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## SCIENCE AND THE BIBLE<sup>1</sup>

THE question of miracles lies outside the subject we propose to discuss in this paper, for the reason that modern science and the Bible are obviously and entirely in harmony on that subject. The only thing science can say about a real miracle, like the Virgin Birth or Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, is that it is impossible, under the laws of nature; and this statement is made by the Christian with no less emphasis than by the scientist. It is of the very essence of a true miracle that it should be impossible for the alleged event to have taken place naturally. If it could be shown—which is, of course, impossible—that the Resurrection of Christ was due to the action of certain natural laws hitherto unknown, and to them alone, its religious value would be at once destroyed for every believing Christian.

What we propose to discuss is not the relation of science to the miraculous events recorded in the Holy Scriptures, but its relation to the assertions made in those Holy Scriptures with regard to natural phenomena. Are these assertions in harmony with our present scientific knowledge, or are they not? Looked at from this standpoint, is the Bible exactly like other ancient writings, exhibiting contemporary attitudes towards natural things, reflecting in its pages the crude and ignorant notions of an unscientific age, or is it so markedly different that we must fairly posit a special divine superintendence of its writers, withholding them from giving utterance to absurdities, and causing them to write the truth?

We shall examine first the New Testament, and then the Old Testament.

### I—THE NEW TESTAMENT

With regard to the New Testament, we lay down for the consideration of the reader the following proposition:

There is not a single statement in the New Testament that is even alleged, by any scientist, to be out of harmony with modern knowledge.

<sup>1</sup> An address delivered at the Eighth Annual Convention of the League of Evangelical Students held at Calvin College at Grand Rapids, Michigan, January 17th-19th, 1933, by the Rev. Professor Albertus Pieters, D.D., Professor of English Bible and Missions at the Western Theological Seminary at Holland, Michigan.

My attention was called to this many years ago, in reading a little book by Professor George Romanes, entitled *Thoughts on Religion*. Professor Romanes was a famous scientist, who lost his early Christian faith on account of his belief in evolution, but who came back to it in his later years, and died a believer. While still a sceptic, he wrote *A Candid Examination of Theism*, in which he demolished, to his own satisfaction, the arguments for the existence of God; but after coming back to the faith, or, rather, while feeling his way back, he wrote *Thoughts on Religion*, in which he revised his earlier views. On p. 167 of this latter work, we read:

“One of the strongest pieces of objective evidence in favour of Christianity is not sufficiently enforced by apologists. Indeed, I am not aware that I have ever seen it mentioned. It is the absence from the biography of Christ of any doctrines which the subsequent growth of human knowledge—whether in natural science, ethics, political economy, or elsewhere—has had to discount. This negative argument is really almost as strong as is the positive one from what Christ did teach. For when we consider what a large number of sayings are recorded of, or at least attributed to Him, it becomes most remarkable that in literal truth there is no reason why any of His words should ever pass away, in the sense of becoming obsolete . . . .

“Contrast Jesus Christ in this respect with other thinkers of like antiquity. Even Plato . . . is nowhere in this respect as compared with Christ. Read the dialogues, and see how enormous is the contrast with the gospels in respect of errors of all kinds, reaching even to absurdity in respect of reason, and to sayings shocking to the moral sense. Yet this is confessedly the highest level of spirituality, when unaided by alleged revelation.”

Let us take up this line of thought for a little, and see what a contrast there is in this respect between some of the most brilliant writers of the ages shortly before and after the time when the New Testament was written, and the contents of the New Testament itself.

Ancient thought comes commonly into collision with the teachings of modern science along three main lines: (1) Direct statements of things that are not true. (2) Belief in magic. (3) Belief in astrology.

(a) *Plato*.

(1) Plato's Chemistry.

“Water, when divided by fire or air, on reforming, may become one part fire and two parts air, and a single volume of air divided becomes two of fire” *Timaæus* (Jowett, Vol. III, p. 477).<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> From *Timaæus*. These quotations are taken from a translation by B. Jowett, M.A., published in a six volume edition. Page references are to that work.

## (2) Plato's Geography.

He says that the Atlantic Ocean was anciently navigable, but was not so in his day, because the Island of Atlantis had sunk beneath the waves just outside the straits of Gibraltar.

“ For which reason the sea in those parts is impassable and impenetrable, because there is a shoal of mud in the way, and this is caused by the subsidence of the island ” (Vol. III, p. 446).

## (3) Plato's Physiology.

In company with most ancients, Plato had a high opinion of the liver, and he devotes a considerable space to a discussion of its wonderful prophetic capacities, concluding as follows :

“ Such is the nature of the liver, which is placed as we have described in order that it may give prophetic intimations. During the life of each individual these intimations are plainer, but after his death the liver becomes blind, and delivers oracles too obscure to be intelligible ” (Vol. III, p. 493).

## (4) Plato's Biology.

Plato believed in something like the transmigration of souls, and in that connection had a very uncomplimentary idea of the way in which women come into existence. One wonders what kind of women he had known :

“ Of the men who came into the world, those who were cowards or led unrighteous lives may with reason be supposed to have changed into the nature of women in the second generation.

“ The race of birds was created out of innocent, light-minded men . . . these were remodelled and transformed into birds, and they grew feathers instead of hair ” (Vol. III, p. 513).

(b) Plato does not show to advantage, and no more does Pliny or his contemporary Josephus who tells us such things as these :

(1) One of the great dangers Moses met was a multitude of invisible serpents, “ which ascend out of the ground unseen, and also fly into the air, and so come upon men at unawares, and do them a mischief ” (Ant., Book II, Chapter X, Section 2).

(2) The Demon and the Ring.

Josephus relates, as something he himself has seen, that a ring, with a certain root mentioned by Solomon, was placed over the nose of a demoniac, and the demon was drawn out through the ring (Ant. Book VIII, Chapter II, Section 5).

(3) The Fruits of Sodom.

He also tells us of the fruits of Sodom :

“ which fruits have a colour as if they were fit to be eaten, but if you pluck them with your hands, they dissolve into smoke and ashes ” (*Jewish War*, Book IV, Chapter VIII, Section 3).

## (4) The Sabbatic River.

“ Now Titus Caesar tarried for some time in Berytus . . . He then saw a river, as he went along, of such a nature as deserves to be recorded in history ; it runs in the middle between Arcea, belonging to Agrippa’s kingdom, and Raphanea. It hath somewhat very peculiar in it ; for when it runs, its current is strong, and has plenty of water ; after which its springs fail for six days together, and leave its channel dry, as any one may see ; after which it runs on the seventh day as it did before, and as though it had undergone no change at all ; it hath also been observed to keep this order perpetually and exactly ; whence it is that they call it, The Sabbatic River ” (*Jewish War*, Book VII, Chapter V, Section 1).

## (5) The Root of Baaras.

“ There is a certain place called Baaras, which produces a root . . . Its colour is like to that of flame, and toward the evening it sends out a certain ray like lightning : it is not easily taken by such as would do it, but recedes from their hands, nor will it yield itself to be taken quietly, until either the urine of a woman, or blood be poured upon it ; nay, even then it is certain death to those that touch it, unless any take and hang the root itself down from his hand, and so carry it away. It may also taken be in another way, without danger, which is this : they dig a trench quite round it, till the hidden part of the root be very small. They then tie a dog to it, and when the dog tries hard to follow him that tied him, this root is easily plucked up, but the dog dies immediately, as if it were instead of the man who would take the plant away ; nor after this need any one be afraid of taking it into his hands ” (*Jewish War*, Book VII, Chapter VI, Section 3).

(c) *Augustine.*

Let us look at one more eminent thinker, one of the keenest minds ever created, St. Augustine, and read some of the mistakes he makes in regard to natural things. He was a man of truly scientific temperament, and of interest in nature. He lost faith in the teachings of the Manicheans because they contradicted what he knew to be true of nature. He was far ahead of his age in rejecting astrology. He took great interest in the load-stone, and experimented with its magnetic powers. He experimented with the flesh of a peacock, to determine whether it would spoil.

Yet he tells us soberly such things as the following, and bases upon them an argument to the effect that the things told of the future life are not more wonderful than some things we know to be true in nature : that in Cappadocia the mares are impregnated by the wind, and their colts live only three years ; that the Caramantac have a fountain so cold by day that no one can drink it, but so hot by night that no one can touch it ; that the apples of Sodom crumble into dust and ashes when touched with hand or tooth, etc., etc. (*De Civitate Dei*, Book XXI, Section 5).

(d) *Other Ancient Writers.*

We have found absurdities in the realm of nature in the writings of Plato, Pliny, Josephus, and St. Augustine, four of the most brilliant, intelligent, and well informed men of the ancient world. What of the others? If these things are true in the green tree, what of the dry? To discover this, one needs only to read the Old Testament Apocrypha, even those books accepted by the Roman Catholic Church. In Tobit one finds the story of fish liver that was a potent charm against the devil, when placed upon burning coals; in the New Testament Apocrypha the tale of a young man transformed by magic into a mule, etc., etc. Even a casual reading of these and other ancient writings will show how completely the thought of that day was permeated with magic, astrology, and every sort of erroneous conception of things in the realm of nature.

Now, then, turn to the New Testament, a book written in the same community, by men subject to the same thought influences, in the same general period, and explain, if you can, apart from divine inspiration, the marvel that there is not in the entire New Testament a single sentence that to-day is an embarrassment to faith because it is in conflict with the most advanced knowledge of natural science, not a passing illustration drawn from the apples of Sodom, or any similar mistake in natural history; not the slightest expression of faith in astrology; and not the remotest ascription of any event whatever to magical powers. Had we only the New Testament, from the literature of that age, we should without hesitation come to the conclusion that none of these things were then thought of; instead of which the fact is, as we have seen, and as is abundantly clear from all the extant literature outside the Bible, that the thought of the day was simply soaked in them.

Miraculous events, certainly, there are, in the New Testament, plenty of them; but miracles, in the Christian sense, stand in a totally different relation to scientific thought from such things as astrology and magic. Professor Romanes brings this out clearly when he says (*Thoughts on Religion*, p. 191):

“The antecedent improbability against a miracle being wrought by a man, without a moral object, is apt to be confused with that of its being done by God, with an adequate moral object. The former is immeasurably great; the latter is only equal to the improbability of theism itself—i.e. nil.”

This is a distinction to be constantly kept in mind. At the basis of all scientific thought and study lies the conviction that nothing occurs without an adequate cause. This conviction is not out of harmony with Christian miracles, for an adequate cause is assigned to them, namely, an almighty God, carrying out a programme of redemption. Therefore, although such a cause is not within the realm of science, and is not open to its inspection, yet the demand of the scientific spirit for an adequate cause is met. This thing, if accepted as true, does not result in an arbitrary universe, does not undermine the foundation upon which science rests. That is exactly what magic, however, does. Its results are alleged to be produced by the repetition of certain words and formulas, by incantations, roots, rabbits' feet, bits of hair, etc., etc., which bear no intelligible relation to any adequate cause. If this were true, there could be no science, for it would not be an orderly universe. Hence, with such a conception science is of necessity irreconcilably and eternally at war. If there were so much as one story in the New Testament in which the reality of magical powers figured, it would raise an acute problem of our modern faith.

There is not, and no explanation of this fact is possible, but that these scriptures were written by inspiration of God; for we cannot ascribe to the men that composed the New Testament any knowledge of natural things different from and superior to that of their contemporaries. It is not that they themselves were free from error, but that when they wrote this book, intended to be God's message, not only to their times but to ours, the guiding hand of the Holy Spirit prevented them from writing down anything that would discredit this revelation in the twentieth century.

Nor let any man say that, since the New Testament writers were discussing religion, not nature, there is no occasion for surprise in its freedom from scientific error. So was St. Augustine discussing religion, and it was precisely in order to strengthen his religious argument that he adduced some of his erroneous accounts of nature. Josephus writes a history—so does St. Luke. The former takes his heroes through various lands—so does the latter. Yet the former makes many mistakes in natural history—the latter none. Our Lord Jesus uses illustrations from nature constantly, yet not one that requires the slightest amendment in the light of our present knowledge.

## II—THE OLD TESTAMENT

So far we have confined our discussion to the New Testament ; for, however completely and confidently we also accept the Old Testament as the Word of God, it remains true that the New Testament is the primary Christian document ; that upon its history and teachings the Christian religion is based ; and that therefore the first question is whether science can raise any legitimate objection to anything in it. We have seen that it can not.

What we have thus seen to be true of the New Testament, may, broadly speaking, be affirmed of the Old Testament also. Again we lay aside, as outside the range of our discussion, those things that are definitely presented to us as miracles, events wrought by God at critical points in the development of revelation and redemption such as the miracles of the Exodus and of Elijah's time. The budding of Aaron's rod, the story of the ass that spoke with a man's voice to Balaam, the floating of the axe in Elisha's day, the healing of Naaman the leper, and similar things, are deliberately presented to us as having been done by God for high spiritual purposes. They come under the head of miracles strictly so called.

Certain other events have their natural side, and are presented to us as having taken place by the Will of God, without its being made plain whether they are of the order of an overruling Providence, using natural laws and properties, or not. Such events are the plagues of Egypt, the deluge of Noah, the passage of the Red Sea and of the Jordan, the lengthening of the day at the battle of Beth-horon, the preservation of Jonah for three days in the belly of the whale, etc., etc. If there is a scientific explanation, we are ready to hear what it is : if not, we classify them under miracles, strictly so called. In neither case is there any occasion to speak of conflict between the record and scientific knowledge.

Again, as in the New Testament, we are impressed with the immeasurable difference between the canonical scriptures and all contemporary or nearly contemporary literature. Compare what we know of the thought of Egypt, Babylonia, Greece, Assyria and Persia with the Old Testament books, and no one can fail to recognize the immensity of this difference. In all of these nations, divination, necromancy, astrology, and magic



were accepted as true, and all important events were brought into connection with them.

Yet in all the Old Testament historical books, in the Psalms, the "Wisdom Literature", and the Prophetic literature, whether of the Major or Minor Prophets, where do you find any passage teaching the reality of these things, or recommending men to use them? On the contrary, when they are mentioned at all, it is with loathing and contempt, as delusions and abominations of the heathen. There are two exceptions—at least apparent exceptions—to this statement. The magicians of Egypt are said to have transformed their staves into serpents, and the witch of Endor is said to have called up Samuel from the dead. We cannot now go into a discussion of these two instances. Even if they are real exceptions, they stand apart from the body of the Old Testament, and help to emphasize the contrast between that literature and the thinking of surrounding nations.

In regard to erroneous statements in the realm of nature, the case is more complicated. We begin by saying that even here the astonishing thing is the very great scarcity of any statements that, on this ground, can be called into question, but there are some that cause hesitation and difficulty. Among these we may mention the apparent teaching of Genesis xxx. 37-43, about the means taken by Jacob to cause the conception of speckled sheep and cattle. If the account means to say that this did cause such conception, we do not know how to reconcile it with biology; but when we look again, is the inspired writer doing anything else than to tell us what was in Jacob's mind, and is not the passage, xxxi. 10-12 intended to inform us that it was by the act of God, not by the influence of the peeled rods, that the speckled cattle were conceived?

Another case is the classification of the hare as an animal that chews the cud. Here the principle that scriptural language always refers to the phenomenon, not to the ultimate reality behind the phenomenon, furnishes an adequate explanation. That principle will be discussed presently. The reference to the eagle's habits, in Deut. xxxii. 11, has been challenged, but there is good evidence that it is correct. Then there are incidental references here and there that, taken literally, imply things about natural phenomena that are not true, such as that the snail wastes away as it goes (Psalm lviii. 8) that adders make themselves deaf (Psalm lviii. 4), that the eagle's youth is renewed

(Psalm ciii. 5) and similar things. At worst, compare these, even if acknowledged to be real errors, with the things we quoted from the wisest men of Greece, Palestine, and Rome. However, a reasonable explanation is immediately at hand. The things named are, almost without exception, passing allusions that had become standard literary phrases in the Hebrew language. When one uses such expressions, whether in poetry or prose, but especially in poetry, he is entitled to use them without being understood to commit himself to their correctness. We do that ourselves constantly. We speak of a city, after a conflagration, rising "like a phoenix" from the ashes, of the folly of governments that shut their eyes to coming dangers, "like the ostrich that hides her head in the sand", and other things of that kind, without intending in the least to guarantee the correctness of the tales about the phoenix and the ostrich from which these set phrases are derived. Most of the incidental references to nature in the Old Testament are of this class, and are of no importance whatever.

Far otherwise, however, is it with the first chapter of Genesis. There we find a series of statements purporting to give the essential facts in regard to the origin of the world, of the heavenly bodies, of vegetation, animal life, and man. These statements speak of the order in which these various things came into existence, of the state of the world before life existed upon it, etc. Such statements are about matters that fall within the proper domain of science, and fairly come into comparison with its teachings at the present time.

With regard to this there has been much shifting of opinion among Christian men. When astronomy, geology, and biology were young, there was a tendency among believers to reject their findings because of conflict with the biblical record as then understood, and many things were said that all sensible Christians must regret. To this there came a natural reaction, and the prevailing attitude among Bible students now is to say that science and Genesis are clearly irreconcilable with one another; but that it doesn't in the least matter, because the Bible is a text-book of religion, not of science; and we can accept its religious teaching as authoritative, whether we regard its statements on natural things to be true or false.

I wish to express my very emphatic dissent to this position. It seems to me that it matters a great deal whether we accept

the first Chapter of Genesis or not. It matters, first of all, because the religious teaching of that part of the Bible—and of all succeeding parts—is very intimately connected with what it says about the origin of the world and the process of creative activity. It matters, further, because our Lord and His apostles implicitly accepted the Old Testament as true, and if we must come to the conclusion that they were mistaken in so accepting it, it cannot but have an effect upon our estimate of them as religious teachers. It matters, finally, because those who begin by denying the biblical teaching on nature very soon are observed to go on to a similar denial of its trustworthiness in the realm of history, and then of morality: finally to the assertion that its teaching about God is inconsistent with the New Testament revelation. Beginning, thus, with the apparently innocent remark that the Bible is a text-book of religion, not of science, they end by denying that the religion it teaches is worthy of our acceptance.

Not only is the principle, thus enunciated, dangerous; I wish to register my conviction that such a surrender of the credibility of the creation accounts in Genesis is entirely unnecessary and unscholarly. If right principles of interpretation are laid down, while not every problem can yet be solved, and not every difficulty removed, the comparison of Genesis with what is really proved by science, results very favourably to the biblical record. Let me lay down three principles of interpretation, as I have come to view the matter.

(1) *The Phenomenal Principle.*

First of all in importance is the principle laid down by John Calvin, in his commentary on Genesis:

“To my mind, this is a certain principle, that nothing is here treated of but the visible form of the world. He who would learn astronomy, and other recondite arts, let him go elsewhere.”

This is what we mean by the “Phenomenal Principle” of interpretation, and it applies not only to the first chapter of Genesis, but to everything said in the Bible on natural things. Here or elsewhere, whatever the Bible says about such things must be understood of the “visible form” of things, as Calvin puts it: that is, of the phenomenon, the appearance that meets the eye, if there are human observers present, or as it would have appeared to such observers, if they had been present.

This is directly contrary to the method of speech employed by science, which seeks always to make its assertions in terms, not of the way things appear to the eye, but of the way they really are. Both are legitimate modes of speech, and if we are to compare the teachings of science and the Bible, we must first translate the one mode of speech into the other. A very common, and very sound, illustration is taken from the apparent motion of the sun around the earth. We say that the sun rises, that it sets, that it sinks beneath the horizon, etc., all expressions implying that the sun has a proper diurnal motion around the earth; and we continue to use such expressions, although knowing very well that it is not really true. Yet we are not inaccurate, for we speak according to the appearance of things, and if what we say is true on that basis, we cannot be accused of error.

Obviously sensible as this principle of Calvin's is, it has been constantly disregarded, both by friends and by enemies of the Bible. The great geologist Dana, for instance, seeking to reconcile science and Genesis, found in the six creative days six geologic periods, not remembering that this account properly has to do with the finished earth, and with stages in its production only in so far as they would have been visible to the eye of a beholder then present on the surface of the earth. Others have discussed the question whether the various forms of life include such as became extinct before man appeared: again making the same mistake. It is the animals known to us that are referred to, not such others. Reading the story of the Flood, men have thought that loyalty to the Holy Scriptures required them to believe that the waters covered the entire globe as now known to us: failing to confine the statement to the conditions that met the eye of the witnesses in the ark.

(2) *The Principles of Limitation.*

The second principle is that each biblical statement must be limited to what it contains, and that we have no right to read into it what is not there. Not long ago I had a letter from a man who was sure that the creation of man was an instantaneous act, because the account says: "God formed man from the dust of the ground, and breathed into him the breath of life." Yet it is clear that nothing is here said about any instantaneous creation. The Lord God formed man: Yes, but it is not said

how long it took Him to do it. He breathed into him the breath of life : Yes, but how long did this require ? You may have your own opinion on these points, but you have no right to say that your opinion is Bible teaching.

Modern scholars are great sinners against this principle. Almost without exception, the reference books tell us that the ancient Hebrews believed in a solid vault of crystal, extending over the earth, in which the heavenly bodies were fixed, and above which was a sea of fresh water, coming down as rain through sluice-gates, called the " windows of heaven ". In accordance with this erroneous conception of the universe they then proceed to interpret Genesis i. 6-8, and to declare it irreconcilable with our present knowledge. Yet there is nothing corresponding to this representation in the book. It is read into the account, largely on the basis of certain poetic figures of speech found elsewhere in the Bible.

### (3) *The Principle of God's working through Nature.*

This principle is that when the Bible says God did a thing, it does not mean to exclude the use of natural processes by God. Believers have too often taken the stand, which sceptics insist on taking constantly, that the laws of nature and the acts of God are mutually exclusive. People find certain natural causes for a phenomenon, and forthwith they consider that they have proved that God had nothing to do with it. This is far from the scriptural point of view. The Lord Jesus says that God clothes the lilies of the field, that He feeds the sparrows, that He causes the rain to fall and the sun to shine, not at all intending thereby to teach that these things are miracles. They are natural events ; but above nature, working in and through nature, stands God, and the completed phenomenon is His act. That is the uniform attitude of the Bible. If this is clearly apprehended and firmly held, it disposes of many alleged difficulties. We shall not be apprehensive that the geologist is contradicting the Bible, when he tells us he has discovered long periods and important natural processes in the formation of the earth. He may be right or wrong, we are not concerned, for by whatever processes God brought this world into being, it is still His creation. At the very beginning, of course, you must have instantaneous creation, for you cannot have a gradual beginning of anything, but after the first verse of Genesis there is no occasion to deny God's use of

natural processes in bringing about the results described, and there is much reason to admit it.

To examine the first chapter of Genesis in detail would require more space than we can now command ; but we may indicate a number of important points in which there is a most striking harmony between the discoveries of science on the one hand and this account on the other. Let it first be premised that we join with St. Augustine in looking upon the six creative days, not as ordinary days such as are known to us, but as “ days of God ”, to be measured by a measure not revealed to us. This is not a subterfuge forced upon us by modern science, as some would have it, but an interpretation demanded by the text itself, as St. Augustine clearly perceived. So taking the days, we have the following important assertions of Genesis, with which science agrees, or to which it, at any rate, can offer no objection :

(1) *That the universe had a beginning.*

In all antiquity, the Bible stood alone in making this assertion. All science now stands with it ; as witness the most recent views of Sir James Jeans and others. This is the first assertion of the Book, and it is of overwhelming importance. Agreement here means more than disagreement almost anywhere else.

(2) *That the earth was at one time dark, formless, and empty.*

(3) *That it was at one time covered with water, the continents gradually appearing.*

(4) *That there was vapour so dense as to make sea and cloud practically indistinguishable.*

(5) *That there was light on the surface of the earth before the heavenly bodies as such became visible.*

(6) *That the order of creation was, in general, first, vegetation, then marine life, then birds and reptiles, then mammals, and finally man.*

(7) *That man is essentially of a different order of being from the lower animals, separated from them by a wide and impassable gulf.*

In all of these important statements there is no serious conflict between the things stated in the Bible and the things definitely ascertained by modern science. Of course, we speak not of the many shifting theories, but of those things that can not be shaken.

As already said, by no means all problems have as yet been cleared up. It will be a long time before they are, if that ever takes place. On the one hand, we may be wrong on more than one point of interpretation. On the other, the last word of science has not yet been spoken. Yet it seems clear that the two are approaching each other, and that a later generation of Bible students will find it easier to bring them into reasonable adjustment than our generation has found it. I feel very sure, also, that scholarship will come back from the facile but superficial attitude now so common, that the two are hopelessly at variance, but that it makes no difference.

In conclusion, let us emphasize again that one thing is already entirely beyond dispute, namely, that the Bible, and the Bible alone, among all ancient writings, can make a respectable showing in the sort of comparison we have instituted. We have seen how true that is of the most famous writers of Greece, Palestine, and Rome. It is true, with added emphasis, of the recovered writings of Sumer, Babylonia, Assyria, Egypt, and Persia ; and it is no less true of the wisest things ever written in India, China, Japan, and wherever else men have thought and written on these themes, since the dawn of time. The Bible, and only the Bible, among all ancient compositions, has led men to views of the world that are tenable to-day.

ALBERTUS PIETERS.

Holland, Michigan, U.S.A.