sort were completed during the year that saw the beginning of my thesis, and only one was ever refused. That was in the Latin Seminary, my eyes were giving out, and it proved to be big enough for a doctor's thesis. My private reading necessarily suffered — one thousand pages of Teubner text in Greek and all of one author in Latin; — for matters of a business nature prevented me from doing much during the summer time, although a little Sanskrit was read. The result, including the publication of my thesis (see *Amer. Jour. Phil.*, July, 1889, pp. 165-197), was an additional year in Baltimore.

wrong; but the degree was the last thing I thought of. Professor Bloomfield insisted on my taking a variety of things to broaden my horizon, and he seemed to me to be wise. I obeyed orders, got a Sanskrit Scholarship and then a Sanskrit Fellowship, edited a new Sanskrit manuscript (the *āsūrīkalpa*) for my thesis, and in due time got my degree.

With such a "fit" behind me—five years of exacting post-graduate work under scholars of the first rank,—am I wrong in feeling that I am entitled to an opinion on this subject, which is distinctly within my line of investigation and my field of labor? Where is the presumption, in me or in the critics, if I ask for logical grounds on which to base a rational method of escape from objections that appear to me to be vital, and they sidestep the issue? It is true that I have not had the benefit of a distinctly theological training in a theological seminary, although I have spent years on such subjects in my private studies; but will any one dare to say that that sort of training is superior, especially for the work in hand, to the discipline that has been mine?

The field is a fascinating one. The great problem, however, is man himself. The relation of these things to the history of mankind is the real source of interest not only in these matters but also in that other field embraced by the study of Comparative Religion. The Rig-Veda, the Zend-Avesta, the Li Ki, Shû King, Shih King, and Yi King of the Chinese,—in short anything that chronicles the thoughts and beliefs of men concerning religion must be a subject of vital interest to all students of the race. They have been my hobby for many years.

That will explain why Biblical problems have so appealed to me. They are of various sorts,—linguistic, scientific, philosophical, religious, and ethnographical. Peculiarities of the

text come under the first head, "mediate miracles" come under the second, Abraham's attempt to offer up Isaac and the various lies told by Old Testament worthies come under the third, Moses' legislation with regard to worship and the segregation of Israel from the heathen come under the fourth, and the race problems constantly coming up in Biblical investigations come under the fifth. The classification is incomplete, but it will answer.

Within the last ten years an astonishing amount has been done in these various fields. The supposed myths and legends have been shown to be history in some instances and facts expressed in poetic form in others. The myth and legend theory, in short, has been exploded. It was never much better than a confession of shallowness or of laziness on the part of its sponsors, and, in reality, it constitutes merely another lacuna in scholarship; for no such explanation is actually needed anywhere, and a better understanding of underlying facts will make the whole situation clear in most instances. For example, Abraham was not "insane,"—he was merely getting into line with his heathen neighbors. The wonder is that he did not do so.

Similarly, the crossing of the Red Sea was not a fantastic impossibility,—the records of our own geological survey and the researches of Dr. G. F. Wright and others have made that abundantly evident along with various matters of a like nature in this field;—the flood was a world cataclysm (the recognition of this fact solves about a score of geological problems that seem to have no satisfactory solution otherwise); the extermination of the Canaanites was a bit of racial surgery that had become imperative, if a sane and healthy race was to give religion to the world; Sennacherib's army perished by bubonic plague; Genesis xiv. is not legend but history,—

Archæology has settled that, even if details and identifications are still in dispute;—and so it goes all along the line. Difficulties of this sort are therefore settled.

Linguistic difficulties remain; but they involve the whole critical field, textual as well as the so-called higher criticism. The former is rapidly and effectively discrediting the latter, and it can therefore be passed over in this connection. The latter has been forced by the process to shift its ground to the differences in style that are found in the original Hebrew. That makeshift, however, is a broken reed; for the solution of the stylistic problem is extremely simple. Oral traditions — to discredit them is to betray a woeful ignorance of things Oriental — modifying verbal expression and therefore producing variations in the linguistic style wherever they are embodied in the text, any and every adaptation of existing legal forms where such were needed, together with the ordinary textual fluctuations and glosses that always attend the copying of manuscripts, are enough in most instances to account for the different stylistic variations. A few special difficulties can doubtless still be found here and there.

Most of these are probably fortuitous and therefore hardly pertinent. Sometimes the history involved or the rules of textual criticism can be counted on to supply the needed information or the materials for a common-sense elucidation of the mystery. In either case the critical theory betrays its hypothetical character, because it becomes wholly superfluous in the premises if not an actual abomination to textual critics, who must necessarily be given a hearing before anything further can be done. The text is the first consideration. That must be settled to begin with; but it is not settled, and it was never more uncertain than it is to-day, thanks to the collators in that field.

That such is the state of things is now commonly recognized by those who are familiar with the facts. It leaves the critical theory suspended in the air, so to speak; for the Massoretic Text has lost its authoritative position and is no longer the infallible guide that it was assumed to be by the critics when they began their work. The names of God are now "the sore spot" in this theory, and Wellhausen himself is said to have admitted it.¹ What still remains can be disposed of by the simple expedient of recognizing the normal method of procedure that a man of that day and generation would follow under the conditions which Moses faced. To fail to recognize this fact and give it due weight is to be guilty of another lacuna in scholarship.

Exodus xviii. indicates an imperative need of secular laws, and Moses must have known such verbatim. That will explain the fact that in Ex. xxi. and xxii. laws are found very similar to those in the code of Hammurabi; for the laws of that day in countries more or less intimately connected with one another would probably come to be more or less alike. Exodus xxviii. begins to reveal a similar imperative need for the details of a ritual. Numbers xi. 16-17 discloses a situation calling for a clear understanding of all things Hebraic. Numbers xxvii. 12-17 furnishes a reason for the repetition of the law. Put all these passages together, and the motives for the preparation of the Pentateuch are uncovered. It would be the natural result of those motives; but every bit of learning — whether it included Egyptian lore of any sort or Israelitish tradition — that was incorporated in that Pentateuch would necessarily have a definite and fixed verbal form. In that form it would be used if possible, and that means variations in style. They are therefore an evidence of genuineness.

¹ See *Expository Times*, vol. xx. p. 563.

That they have not been so regarded makes no difference. That is what they are. To deny it is to be guilty of an anachronism, since it is to put the matter on a modern basis. We do not do things that way; but the ancients did, and the method is typically Oriental. What we do is not pertinent. The only thing to be considered is what they did or would be likely to do with their habits and in their environment, with all its limitations.¹

Incidentally, one other thing should be noticed. The critical theory necessarily involves the assumption that the Bible is "just like any other book." It must be if it had any such origin as these gentlemen postulate. That excludes inspiration and revelation. It also admits fraud, and it places the books of the Parsees and those of the Buddhists on a level with the Scriptures. That is the only logical outcome of the theory.

How any one can subscribe to such a doctrine, if he really knows anything about these other books and has studied his

¹ Attention has already been called to the part which memory played in such matters. It is exceedingly hard for modern scholars to get it through their heads that memory could be what it undoubtedly is and always has been among Orientals. We actually have a record of it in Jeremiah, where it says (xxxvi. 32): "Then took Jeremiah another roll, and gave it to Baruch the scribe, the son of Neriah; who wrote therein from the mouth of Jeremiah all the words of the book which Jehoiakim king of Judah had burned in the fire: and there were added besides unto them many like words." This means that Jeremiah remembered verbatim what he had previously said to Baruch and so was able to repeat his statements with such additions as the situation called for. It was not at all remarkable for a man of his times and race to do this. On the other hand, it was merely what would be expected of a prophet or any other intellectual leader. It was simply their way of doing things. We cannot duplicate it—all our training tends to make that impossible,—and so men of learning play the part of the deaf man who cannot hear, or of the blind man who cannot see, and either ignore or tactfully deny the very existence of the thing itself. The product is another lacuna in scholarship.

Bible, passes my comprehension. It is not necessary, however, for him to go that far. He needs but to ask himself why these other books never produce results like those which the Bible does produce. What other book, for instance, or set of books, ever took a gypsy boy from beside the wagon of his father and turned him into a preacher of righteousness? The Bible did that for Gypsy Smith. It also took a blundering clerk in a shoe store who could not speak English correctly and made of him an evangelist who stood before kings. What other book ever made a Dwight L. Moody? It likewise found a man in the gutter and thus gave to the world John B. Gough. Where can you duplicate that with any other book? And what other book ever so changed a low-lived river thief and miserable wharf rat that, as a result, Jew and Gentile, Protestant and Catholic, wept over his bier? That is what happened in the case of Jerry McAuley.

This last man hated the Bible. He tore two copies of it to shreds when they were given to him in prison. He succumbed, however, to a single text, which came to him by accident and burned itself into his memory. Could any other bit of any book do that? Has it, as a matter of fact? Can you find a record of anything that resembles it, if you keep outside the limits of the Bible? Such things are no exception for the Bible. It has done them again and again down through the ages. It is doing them now, in our own day. Why?

Is there any rational explanation except the simple and direct one that the Bible is different from other books? If we once admit that it is different, however, we must face the question,—in what respect? Is it accidental? The dilemma cannot be dodged. It must be met and answered. It begins to look as though the Bible must contain within itself some such element as the physicists encountered in studying the nature

of man. His personality was found to be simply unaccountable on the evolutionary basis of his brain development; for the higher apes had brains similar to his in every particular, so far as their anatomical structure was concerned. Man's personality, therefore, had no adequate explanation, and the physicists could find none. But it is there, and it cannot be ignored.

Moreover, this personality of his does many wonderful things. It selects certain portions of the brain tissue and makes speech centers of them, and it then proceeds to educate those speech centers to record words and to recall them when needed. Spoken words are entrusted to one section and written words to another, as appears from the fact that any injury to one of the individual sections immediately impairs its powers if it does not destroy them altogether. The process involves a remarkable story; but it is too long to be considered here.¹ In brief, the human will is an element that cannot be explained on a purely physical basis. It lies above and beyond that plane. It is a reality, just the same, and it cannot be denied.

In a somewhat similar way, the Bible contains an element that is unlike any found in ordinary literary productions, and this element cannot be explained on an ordinary basis. It breathes a spirit which has an amazing power over the lives of men, and that spirit is unlike anything else found in literature. There are things that may be said to resemble it; but most of them shine by borrowed light, if it is allowable to change the figure, since they get their illuminating power by reflecting rays that originated in the Scriptures. The extent to which thoughts taken from the Bible are so adapted for private use by all sorts and conditions of men is simply aston-

¹Read *Brain and Personality* by Wm. Hanna Thomson, M.D.

ishing. Hindu swāmīs do that kind of thing, in order to make their Oriental philosophy acceptable to our Western modes of thought, and then palm off the combination as genuine; although no Hindu in India would ever recognize it. Gullible Americans swallow it and think it charming. They are too ignorant of the facts to know any better. New Thought also appropriates various ideas from the same source and then makes bold to proclaim itself the coming belief. Much of it is old, exceedingly old; but tribute is nevertheless paid to the Bible, that greatest and best of books.

Some call the Bible bad. Anything is bad to the right mentality. The wardens of our jails will tell you that. To the pure in heart, however, all things are pure, and they understand. The Bible speaks plainly, and it has no use for prudery. If we only took care to read it in the right spirit, we could not condone sin, as most men do who think it bad. That fact alone is significant.

Let us suppose for a moment that the Bible is like any other book and see where we come out. Its peculiar power and influence cannot be denied, since they are too prominent and too well-known for that. They have no explanation, as already intimated, on an ordinary literary basis, and must accordingly be either miraculous or else inexplicable. In other words, for the sake of getting rid of the divine and the supernatural, the critics postulate a condition of things which actually demands a miraculous element to make it a rational possibility! In effect, they manage to create the very thing which they seek to be rid of, and they do it in the name of scientific research. They ignore a part of the facts, assume that their method is the only correct one, and thus manage to mix things up generally and to confuse the issue so effectually that their follow-

ers plunge onward, with their eyes shut, regardless of consequences.

As a by-product of this method, the children of Israel are reduced to the level of ordinary heathen working their way upward from an animistic or a totemistic state, through a period of polytheism, until they finally emerge, not as they should into pantheism, but into an anomalous condition amounting to an exalted monotheism, which, in turn, is another unaccountable miracle, if revelation is excluded, since no fountain ever rises higher than its source. The theory thus involves the supposition that the lower can be an adequate cause for the higher, which no rational mind can accept as a possibility. Israel, therefore, had some other element in its religious development, and that element is not found elsewhere in the history of ancient nations. It is like the human will and must be traced back to the Creator himself. With revelation restored, it is possible to understand how the Hebrews could have such exalted ideas of the Deity. Without it, all becomes a blank, and the reason is staggered by the facts.

This does not mean that spiritual growth and intellectual progress are to be excluded. On the contrary, they become the more imperative, since it would require time and many generations to grasp an idea so exalted as their conception of the Deity certainly was. It could be formulated, under the influence of the Spirit, long before it could be grasped by the people, and that is what the evidence seems to point to as it stands. Moses and Joshua and a few others in the early days apprehended God. The rest could not do so with clearness, because they were but children at best and lacked the intellectual power to comprehend the truth. They lapsed into idolatry in consequence, in spite of all the "signs" showed

them in Egypt and elsewhere. Some of them, moreover, would not believe. They still have survivors.

Jehovah is not a product of evolution in the realm of thought. Past experience plus present experience never would have resulted in such a God. No man or set of men could, unaided, have reached so great a height as that. It is also clear from the evidence that the further back we go the purer becomes the heathen idea of a tribal god supreme in his own domain. That condition has rightly been called an "inchoate monotheism," and it is another significant fossil, indicating that the Bible has told the truth concerning the early history of the race. Degeneration has been the common lot, and only the continued presence of the Spirit has saved men from losing their birthright altogether.

Men are still working to that end; for they exalt a theology, so-called, which necessarily excludes both inspiration and revelation from the Scriptures, although the fact is never advertised. Worked out to its logical conclusion, that is where it lands; but men swallow it and never stop to consider the outcome. Evolution sounds well, and this is in line with that. The unsolvable riddles that are thus produced, they do not even stop to look at; for thinking is going out of fashion in the mad rush of our modern life.

The natural goal of such a course is atheism. It is, in fact, the only logical goal, since a God that is evolved from human experience is no God at all. Human experience helps us to understand the meaning of revelation; but it is not the basis of revelation, and it cannot be. God is not a subjective development or creation, even if men would have us believe that he is. Neither is man the ultimate intelligence in the universe. He is not divine and he never will be. Moreover, the idea that there is a great unfathomable subconscious something

upon which we draw for power to work and to progress is essentially ancient and heathenish, even if it was not so expressed. The basic notion was once Egyptian, it was found in Greece, it is taught in the Vedānta, and now it appears in New Thought. Of necessity, such an idea is pantheistic. It cannot be Christian.

If there is a personal God, he must be benevolent. Inspiration and revelation thus become a natural part of his dealing with his creatures. That means a Bible such as Christians have believed in down through the ages, and it is impossible to escape from such a conclusion. Christianity and atheism are thus made the two alternatives, unless we resort to pantheism. Which shall it be? Nominal Christians who accept modern teachings are fast becoming essentially Hindu pantheists. If they are honest, they must admit it and no longer pose as Christians. To do so is to be guilty of hypocrisy. To propagate infidel doctrines while still posing as Christians is likewise to be guilty of hypocrisy. The very idea of a personal God must ultimately be laid aside, however, if the Bible is only a late forgery, since God himself thus becomes liable to be regarded as merely a philosophical speculation. If that is not infidelity, it is something very like it, and the ultimate effects of such teachings may be worse than those of outspoken infidels. When Satan poses as an angel of light, he is then most dangerous.

Is there no significance in the fact that men who still hold to the idea of a personal God and to an inspired Bible are the only ones who succeed in convincing men of sin and of their obligation to lead an upright life? Those who forsake these beliefs have no message, gain no converts to the faith, upset the belief of the weaker brethren, and feed their congregations on milk that has not only been skimmed but watered! No

wonder that their churches die. They deserve to die. That is the best thing that can happen to them, since they have really ceased to be Christian.

Do these strictures and those that have preceded them seem unduly severe? Do they seem unkind? Suppose they are sound, what then? Is it really kind to condone anything that robs men of faith and peace? Listen to this:—

“I lost my power as a Minister of the Gospel, . . . was often conquered by Satan, . . . even thought of self-destruction. . . . Thank God, I have been delivered. . . . I have chosen Christ . . . and have thrown overboard the higher critic with all his theories.” (Rev. J. A. Grose in *The Bible Champion*, March–April, 1917, p. 129.)

A robust faith makes men. The lack of it makes spiritual babes. The ripe fruit can now be seen in the devastated countries of Europe; for rightly has a Boston physician, who got his education in Germany, diagnosed the case, when he says that the men who are responsible for these conditions are “infants spiritually.” Ethically, they are undeveloped. They cannot understand the idea of right apart from self-interest, and they know no law but that. Righteousness thus becomes impossible, and frightfulness is the logical outcome. This lack of ethical development is only natural where a materialistic philosophy is allowed to dominate everything, not even excepting theology, and where “the survival of the fittest” is construed to mean one’s own country and people. This is indeed Antichrist, in essence, if not in reality. How long shall we continue to worship the image of the beast?