

THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK OF THE BIBLE: I. AUTHENTICITY II. CREDIBILITY III.  
MORALITY, BY JOHN E. REMSBURG

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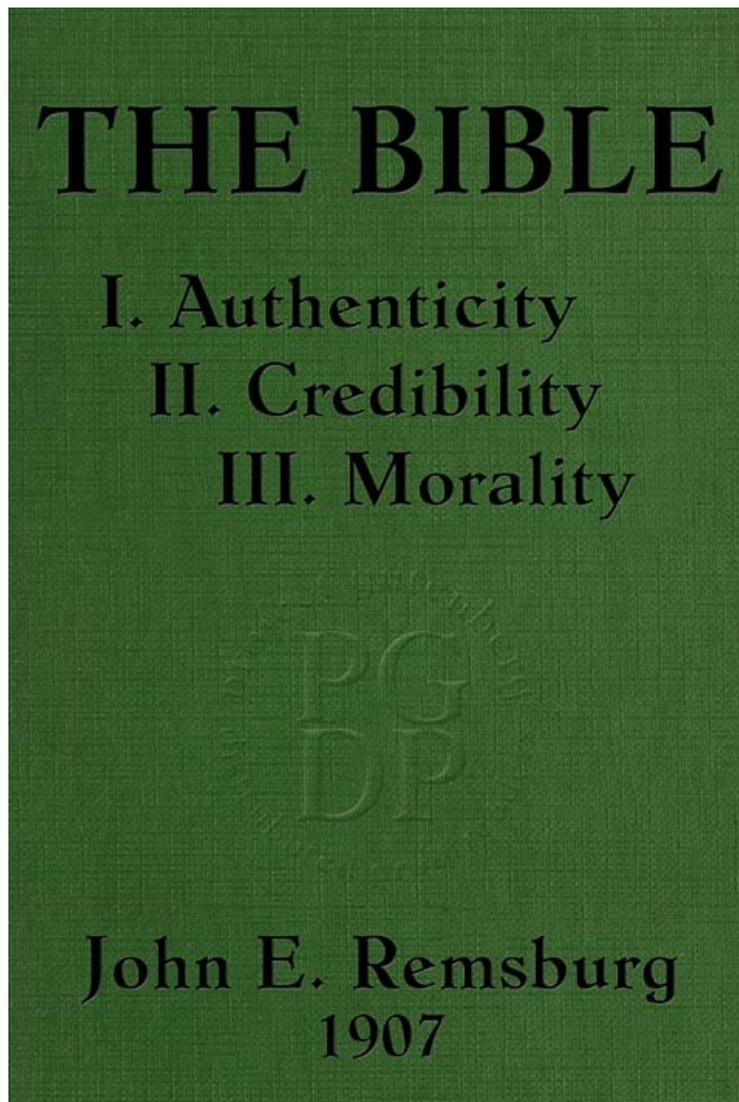
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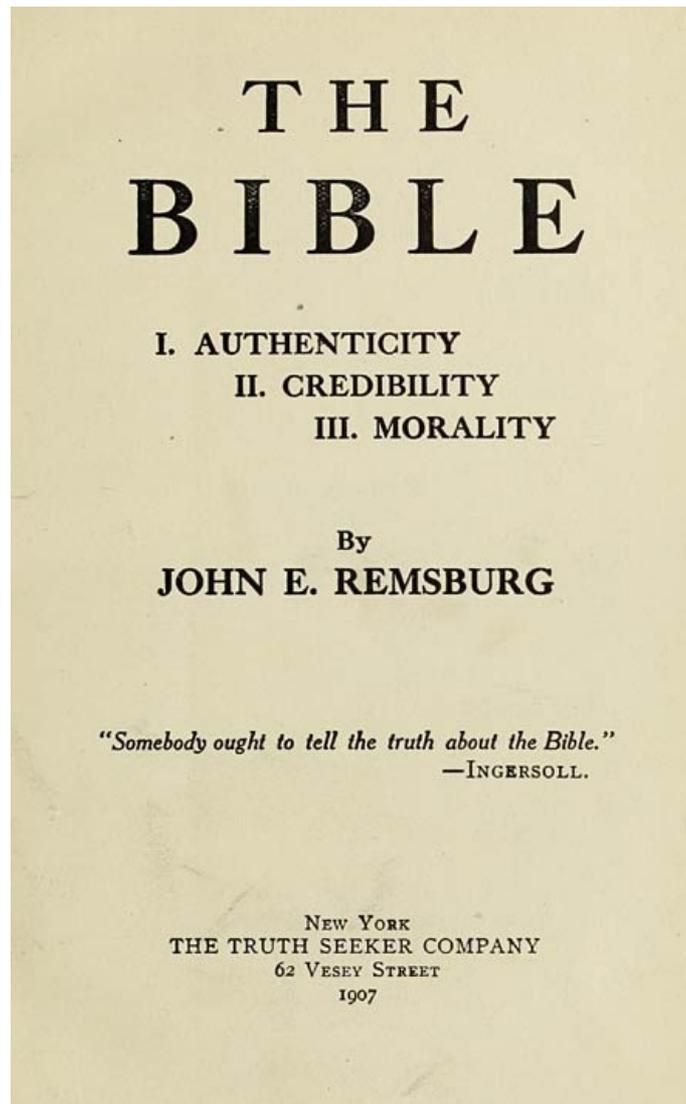
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# **THE BIBLE**

## **I. AUTHENTICITY**

## **II. CREDIBILITY**

## **III. MORALITY**

By

**JOHN E. REMSBURG**

*"Somebody ought to tell the truth about the Bible."*

—INGERSOLL.

NEW YORK

THE TRUTH SEEKER COMPANY

62 VESEY STREET

**1907**

In memory of  
my  
mother,  
Sarah A. Bruner.

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## PREFACE.

In January, 1901, the following announcement appeared in *The Truth Seeker*, of New York:

TO THE READERS OF *THE TRUTH SEEKER*: Two years ago that able and sagacious Liberal leader, L. K. Washburn, wrote: "The next great moral revolution of the world will be a crusade against the Christian Bible." The church expects this and is preparing for it. In an address before the Methodist ministers of Chicago, the Rev. Dr. Curry, a distinguished Methodist divine, said: "We are standing on the eve of the most stupendous revolution in reference to the doctrines of the Bible that the church has ever known." In this long war with bibliolaters the younger readers of *The Truth Seeker* will take a prominent part. To call their attention to the impending struggle, and to aid in a small way in fitting them for it, the editor of *The Truth Seeker* has invited me to open a sort of Bible school in his paper. For nearly a quarter of a century I have been writing and lecturing and debating against the divinity of the Bible. My opposition from the trained defenders of the book has been at times both keen and bitter. I was compelled to become and remain a diligent student of the Bible and of Biblical criticism. As far as possible I collected all of the damaging facts obtainable. I digested and classified them and filed them away in the labeled pigeon-holes of my brain for use when needed. I am growing old. My hair which was black when I began my work will soon be white. I have at the most but a few more years to labor. This arsenal of facts which I have gathered and the arguments that I have formulated from them I wish to place within the reach of others. Whether the thought be a Spiritualistic assurance or an Irish bull, it will be a pleasure to me when I am dead to know that I am still of some service to the cause.

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In the next issue of *The Truth Seeker* I shall begin a series of some thirty lessons or chapters on "The Bible." The chief purpose of the work will be to combat the dogmas of the divine origin and infallibility of the Christian Bible. The points of attack will be three: 1. Its Authenticity; 2. Its Credibility; 3. Its Morality. I shall endeavor to disprove in a large degree the authenticity of its books, the credibility of its statements, and the morality of its teachings.

JOHN E. REMSBURG.

These chapters were published in weekly installments in *The Truth Seeker*, their publication extending through a period of twenty months. The matter was electrotyped as published and the work will now be given to the public in book form. To those interested in Biblical criticism, and especially to the Freethought propagandist and to the Christian investigator, it is hoped that its contents may be useful.

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The facts presented in this volume, while known to many Christian scholars, are, as far as possible, kept from the lower orders of the clergy and from the laity. Divines enjoying high honors and large salaries may be cognizant of them without endangering their faith; but the humbler ministers who receive small pay, and the laity who support the church, are liable to have their faith impaired by a knowledge of them.

In Part II., devoted to the Credibility of the Bible, less space is given to the errors of the New Testament than to those of the Old Testament. This is not because the

New contains less errors than the Old, but because the author has prepared another volume on this subject. In "The Christ," a sequel to "The Bible," a more exhaustive exposition of the errors of the New Testament, particularly of the Four Gospels, is given.

While denying the infallibility of the writers of the Bible the author is not unconscious of his own fallibility.

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## THE BIBLE.

### PART I.—AUTHENTICITY.

#### CHAPTER I.

#### SACRED BOOKS OF THE WORLD.

Asia has been the fruitful source of religions and Bibles. The seven great religions of the world, Brahmanism, Buddhism, Confucianism, Zoroastrianism, Mohammedanism, Judaism, and Christianity—all had their birth in Asia; and the so-called sacred books which are used to uphold and propagate these faiths were nearly all written by Asiatic priests and prophets. A brief description of the most important of these books will be presented in this chapter.

## Sacred Books of India.

VEDAS.—The Vedas are the oldest Bibles in the world. There are four of them, the Rigveda, the Yajurveda, the Samaveda, and the Atharvaveda. Devout Hindoos believe that these books have always existed—that they are co-eternal with God. Scholars agree that they are very old, that the Rigveda, the oldest of the four, and one of the oldest books extant, was composed between 3,000 and 4,000 years ago. Each Veda is complete in itself, and consists of religious teachings, prayers, and hymns. [6]

PURANAS.—The Vedas and Puranas are the most important of the sacred books of the Hindoos. The Puranas, more than any other works, have contributed to mould the doctrines of the popular Brahmanical religion of India. They are eighteen in number, of which the Bhagavata, containing a history of Chrisna, is the one best known.

TRIPITAKA.—This is the Buddhist Bible. It was compiled 300 years before the Christian era. Self conquest and universal charity are its fundamental teachings.

UPANISHADS.—These are sacred books which treat of the Creation, of the Supreme Being or Spirit, Brahma, and of the nature of the human soul and its relation to Brahma.

TANTRAS.—The Tantras are sacred books relating chiefly to the God Siva.

RAMAYANA.—The Ramayana is one of the great epic poems of the world. It gives the history of Rama, one of the incarnations of the God Vishnu.

MAHABHARATA.—This is another epic poem, a larger one, containing more than 100,000 verses. Like the Ramayana, it is believed to be of divine origin. It has been described as “the great manual of all that is moral, useful, and agreeable.” [7]

INSTITUTES OF MENU.—Menu is regarded as the law-giver of the Hindoos, as Moses is of the Jews. The Institutes of Menu are in many respects similar to the so-called laws of Moses.

## Sacred Books of China.

YIH KING.—This book contains a cosmological treatise and a compendium on morals. It was written 1143 B.C.

SHU KING.—This contains the teachings and maxims of certain ancient Chinese kings. There are documents in it over 4,000 years old.

SHI KING.—This is the Chinese hymn book. It contains three hundred sacred songs and poems, some of which are very old.

LE KING.—The Le King is a text book on manners, customs, and ceremonies. It has been one of the chief agents in moulding the social and religious life of China.

CHUN TSIEN.—The Chun Tsien is a historical work compiled by Confucius. It gives a record of his own times and those immediately preceding him.

The above books, called the Five Kings, are the canonical books of Confucianism, the religion of the educated classes of China. With the exceptions noted, they were mostly written or compiled about 500 B.C. They are considered sacred by the Chinese, but not, like other sacred books, a revelation from God. Confucius recognized no God. His religion is preeminently the religion of this world, and is thus summed up by him: “The observance of the three fundamental laws of relation between sovereign and subject, father and child, husband and wife, and the five capital virtues—universal charity, impartial justice, conformity to ceremonies and established usages, rectitude of heart and mind, and pure sincerity.” [8]

## Sacred Books of Persia.

ZEND AVESTA.—This is one of the most important of all the Bibles of the world, although the religion which it teaches numbers but a few adherents. It was written by Zoroaster and his disciples about 3,000 years ago. It was an enormous work in size, covering, it is said, 12,000 parchments. The Zend Avesta proper consisted of twenty-one books. All of these, save one and some fragments of the others, have perished. They dealt chiefly with religion, but touched upon almost every subject of interest to mankind. They were believed to be a faithful record of the words spoken to the great prophet by God himself. Both Jews and Christians borrowed much from the Zend Avesta.

SADDER.—The Sadder is the Bible of the modern Parsees, and contains, in an abridged form, the religious teachings of Zoroaster.

## Sacred Books of Islam.

*Koran*.—The Mohammedans believe that divine revelations were given to Adam, Seth, Enoch, Abraham, Moses, David, Jesus, and Mohammed, and that each successive revelation in a measure superseded the preceding one. The books given to Adam, Seth, Enoch, and Abraham have been lost. The Pentateuch, the Psalms, and the Four Gospels are accepted by them, but the interpolations and corruptions of Jews and Christians, they claim, have greatly impaired their value. The Koran is with them the book of books—God's last and best revelation to man. It was written in rays of light on a tablet before the throne of God. A copy bound in white silk and bedecked with gems was carried by Gabriel to the lowest heaven, where from time to time, during a period of twenty years, portions of it were transmitted to Mohammed until the whole was given to the world. The book is divided into 114 chapters. It is elegant in style, and, like most other Bibles, contains, along with a great deal that is fabulous and puerile, some admirable moral teachings.

SUNNA.—The Sunna is a large work containing many thousand legends of Mohammed. It is a sacred book, but of less authority than the Koran.

## Sacred Books of the Jews.

TORAH.—The Book of the Law, now commonly called the Pentateuch, is the most sacred of all Jewish books. Jews as well as Christians believe that it was written by Moses and dictated by God. It was not divided into five books as we have it. In the oldest Hebrew manuscripts the entire work forms but one book. It was subsequently divided into *parshiyoth*, or chapters, and these into *sedarim*, or sections.

NEBIIM.—The Law and the Prophets were the chief authorities of the Jews. The books of the Prophets, called Nebiim, were believed by the orthodox Jews to be divinely inspired, but were esteemed of less importance than the Torah.

CETHUBIM.—This collection of writings comprised the hymns, poems, and other books now known as the Hagiographa.

TALMUD.—The Talmud, while not regarded as a divine revelation, like the Law and the Prophets, is in some respects the most important of Jewish works. It is almost a library in itself, and constitutes a vast storehouse of information pertaining to Jewish history and theology.

## Sacred Book of Christians.

HOLY BIBLE.—The Christian Bible consists of two collections of small books, one called the Old Testament, the other the New Testament. The Old Testament

comprises the Torah, Nebiim, and Cethubim of the Jews. It is divided into 39 books (including the Apocryphal books accepted by the Greek and Roman Catholic churches, about 50). The New Testament is a collection of 27 early Christian writings, which originally appeared in the various churches of Asia, Africa and Europe.

The Bible is but one of many books for which divinity is claimed. Christians deny the divinity of the other books, however, and affirm that they are of human origin—that their book is God’s only revelation to mankind. The orthodox claim respecting its divinity is expressed in the following words:

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“Behind the human authors stood the divine Spirit, controlling, guiding, and suggesting every part of their different messages” (Birks).

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## CHAPTER II.

### THE CHRISTIAN BIBLE.

The title Bible, from *Ta Biblia*, meaning The Book, or more properly The Books, was given to the sacred book of Christians, it is claimed, by Chrysostom in the fifth century.

For a period of one hundred and fifty years the sacred books of the Jews alone constituted the Christian Bible. They consisted of the following three collections of books which form the

Old Testament.

THE LAW.

|                                   |                          |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Genesis,<br>Exodus,<br>Leviticus, | Numbers,<br>Deuteronomy. |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|

THE PROPHETS.

|   |   |
|---|---|
| Joshua,<br>Judges,<br>1 Samuel,<br>2 Samuel,<br>1 Kings,<br>2 Kings,<br>Isaiah,<br>Jeremiah,<br>Ezekiel,<br>Hosea,<br>Joel, | Amos,<br>Obadiah,<br>Jonah,<br>Micah,<br>Nahum,<br>Habakkuk,<br>Zephaniah,<br>Haggai,<br>Zechariah,<br>Malachi. |
|---|---|

HAGIOGRAPHA.

[13]

|   |  |
|---|--|
| Psalms,<br>Proverbs,<br>Job,<br>Song of Solomon,<br>Ruth,<br>Lamentations,<br>Ecclesiastes, | Esther,<br>Daniel,<br>Ezra,<br>Nehemiah,<br>1 Chronicles,<br>2 Chronicles. |
|---|--|

To the above thirty-nine books of the Old Testament were subsequently added the following twenty-seven books of the

New Testament.

|          |            |
|----------|------------|
| Matthew, | 1 Timothy, |
|----------|------------|

|                  |             |
|------------------|-------------|
| Mark,            | 2 Timothy,  |
| Luke,            | Titus,      |
| John,            | Philemon,   |
| Acts,            | Hebrews,    |
| Romans,          | James,      |
| 1 Corinthians,   | 1 Peter,    |
| 2 Corinthians,   | 2 Peter,    |
| Galatians,       | 1 John,     |
| Ephesians,       | 2 John,     |
| Philippians,     | 3 John,     |
| Colossians,      | Jude,       |
| 1 Thessalonians, | Revelation. |
| 2 Thessalonians, |             |

The books of the Old Testament were called The Scripture, or Scriptures, by early Christians. After the books of the New Testament were recognized as canonical and inspired, the terms Old and New Testaments were employed to distinguish the two divisions. Tertullian, at the beginning of the third century, was the first to use the term New Testament. [14]

The proper arrangement of the books of the Old Testament is in the order named in the foregoing list. Both Jews and Christians, however, have varied the order. The books of the Hagiographa, with the exceptions of Ruth which follows Judges, Lamentations which follows Jeremiah, and Daniel which appears among the Prophets, have been placed between the Earlier and Later Prophets. In later Jewish versions the Song of Solomon, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, and Esther, called the five rolls, come immediately after the Pentateuch. In the Christian Bibles of the Eastern churches, including the two most noted ancient manuscripts, the Vatican and Alexandrian, the seven Catholic Epistles, James, 1 Peter, 2 Peter, 1 John, 2 John, 3 John, and Jude, follow Acts and precede the Pauline Epistles.

In the accepted Hebrew the thirty-nine books of the Old Testament formed but twenty-two, corresponding to the twenty-two letters of the Hebrew alphabet. Judges and Ruth formed one book, First and Second Samuel one, First and Second Kings one, First and Second Chronicles one, Ezra and Nehemiah one, Jeremiah and Lamentations one, and the twelve Minor Prophets one.

The books of the Pentateuch (*Pente*, five; *teuchos*, volume) now bear the Greek names given them by the Septuagint translators, with the exception of the fourth, Arithmoi, which is called by the English name, Numbers. The Hebrew names for these, as well as many other books of the Old Testament, are the initial words of the books. The name of Genesis, as translated, is "In the Beginning;" Exodus, "These Are the Words;" Leviticus, "And He Called;" Numbers, "And He Spake;" Deuteronomy, "These Are the Words." Joshua originally belonged to this collection, and to the six books modern scholars have given the name Hexateuch. [15]

About one-half of the books of the Bible, Joshua, Isaiah, Matthew, etc., are named after their alleged authors. A few, like Ruth and Esther, take their names from the leading characters of the books. The Pauline Epistles bear the names of the churches, people, or persons to whom they are addressed. The titles of Judges, Kings, Chronicles, Psalms, Proverbs, and a few others, indicate the subjects of the books.

The division of the books of the Bible into chapters was made in the thirteenth century; the division into verses, in the sixteenth century. These divisions are to a great extent mechanical rather than logical. Paragraphs are frequently divided in the formation of chapters, and sentences in the formation of verses.

## Canonical and Apocryphal Books of the Old and New Testaments. [Contents]

In addition to the canonical books of the Bible, there are many Jewish and Christian books known as the Apocryphal books of the Old and New Testaments. A critical review of the Bible demands a consideration of the apocryphal as well as the canonical books, and the subject will be made more intelligible to the reader by giving a list of both. In making a classification of them they will be divided into ten groups, as follows: [16]

1.

[Contents]

Books accepted as canonical and divine by all Jews and Christians.

Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy.

2.

[Contents]

Books accepted as canonical and divine by a part of the Jews and by all Christians.

Joshua, Judges, 1 Samuel, 2 Samuel, 1 Kings, 2 Kings, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi.

3.

[Contents]

Books accepted by a part of the Jews as canonical, but not divine; by most Christians as canonical and divine.

Ruth, 1 Chronicles, 2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon, Lamentations, Daniel.

4.

[Contents]

Books accepted as canonical by some Jews, and for most part by the Greek and Roman Catholic churches, but rejected by the Protestants.

Baruch, Tobit, Judith, Book of Wisdom, Song of the Three Children, History of Susanna, Bel and the Dragon, Prayer of Manasseh, Ecclesiasticus, 1 Esdras, 2 Esdras, 1 Maccabees, 2 Maccabees, 3 Maccabees, 4 Maccabees, 5 Maccabees.

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5.

[Contents]

Lost books cited by writers of the Bible.

Book of the Wars of the Lord, Book of Jasher, Book of the Covenant, Book of Nathan, Book of Gad, Book of Samuel, Prophecy of Ahijah, Visions of Iddo, Acts of Uzziah, Acts of Solomon, Three Thousand Proverbs of Solomon, A Thousand and Five Songs of Solomon, Chronicles of the Kings of Judah, Chronicles of the Kings of Israel, Book of Jehu, Book of Enoch.

6.

[Contents]

Books which formed the original canon of the New Testament and which have always been accepted by Christians.

Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Acts, Romans, 1 Corinthians, 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 Thessalonians, 2 Thessalonians, 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon, 1 John.

Books which are now generally accepted by Christians, but which were for a time rejected.

Hebrews, James, 1 Peter, 2 Peter, 2 John, 3 John, Jude, Revelation.

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Books now excluded from the canon, but which are found in some of the older manuscripts of the New Testament.

Shepherd of Hermas, Epistle of Barnabas, 1 Clement, 2 Clement, Paul's Epistle to Laodiceans, Apostolic Constitutions.

Other Apocryphal books of the New Testament which are extant.

Gospel of the Infancy, Protevangelion of James, Acts of Pilate, Nativity of Mary, Fifteen Epistles of Ignatius, Epistle of Polycarp, Gospel of Marcion (in part), Clementine Recognitions, Clementine Homilies.

Apocryphal books of the New Testament which are lost.

Oracles of Christ, Gospel According to the Hebrews, Gospel According to the Egyptians, Gospel of Peter, Gospel of Paul, Gospel of Philip, Gospel of Matthias, Gospel of Andrew, Gospel of Perfection, Gospel of Tatian, Gospel of Basilides, Gospel of Apelles, Gospel of Cerinthus, Gospel of Bartholomew, Acts of Paul, Acts of Peter, Revelation of Paul, Revelation of Peter, Preaching of Peter, Memoirs of the Apostles.

Here is a list of one hundred and fifty books. In the apocryphal groups have been included only the most important of this class. To these might be added at least one hundred other apocryphal books of the Old and New Testaments. Of these two hundred and fifty Jewish and Christian writings, sixty-six—about one-fourth—have been declared canonical and divine by Protestants.

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In the mind of the devout Protestant there is as great a difference between the canonical and apocryphal books of the Old and New Testaments as there is between light and darkness. The former he regards as the work of a wise and good God, the latter, with a few exceptions, as the work of ignorant and wicked men. And yet there is no such difference. The two classes are of much the same character. The worst canonical books are, perhaps, better than the worst apocryphal books; while, on the other hand, the best apocryphal books, if not equal to the best canonical books, are far superior to a majority of them. Circumstances rather than merit determined the fate of these books. Books of real merit and of high authority in some of the early churches were cast aside because these churches either ceased to exist or changed their creeds; while books of little merit survived as authorities because their teachings supported the doctrines which survived. The religion of the primitive churches underwent many radical changes. The Christianity of the second century was not the Christianity of the first. Books teaching the new theology superseded those which taught the old; and thus the earlier writings became obsolete. Of all the Christian books written prior to the middle of the second century only a few epistles have been retained as authorities.

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## CHAPTER III.

## FORMATION OF THE CANON.

Second in interest and importance only to the origin of the individual books composing the Bible are the facts relating to the manner in which these books were collected into one great volume and declared canonical or authoritative. The formation of the canon required centuries of time to complete.

[Contents]

## The Jewish Canon.

The Jewish canon, it is claimed, was chiefly the work of Ezra, completed by Nehemiah. "All antiquity," says Dr. Adam Clarke, "is nearly unanimous in giving Ezra the honor of collecting the different writings of Moses and the prophets and reducing them into the form in which they are now found in the Bible."

This opinion, shared alike by Jews and Christians, is simply a tradition. There is no conclusive evidence that Ezra founded the canon of the Old Testament. Nehemiah could not have completed it, because a part of the books were written after his time. There is no proof that all the books of the Old Testament existed in a collected form before the beginning of the Christian era. There is no proof that even the Law and the Prophets existed in such a form before the Maccabean period. The Rev. Frederick Myers, an able authority on the Bible, makes this candid admission: "By whom the books of the Old Testament were collected into one volume, and by what authority made canonical, we do not know" ("Catholic Thoughts on the Bible," p. 56).

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Another prevalent belief is that all of the Jewish scriptures were lost during the captivity, and that Ezra was divinely inspired to rewrite them. Irenaeus says: "God ... inspired Esdras, the priest of the tribe of Levi, to compose anew all the discourses of the ancient prophets, and to restore to the people the laws given them by Moses" ("Ecclesiastical History," Book V., chap. viii).

This is a myth. The books of the Old Testament which were written before the captivity were not lost. Many books, it is true, were written after the captivity, but these books were not reproductions of lost writings. They were original compositions, or compilations of documents which had not been lost.

If Ezra was inspired, as claimed, to rewrite the Hebrew scriptures, he did not complete his task, for the books that were really lost have never been restored, and the Old Testament is but a part of the Hebrew scriptures that once existed. St. Chrysostom says: "The Jews having been at some time careless, and at others profane, they suffered some of the sacred books to be lost through their carelessness, and have burnt and destroyed others." The list of books given in the preceding chapter, under the head of "Lost Books cited by writers of the Bible," would nearly all be deemed canonical were they extant. Referring to these books, the Rev. Dr. Campbell, in his "Introduction to Matthew," says: "The Book of the Wars of the Lord, the Book of Jasher, the Book of Nathan the Prophet, the Book of Gad the Seer, and several others, are referred to in the Old Testament, manifestly as of equal authority with the book which refers to them, and as fuller in point of information. Yet these are to all appearances irrecoverably lost." God's revelation in its entirety, then, no longer exists.

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The ten Hebrew tribes which formed the kingdom of Israel, and whose remnants were afterwards called Samaritans, accepted only the first six books of the Old Testament. The other Jews generally accepted the Pentateuch and the Prophets, and, in a less degree, the Hagiographa as canonical. Some of them also attached more or less importance to the Apocryphal books.

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## The Christian Canon.

Respecting the formation of the New Testament canon, the Rev. Dr. Roswell D. Hitchcock says:

"The new book of records was, like the old, set down by eye-witnesses of and actors in its scenes, closely after their occurrence; its successive portions were cautiously scrutinized and clearly distinguished as entitled to reception; when the record, properly so-called, was completed, the new canon was closed" ("Analysis of the Bible," p. 1149).

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"This process was rapid and decisive; it had in all probability become substantially complete before the death of John, the last of the apostles" (Ibid, p. 1158).

That these statements, popularly supposed to be true, are wholly untrue will be demonstrated by the facts presented in this and succeeding chapters. The Christian canon was not completed before the death of the last apostle. The New Testament did not exist in the time of the apostles. It did not exist in the time of the Apostolic Fathers. It was not in existence in the middle of the second century.

There was no New Testament in the time of Papias. Dr. Samuel Davidson, the highest Christian authority on the canon, says: "Papias (150 A.D.) knew nothing, so far as we can learn, of a New Testament canon" ("Canon of the Bible," p. 123).

Justin Martyr knew nothing of a New Testament canon. I quote again from Dr. Davidson: "Justin Martyr's canon (150 A.D.), so far as divine authority and inspiration are concerned, was the Old Testament" (Ibid, p. 129).

For nearly two centuries after the beginning of the Christian era, the Old Testament—the Old Testament alone—constituted the Christian canon. No other books were called scripture; no other books were considered inspired; no other books were deemed canonical.

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## Founding of the Canon.

To Irenaeus, more than to any other man, belongs the credit of founding the Roman Catholic church; and to him also belongs the credit of founding the New Testament canon, which is a Roman Catholic work. No collection of books corresponding to our New Testament existed before the time of Irenaeus. He was the first to make such a collection, and he was the first to claim inspiration and divine authority for its books. Dr. Davidson says:

"The conception of canonicity and inspiration attaching to New Testament books did not exist till the time of Irenaeus" ("Canon," p. 163).

At the close of the second century the Christian world was divided into a hundred different sects. Irenaeus and others conceived the plan of uniting these sects, or the more orthodox of them, into one great Catholic church, with Rome at the head; for Rome was at this time the largest and most influential of all the Christian churches. "It is a matter of necessity," says Irenaeus, "that every church should agree with this church on account of its preeminent authority" ("Heresies," Book 3).

In connection with this work Irenaeus made a collection of books for use in the church. His collection comprised the following: Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Acts, Romans, First Corinthians, Second Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, First Thessalonians, Second Thessalonians, First Timothy, Second Timothy, Titus, Philemon, First John, and Revelation—twenty books in all.

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In the work of establishing the Roman Catholic church and the New Testament canon Irenaeus was succeeded, early in the third century, by Tertullian and Clement of Alexandria. They adopted the list of books made by him. The books adopted by these Fathers were selected from a large number of Christian writings then extant—forty or more gospels, nearly as many Acts of Apostles, a score of Revelations, and a hundred epistles. Each church had one or more books which were used in that church. No divine authority, however, was ascribed to any of them.

Why did the Fathers choose these particular books? Above all, why did they choose four gospels instead of one? We never see four biographies of Washington, of Cromwell, or of Napoleon, bound in one volume; yet here we have four different biographies of Jesus in one book. Irenaeus says it is because "there are four quarters of the earth in which we live, and four universal winds." Instead of this artificial reason he could have given a natural, a rational, and a truthful reason.

While primitive Christians, as we have seen, were divided into many sects, the principal sects may be grouped into three divisions: 1. The Petrine churches, comprising the church of Rome and other churches which recognized Peter as the chief of the apostles and the visible head of the church on earth; 2. The Pauline sects, which accepted Paul as the true exponent of Christianity; 3. The Johannine or Eastern churches, which regarded John as their founder. A collection of books to be acceptable to all of these churches must contain the favorite books of each. The First Gospel, written about the time this church union movement was inaugurated, was adopted by the Petrine churches. The Second Gospel was also highly valued by the church of Rome. The Third Gospel, a revised and enlarged edition of the Pauline Gospel of Marcion, had become the standard authority of Pauline Christians. The Fourth Gospel, which had superseded other and older gospels, was generally read in the Johannine churches. The Acts of the Apostles, written for the purpose of healing the dissensions that had arisen between the followers of Peter and Paul, was acceptable to both Petrines and Paulines. The Epistles of Paul were of course received by the Pauline churches, while the First Epistle of John was generally received by the Eastern churches. The collection would not be complete without a Revelation, and the Revelation of John was selected.

The work instituted by Irenaeus was successful. The three divisions of Christendom were united, and the Catholic church was established. But this cementing, although it held for centuries, did not last, as was hoped, for all time. The seams gave way, the divisions separated, and to-day stand out as distinctly as they did in the second century; the Roman Catholic church representing the Petrine, the Greek church the Johannine, and the Protestant churches to a great extent the Pauline Christians of that early age. But while the church separated, each retained all of the sixty-six canonical books, save Revelation, which for a time was rejected by the Greek church.

The New Testament originally contained but twenty books. To First Peter, Second John, and the Shepherd of Hermas Irenaeus attached some importance, but did not place them in his canon. Hebrews, James, Second Peter, Third John, and Jude he ignored. Tertullian placed in an appendix Hebrews, First Peter, Second John, Jude, and the Shepherd of Hermas. Clement of Alexandria classed as having inferior authority, Hebrews, Second John, Jude, First and Second Epistles of Clement (of Rome), Epistle of Barnabas, Shepherd of Hermas, and Revelation of Peter.

Regarding the competency of the founders of the New Testament canon, Davidson says:

“Of the three fathers who contributed most to its early growth, Irenaeus was credulous and blundering, Tertullian passionate and one-sided, and Clement of Alexandria, imbued with the treasures of Greek wisdom, was mainly occupied with ecclesiastical ethics” (Canon, p. 155).

“The three Fathers of whom we are speaking had neither the ability nor the inclination to examine the genesis of documents surrounded with an apostolic halo. No analysis of their authenticity was seriously contemplated” (Ibid, p. 156).

## Completion of the Canon.

The Christian canon, including the New Testament canon, assumed something like its present form under the labors of Augustine and Jerome toward the close of the fourth century. St. Augustine's canon contained all of the books now contained in the Old and New Testaments, excepting Lamentations, which was excluded. It contained, in addition to these, the apocryphal pieces belonging to Daniel, and the books of Tobit, Judith, Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus, and First and Second Maccabees.

St. Jerome's canon contained Lamentations, which Augustine's canon excluded, and omitted Tobit, Judith, Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus, and First and Second Maccabees, which Augustine's included. Roman Catholics accept the canon of Augustine, including Lamentations; Protestants, generally, accept the canon of Jerome.

While Jerome included in his canon all the books of the New Testament, he admitted that Philemon, Hebrews, Second Peter, Second and Third John, Jude, and Revelation were of doubtful authority.

Referring to the work of Augustine and Jerome, Davidson, says: “Both were unfitted for the critical examination of such a topic” (Canon, p. 200).

## Christian Councils.

Many believe that the Council of Nice, held in 325 A.D., determined what books should constitute the Bible. This council did not determine the canon. So far as is known, the first church council which acted upon this question was the Synod of Laodicea which met in 365. This council rejected the Apocryphal books contained in Augustine's list, but admitted Baruch and the Epistle of Jeremiah. It excluded Revelation.

Various councils, following this, adopted canonical lists. One council would admit certain books and the next council would reject them. The third council of Carthage in 397 adopted the list of Augustine which admitted the Apocryphal books and Revelation and rejected Lamentations.

The actions of none of these councils were unanimous or decisive. The list of books adopted was adopted simply by a majority vote. A large minority of every council refused to accept the list of the majority. Some advocated the admission of books that were rejected; others opposed the admission of books that were accepted. As late as the seventh century (629), at the sixth Council of Constantinople, many different canonical lists were presented for ratification.

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The damaging facts that I have adduced concerning the formation of the Christian canon are admitted in a large degree by one of the most orthodox of authorities, McClintock and Strong's "Cyclopedia of Biblical and Ecclesiastical Literature." Dr. McClintock says:

"The New Testament canon presents a remarkable analogy to the canon of the Old Testament. The beginnings of both are obscure.... The history of the canon may be divided into three periods. The first, extending to 170, includes the era of circulation and gradual collection of the apostolic writings. The second is closed in 303, separating the sacred from other ecclesiastical writings. The third may be defined by the third Council of Carthage, 397 A.D., in which a catalogue of the books of the Scriptures was formally ratified by conciliar authority. The first is characteristically a period of tradition, the second of speculation, and the third of authority, and we may trace the features of the successive ages in the course of the history of the canon. But however all this may have been, the complete canon of the New Testament, as we now have it, was ratified by the third Council of Carthage, 397 A.D., from which time it was generally accepted by the Latin church, some of the books remaining in doubt and disputed."

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Concerning the work of these councils, William Penn writes as follows:

"I say how do they know that these men discerned true from spurious? Now, sure it is, that some of the Scriptures taken in by one council were rejected by another for apocryphal, and that which was left out by the former for apocryphal was taken in by the latter for canonical" (Penn's Works, Vol. I., p. 302).

In regard to the character of these councils, Dean Milman writes:

"It might have been supposed that nowhere would Christianity appear in such commanding majesty as in a council.... History shows the melancholy reverse. Nowhere is Christianity less attractive, and if we look to the ordinary tone and character of the proceedings, less authoritative, than in the councils of the church. It is in general a fierce collision of two rival factions, neither of which will yield, each of which is solemnly pledged against conviction" (History of Latin Christianity, Vol. I., p. 226).

The Roman Catholic, Greek Catholic, and Protestant canons, no two of which are alike, were fixed by modern councils. The Council of Trent (1545-1563) determined the Roman Catholic canon. While a majority were in favor of the canon of Augustine they were not agreed in regard to the character and classification of the books. There were four parties. The first advocated two divisions of the books, one to comprise the acknowledged books, the other the disputed books. The second party proposed three divisions—the acknowledged books, the disputed books of the New Testament, and the Apocryphal books of the Old Testament. The third party desired the list of books to be named without determining their authority. The fourth party demanded that all the books, acknowledged, disputed, and apocryphal, be declared canonical. This party triumphed.

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At a council of the Greek church held in Jerusalem in 1672, this church, which had always refused to accept Revelation, finally placed it in the canon. The Greek canon contains several apocryphal books not contained in the Roman Catholic

canon.

Both divisions of the Protestant church, German and English, declared against the authority of the Apocryphal books. The Westminster Assembly (1647) formally adopted the list of books contained in our Authorized Version of the Bible.

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## Ancient Christian Scholars.

Most Christians believe that all of the books of the Bible, and only the books of the Bible, have been accepted as canonical by all Christians. And yet, how far from this is the truth! In every age of the church there have been Christians, eminent for their piety and learning, who either rejected some of these books, or who accepted as canonical books not contained in the Bible.

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Not one of the five men who contributed most to form the canon, Irenaeus, Tertullian, Clement, Jerome, and Augustine, accepted all of these books.

Late in the second century Melito, Bishop of Sardis, a contemporary of Irenaeus, was deputed to make a list of the books belonging to the Old Testament. His list omitted Esther and Lamentations.

The Muratori canon, which is supposed to belong to the third century, omitted Hebrews, James, First and Second Peter, and Third John. The Apostolic canon omitted Revelation, and included First and Second Clement and the Apostolic Constitutions.

Of Origen, the great Christian Father of the third century, "Chambers' Encyclopedia" says: "Origen doubted the authority of the Epistle to the Hebrews, of the Epistle of James, of Jude, of the Second of Peter, and the Second and Third of John; while, at the same time, he was disposed to recognize as canonical certain apocryphal scriptures, such as those of Hermas and Barnabas." In addition to the apocryphal books named, Origen also accepted as authoritative the Gospel of the Hebrews, Gospel of the Egyptians, Acts of Paul, and Preaching of Peter.

The Rev. Jeremiah Jones, a leading authority on the canon, says: "Justin Martyr, Clemens Alexandrinus, Tertullian, and the rest of the primitive writers were wont to approve and cite books which now all men know to be apocryphal" (Canon, p. 4).

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Theodoret says that as late as the fifth century many churches used the Gospel of Tatian instead of the canonical Gospels. Gregory the Great, at the beginning of the seventh, and Alfric, at the close of the tenth century, accepted as canonical Paul's Epistle to the Laodiceans.

Early in the fourth century the celebrated church historian, Eusebius, gave a list of the acknowledged and disputed books of the New Testament. The disputed books—books which some accepted and others rejected—were Hebrews, James, Second and Third John, Jude, Revelation, Shepherd of Hermas, Epistle of Barnabas, Acts of Paul, and Revelation of Peter.

Athanasius rejected Esther, and Epiphanius accepted the Epistle of Jeremiah. Cyril, Bishop of Jerusalem, and Gregory, Bishop of Constantinople, both rejected Revelation.

Chrysostom, one of the greatest of church divines, and, who gave to the sacred book of Christians its name, omitted ten books from his canon—First and Second Chronicles, Esther, Job, and Lamentations, five books in the Old Testament; and Second Peter, Second and Third John, Jude, and Revelation, five books in the New Testament.

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## Protestant Scholars.

Many Protestant scholars have questioned or denied the correctness of the Protestant canon. Calvin doubted Second and Third John and Revelation. Erasmus doubted Hebrews, Second and Third John, and Revelation. Zwingli and Beza rejected Revelation. Dr. Lardner questioned the authority of Hebrews, James, Second Peter, Second and Third John, Jude and Revelation. Evanson rejected Matthew, Mark, Luke, and nearly half of the Epistles. Schleiermacher rejected

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First Timothy. Scaliger rejected Second Peter. Davidson thinks that Esther should be excluded from the canon. Eichorn rejected Daniel and Jonah in the Old Testament, and Second Timothy and Titus in the New.

Dr. Whiston excluded the Song of Solomon, and accepted as canonical more than twenty books not found in the Bible. He says: "Can anyone be so weak as to imagine Mark, and Luke, and James, and Jude, who were none of them more than companions of 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 of no authority at all?" (Exact Time, p. 28).

The Rev. James Martineau, of England, says: "If we could recover the Gospel 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 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" (Rationale of Religious Enquiry). [37]

Archbishop Wake pronounces the writings of the Apostolic Fathers "inspired," and says that they contain "an authoritative declaration of the Gospel of Christ" (Apostolic Fathers).

The church of Latter Day Saints, numbering one half million adherents, and including some able Bible scholars, believe that the modern Book of Mormon is a part of God's Word, equal in authority and importance to the Pentateuch or the Four Gospels.

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## Martin Luther.

The greatest name in the records of the Protestant church is Martin Luther. He is generally recognized as its founder; he is considered one of the highest authorities on the Bible; he devoted a large portion of his life to its study; he made a translation of it for his people, a work which is accepted as one of the classics of German literature. With Luther the Bible superseded the church as a divine authority. And yet this greatest of Protestants rejected no less than six of the sixty-six books composing the Protestant Bible.

Luther rejected the book of Esther. He says: "I am such an enemy to the book of Esther that I wish it did not exist." In his "Bondage of the Will," he severely criticises the book.

He rejected the book of Jonah. He says: "The history of Jonah is so monstrous as to be absolutely incredible" (Colloquia, Chap. LX., Sec. 10). [38]

He rejected Hebrews: "The Epistle to the Hebrews is not by St. Paul; nor, indeed, by any apostle" (Standing Preface to Luther's New Testament).

He rejected the Epistle of James: "St. James' Epistle is truly an epistle of straw" (Preface to Edition of 1524).

He rejected Jude. "The Epistle of Jude," he says, "allegeth stories and sayings which have no place in Scripture" (Standing Preface).

He rejected Revelation. He says: "I can discover no trace that it is established by the Holy Spirit" (Preface to Edition of 1522). [39]

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## CHAPTER IV.

### DIFFERENT VERSIONS OF THE BIBLE.

The following is a brief description of the principal versions, translations, and manuscripts of the Bible:

## Versions of the Jewish Scriptures.

**HEBREW.**—The greater portion of the Jewish Scriptures was written in the ancient Hebrew language, while a smaller portion was written in the Aramaic or Chaldaic dialect of this language. The written language of the Hebrew contained no vowels. The meaning of many words was mere conjecture. About one thousand years ago Jewish scholars developed a system of vowel points and made a revision of the Hebrew Scriptures in what is known as the Masoretic text. The early Christian versions of the Old Testament, including that of the Roman Catholic church, are based upon the earlier or consonantal text; the Protestant versions are based upon the later or Masoretic text. The accepted Hebrew versions generally omitted the Apocryphal books.

**SAMARITAN.**—The Samaritan Bible, the canonical Scriptures of the Samaritan Israelites, contained but six books—the Pentateuch and what is styled a corrupt version of Joshua. Some scholars believe that the Samaritan Pentateuch is the most correct version we have of this work.

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**SEPTUAGINT.**—The Septuagint was a Greek translation of the Jewish Scriptures, including the Apocryphal books. We are told that about 285 b. c. seventy scholars, each in a separate cell, translated all of these books. The translations, it is stated, were exactly alike, a proof of divine supervision. This story is a fiction. Instead of seventy translations of fifty books, there was one translation of five books. The Pentateuch alone was translated at this time. The Prophets, the Hagiographa, and the Apocrypha were translated at various times during the succeeding three hundred years. The Septuagint was the version used by the Hellenistic Jews and by the primitive Christians.

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## Ancient Christian Versions.

**PESHITO.**—The Peshito is probably the oldest version of the Christian Bible. It is in Aramaic, and is the Bible of Syrian Christians. It omits Second Peter, Second and Third John, Jude, and Revelation.

**EGYPTIAN.**—There were two versions of the Egyptian Bible, the Thebaic, written in the language of Upper Egypt, and the Memphitic or Coptic, written in the language of Lower Egypt. These versions included the Apocrypha and excluded Revelation.

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**ETHIOPIAN.**—This was the Bible of Ethiopian Christians. The Old Testament contained four divisions: 1. The Law; 2. Kings; 3. Solomon; 4. The Prophets. It also contained the Book of Enoch, a book found in no other version. The New Testament omitted Revelation and included the Apostolic Constitutions.

**GOTHIC.**—This version was made by a Gothic bishop in the fourth century. It omitted four of the principal books of the Old Testament, First and Second Samuel, and First and Second Kings.

**ITALIC.**—The Italic version was one of the earliest Latin versions of the Bible. The New Testament contained but twenty-four books. It omitted Hebrews, James, and Second Peter.

**VULGATE.**—The Vulgate, one of the most important versions of the Bible, is the Latin version made by Jerome about the beginning of the fifth century. It is the standard version of the Roman Catholic church. It has undergone many revisions and consequently many changes. It now includes the Apocryphal books which Jerome did not accept as canonical.

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## Ancient Manuscripts.

The three most important Greek manuscripts, those which are recognized as the highest authorities in determining the text of the Bible, are the Sinaitic, the Vatican, and the Alexandrian.

**SINAITIC.**—The Sinaitic Manuscript, now preserved in St. Petersburg, was discovered by Dr. Tischendorf at a convent near Mount Sinai. It is believed by many to be the oldest manuscript of the New Testament extant, dating back, it is supposed by some, to the fourth century. It contains twenty-nine books—the twenty-seven canonical books, the Epistle of Barnabas, and the Shepherd of Hermas.

**VATICAN.**—This manuscript, now in the Vatican library at Rome, belongs, it is claimed, to the fourth century. The Old Testament contains the Apocrypha. The New Testament is a mutilated copy, containing only the Four Gospels, Acts, and a part of the Epistles.

**ALEXANDRIAN.**—The Alexandrian Manuscript, now in the British Museum, belongs, it is said, to the fifth or sixth century. The Old Testament includes the Apocryphal books. The New Testament includes the canonical books, and in addition to these the First and Second Epistles of Clement.

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## Modern Versions.

**LUTHER'S.**—The principal German version of the Bible was made by the leader of the Protestant Reformation. On account of its superior literary merits and its large circulation it is, next to our Authorized Version, the most important of the Protestant versions. Luther placed the Apocryphal books in an appendix at the end of the Old Testament, and the books of the New Testament which he rejected in an appendix at the end of the New.

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**WICLIFFE'S.**—The translation of Wicliffe, which appeared in the latter part of the fourteenth century, was the first English translation of the Bible.

**TYNDALE'S.**—Tyndale commenced his English translation of the Bible about the same time that Luther commenced his German translation. He did not live to complete it, and a portion of the Old Testament was translated by others.

**KING JAMES.**—The Authorized English Version, commonly called the King James Bible, was published in 1611. It was made by forty-seven English scholars, working in six companies—two at Oxford, two at Cambridge, and two at Westminster. The basis of this version is Tyndale's translation. The Apocryphal books, which were not accepted as canonical by the English church, were placed in an appendix. They are now generally omitted. The King James Bible is admittedly one of the most incorrect versions; but dressed in the strong, quaint English of Shakespeare's time it possesses considerable literary merit. It has been translated into nearly every tongue, and has had a larger circulation than all others combined.

**NEW VERSION.**—The new or Revised Version of the Bible is a revision of the King James version. The revision was made by a Committee of twenty-seven English scholars, whose work was revised by an American committee. It was begun in 1870 and finished in 1882. In this version the matter is divided into paragraphs instead of chapters and verses.

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**DOUAY.**—The Douay Bible is an English translation of the Vulgate. It is the standard English version of the Roman Catholic church.

The foregoing are but a few of the numerous versions of the Bible, ancient and modern, that have appeared. Nearly every nation of Europe has from one to a score. Luther's version is nearly 400 years old, and yet Germany had seventeen translations, and consequently seventeen versions, before Luther's was published. England had many versions besides those named.

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## CHAPTER V.

### AUTHORSHIP AND DATES.

Upon the authenticity of the books of the Bible depends in a large measure their value as authorities. These books are filled with strange and marvelous stories. Are these stories true or false? If true, we should accept them; if false, reject them. From whence do these writings come?

If you hear a startling statement on the street your disposition to accept or reject it will depend largely upon the character of its author. If he is a reputable person you will be disposed to accept it; if it does not come from a reputable person, or if you are unable to discover its author, you will be disposed to reject it. Christian priests demand the acceptance of these books as infallible truth. What evidence do they adduce to justify this demand? Where did they obtain these books? When were they written? Who wrote them? What is the reputation of their authors for intelligence and veracity? Were they learned and astute men, or were they weak and credulous men? Were they good men, or were they bad men? If able men wrote them, may they not have been impostors? If good men wrote them, may they not have been mistaken?

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These priests claim to have a knowledge of the authorship of all, or nearly all, the books of the Bible. With one or two exceptions, they have assigned authors to all the books of the Old Testament, and to these exceptions they have even assigned "probable" authors. They also claim a great antiquity for them—claim that they were written from four hundred to fifteen hundred years before the Christian era. The books of the New Testament, they affirm, were all written in the first century, and by those whose names they bear.

The following table gives the authorship and date of composition, according to orthodox authorities, of the books composing the Protestant canon. It is not claimed that every book was written in the year assigned for its composition, but that it was written in or prior to the year assigned.

Old Testament.

| <b>BOOK</b>   | <b>AUTHOR</b> | <b>DATE</b> |
|---------------|---------------|-------------|
| Genesis       | Moses         | B.C. 1451   |
| Exodus        | "             | " "         |
| Leviticus     | "             | " "         |
| Numbers       | "             | " "         |
| Deuteronomy   | "             | " "         |
| Joshua        | Joshua        | " 1426      |
| Judges        | Samuel        | " 1049      |
| Ruth          | " (?)         | " "         |
| 1 Samuel      | "             | " "         |
| 2 Samuel      | Gad & Nathan  | B.C. 1016   |
| 1 Kings       | Jeremiah      | " 600       |
| 2 Kings       | "             | " "         |
| 1 Chronicles  | Ezra          | " 456       |
| 2 Chronicles  | "             | " "         |
| Ezra          | "             | " "         |
| Nehemiah      | Nehemiah      | " 433       |
| Esther        | Mordecai (?)  | " 440       |
| Job           | Job           | " 1520      |
| Psalms        | David         | " 1020      |
| Proverbs      | Solomon       | " 980       |
| Ecclesiastes  | "             | " "         |
| S. of Solomon | "             | " 1016      |
| Isaiah        | Isaiah        | " 700       |
| Jeremiah      | Jeremiah      | " 585       |
| Lamentations  | "             | " "         |
| Ezekiel       | Ezekiel       | " 575       |
| Daniel        | Daniel        | " 534       |
| Hosea         | Hosea         | " 780       |
| Joel          | Joel          | " 800       |
| Amos          | Amos          | " 785       |
| Obadiah       | Obadiah       | " 588       |
| Jonah         | Jonah         | " 856       |
| Micah         | Micah         | " 700       |
| Nahum         | Nahum         | " 698       |
| Habakkuk      | Habakkuk      | " 600       |
| Zephaniah     | Zephaniah     | " 609       |
| Haggai        | Haggai        | " 583       |
| Zechariah     | Zechariah     | " 520       |

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New Testament.

| BOOK            | AUTHOR  | DATE    |
|-----------------|---------|---------|
| Matthew         | Matthew | A.D. 40 |
| Mark            | Mark    | „ 63    |
| Luke            | Luke    | „ „     |
| John            | John    | A.D. 97 |
| Acts            | Luke    | „ 63    |
| Romans          | Paul    | „ 57    |
| 1 Corinthians   | „       | „ „     |
| 2 Corinthians   | „       | „ „     |
| Galatians       | „       | „ 55    |
| Ephesians       | „       | „ 62    |
| Philippians     | „       | „ „     |
| Colossians      | „       | „ 61    |
| 1 Thessalonians | „       | „ 52    |
| 2 Thessalonians | „       | „ „     |
| 1 Timothy       | „       | „ 64    |
| 2 Timothy       | „       | „ 65    |
| Titus           | „       | „ „     |
| Philemon        | „       | „ 61    |
| Hebrews         | „       | „ 62    |
| James           | James   | „ „     |
| 1 Peter         | Peter   | „ 64    |
| 2 Peter         | „       | „ „     |
| 1 John          | John    | „ 68    |
| 2 John          | „       | „ „     |
| 3 John          | „       | „ 69    |
| Jude            | Jude    | „ 64    |
| Revelation      | John    | „ 96    |

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The names and dates given in the foregoing table are, with a few exceptions, paraded as established facts. And yet the greater portion of them are mere assumptions, without even the shadow of proof upon which to base them. Many of them are self-evidently false—are contradicted by the contents of the books themselves. The authorship of at least fifty books of the Bible—thirty in the Old Testament and twenty in the New—is unknown.

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These books are not as old as claimed. The books of the Old Testament, instead of having been written from 1520 to 420 B.C., were probably written from 1000 to 100 B.C. The books of the New Testament, instead of having all been written in the first century, were, many of them, not written until the second century.

In regard to this subject, Prof. George T. Ladd of Yale College writes: “The authorship and date of most of the Old Testament writings, and of some of the New Testament, will never be known with certainty” (What Is the Bible? p. 294).

The following six chapters will be devoted to an examination of the question of the authenticity of the books of the Bible. I shall attempt to show that the greater portion of these books, including the most important ones, are not authentic—were not written by the authors claimed, nor at the time claimed; that they are anonymous documents, written or compiled for the most part at a later age than that in which their reputed authors are supposed to have lived.

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## CHAPTER VI.

### THE PENTATEUCH.

The first five books of the Bible, Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy—collectively called the Pentateuch—are the most important books of the Old Testament. The three great Semitic religions, Judaism, Christianity, and

Mohammedanism, are all, to a great extent, based upon them.

These books, orthodox Christians affirm, were written by Moses at least 1,450 years before the Christian era. "This sacred code," says Dr. Adam Clarke, "Moses delivered complete to the Hebrews sometime before his death." In modern versions of the Bible, Genesis is styled the First Book of Moses; Exodus, the Second Book of Moses; Leviticus, the Third Book of Moses; Numbers, the Fourth Book of Moses, and Deuteronomy, the Fifth Book of Moses. Their very high authority rests upon the supposed fact of their Mosaic authorship and great antiquity. To disprove these—to show that the Pentateuch was not written by Moses, nor at this early age, but centuries later by unknown writers—is to largely impair, if not entirely destroy, its authority as a religious oracle. And this is what modern criticism has done.

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### Arguments for Mosaic Authorship.

The following passage is the chief argument relied upon to prove the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch:

"And it came to pass, that when Moses had made an end of writing the words of this law in a book, until they were finished, that Moses commanded the Levites, which bore the ark of the covenant of the Lord, saying, Take this book of the law, and put it in the side of the ark of the covenant of the Lord your God, that it may be there for a witness against thee" (Deut. xxxi, 24-26).

This was written for a purpose. Its sequel appears in 2 Kings. During the reign of Josiah, Hilkiah the high priest discovered a "book of the law" in the temple. "And Hilkiah the high priest said unto Shaphan the scribe, I have found the book of the law in the house of the Lord" (2 Kings xxii, 8).

This book was the book of Deuteronomy, written, not in the time of Moses, but in the time of Josiah, more than eight centuries later. Hilkiah needed the book and he "found" it. It was written by him or for him. Holland's great critic, Dr. Kuenen, says: "There is no room to doubt that the book was written with a view to the use that Hilkiah made of it" (Kuenen's Hexateuch, p. 215).

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Dr. Oort, another able Dutch scholar, professor of Oriental languages at Amsterdam, says: "The book was certainly written about the time of its discovery. It is true that it introduces Moses as uttering the precepts and exhortations of which it consists, just before the people enter Canaan. But this is no more than a literary fiction. The position of affairs assumed throughout the book is that of Judah in the time of Josiah" (Bible for Learners, vol. ii, p. 331).

In support of this unanimous conclusion of the critics, Dr. Briggs presents the following long array of irrefutable arguments:

"The reasons for the composition of Deuteronomy in the time of Josiah according to the later hypothesis are: (1) Expressions which indicate a period subsequent to the Conquest (ii, 12; xix, 14); (2) the law of the king, which implies the reign of Solomon (xvii, 14-20); (3) the one supreme judicatory of the time of Jehoshaphat (xvii, 8); (4) the one central altar of the times of Hezekiah (xii, 5 *seq.*); (5) the return to Egypt in ships not conceivable before the time of Manasseh (xxviii, 68); (6) the forms of idolatry of the middle period of the monarchy (iv, 19; xvii, 3); (7) no trace of Deuteronomy in writings prior to Jeremiah; (8) the point of view indicates an advanced style of theological reflection; (9) the prohibition of Mazzebah (xvi, 22) regarded as lawful in Isaiah (xix, 19); (10) the style implies a long development of the art of Hebrew oratory, and the language is free from archaism, and suits the times preceding Jeremiah; (11) the doctrine of the love of God and his faithfulness with the term 'Yahweh thy God' presuppose the experience of the prophet Hosea; (12) the humanitarianism of Deuteronomy shows an ethical advance beyond Amos and Isaiah and prepares the way for Jeremiah and Ezekiel; (13) ancient laws embedded in the code account for the penalties for their infraction in 2 Kings xxii; (14) ancient laws of war are associated with laws which imply the wars of the monarchy, and have been influenced by Amos" (The Hexateuch, p. 261).

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No book had been deposited in the ark as the writer stated. At the dedication of Solomon's temple the ark was opened, but it contained no book. "There was nothing in the ark save the two tables of stone, which Moses put there at Horeb" (1 Kings viii, 5-9).

In the Pentateuch it is also stated that Moses, at the command of God, wrote

certain covenants (Ex. xxxiv, 27), recorded the curse of Amalek (Ex. xvii, 14), and made a list of the stations between the Red Sea and the Jordan (Num. xxxiii); likewise that he wrote a song (Deut. xxxi, 22). The absurdity of adducing these to prove that Moses wrote the Pentateuch is thus exposed by Briggs:

“When the author of the Pentateuch says that Moses wrote one or more codes of law, that he wrote a song, that he recorded a certain memorandum, it would appear that having specified such of his materials as were written by Moses, he would have us infer that the other materials came from other sources of information. But it has been urged the other way; namely, that, because it is said that Moses wrote the codes of the covenant and the Deuteronomic code, he also wrote all the laws of the Pentateuch; that because he wrote the song Deut. xxxii, he wrote all the other pieces of poetry in the Pentateuch, that because he recorded the list of stations and the memorial against Amalek, he recorded all the other historical events of the Pentateuch. It is probable that no one would so argue did he not suppose it was necessary to maintain the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch at every cost” (Hexateuch, pp. 10, 11).

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Again, it has been argued that Christ and some of the writers of the New Testament recognize Moses as the author of the Pentateuch. Such expressions as “the law of Moses,” “the book of Moses,” “Moses said,” etc., occur a few times. These expressions are explained and this argument answered by the following: 1. It is not denied by critics that Moses was the legislator of the Jews and promulgated certain laws. 2. An anonymous book is usually called after the leading character of the book. 3. At this time the traditional theory of the Mosaic authorship was generally accepted. Of Christ’s mention of Moses, Dr. Davidson says: “The venerable authority of Christ himself has no proper bearing on the question.”

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## Arguments Against Mosaic Authorship.

That the Pentateuch was not written by Moses, that it is an anonymous work belonging to a later age, is clearly proven by the following:

1. There is no proof that Moses ever claimed to be the author of the Pentateuch. There is nothing in the work, neither is there anything outside of it, to indicate that he was its author.
2. The ancient Hebrews did not believe that he wrote it. Renan says: “The opinion which attributes the composition of the Pentateuch to Moses seems quite modern; it is very certain that the ancient Hebrews never dreamed of regarding their legislator as their historian. The ancient documents appeared to them absolutely impersonal, and they attached to them no author’s name” (History of Semitic Languages, Book II., chapter i).
3. The Pentateuch was written in the Hebrew language. The Hebrew of the Bible did not exist in the time of Moses. Language is a growth. It takes centuries to develop it. It took a thousand years to develop the English language. The Hebrew of the Bible was not brought from Egypt, but grew in Palestine. Referring to this language, De Wette says: “Without doubt it originated in the land [Canaan] or was still further developed therein after the Hebrew and other Canaanitish people had migrated thither from the Northern country” (Old Testament, Part II.). Gesenius says that the Hebrew language scarcely antedates the time of David.
4. Not only is it true that the Hebrew language did not exist, but it is urged by critics that no written language, as we understand it, existed in Western Asia in the time of Moses. Prof. Andrew Norton says: “For a long time after the supposed date of the Pentateuch we find no proof of the existence of a book or even an inscription in proper alphabetical characters among the nations by whom the Hebrews were surrounded” (The Pentateuch, p. 44). Hieroglyphics were then in use, and it is not to be supposed that a work as large as the Pentateuch was written or engraved in hieroglyphics and carried about by this wandering tribe of ignorant Israelites.
5. Much of the Pentateuch is devoted to the history of Moses; but excepting a few brief compositions attributed to him and quoted by the author he is always referred to in the third person. The Pentateuch contains a biography, not an autobiography of Moses.
6. It contains an account of the death and burial of Moses which he could not have written:

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"So Moses, the servant of the Lord, died there in the land of Moab.... And he buried him in a valley of the land of Moab" (Deut. xxxiv, 5, 6).

"And the children of Israel wept for Moses in the plains of Moab thirty days" (8).

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Orthodox commentators attempt to remove this difficulty by supposing that the last chapter of Deuteronomy belongs to the book of Joshua, and that Joshua recorded the death of Moses. The same writer, referring to the appointment of Joshua as the successor of Moses, says: "And Joshua the son of Nun was full of the spirit of wisdom" (Deut. xxxiv, 9). If Joshua wrote this, however full of the spirit of wisdom he may have been, he certainly was not full of the spirit of modesty. Joshua did not write this chapter.

7. "No man knoweth of his [Moses'] sepulchre unto this day" (Deut. xxxiv, 6).

That the authorship of this chapter should ever have been attributed to either Moses or Joshua is incomprehensible. The language plainly shows that not merely one but many generations had elapsed between the time of Moses and the time that it was written.

8. While the advocates of the Mosaic authorship have, without proof, asserted that Joshua wrote the book of Joshua and the conclusion of Deuteronomy, the Higher Critics have demonstrated the common authorship of Deuteronomy and a large portion of Joshua. As all the events recorded in Joshua occurred after the death of Moses, he could not have been the author of Deuteronomy.

9. "They [the Israelites] did eat manna until they came unto the borders of Canaan" (Ex. xvi, 35).

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This passage was written after the Israelites settled in Canaan and ceased to subsist on manna. And this was not until after the death of Moses.

10. "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" (Deut. ii, 12).

This refers to the conquest of Canaan and was written after that event.

11. "And while the children of Israel were in the wilderness they found a man that gathered sticks upon the Sabbath day" (Num. xv, 32).

When this was written the children of Israel were no longer in the wilderness. Their sojourn there is referred to as a past event. As Moses died while they were still in the wilderness—that is, before they had entered the promised land—it could not have been written by him.

12. "Thou shalt eat it within thy gates" (Deut. xv, 22).

The phrase, "within thy gates," occurs in the Pentateuch about twenty-five times. It refers to the gates of the cities of the Israelites, which they did not inhabit until after the death of Moses.

13. "Ye shall therefore keep my statutes and my judgments, ... that the land spew not you out also, when ye defile it, as it spewed out the nations that were before you" (Lev. xviii, 26, 28).

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When Moses died the nations alluded to still occupied the land and had not been expelled.

14. "And Abraham called the name of the place Jehovah-jireh: as it is said to this day, In the mount of the Lord it shall be seen" (Gen. xxii, 14).

This is one of the passages adduced by the critics of the seventeenth century against the Mosaic authorship of these books. It implies the conquest and a long occupancy of the land by the Israelites.

15. "And Sarah died in Kirjath-arba; the same is Hebron in the land of Canaan" (Gen. xxiii, 2). "And Jacob came ... unto the city of Arbah, which is Hebron" (xxxv, 27).

Moses' uncle was named Hebron, and from him the Hebronites were descended. After the Conquest this family settled in Kirjath-arba and changed the name of the city to Hebron.

16. "And Rachel died and was buried in the way to Ephrath, which is Bethlehem" (Gen. xxxv, 19).

The Hebrew name of Bethlehem was not given to this city until after the Israelites had conquered and occupied it.

17. "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?" (Deut. iii, 11.)

This is another passage relied upon by the early critics to disprove the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch. The writer's reference to the bedstead of Og, which was still preserved as a relic at Rabbath, indicates a time long subsequent to the conquest of Bashan. [60]

18. "Thou shalt not remove thy neighbor's landmark, which they of old time have set in thine inheritance" (Deut. xix, 14).

This refers to the ancient landmarks set by the Israelites when they obtained possession of Canaan, and was written centuries after that time.

19. "And Jair the son of Manasseh went and took the small towns thereof, and called them Havoth-jair" (Num. xxxii, 41).

The above is evidently a misstatement of an event recorded in Judges:

"And after him [Tola] arose Jair, a Gileadite, and judged Israel twenty and two years. And he had thirty sons, ... and they had thirty cities, which are called Havoth-jair unto this day" (Jud. x, 3, 4).

Jair was judge of Israel from 1210 to 1188 B.C., or from 241 to 263 years after the date assigned for the writing of the Pentateuch.

20. "And Nobah went and took Kenath, and the villages thereof, and called it Nobah, after his own name" (Num. xxxii, 42).

Referring to this and the preceding passage, Dr. Oort says: "It is certain that Jair, the Gileadite, the conqueror of Bashan, after whom thirty places were called Jair's villages, lived in the time of the Judges, and that a part of Bashan was conquered at a still later period by a certain Nobah" (Bible for Learners, vol. i, p. 329). [61]

21. "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" (Deut. iii, 14).

Even if Jair had lived in the time of Moses, the phrase "unto this day" shows that it was written long after the event described.

22. "And when Abram heard that his brother was taken captive, he armed his trained servants, born in his own house, three hundred and eighteen, and pursued them unto Dan" (Gen. xiv, 14).

This passage could not have been written before Dan existed. In Judges (xviii, 26-29) the following account of the origin of this place is given: "And the children of Dan went their way; ... and came unto Laish, unto a people that were at quiet and secure; and they smote them with the edge of the sword, and burnt the city with fire.... And they built a city, and dwelt therein. And they called the name of the city Dan." This is placed after the death of Samson, and Samson died, according to Bible chronology, 1120 B.C.—331 years after Moses died.

23. "And these are the kings that reigned in the land of Edom before there reigned any king over the children of Israel" (Gen. xxxvi, 31). [62]

This could not have been written before the kingdom of Israel was established; for the writer is familiar with the fact that kings have reigned in Israel. Saul, the first king of Israel, began to reign 356 years after Moses.

24. "And his [Israel's] king shall be higher than Agag" (Num. xxiv, 7).

This refers to Saul's defeat of Agag. "And he [Saul] took Agag the king of the Amalekites alive, and utterly destroyed all the people with the edge of the sword" (1 Sam. xv, 8). The defeat of Agag is placed in 1067 B.C., 384 years after Moses.

25. "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, ... until Shiloh come" (Gen. xlix, 10).

These words are ascribed to Jacob; but they could not have been written before Judah received the sceptre, which was not until David ascended the throne, 396 years after the death of Moses.

26. "And the Canaanite was then in the land" (Gen. xii, 6).

When this was written the Canaanite had ceased to be an inhabitant of Palestine. As a remnant of the Canaanites inhabited this country up to the time of David, it could not have been written prior to his time.

27. "The Canaanite and the Perizzite dwelt then in the land" (Gen. xiii, 7).

This, like the preceding passage, could not have been written before the time of David. The Perizzites, also, inhabited Palestine for a long period after the conquest. In the time of the Judges "the children of Israel dwelt among the ... Perizzites" (Jud. iii, 5).

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28. "The first of the first fruits of thy land thou shalt bring into the house of the Lord thy God" (Ex. xxiii, 19).

This was not written before the time of Solomon; for God had no house prior to the erection of the temple, 1004 B.C., 447 years after Moses. When David proposed to build him a house, he forbade it and said:

"I have not dwelt in any house since the time that I brought up the children of Israel out of Egypt, even to this day, but have walked in a tent and in a tabernacle" (2 Sam. vii, 6).

The tabernacle itself was a tent (Tent of Meeting). During all this time no house was ever used as a sanctuary.

29. "One from among the brethren shalt thou set king over thee.... But he shall not multiply horses to himself, nor cause the people to return to Egypt, to the end that he should multiply horses.... Neither shall he multiply wives to himself, that his heart turn not away; neither shall he greatly multiply to himself silver and gold" (Deut. xvii, 15-17).

"And Solomon had forty thousand stalls of horses" (1 Kings iv, 26). "And Solomon had horses brought out of Egypt" (x, 28). "And he had seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines: and his wives turned away his heart" (xi, 3). "The weight of gold that came to Solomon in one year was six hundred three score and six talents of gold" (x, 14). "And the king made silver to be in Jerusalem as stones" (27).

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Nothing can be plainer than that this statute in Deuteronomy was written after Solomon's reign. The extravagance and debaucheries of this monarch had greatly impoverished and corrupted the kingdom, and to prevent a recurrence of such excesses this law was enacted.

30. "If there arise a matter too hard for thee in judgment, ... thou shalt come unto the priests the Levites, and unto the judge that shall be in those days, and enquire; and they shall show thee the sentence of judgment" (Deut. xvii, 8, 9).

This court was established by Jehoshaphat (2 Chron. xix, 8-11). Jehoshaphat commenced his reign 914 B.C., 537 years after Moses.

31. "But in the place which the Lord shall choose in one of thy tribes, there thou shalt offer thy burnt offerings, and there shalt thou do all that I command thee" (Deut. xii, 14).

"Is it not he [the Lord] whose high places and whose altars Hezekiah hath taken away, and said to Judah and Jerusalem, Ye shall worship before this altar?" (Is. xxxvi, 7).

Up to the time of Hezekiah the Hebrews worshiped at many altars. Hezekiah removed these altars and established the one central altar at Jerusalem. This was in 726 B.C.—725 years after Moses.

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32. "And the Lord shall bring thee into Egypt again with ships" (Deut. xxviii, 68).

This, critics affirm, was written when Psameticus was king of Egypt. He reigned from 663 to 609 B.C.

33. "Neither shalt thou set thee up any image [pillar]" (Deut. xvi, 22).

This proves the late origin of the Pentateuch, or at least of Deuteronomy. Isaiah (xix, 19) instructs them to do the very thing which they are here forbidden to do, and as he would not have advised a violation of the law it is evident that this statute could not have existed in his time. Isaiah died about 750 years after Moses died.

34. The worship of the sun, moon, and stars by the Jews, is mentioned and condemned (Deut. iv, 19; xvii, 3). This nature worship was adopted by them in the reign of Manasseh, 800 years after Moses.

35. "Wherefore it is said in the book of the Wars of the Lord, what he did in the Red Sea, and in the brooks of Arnon" (Num. xxi, 14).

The author of the Pentateuch here cites a book older than the Pentateuch, which gives an account of the journeyings of the Israelites from Egypt to Moab—from the Exodus to the end of Moses' career.

36. "And thou shalt write upon the stones all the words of this law very plainly" (Deut. xxvii, 8).

"And he [Joshua] wrote there upon the stones a copy of the law of Moses" (Josh. viii, 32).

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Christians affirm that the Law of Moses and the Pentateuch are one. That this Law of Moses was not the one hundred and fifty thousand words of the Pentateuch is shown by the fact that after the death of Moses it was all engraved upon a stone altar.

37. "Now the man Moses was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth" (Num. xii, 3).

No writer would bestow such fulsome praise upon himself. This was written by a devout admirer of Moses, but it was not written by Moses.

38. "And this is the blessing wherewith Moses the man of God blessed the children of Israel before his death" (Deut. xxxiii, 1).

There are three reasons for rejecting the Mosaic authorship of this: Moses is spoken of in laudatory terms; he is spoken of in the third person; his death is referred to as an event that is already past.

39. "And there arose not a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses" (Deut. xxxiv, 10).

Not only is the highest praise bestowed upon Moses, a thing which he would not have done, but the language clearly shows that it was written centuries after the time he lived.

40. The religious history of the Hebrews embraces three periods of time, each covering centuries. During the first period the worship of Jehovah was confined to no particular place; during the second it was confined to the holy city, Jerusalem; during the third it was confined, not merely to Jerusalem, but to the temple itself. There are writings in the Pentateuch belonging to each of these periods. The Encyclopedia Britannica declares that this fact alone affords overwhelming disproof of Mosaic authorship.

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41. The religion of the Pentateuch was not a revelation, but an evolution. The priestly offices, the feasts, the sacrifices, and other religious observances underwent many changes, these changes representing different stages of development in Israel's religion and requiring centuries of time to effect.

42. The legislation of the Pentateuch was also the growth of centuries. Some of the minor codes are much older than the documents containing them. There is legislation older than David, 1055 B.C.—probably as old as Moses, 1451 B.C. There is legislation belonging to the time of Josiah, 626 B.C., of Ezekiel, 575 B.C., of Ezra, 456 B.C. Would it not be absurd to claim that all the laws of England from Alfred to Victoria were the work of one mind, Alfred? And is it less absurd to claim that all the laws of the Jews from Moses to Ezra were instituted by Moses?

43. The Pentateuch abounds with repetitions and contradictions. The first two chapters of Genesis contain two accounts of the Creation differing in every important particular. In the sixth, seventh, and eighth chapters of Genesis two different and contradictory accounts of the Deluge are intermingled. Exodus and Deuteronomy each contain a copy of the Decalogue, the two differing as to the reason assigned for the institution of the Sabbath. There are several different versions of the call of Abraham; different and conflicting stories of the Egyptian plagues; contradictory accounts of the conquest of Canaan.

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## The Work of Various Authors and Compilers.

44. The four preceding arguments suggest the concluding and most important one. The character of the writings of the Pentateuch preclude the possibility of unity of authorship, and consequently the Mosaic authorship of the work as a whole. The

books of the Pentateuch were not all composed by one author. The book of Genesis is not the work of one author. The first two chapters of Genesis were not written by the same writer. The Pentateuch was written by various writers and at various times.

The Pentateuch comprises four large documents known as the Elohist and Jehovistic documents, and the Deuteronomic and Priestly Codes. They are distinguished by the initial letters E, J, D, and P. E and J include the greater portion of Genesis and extend through the other books of the Pentateuch, as well as through Joshua, Judges, Samuel, and Kings. D includes the greater portion of Deuteronomy, fragments of the preceding books, and a large portion of Joshua. P includes the greater portion of the middle books of the Pentateuch and smaller portions of the other books. [69]

The author of each of these documents incorporated into his work one or more older documents. These four works were afterwards united by successive editors or redactors. E and J were first fused into one. A subsequent redactor united D with this, and still later another united this compilation with P.

In addition to these principal documents there are several minor codes, chief of which is the Holiness Code comprising ten chapters of Leviticus, xvii-xxvi. There are also several poems written by various authors. Thus the Pentateuch instead of being the product of one mind is the work of many writers and compilers, probably twenty or more.

These documents, especially the principal ones, notwithstanding the intermingling of their contents, are easily distinguished and separated from each other by Bible critics. The thoughts of the human mind, like the features of the human face, controlled by the law of variation, assume different forms. We who are familiar with faces have no difficulty in distinguishing one face from another. No two faces are alike. Critics who have devoted their lives to literature can distinguish the writings of individuals almost as readily as we distinguish the faces of individuals. There are certain idioms of language, certain peculiarities of style, belonging to each writer. The language and style of these documents are quite dissimilar. To quote Dr. Briggs: "There is as great a difference in style between the documents of the Hexateuch as there is between the Four Gospels." The principal documents are thus described by this critic: [70]

"E is brief, terse, and archaic; graphic, plastic, and realistic; written in the theocratic interest of the kingdom of God. J is poetical and descriptive, the best narrative in the Bible, giving us the history of the kingdom of redemption. D is rhetorical and hortatory, practical and earnest, written in the more theological interest of the training of the nation in the fatherly instruction of God. P is annalistic and diffuse, fond of names and dates, written in the interest of the priestly order, and emphasizing the sovereignty of the Holy God and the sanctity of the divine institutions" (Hexateuch, p. 265).

Each document abounds with characteristic words and phrases peculiar to that document. Holzinger notes 108 belonging to E and 125 belonging to J. Canon Driver gives 41 belonging to D and 50 belonging to P. One of the chief distinguishing marks is the term used to designate the Deity. In E it is Elohim, translated God; in J, Jehovah (Yahveh) Elohim, translated Lord God. In D the writer continually uses the phrase "The Lord thy God," this phrase occurring more than 200 times. "I am Jehovah" is a phrase used by P, including the Holiness Code, 70 times. It is never used by E or D. "God of the Fathers" is frequently used by E and D; never by P. [71]

Bishop Colenso's analysis of Genesis is as follows: Elohist, 336 verses; Jehovist, 1,052 verses; Deuteronomist, 39 verses; Priestly writer, 106 verses.

The Pentateuch was chiefly written and compiled from seven to ten centuries after the time claimed. The Elohist and Jehovistic documents, the oldest of the four, were written at least 300 years after the time of David and 700 years after the time of Moses. They were probably written at about the same time. E belongs to the Northern Kingdom of Israel, J to the Southern Kingdom of Judah. The unanimous verdict of critics is that Deuteronomy was written during the reign of Josiah, about 626 *B.C.*, 825 years after Moses died. The Holiness Code belongs to the age of Ezekiel, about fifty years later. The Priestly Code was written after the Exile, in the time of Ezra, 1,000 years after Moses. Important changes and additions were made as late as the third century *B.C.*, so that, excepting the variations and interpolations of later times, the Pentateuch in something like its present form appeared about 1,200 years after the time of Moses.

The certainty and the consequences of the Higher Criticism of the Pentateuch are thus expressed by Hupfeld:

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“The discovery that the Pentateuch is put together out of various sources, or original documents, is beyond all doubt not only one of the most important and most pregnant with consequences for the interpretation of the historical books of the Old Testament, or rather for the whole of theology and history, but it is also one of the most certain discoveries which have been made in the domain of criticism and the history of literature. Whatever the anti-critical party may bring forward to the contrary, it will maintain itself, and not retrograde again through anything, so long as there exists such a thing as criticism, and it will not be easy for a reader upon the stage of culture on which we stand in the present day, if he goes to the examination unprejudiced, and with an uncorrupted power of appreciating the truth, to be able to ward off its influence.”

The critical labors of Hobbes, Spinoza, Peyrerijs, Simon, Astruc, Eichorn, Paine, Bauer, (G. L.) De Wette, Ewald, Geddes, Vater, Reuss, Graf, Davidson, Colenso, Hupfeld, Wellhausen, Kuenen, Briggs, and others, have overthrown the old notions concerning the authenticity of the Pentateuch. There is not one eminent Bible scholar in Europe, and scarcely one in America, who any longer contends that Moses wrote this work.

The pioneers in the field of the Higher Criticism were the Rationalists Hobbes and Spinoza and the Catholics Peyrerijs, Simon, and Astruc. More than two hundred years ago Benedict Spinoza, the greatest of modern Jews, with his own race and the entire Christian church against him, made this declaration, which the scholarship of the whole world now accepts:

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“It is as clear as the noonday light that the Pentateuch was not written by Moses” (Tractatus Theologico-Politicus, Chap, viii, Sec. 20).

A century passed, and Thomas Paine in France, in the most potent volume of Higher Criticism ever penned, exposed in all their nakedness the wretched claims of the traditionalists. He read the Pentateuch and wrote:

“Those books are spurious.” “Moses is not the author of them.” “The style and manner in which those books are written give no room to believe, or even to suppose, they were written by Moses.” “They were not written in the time of Moses, nor till several hundred years afterwards” (Age of Reason).

About the same time German scholars, ever foremost in the domain of critical analysis, took up the work. The writings of Eichorn, Bauer, Vater, and De Wette, “swept the field in Germany.” De Wette, one of her greatest theologians, thus presents the conclusion of German critics:

“The opinion that Moses composed these books is not only opposed by all the signs of a later date which occur in the work itself, but also by the entire analogy of the history of Hebrew literature and language” (Books of Moses, Sec. 163).

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Fifty years or more elapsed and Davidson and Colenso studied and wrote, and British scholarship was soon arrayed against the old in favor of the new. Dr. Davidson, in the following words, voices the opinion of England’s learned:

“There is little external evidence for the Mosaic authorship, and what little there is does not stand the test of criticism. The succeeding writers of the Old Testament do not confirm it.... The objections derived from internal structure are conclusive against the Mosaic authorship” (Introduction to the Old Testament).

At last, in our own land and in our own time, Dr. Briggs and others attack the Mosaic theories, and, in spite of the efforts of Princeton’s fossils, the intelligence of America acknowledges the force of their reasoning and accepts their conclusions. The Higher Criticism has triumphed. Spinoza’s judgment is confirmed, and the American critic pronounces the verdict of the intellectual world:

“In the field of scholarship the question is settled. It only remains for the ministry and people to accept it and adapt themselves to it” (Hexateuch, p. 144).

But this is not the end. A victory has been achieved, but its full results remain to be realized. The clergy, against their will, and the laity, who are subservient to the clergy’s will, are yet to be enlightened and convinced. Even then, when the facts disclosed by the Higher Criticism have gained popular acceptance, another task remains—the task of showing men the real significance of these facts. The critics themselves, many of them, do not seem to realize the consequences of their work.

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The Rationalistic critics, like Hobbes, Spinoza, Paine, Reuss, Wellhausen, Kuenen and others, have measured the consequences of their criticisms and accepted them. The orthodox critics have not. Some of them, like Dr. Briggs, while denying the Mosaic authorship and great antiquity of the Pentateuch, while maintaining its anonymous and fragmentary character, and conceding its contradictions and errors, are yet loath to reject its divinity and authority. But these also must be given up. This work as a divine revelation and authentic record must go. Its chief theological doctrine, the Fall of Man, is a myth. With this doctrine falls the Atonement, and with the Atonement orthodox Christianity. This is the logical sequence of the Higher Criticism of the Pentateuch. To these critics, and to all who are intelligent enough to discern the truth and courageous enough to meet it, I would repeat and press home the admonition of our critic, "to accept it and adapt themselves to it."

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## CHAPTER VII.

### THE PROPHETS.

Next to the Pentateuch, the most important books of the Old Testament are the Prophets. They are divided into two divisions, Earlier and Later. The Earlier prophets comprise Joshua, Judges, First Samuel, Second Samuel, First Kings, and Second Kings. The Later Prophets are divided into Greater and Minor. The Greater Prophets are Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel; the Minor Prophets, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi.

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#### Joshua.

The book of Joshua, it is claimed, was written by Joshua just before his death, which occurred, according to the accepted chronology, in 1426 B.C. This book for a time formed a part of the Pentateuch (or Hexateuch). In later times, to increase its authority, the Pentateuch was ascribed to Moses. A recognition of the fact that Moses could not have written a history of the events that happened after his death caused that portion now known as Joshua to be detached and credited to Joshua.

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Many of the arguments adduced against the Mosaic authorship of the preceding books apply with equal force against the claim that Joshua wrote the book which bears his name. The book contains no internal evidence of his authorship; he does not claim to be its author; the other writers of the Old Testament do not ascribe its authorship to him; he is spoken of in the third person; it is clearly the work of more than one writer; the language in which it was written was not in existence when he lived; much of it relates to events that occurred after his death.

"And it came to pass after these things, that Joshua, the son of Nun, the servant of the Lord, died, being a hundred and ten years old. And they buried him in the border of his inheritance in Timnath-serah.... And Israel served the Lord all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that overlived Joshua" (Josh. xxiv, 29-31).

As the Pentateuch gives an account of the death and burial of Moses, so the book of Joshua gives an account of the death and burial of Joshua.

"And Eleazer the son of Aaron died" (xxiv, 33).

The death of Eleazer occurred six years after the death of Joshua.

"But the Jebusites dwell with the children of Judah at Jerusalem unto this day" (xv, 63).

The children of Judah did not dwell in Jerusalem until nearly 400 years after Joshua. The phrase "unto this day" is frequently used in the book, and this shows that it was written long after the events it describes.

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In his account of the miracle of Joshua causing the sun to stand still, the writer appeals to the book of Jasher in support of his statement:

"Is not this written in the book of Jasher?" (x, 13.)

This could not have been written until after the book of Jasher was written or compiled. When was Jasher written? We do not know, but in his history of David the author of Samuel thus refers to it: "He [David] bade them teach the children of Judah the use of the bow; behold, it is written in the book of Jasher" (2 Sam. i, 18). This proves that the book of Jasher was not written before the time of David. If the book of Joshua was not written until after the book of Jasher was written, then it could not have been written until the time of David or later.

The book of Joshua consists of two parts. The first, which originally formed a part of, or sequel to, Deuteronomy, was probably written before the Captivity; the latter part was written after the captivity—900 years after the time of Joshua.

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## Judges.

The authorship of this book has been ascribed to Samuel. In disproof of this I quote the following:

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"Now the children of Judah had fought against Jerusalem and taken it" (i, 8).

Jerusalem was taken by Judah 1048 B.C.; Samuel died 1060 B.C., twelve years before it was taken.

"In those days there was no king in Israel" (xviii, 1; xix, 1; xxi, 25).

This passage, which is repeated several times, was written after Israel had become a kingdom, and evidently long subsequent to the time of Saul and Samuel.

"And they forsook the Lord, and served Baal and Ashtaroth" (ii, 13).

This was probably written as late as the reign of Hoshea, 730 B.C.

The chapters relating to Samson indicate a date as late as Manasseh, 698 to 643 B.C. During the reign of this king the Hebrews became sun-worshipers. Samson was a sun-god—the name signifies "sun-god." All the stories related of him in Judges are solar myths.

"He and his sons were priests to the tribe of Dan until the day of the captivity of the land" (xviii, 30).

The above passage denotes a date as late as the Captivity.

Smith's "Bible Dictionary" says: "It is probable that the books of Judges, Ruth, Samuel, and Kings originally formed one work" (art. Ruth). If these books originally formed one work, Samuel was not the author of any of them, for Kings, it is admitted, was written as late as the time of Jeremiah, and possibly as late as the time of Ezra, from 450 to 600 years after Samuel.

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Judges, like the Pentateuch and Joshua, is the work of several writers. It can scarcely be called even a compilation. It is a mere collection of historical and mythological fragments, thrown together without any regard to logical arrangement or chronological order.

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## First and Second Samuel.

It is popularly supposed, and many Christian teachers affirm, that Samuel wrote the books which bear his name. And yet the writer says, "Samuel died," and seven chapters of the first book follow this announcement. The second book in no way pertains to him; his name is not once mentioned; the events narrated occurred from four to forty-four years after his death.

Others claim that the books were written by Samuel, Nathan, and Gad, basing their claim on a passage in Chronicles, which says that the acts of David "are written in the book of Samuel the seer, and in the book of Nathan the prophet, and in the book of Gad the seer" (1 Chron. xxix, 29).

As Samuel died while David was yet a young man—four years before he became king—he did not record the acts of David. Nathan and Gad are referred to in the

books, but in a manner that forbids the supposition of their authorship. These books were not written by Samuel; neither were they written by Samuel, Nathan, and Gad. Their authorship is unknown.

Concerning the books of Samuel, Dr. Oort writes: "There is no book in the Bible which shows so clearly that its contents are not all derived from the same source.... Two conflicting traditions relating to the same subject are constantly placed side by side in perfect simplicity, and apparently with no idea that the one contradicts the other" (Bible for Learners, vol. i, pp. 433, 434).

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## First and Second Kings.

In the Catholic version, and in the subtitles of our versions of the Bible, First and Second Samuel and First and Second Kings are called the First, Second, Third, and Fourth books of Kings. They are properly one book. The division of the work into four books is not only artificial, but illogical. Regarding the authorship of the last two, Smith's "Bible Dictionary" says: "As regards the authorship of the books, but little difficulty presents itself. The Jewish tradition, which ascribes them to Jeremiah, is borne out by the strongest internal evidence" (Kings).

Is this true? The date assigned for Jeremiah's composition of the books is 600 B.C. And yet a considerable portion of the work is devoted to a presentation of the forty years of Jewish history subsequent to this date. It records the death of Jehoiakim, the first siege and taking of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar, the elevation of Zedekiah to the throne, his eleven years' reign, the second siege and capture of Jerusalem, and a long list of events that followed. It records the reign of the Babylonian king, Evil-Merodach. This, according to the popular chronology, and according to the "Bible Dictionary," was from 561 to 559 B.C.—forty years after the date assigned, and long after the time of Jeremiah.

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These books are a mixture of history and fiction. They profess to be a history of the Hebrew kings; and yet a dozen chapters are devoted to a fabulous account of the sayings and doings of two Hebrew prophets, Elijah and Elisha. First and Second Chronicles, which give a history of the same kings, refer to Elijah but once, and make no mention of Elisha.

The confused character of their contents, especially their chronology, has often been referred to. They are simply a compilation of ancient documents, written at various times, and by various authors.

The Encyclopedia Britannica expresses the almost unanimous verdict of critics respecting the authorship of the four principal historical books of the Old Testament: "We cannot speak of the author of Kings or Samuel, but only of an editor or successive editors whose main work was to arrange in a continuous form extracts or abstracts from earlier books."

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## Isaiah.

Isaiah, the chief of the prophetic books, and, next to the Pentateuch and the Four Gospels, the most important book of the Bible, purports to be a series of prophecies uttered during the reigns of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah. Uzziah's reign began B.C. 810, and ended B.C. 758; Hezekiah's reign began B.C. 726 and ended B.C. 698. Isaiah's ministry is supposed to have extended from about 760 to 700 B.C., and toward the close of this period, the book of Isaiah, as it now appears, is said to have been written.

In support of Isaiah's authorship of the entire work the following arguments have been advanced:

1. Its various prophecies exhibit a unity of design.
2. The style is the same throughout the work.
3. Messianic prophecies abound in both its parts.
4. No other writer claimed its authorship.
5. The ancient Jews all ascribe it to him.

The above arguments for the authenticity of the work are partly true and partly untrue. So far as they conflict with the following arguments against its authenticity as a whole they are untrue:

1. The work is fragmentary in character.
2. The style of its several parts is quite unlike.
3. Many of its events occurred after Isaiah's death.
4. Much of it relates to the Babylonian captivity.
5. It records both the name and the deeds of Cyrus.

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Isaiah might very properly be divided into two books, the first comprising the first thirty-nine chapters; the second, the concluding twenty-seven chapters. Impartial critics agree that while Isaiah may have written a portion of the first part he could not have written all of it nor any of the second. This is the conclusion of Cheyne, Davidson, De Wette, Eichorn, Ewald, Gesenius, and others.

That he wrote neither the first nor the second part of the book, as it now exists, is proven by the following passages taken from both:

"Babylon is fallen, is fallen" (xxi, 9).

"Sennacherib king of Assyria came up against all the defended cities of Judah, and took them" (xxxvi, 1).

"So Sennacherib king of Assyria departed, and went and returned and dwelt in Nineveh.

"And it came to pass, as he was worshiping in the house of Nishrock his god, that Adrammelech and Sharezer his sons smote him with the sword; and they escaped into the land of Armenia; and Esarhaddon his son reigned in his stead" (xxxvii, 37, 38).

Sennacherib ascended the throne 702 B.C. and died 680 B.C. Isaiah lived in the preceding century.

"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" (xlv, 28).

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"Thus saith the Lord to his anointed, to Cyrus" (xlv, 1). "He shall build my city, and he shall let go my captives" (xlv, 13).

Cyrus conquered Babylon B.C. 538, and released the Jews from captivity and permitted them to return and rebuild Jerusalem and the temple B.C. 536, nearly two centuries after the time of Isaiah.

Regarding these passages, Dr. Lyman Abbott, in a sermon on "The Scientific Conception of Revelation," says: "If you take up a history and it refers to Abraham Lincoln, you are perfectly sure that it was not written in the time of George Washington. Now, if you take up the book of Isaiah and read in it about Cyrus the Great, you are satisfied that the book was not written by Isaiah one hundred years before Cyrus was born."

Prof. T. K. Cheyne of Oxford University, the leading modern authority on Isaiah, says: "That portion of the Old Testament which is known as the book of Isaiah was, in fact, written by at least three writers—and possibly many more—who lived at different times and in different places." Nearly all of the ninth chapter, which, on account of its supposed Messianic prophecies, is, with Christians, one of the most valued chapters of the Bible, Professor Cheyne declares to be an interpolation.

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That four of the middle chapters, the thirty-sixth, thirty-seventh, thirty-eighth, and thirty-ninth, originally formed a separate document is evident. Concerning these four chapters, Paine truthfully observes: "This fragment of history begins and ends abruptly; it has not the least connection with the chapter that precedes it, nor with that which follows it, nor with any other in the book" (Age of Reason, p. 129).

If Isaiah wrote this book, and Jeremiah wrote the books of Kings, as claimed; then either Isaiah or Jeremiah was a plagiarist; for the language of the four chapters just mentioned is, with a few slight alterations, identical with that of a portion of the second book of Kings.

The integrity of this book cannot be maintained. It is not the product of one writer, but of many. How many, critics may never be able to determine; certainly not less than five, probably more than ten.

The prophecies of Jeremiah, it is affirmed, were delivered at various times between 625 and 585 B.C., and a final redaction of them was made by him about the latter date. The book, as it now appears, is in such a disordered condition that Christian scholars have to separate it into numerous parts and rearrange them in order to make a consecutive and intelligible narrative. Dr. Hitchcock, in his "Analysis of the Bible" (p 1,144), says: "So many changes have taken place, or else so many irregularities were originally admitted in the arrangement of the book, that Dr. Blayney, whose exposition we chiefly follow, was obliged to make fourteen different portions of the whole before he could throw it into consecutive order."

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The following is Dr. Blayney's arrangement of the book: Chapters i-xii; xiii-xx; xxii, xxiii; xxv, xxvi; xxxv, xxxvi; xlv-xlviii; xlix (1-33); xxi; xxiv; xxvii-xxxiv; xxxvii-xxxix; xlix (34-39); l, li; xl-xliv.

This disordered condition of Jeremiah indicates one of two things: a plurality of authors, or a negligence, if nothing worse, on the part of the Bible's custodians that Christians will be loath to acknowledge.

The book, as a whole, was not written by Jeremiah. He did not write the following:

"And it came to pass in the seven and thirtieth year of the captivity of Jehoiachin king of Judah, in the twelfth month, in the five and twentieth day of the month, that Evil-Merodach king of Babylon, in the first year of his reign, lifted up the head of Jehoiachin king of Judah, and brought him forth out of prison" (lii, 31).

The release of Jehoiachin by Evil-Merodach occurred 562 or 561 B.C. Jeremiah had then been dead twenty years.

This book is not the work of one author. The thirty-seventh and thirty-eighth chapters were not written by the same person. Much of the thirty-eighth is a mere repetition of the thirty-seventh; and yet the two are so filled with discrepancies that it is impossible to accept both as the writings of the same author.

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Jeremiah, it is declared, wrote both Kings and Jeremiah. He could not have written the concluding portion of either. The last chapter of 2 Kings and the last chapter of Jeremiah are the same, and were written after the time of Jeremiah.

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## Ezekiel.

The period assigned for Ezekiel's prophecies is that beginning B.C. 595 and ending B.C. 573. Christians assert that the first twenty-four chapters of the work were written before the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar. The whole work was undoubtedly written after this event.

The Talmud credits its authorship to the Great Synagogue. If this be correct, Ezekiel had nothing to do with its composition; for he was not a member of the Great Synagogue. Ewald, while claiming for him the utterance of its several prophecies, believes that the book in its present form is not his work, but that of a later author.

Referring to Ezekiel, Dr. Oort says: "In his case, far more than in Jeremiah's even, we must be on our guard against accepting the written account of his prophecies as a simple record of what he actually said" (Bible for Learners, vol. ii, p. 407).

Zunz, a German critic, not only contends that the book is not authentic, but declares that no such prophet as Ezekiel ever existed.

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While it must be admitted that the internal evidence against the integrity and authenticity of Ezekiel is weaker than that of the other books thus far examined, it can be confidently asserted that Bible apologists have been unable to establish either. One damaging fact they concede: no other writer of the Bible ever mentions the book or its alleged author.

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## Minor Prophets.

The twelve Minor Prophets, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi, require but a passing notice. Compared with the other Prophets, or even with the principal books of the

Hagiographa, they are of little importance. A part of them may be genuine—the writings of those to whom their authorship has been ascribed—but there is no external evidence, either in the Bible or elsewhere, to support the claim, while the internal evidence of the books themselves is not convincing.

The date assigned for the composition of Jonah, the oldest of the Later Prophets, is 856—according to some, 862 B.C. He is said to have prophesied during the reign of one Pul, “king of Assyria.” But unfortunately Pul’s reign is placed in 770 B.C., ninety years after the date assigned for the book. Jonah is named in the Four Gospels, named by Christ himself. This is adduced as proof of its authenticity and in support of a literal instead of an allegorical interpretation of its language. But Christ’s language, even if his divinity be admitted, proves neither the authenticity nor the historical character of the book. He taught in parables, and certainly would have no hesitancy in using an allegorical figure as a symbol. No scholar now contends for its authenticity, and no sane person believes its stories to be historical. Luther rejected the book.

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Four other books, Hosea, Micah, Zechariah, and Malachi, are quoted or supposed to be quoted, by the Evangelists, and two, Joel and Amos, are mentioned in Acts. This proves no more than that these books were in existence when the New Testament was written—a fact which none disputes.

Matthew (ii, 6) cites Micah (v, ii) as a Messianic prophecy. Micah lived during the reign of Hezekiah and wrote, not of an event 700 years in the future, but of one near at hand, the expected invasions of the Assyrians. The passage quoted by Matthew (ii, 15) from Hosea (xi, 1) refers to the exodus of the Israelites which took place 700 years before the time of Hosea.

Zechariah is the work of at least three writers. Davidson says: “To Zechariah’s authentic oracles were attached chapters ix-xiv, themselves made up of two parts (ix-xi, xii-xiv) belonging to different times and authors” (Canon, p. 33). The passage quoted by Matthew (xxi, 5) is not from the authentic portion of Zechariah, but from one of the spurious chapters, ix, 9.

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Mark (1, 2, 3) quotes a prophecy which he applies to John the Baptist. The passage quoted contains two sentences, one of which is found in Malachi (iii, 1), the other in Isaiah (xl, 3). Whiston declares that both sentences originally belonged to Isaiah. If Whiston is correct the Evangelist has not quoted Malachi. This, the last book of the Old Testament, is an anonymous work, Malachi being the name of the book and not of the author.

The period assigned for the prophecies of Amos is from 808 to 785 B.C. The book contains the following: “In that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, and close up the breaches thereof; and I will raise up his ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old” (ix, 11).

“And I will bring again the captivity of my people of Israel, and they shall build the waste cities and inhabit them” (14).

Amos was not written until after the captivity. This commenced 588 B.C. and continued fifty years.

Joel, it is asserted, was written 800 B.C. That this writer also lived after the captivity is shown by the following:

“I shall bring again the captivity of Judah and Jerusalem” (iii, 1).

This passage, it is claimed, was a prediction made centuries before the event occurred. Joel’s ability to predict future events, however, is negated by his next effort: “But Judah shall dwell forever, and Jerusalem from generation to generation” (20).

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“Nineveh is laid waste: who shall bemoan her?” (Nahum iii, 7).

The composition of Nahum is placed between 720 and 698 B.C. Nineveh was destroyed 606 B.C., a century later.

The first verse of Zephaniah declares that the book was written “in the days of Josiah,” in the seventh century B.C.; the last verse shows that it was written in the days of Cyrus, in the sixth century B.C. Every chapter of Habakkuk and Obadiah’s single chapter show that these books were written after the dates assigned.

The book of Haggai is ascribed to Haggai, the last person in the world to whom it can reasonably be ascribed. It is not a book *of* Haggai, but *about* Haggai. Excepting a few brief exhortations, of which it gives an account, it does not purport to contain a word from his tongue or pen. This argument applies with still greater force to Jonah.

The greater portion of the Minor Prophets are probably forgeries. The names of their alleged authors are attached to them, but in most cases in the form of a superscription only. Each book opens with a brief introduction announcing the author. These introductions were not written by the authors themselves, but by others. The only authority for pronouncing the books authentic, then, is the assurance of some unknown Jewish scribe or editor.

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A damaging argument against the authority, if not against the authenticity, of the Prophets is the fact that while the historical records of the Old Testament cover the time during which all of them are said to have flourished, only a few of them are deemed worthy of mention.

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## CHAPTER VIII.

### THE HAGIOGRAPHHA.

The Hagiographa comprises the remaining thirteen books of the Old Testament. It was divided into three divisions: 1. Psalms, Proverbs, Job. 2. Song of Solomon, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, Esther. 3. Daniel, Ezra and Nehemiah, First and Second Chronicles. The Jews considered these books of less value than those of the Law and the Prophets. The books belonging to the third division possess little merit; but the first two divisions, omitting Esther, together with a few poems in the Pentateuch and the Prophets, contain the cream of Hebrew literature.

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#### Psalms.

The collection of hymns and prayers used in public worship by Jews and Christians, and called the Psalms, stands first in importance as a religious book in the Hagiographa. Christians accept it not only as a book of praise, but as a prophetic revelation and doctrinal authority.

It is popularly supposed that David wrote all, or nearly all, of the Psalms. Many commentators attribute to him the authorship of one hundred or more. He wrote, at the most, but a few of them.

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The Jews divided them into five books: 1. Chapters i-xli; 2. xlii-lxii; 3. lxiii-lxxxix; 4. xc-cvi; 5. cvii-cl. Smith's "Bible Dictionary," a standard orthodox authority, claims for David the authorship of the first book only. The second book, while including a few of his psalms, was not compiled, it says, until the time of Hezekiah, three hundred years after his reign. The psalms of the third book, it states, were composed during Hezekiah's reign; those of the fourth book following these, and prior to the Captivity; and those of the fifth book after the return from Babylon, four hundred years after David's time.

There are psalms in the third, fourth, and fifth books ascribed to David, but they are clearly of much later origin. The "Bible Dictionary" admits that they were not composed by him, and attempts to account for the Davidic superscription by assuming that they were written by Hezekiah, Josiah, and others who were lineal descendants and belonged to the house of David. But there is nothing to warrant the assumption that they were written by these Jewish kings. They were anonymous pieces to which the name of David was affixed to add to their authority.

The second book concludes with these words: "The prayers of David, the son of Jesse, are ended." This is accepted to mean that none of the psalms following this book belong to David. The Korahite psalms, assigned to David's reign, belong to a later age. Twelve psalms are ascribed to Asaph, who lived in David's reign. This passage from one of them was written at least 430 years after David's death:

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"O God, the heathen are come into thine inheritance; thy holy temple have they defiled: they have laid Jerusalem on heaps" (lxxix, 1).

In the second and third books the word God occurs 206 times, while Jehovah, translated "Lord God," occurs but 44 times; in the remaining three books, God occurs but 23 times, while Jehovah occurs 640 times.

Psalms xlii and xliii are merely parts of the same psalm. Psalm xix consists of two distinct psalms, the first eleven verses constituting one, the last three another. Psalms xiv and liii are the same; lx and cviii, omitting the first four or five verses, are also the same. The Septuagint version and the Alexandrian manuscript contain 151 psalms, the last one being omitted from other versions.

Some of the more conservative German critics credit David with as many as thirty psalms. Dr. Lyman Abbott contends that he did not write more than fifteen. The Dutch scholars, Kuenen and Oort, believe that he wrote none. And this is probably the truth. While collections of these psalms doubtless existed at an earlier period, the book, in its present form, was compiled during the Maccabean age, about one hundred and fifty years before the Christian era.

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Many of these psalms are fine poetical compositions; but the greater portion of them are crude in construction, and some of them fiendish in sentiment.

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## Proverbs.

The authorship of Proverbs has been ascribed to Solomon. He could have written but few of these proverbs, and probably wrote none. It is a compilation of maxims made many centuries after his time. Tradition represented Solomon as the wisest of men, and every wise saying whose origin was unknown was credited to him.

Dr. Oort says: "The history of Solomon's wisdom resembles that of David's music. In either case the imagination of posterity has given a thoroughly religious character to what was in reality purely secular; and just as David was made the author of a number of psalms, so various works of the so-called sages, or proverb-makers, were ascribed to Solomon" (Bible for Learners, vol. ii, p. 75).

The book consists of seven different collections of proverbs, as follows: 1. i, 7-ix; 2. x-xxii, 16; 3. xxii, 17-xxiv; 4. xxv-xxix; 5. xxx; 6. xxxi, 1-9; 7. xxxi, 10-31. The first six verses are a preface.

The first collection, it is admitted, was not the work of Solomon. These proverbs were composed as late as 600 B.C. The second collection is presented as "The Proverbs of Solomon." If any of Solomon's proverbs exist they are contained in this collection. The third collection is anonymous. The fourth begins as follows: "These are also proverbs of Solomon, which the men of Hezekiah, king of Judah, copied out" (700 B.C.). The fifth contains "The words of Agur the son of Jakeh." The sixth, comprising the first nine verses of the last chapter, are "The words of King Lemuel." The seventh, comprising the remainder of the chapter, is a poem, written after the Captivity.

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## Job.

It is remarkable that the book which, from a literary point of view, occupies the first place among the books of the Bible, should be the only one in the collection that was not written by a believer in the religion of the Bible. It is almost universally conceded that the book of Job was not written by a Jew, but by a Gentile.

Most Christians ascribe its authorship to Job himself; but there is no more authority for ascribing it to Job than there is for ascribing the Pentateuch to Moses. Job is the name of the leading character of the book, not the name of its author. Its authorship is unknown. The Talmud asserts, and probably correctly, that Job was not a real personage—that the book is an allegory. Luther says, "It is merely the argument of a fable."

Regarding its antiquity, Dr. Hitchcock says: "The first written of all the books in the Bible, and the oldest literary production in the world, is the book of Job." The date assigned for its composition is 1520 B.C.

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Had Job been written a thousand years before the time claimed, it would not be the oldest literary production in the world. But it was probably written a thousand years after the time claimed. Luther places its composition 500 years after this time; Renan says that it was written 800 years later, Ewald and Davidson 900 years later. Grotius and De Wette believe that it was written 1000 years after the date assigned, while Hartmann and others contend that it was written still later.

While its exact date cannot be determined, there is internal evidence pointing to a much later age than that named.

“Which maketh Arcturus, Orion, and Pleiades, and the chambers of the south” (ix, 9).

The use of these Greek astronomical names proves a later origin. So, too, does the following passage:

“The Chaldeans made out three bands” (i, 17).

Of this people Chambers’ Encyclopedia says: “The Chaldeans are first heard of in the ninth century before Christ as a small Accadian tribe on the Persian Gulf.” This was seven centuries after the date assigned for Job, while the same authority states that Chaldea did not exist until a still later period.

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The poem of Job, as originally composed, comprised the following: Chapters i-xxvii, 10; xxviii-xxxi; xxviii-xli, 12; xlii, 1-6. All the rest of the book, about eight chapters—nearly one fifth of it—consists of clumsy forgeries. The poet is a radical thinker who boldly questions the wisdom and justice of God. To counteract the influence of his work these interpolations which controvert its teachings were inserted.

Nor is this all. Our translators have still further mutilated the work. Its most damaging lines they have mistranslated or glossed over. Thus Job (xiii, 15) says: “He [God] will slay me; I have no hope.” Yet they make him say the very reverse of this: “Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him.”

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## The Five Rolls.

The second division of the Hagiographa, known as the Five Rolls, or Megilloth, contains five small books—The Song of Solomon, Ecclesiastes, Lamentations, Ruth, and Esther.

The Song of Solomon, Song of Songs, or Canticles, as it is variously called, and Ecclesiastes, or The Preacher, are said to be the works of Solomon—the former a product of his youth, the latter of his old age. It is quite certain that the same author did not write both, and equally certain that Solomon wrote neither.

The Song of Solomon, Ewald affirms, is an anonymous poem, written about the middle of the tenth century B.C.—after Solomon’s time. It is doubtless of much later origin. It belongs to Northern, and not to Southern Palestine. This alone proves that Solomon did not write it. The Talmud says, “Hezekiah and his company wrote Isaiah, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Song of Songs.” Hengstenberg, one of the most orthodox of commentators, says that Ecclesiastes was written centuries after the time of Solomon. Davidson believes that it was written as late as 350 B.C.; while Hartmann and Hitzig, German critics, contend that it was written still later.

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Solomon’s Song is an amorous poem, beautiful in its way. But when we turn to it in the Christian Bible and find the running titles of every page and the table of contents of every chapter filled with sanctimonious drivel about Christ and his bride, the Church, we are reminded of a lecherous parson masquerading under the cloak of piety among his female parishioners. The Preacher of Ecclesiastes is something of a Freethought preacher. He is a skeptic and a philosopher.

Lamentations, it is claimed, was composed by Jeremiah. There is little evidence either for or against this claim. Oort affirms that its ascription to Jeremiah is a “mistaken tradition,” that its five poems were written by five different authors and at different times. The habit of ascribing anonymous writings to eminent men was prevalent among the Jews. Moses, Joshua, Samuel, David, Solomon, Daniel, and probably Jeremiah, have been declared the authors of books of which they never heard.

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Ruth is the only book of the Bible whose authorship is generally conceded by Christians to be unknown. Dr. Hitchcock says: “There is nothing whatever by which the authorship of it can be determined.”

Many orthodox scholars admit that Esther’s authorship, like that of Ruth, is unknown. Some credit it to Mordecai. It was written as late as 300 B.C., 150 years after Mordecai’s time. The Vulgate and modern Catholic versions include six chapters not found in our authorized version. There are many books in the Bible devoid of truth, but probably none so self-evidently false as Esther. It has been

described as “a tissue of glaring impossibilities from beginning to end.” Luther pronounces it a “heathenish extravagance.”

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## Daniel.

Christians class Daniel with the Greater Prophets, and assign its authorship to the sixth century B.C. It belongs to the Hagiographa and was one of the last books of the Old Testament to be written.

A considerable portion of the book relates to Belshazzar. Twenty times in one chapter is he referred to as the king of Babylon, and five times is he called the son of Nebuchadnezzar. Yet Belshazzar was not the son of Nebuchadnezzar, neither was he king of Babylon. Again the author devotes several chapters to Darius “the Median,” who, he says, defeated the Chaldeans and conquered Babylon. Now, nearly everybody, excepting this writer, supposed that it was Cyrus the Persian who conquered Babylon. Darius “the Median” was never king of Babylon. This book was written by one ignorant of Babylonian history, and not by Daniel, who lived in Babylon, and who is said to have been next to the king in authority.

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Prof. A. H. Sayce, Professor of Assyriology in Oxford University, considered by many the greatest of archaeologists, a believer in the divinity of the Bible and an opponent of Higher Criticism, is compelled to reject Daniel. In a recent article, he says: “The old view of the old Book is correct excepting the book of Daniel, which is composed of legends.... The historical facts as we know them from the contemporaneous records are irreconcilable with the statements found in the historical portions of Daniel.”

This statement, aside from its rejection of Daniel, is significant. Here is a man whose life-long study and researches make him preeminently qualified to judge of one book’s authenticity and credibility. This book he rejects. The books he accepts are those concerning which he is not specially qualified to judge.

Dr. Arnold says: “I have long thought that the greater part of the book of Daniel is most certainly a very late work, of the time of the Maccabees” (Life and Correspondence, Vol. II., p. 188). This conclusion of Dr. Arnold’s, made seventy years ago, is confirmed by the later critics who place its composition in the reign of Antiochus Epiphanes, about 165 B.C.

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A part, if not all of the book, was written in Aramaic. In the Greek version the three small Apocryphal books, History of Susannah, Song of the Three Holy Children, and Bel and the Dragon, are included in it. The fact that the Jews placed Daniel in the Hagiographa, instead of the Prophets, is fatal to the claims regarding its authorship and date.

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## Ezra and Nehemiah.

Ezra and Nehemiah for a time constituted one book, Ezra. This was afterwards divided into two books and called The First and Second books of Ezra. Both were ascribed to Ezra. Subsequently the names were changed to those by which they are now known, and the authorship assigned respectively to Ezra and Nehemiah. That both were not composed by the same author is shown by the fact that each contains a copy of the register of the Jews that returned from Babylon.

Critics agree that Ezra did not write all of the book which now bears his name—that it is the work of various authors and was written, for the most part, long after Ezra’s time. A portion of it was written in Hebrew and the remainder in Aramaic.

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Nehemiah wrote, at the most, but a part of the book ascribed to him. He did not write the following:

“The Levites in the days of Eliashib, Joiada, and Johanan, and Jaddua, were recorded chief of the fathers; also the priests to the reign of Darius the Persian” (xii, 22).

Darius the Persian began to reign 336 B.C.; Nehemiah wrote 433 B.C.

“There were in the days of ... Nehemiah the governor” (xii, 26). “In the days of Nehemiah” (47).

These passages show that the book, as a whole, was not only not written by Nehemiah, but not until long after the time of Nehemiah. Spinoza says that both Ezra and Nehemiah were written two or three hundred years after the time claimed. The later critics are generally agreed that neither Ezra nor Nehemiah had anything to do with the composition of these books.

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## First and Second Chronicles.

The concluding books of the Hagiographa, and of the Old Testament, if arranged in their proper order, are First and Second Chronicles. Theologians tell us that they were written or compiled by Ezra 456 B.C.

By carefully comparing the genealogy given in the third chapter of 1 Chronicles with that given in the first chapter of Matthew, it will be seen that the records of Chronicles are brought down to within a few generations of Jesus. These books are a compilation of documents made centuries after the time that Ezra and Nehemiah are supposed to have completed the canon of the Old Testament, and a hundred years after the date assigned for the Septuagint translation.

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The fragmentary character of many of the books of the Bible, and particularly of Chronicles, is shown in the conclusion of the second book. It closes with an unfinished sentence, as follows: "The Lord his God is with him and let him go up —." The concluding words may be found in another book of the Bible—Ezra (i, 3): "To Jerusalem, which is in Judah, and build the house of the Lord God of Israel," etc. The first verses of Ezra are identical with the last verses of Chronicles. The compiler of Chronicles had seemingly begun to copy the document which now forms a part of the book of Ezra, and in the middle of a sentence was suddenly called away from his work, never to resume and complete it.

We have now reviewed the books of the Old Testament. We have seen that the claims made in support of their authenticity are, for the most part, either untrue or incapable of proof. When and by whom Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, First and Second Samuel, First and Second Kings, First and Second Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon, Lamentations, Daniel, Jonah, Haggai, and Malachi were written is unknown. Isaiah, Jeremiah, Amos, and Zechariah wrote, at the most, but portions of the books ascribed to them. The few remaining books may have been written by those whose names they bear, though even these are veiled in doubt. There is not one book in the Old Testament whose authenticity, like that of many ancient Greek and Roman books, is fully established.

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## CHAPTER IX.

### THE FOUR GOSPELS.

The lesser in size but the greater in importance of the two divisions of the Bible is the New Testament. The principal books of the New Testament, and the most highly valued by Christians of all the books of the Bible, are the Four Gospels. These books, it is affirmed, were written by Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, in the first century; Matthew between 37 and 50, Mark and Luke between 56 and 63, and John between 78 and 97 A.D.

The orthodox claims regarding the origin of these books are thus expressed by Dr. Hitchcock:

"The Four Gospels are the best authenticated ancient writings in the world; so clear, weighty, and extensive is the mass of testimony in favor of them" (Analysis of the Bible, p. 1149).

"These four books, together constituting the best attested piece of history in the world, were written by four eye-witnesses of the facts narrated" (Ibid, p. 1151).

"Matthew and John were Apostles and Mark and Luke were companions and disciples of Apostles" (Ibid).

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If these books are authentic and divinely inspired, as claimed, Christianity is built upon a rock, and the floods and winds of adverse criticism will beat against it in vain; but if they are not authentic—if they were not written by the Evangelists named—if they are merely anonymous books, written one hundred and fifty years after the events they purport to record, as many contend, then it is built upon the sand and must fall.

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## The Apostles.

Christians claim to have an “unbroken chain of testimony” to the genuineness and credibility of the Four Gospels from the alleged dates of their composition down to the present time. I shall endeavor to show that they have no such chain of testimony—that the most important part of it is wanting.

Twenty books—all of the remaining books of the New Testament but three—are ascribed to the Apostles Paul, Peter, and John. All of these books, it is affirmed, were written after Matthew was written, and about one-half of them after Mark and Luke were written. If this be true, some proofs of the existence of the Synoptic Gospels ought to be found in these books.

Of the fourteen Epistles credited to Paul all have been assigned later dates than Matthew, and a portion of them later dates than Mark and Luke. But there is not a word to indicate that any one of these Gospels was in existence when Paul wrote.

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The two Epistles of Peter, it is claimed, were written after Matthew, Mark, and Luke were written. But these Epistles contain no mention of them.

The four remaining books, First, Second, and Third John and Revelation, are said to have been written after these Gospels were composed. Their reputed author, however, knows nothing of these gospels.

The three great Apostles are silent—three links at the very beginning of this chain are missing.

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## The Apostolic Fathers.

After the Apostles, and contemporary with the oldest of them, come the Apostolic Fathers, Clement of Rome, Ignatius, and Polycarp. Clement wrote about the close of the first century. There are two Epistles credited to him, but in these Epistles are to be found no evidences of the existence of the Four Gospels.

Ignatius is said to have suffered martyrdom in the year 116. There are fifteen Epistles which bear his name. A few of these are believed to be genuine, while the remainder are conceded to be forgeries. But in none of them, neither in the genuine nor in the spurious, is there any evidence that the Gospels had appeared when they were written.

Polycarp, Bishop of Smyrna, who is said to have been the companion of John, died at a very advanced age, about the year 167. His Epistle to the Philippians is extant, but it contains no reference to the Gospels.

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Hermas and Barnabas are usually classed with the Apostolic Fathers. The Shepherd of Hermas and the Epistle of Barnabas make no mention of the Evangelists.

That the writings of the Apostolic Fathers contain no proofs of the existence of the Four Gospels is admitted even by Christian writers. Dr. Westcott admits it:

“Reference in the sub-apostolic age to the discourses or actions of our Lord, as we find them recorded in the Gospels, show, as far as they go, that what the Gospels relate was then held to be true; but it does not necessarily follow that they were already in use, and were the actual source of the passages in question. On the contrary, the mode in which Clement refers to our Lord’s teaching—‘the Lord said,’ not ‘saith’—seems to imply that he was indebted to tradition, and not to any written accounts, for words most closely resembling those which are still found in our Gospels. The main testimony of the Apostolic Fathers is, therefore, to the substance, and not to the authenticity of the Gospels” (On the Canon of the New Testament, p. 52).

Bishop Marsh makes the following admission: "From the Epistle of Barnabas, no inference can be deduced that he had read any part of the New Testament. From the genuine Epistle, as it is called, of Clement of Rome, it may be inferred that Clement had read the First Epistle to the Corinthians. From the Shepherd of Hermas no inference whatsoever can be drawn. From the Epistles of Ignatius it may be concluded that he had read St. Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians, and that there existed in his time evangelical writings, though it cannot be shown that he has quoted them. From Polycarp's Epistle to the Philippians it appears that he had heard of St. Paul's Epistle to that community, and he quotes a passage which is in the First Epistle to the Corinthians and another which is in the Epistle to the Ephesians; but no positive conclusion can be drawn with respect to any other epistle, or any of the Four Gospels" (Michaelis, Vol. I., p. 354).

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Dr. Dodwell says: "We have at this day certain most authentic ecclesiastical writers of the times, as Clemens Romanus, Barnabas, Hermas, Ignatius, and Polycarp, who wrote in the order wherein I have named them, and after all the writers of the New Testament. But in Hermas you will not find one passage or any mention of the New Testament, nor in all the rest is any one of the Evangelists named" (Dissertations upon Irenaeus).

Professor Norton says: "When we endeavor to strengthen this evidence by appealing to the writings ascribed to Apostolic Fathers we, in fact, weaken its force. At the very extremity of the chain of evidence, where it ought to be strongest, we are attaching defective links which will bear no weight" (Genuineness of the Gospels, Vol I., p. 357).

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Clement, Ignatius, and Polycarp, all refer to the Epistles of Paul, showing that they were in existence when they wrote and that they were acquainted with them. But they never mention the Four Gospels, and this silence affords conclusive evidence that these books as authoritative documents did not exist in their time; for it is unreasonable to suppose that they would use the least important and make no use of the most important books of the New Testament. Three additional and three of the principal links in this "unbroken chain of testimony" are wanting, and must be supplied before the authenticity of the Four Gospels can be established.

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## The Christian Fathers.

The early Christian Fathers had no knowledge of the existence of the Four Gospels. One of the earliest and one of the most eminent of the Christian Fathers was Justin Martyr. He lived and wrote about the middle of the second century. His writings are rather voluminous, and are devoted to the task of proving to both Jews and Gentiles the divinity of Christ and the divine origin of Christianity. If a Christian writer were to attempt to demonstrate this now, where would he go for his authority? To the Four Gospels. These would constitute his chief—almost his entire authority. Now, had these books been extant when Justin wrote, and valued as they are by Christians to-day, he would have used them, he would have quoted from them, he would have named them. But he makes no use of them, he never mentions them. He makes more than three hundred quotations from the Old Testament—Messianic prophecies, etc.—and in nearly two hundred instances he names the books from which he quotes. He makes nearly one hundred quotations from Christian writings that are now considered apocryphal, but he makes none from the Four Gospels.

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This silence of Justin is the most damaging argument that has been adduced against the authenticity of the Gospels. This demonstrates one of two things: that these books were not in existence when Justin Martyr wrote, were not in existence at the middle of the second century, or if they were, the foremost Christian scholar of his age rejected them.

Recognizing the significance of this damaging fact, Christian apologists have attempted to show that Justin was acquainted with our Gospels by citing extracts from his writings similar to passages found in them. Westcott adduces seven passages, but admits that two only are wholly identical. He says:

"Of the seven, five agree verbally with the text of St. Matthew or St. Luke, exhibiting, indeed, three slight various readings not elsewhere found, but such as are easily explicable. The sixth is a condensed summary of words related by St. Matthew; the seventh alone presents an important variation in the text of a verse, which is, however, otherwise very uncertain" (Canon of the New Testament, p. 131).

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Think of this renowned defender of Christianity, Justin Martyr, attempting to

establish the divinity of Christ by citing four hundred texts from the Old Testament and apocryphal books and two only from the Evangelists!

There is really but one passage in the Gospels to be found in Justin. But if it could be shown that they contain many passages similar to, or even identical with, passages found in his writings, this would not prove that he has quoted from them. It is not claimed that these Gospels are mere fabrications of their authors, or that they are composed entirely of original matter. They consist largely of traditions, and these traditions, many of them, were embodied in other and older books which were used by the early Fathers. While the Four Gospels were not extant in Justin's time, some of the documents of which they are composed, particularly those containing the reputed sayings of Jesus, had already appeared and were frequently cited by the Fathers. These citations, Paley, Lardner, Westcott, and others, in their evidences of Christianity, have adduced as proofs of the early origin of the Four Gospels.

Justin's quotations are chiefly from what he calls the "Memoirs of the Apostles." These, it is claimed, were the Four Gospels. If so, then the gospels we have are not genuine, for the quotations from the "Memoirs" are not to be found in our Gospels. Justin says that Mary (not Joseph) was descended from David; that Jesus was born in a cave; that the Magi came from Arabia; that Jesus made ploughs and yokes; that a fire was kindled in the Jordan at his baptism; that he was called a magician. The "Memoirs," or Gospels, from which Justin quotes are not our Gospels.

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The Rev. Dr. Giles repudiates the claim that Justin Martyr recognized the Gospels. He says:

"The very names of the Evangelists, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, are never mentioned by him—do not occur once in all his works. It is, therefore, childish to say that he has quoted from our existing Gospels" (Christian Records, p. 71).

Papias, a Christian bishop and a contemporary of Justin Martyr, is cited as a witness for the Gospels. He is quoted by Eusebius as referring to writings of Matthew and Mark. But the books he mentions are plainly not the gospels of Matthew and Mark.

Of Matthew he says: "Matthew composed the oracles in the Hebrew dialect, and every one interpreted them as he was able" (Eusebius' Ecclesiastical History, book iii, p. 39).

This was not the biographical narrative known as "Matthew," but probably an apocryphal book called the "Oracles of Christ," which some ascribed to Matthew.

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Mark is referred to as follows: "Mark having become the interpreter of Peter, wrote accurately whatever he remembered, though he did not arrange in order the things which were either said or done by Christ. For he neither heard the Lord, nor followed him; but afterwards, as I said, accompanied Peter, who adapted his teaching to the occasion, and not as making a consecutive record of the Lord's discourses" (Ecclesiastical History, book iii, p. 39).

This does not describe our Gospel of Mark, which, although a compilation, is a consecutive narrative of events, and not a collection of isolated fragments.

But even if Papias was acquainted with the Gospels, he is a poor witness to their credibility, for he accepted the teachings of tradition in preference to the books which he knew: "I held that what was to be derived from books did not profit me as that from the living and abiding voice [tradition]" (Ecclesiastical History, iii, 39).

Dr. Davidson admits that the books mentioned by Papias were not our Gospels. He says:

"Papias speaks of Matthew and Mark, but it is most probable that he had documents which either formed the basis of our present Matthew and Mark or were taken into them and written over" (Canon of the Bible, p. 124).

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"He neither felt the want nor knew the existence of inspired Gospels" (Ibid, p. 123).

The writings of thirty Christian authors who wrote prior to 170 are still extant. In all these writings there is to be found no mention of the Four Gospels.

In the writings of Theophilus, bishop of Antioch, occurs the following: "John says: 'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was God.'" This was written in 180, after the middle of the latter half of the second century, and is the earliest proof of the existence of any one of the Four Gospels.

Irenaeus, bishop of Lyons, who wrote about 190, is the earliest writer who mentions all of the Four Gospels. He names them; he declares them to be inspired; he makes four hundred quotations from them. The Four Gospels were in existence when Irenaeus wrote, and they were undoubtedly composed between the time of Justin Martyr and the time of Irenaeus—that is, some time during the latter half of the second century.

Writers on the evidences of Christianity endeavor to establish the genuineness of the Four Gospels by showing that the Fathers who lived and wrote during the two centuries following the ministry and death of Jesus accepted and quoted them as authorities. They credit these Fathers with more than four thousand evangelical quotations. But where are these quotations to be found? Nearly all of them in Irenaeus, Clemens of Alexandria, Tertullian, and Origen, while in Clement of Rome, Ignatius, Polycarp, and Justin Martyr few or none are claimed. The fact that the writings of the Fathers which appeared immediately after 180 contain thousands of evangelical references, while in all the writings which appeared before 170 the evangelists are not even named, affords conclusive evidence that the Four Gospels were composed during or near the decade that elapsed between 170 and 180 A.D.

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### Internal Evidence.

The Four Gospels do not claim to have been composed by Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. The titles are not "The Gospel of Matthew," "The Gospel of Mark," "The Gospel of Luke," and "The Gospel of John," but "The Gospel According to Matthew," "The Gospel According to Mark," "The Gospel According to Luke," and "The Gospel According to John." The titles simply imply that they are according to the real or traditional teachings of these Evangelists. So far as the textual authorship is concerned, they are, and do not purport to be other than, anonymous books. Omit these titles, and not one word remains to indicate their authorship. Now, it is admitted that these books did not originally bear these titles. St. Chrysostom, who believes that they are genuine, says (Homilies i) that the authors did not place their names at the head of their Gospels, but that this was afterward done by the church. There is nothing in them to support the claim that they were written by those whose names have been prefixed. On the contrary, their contents furnish conclusive proofs that they were not written by these supposed authors, nor in the apostolic age.

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### Matthew.

Christians believe that Matthew's Gospel was written in Hebrew. Our Matthew was written in Greek. An attempt has been made to explain the discrepancy by assuming that Matthew wrote his book in Hebrew, and subsequently rewrote it in Greek, or translated it into this language. But another difficulty remains. The quotations from the Old Testament in Matthew, and there are many, are taken, not from the Hebrew, but from the Septuagint (Greek) version. This proves that it was originally written in Greek and not in Hebrew.

The Gospel According to the Hebrews, it is affirmed, was the Hebrew form of Matthew. If this be true, then our Greek Matthew cannot be a correct translation, for the passages from the Gospel of the Hebrews which have been preserved are not to be found in Matthew. The following quotations are from the Gospel of the Hebrews, this supposed original Gospel of Matthew:

"He who wonders shall reign, and he who reigns shall rest."

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"Then the rich man began to smite his head, and it pleased him not."

"The Holy Ghost, my mother, lately took me by one of my hairs, and bore me to the great mountain Tabor."

"I am a mason, who get my livelihood by my hands; I beseech thee, Jesus, that thou wouldst restore to me my strength, that I may no longer thus scandalously beg my bread."

If these passages are from the original Gospel of Matthew, then the accepted Gospel of Matthew is spurious.

This Hebrew Gospel was the Gospel of the Ebionites and Nazarenes. Eusebius says: "They [the Ebionites] made use only of that which is called the Gospel According to the Hebrews." Epiphanius says: "They [the Nazarenes] have the Gospel of Matthew most entire in the Hebrew language." St. Jerome refers to it as "the Gospel which the Nazarenes and Ebionites use."

Referring to these sects, Dr. Hug, the eminent Catholic critic, says: "The Ebionites denied the miraculous conception of Christ, and, with the Nazarenes, looked upon him only as an ordinary man." The Gospel which these sects accepted as their authority could not have been our Gospel of Matthew, because the most important part of this Gospel is the story of the miraculous conception.

While the claim that Matthew wrote his Gospel in Hebrew is vigorously maintained, the claim that he afterwards translated it into Greek himself is so manifestly untenable that many have conceded its improbability. Jerome says: "Who afterwards translated it [Matthew] into Greek is not sufficiently certain."

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The consequences of this admission are thus reluctantly expressed by Michaelis: "If the original text of Matthew is lost, and we have nothing but a Greek translation: then, frankly, we cannot ascribe any divine inspiration to the words."

Two texts may be cited from Matthew which prove a later date for the Gospel than that claimed. Jesus, in upbraiding the Jews, is reported to have used the following language:

"Upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias, son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar" (xxiii, 35).

Zacharias, the son of Baruch (Barouchos), who is undoubtedly meant, was slain in the temple about 69 A.D. Thus Matthew makes Jesus refer to an event that occurred forty years after his death and twenty or thirty years after the Gospel of Matthew is said to have been written.

Dr. Hug admits that this is the Zacharias referred to. He says: "There cannot be a doubt, if we attend to the name, the fact and its circumstances, and the object of Jesus in citing it, that it was the same Zacharias Barouchos, who, according to Josephus, a short time before the destruction of Jerusalem, was unjustly slain in the temple."

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Regarding this passage in Matthew, Professor Newman, of University College, London, says: "There is no other man known in history to whom this verse can allude. If so, it shows how late, how ignorant, how rash, is the composer of a text passed off on us as sacred truth" (Religion Not History, p. 46).

"Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven" (xvi, 18, 19).

This passage was written at the beginning of the establishment of the Roman Catholic hierarchy, for the purpose of securing the recognition of the Church of Rome (the founding of which tradition assigned to Peter) as *the* church of Christ.

Bishop Marsh, in his Michaelis, says: "If the arguments in favor of a late date for the composition of St. Matthew's Gospel be compared with those in favor of an early date, it will be found that the former greatly outweigh the latter."

Dr. Davidson admits that Matthew is an anonymous work. He says: "The author, indeed, must ever remain unknown" (Introduction to the New Testament, p. 72).

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## Mark.

As to where the Gospel of Mark was written, whether in Asia, in Africa, or in Europe, is unknown. Some believe that it was written at Antioch; Chrysostom states that it was written at Alexandria; Irenaeus says that it was written at Rome. If it was written at Rome it was probably written in Latin instead of Greek. Smith's "Bible Dictionary" concedes that "it abounds in Latin words." The following is an example:

"And he asked him, What is thy name? And he answered, saying, My name is Legion: for we are many" (v. 9).

Commenting on this passage, the Rev. Dr. Giles says: "The Four Gospels are written in Greek, and the word 'legion' is Latin; but in Galilee and Perea the people spoke neither Latin nor Greek, but Hebrew, or a dialect of it. The word 'legion' would be perfectly unintelligible to the disciples of Christ, and to almost everybody in the country" (Christian Records, p. 197).

If it was written in Latin, then our Greek Mark, like Matthew, instead of being an original Gospel, is simply an unauthenticated translation.

Mark has generally been considered a Petrine Gospel; orthodox Christians claiming that Peter dictated the Gospel to Mark. Discussing this claim, the author of "Supernatural Religion" says: "Throughout the Gospel there is the total absence of anything which is specially characteristic of Petrine influence and teaching" (Vol. I., p. 362). Volkmar and others declare it to be Pauline. One thing can be affirmed with certainty; it was not written by John Mark, neither was it dictated by Peter.

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The last twelve verses of Mark, it is claimed, are an interpolation, because they are not to be found in the older manuscripts of the book. The Revision Committee which prepared the New Version of the New Testament pronounced them spurious. If these verses are not genuine, then it must be admitted that the second Gospel is either an unfinished or a mutilated work; for with these verses omitted, it ends abruptly with the visit of the women to the tomb, leaving the most important events at the close of Christ's career, his appearance and ascension—the proofs of his resurrection—unrecorded.

The greater portion of Mark is to be found in Matthew and Luke, and much of it in the same or similar language. Judge Waite, in his review of the Gospel, says: "Mark has almost a complete parallel in Luke and Matthew taken together. There are but 24 verses which have no parallel in either of the other synoptics" (History of Christianity, p. 350).

Regarding the origin of Mark, Strauss says: "Our second Gospel cannot have originated from recollections of Peter's instructions, *i. e.*, from a source peculiar to itself, since it is evidently a compilation, whether made from memory or otherwise, from the first and third Gospels" (Life of Jesus, Vol. I., p. 51).

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That neither Peter nor Mark had anything to do with the composition of this book is admitted by Davidson. Referring to it he says: "It has therefore no relation to the Apostle, and derives no sanction from his name. The author is unknown" (Introduction to New Testament, Vol. II, p. 84).

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## Luke.

In denying the authenticity of Mark and Luke, what I deny is that these books were written by the traditional Mark and Luke, the companions of Peter and Paul. I deny that they were written in the apostolic age and by apostolic authority. As stated by "Chambers's Encyclopedia," "the question as to their genuineness is in the main question as to the fact of their existence at this early period; the special authorship of each Gospel is a comparatively less important question."

The book of Luke is anonymous; it does not claim to be written by Luke. And yet the Fathers may have been correct in ascribing its authorship to him. If so, who was this Luke? Where did he live? When did he write his book? "Chambers's" says he "was born, according to the accounts of the Church Fathers, at Antioch, in Syria." Smith's "Bible Dictionary" says, "He was born at Antioch." The Gospel is addressed to Theophilus. Who was Theophilus? The "Bible Dictionary" says: "From the honorable epithet applied to him in Luke i, 3, it has been argued with much probability that he was a person in high official position." There is but one Theophilus known to history to whom the writer can possibly refer, and this is Theophilus, Bishop of Antioch, who lived in the latter part of the second century. Luke and Theophilus, then, both belonged to Antioch, and it is undoubtedly to this Theophilus that Luke's Gospel is addressed. This proves that it was written more than one hundred years after the date assigned for its composition. When Luke assumed the task of writing a Gospel, Matthew, it has been claimed, was the only Gospel extant. And yet Luke in his introduction declares that many had been written; all of which he admits were genuine. Jerome says that one of the Gospels which Luke refers to was the Gospel of Appelles: "The Evangelist, Luke, declares that there were many who wrote Gospels.... They were such as that according to the Egyptians, and Thomas, and Matthias, and Bartholomew, that of the Twelve Apostles, and Basilides, and Appelles, and others." The Gospel of Appelles was written about 60 A.D. If Luke's Gospel was written after the Gospel of Appelles, it

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was written after the middle of the second century.

Dr. Schleiermacher, one of the greatest of modern theologians, maintains that Luke is a compilation of thirty-three different manuscripts; as follows: Chapter i, 1-4; i, 5-80; ii, 1-20; ii, 21; ii, 22-40; ii, 41-52; iii, iv, 1-15; iv, 16-30; iv, 31-44; v, 1-11; v, 12-16; v, 17-26; v, 27-39; vi, 1-11; vi, 12-49; vii, 1-10; vii, 11-50; viii, 1-21; viii, 22-56; ix, 1-45; ix, 46-50; ix, 51-62; x, 1-24; x, 25-37; x, 38-42; xi, 1-13; xi, 14-54; xii, xiii, 1-9; xiii, 10-22; xiii, 23-35; xiv, 1-24; xiv, 25-35; xv, xvi, xvii, 1-19; xvii, 20-37; xviii, xix, xx; xxi; xxii, xxiii, 1-49; xxiii, 50-56; xxiv.

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Bishop Thirlwall's Schleiermacher contains the following in regard to the composition of Luke: "The main position is firmly established that Luke is neither an independent writer, nor has made a compilation from works which extended over the whole course of the life of Jesus. He is from beginning to end no more than the compiler and arranger of documents which he found in existence, and which he allows to pass unaltered through his hands" (p. 313).

The immediate source of Luke's Gospel was undoubtedly the Gospel of Marcion, itself a compilation of older documents. Referring to this Gospel, the Rev. S. Baring-Gould says: "The arrangement is so similar that we are forced to the conclusion that it was either used by St. Luke or that it was his original composition. If he used it, then his right to the title of author of the Third Gospel falls to the ground, as what he added was of small amount" (Lost and Hostile Gospels).

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## The Synoptics.

The Synoptics Matthew, Mark, and Luke, it is claimed, are original and independent compositions, and the oldest of all the Gospels, both canonical and apocryphal. This claim is disproved by the form and character of their contents. One of two things is certain: either these writers copied from each other, or all copied from older documents. The following, which are but a few of the many passages that might be adduced, afford unmistakable evidence of this:

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Matthew—"They were astonished at his doctrine" (xxii, 33).

Mark—"They were astonished at his doctrine" (i, 22).

Luke—"They were astonished at his doctrine" (iv, 32).

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Matthew—"For he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes" (vii, 29).

Mark—"For he taught them as one that had authority, and not as the scribes" (i, 22).

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Matthew—"While he yet spake, lo, Judas, one of the twelve, came, and with him a great multitude, with swords and staves, from the chief priests," etc. (xxvi, 47).

Mark—"While he yet spake, cometh Judas, one of the twelve, and with him a great multitude with swords and staves, from the chief priests," etc. (xiv, 43).

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Matthew—"And without a parable spake he not unto them" (xiii, 34).

Mark—"But without a parable spake he not unto them" (iv, 34).

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Matthew—"Sought opportunity to betray him" (xxvi, 16).

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Luke—"Sought opportunity to betray him" (xxii, 6).

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Mark—"But they understood not that saying" (ix, 32).

Luke—"But they understood not this saying" (ix, 45).

The theory that the Synoptics borrowed from each other will account for the agreements in their books; but it will not account for the disagreements, and these are quite as numerous as the agreements. The following hypothesis, however, will account for both. When the Synoptics were composed probably fifty gospels, some

of recent and others of early origin, were already in existence. In addition to these were a hundred other documents pertaining to Christ and his teachings. From this mass of Gospel literature the Synoptics were compiled. Those portions that agree were taken from a common source; those that do not agree were taken from different documents.

Dean Alford believes that in the early ages of the church there existed what he terms a "common substratum of apostolic teachings," "oral or partially documentary." This, he says, "I believe to have been the original source of the common part of our three Gospels." Canon Westcott admits that "their substance is evidently much older than their form."

Professor Ladd, of Yale College, says: "In some respects each of the first three Gospels must be regarded as a compilation; it consists of material which the others have in common with it, and which was of a traditional kind more or less prepared before the author of the particular Gospel took it in hand to modify and rearrange it" (What Is the Bible? p. 295).

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Bishop Marsh, in his *Michaelis*, says: "The notion of an absolute independence, in respect to the composition of our three first Gospels, is no longer tenable" (Vol. III, part 2, p. 170).

Prof. Robertson Smith, of Scotland, pronounces them "unapostolic digests of the second century." Evanson goes further and declares them to be "spurious fictions of the second century."

The *Encyclopedia Britannica* concedes the fact that Protestant scholarship in Europe has virtually abandoned the popular orthodox position regarding the origin of these books. It says:

"It is certain that the Synoptic Gospels took their present form only by degrees, and that while they have their root in the apostolic age, they are fashioned by later influences and adapted to special wants in the early church. They are the deposits, in short, of Christian traditions handed down first of all in an oral form, before being committed to writing in such a form as we have them; and this is now an accepted conclusion of every historical school of theologians in England no less than in Germany, conservative no less than radical."

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## John.

In addition to what has already been adduced against the Johannine authorship of the Fourth Gospel, I submit the following:

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1. John, the disciple of Jesus, was an unlettered fisherman. The author of the Fourth Gospel was an accomplished scholar and a polished writer. His book is one of the classics of Christian literature.

2. The Apostle John was born at Bethsaida. The author of John says that Bethsaida was in Galilee (xii, 21). Bethsaida was not in Galilee, but in Perea, and to assert that John wrote this Gospel is to assert that he was ignorant of the location of his own town.

3. "In Bethany beyond Jordan" (New Ver. i, 28). "In Enon near to Salim" (iii, 23). "A city of Samaria, called Sychar" (iv, 5). These passages were written by one little acquainted with the geography of Palestine and unfamiliar with the scenes he attempts to describe.

4. John, the son of Zebedee, was a Jew. The manner in which the author of the Fourth Gospel always refers to the Jews is conclusive evidence that he was not a Jew.

5. The Synoptics state that Jesus celebrated the Passover with his disciples, and was crucified on the following day. The author of John states that he was crucified on the previous day, and therefore did not partake of the Paschal supper. In the second century a great controversy arose in the church regarding this. Those who accepted the account given in the Synoptics observed the feast, while those who accepted the account given in the Fourth Gospel rejected it. Now, we have the testimony of Irenaeus that John himself observed this feast. "For neither could Anicetus persuade Polycarp not to observe it, because he had ever observed it with John, the disciple of our Lord" (Against Heresies, iii, 3). As John accepted the account which appears in the Synoptics and rejected that which appears in the Gospel of John, he could not have written the Fourth Gospel.

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6. The disciple John is represented as standing at the cross and witnessing the crucifixion. The author of John does not claim to have been present, but appeals to the testimony of an eye-witness in support of his statements: "And he that saw it bare record, and his record is true" (xix, 35).

7. "Now, there was leaning on Jesus' bosom one of his disciples whom he loved" (xiii, 23). "The disciple standing by, whom he loved" (xix, 26). "To Simon Peter, and to the other disciple, whom Jesus loved" (xx, 2). This beloved disciple is said to be John. The Synoptics, however, do not represent John as the favorite disciple. If there was one disciple whom Jesus loved more than the others, it was Peter. To ascribe to John the authorship of the Fourth Gospel is to ascribe to him a spirit of self-glorification that is simply disgusting.

8. "And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: but these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God: and that believing ye might have life through his name" (xx, 30, 31). Thus concludes the original Gospel According to St. John. This book was not written by John, but it was written by a disciple of John for Johannine Christians. When the Roman Catholic hierarchy was formed and the Gospel of John was admitted to the New Testament canon, there was appended another chapter—a forgery. The hero of this chapter is Peter. A dozen times Jesus calls him by name. To him Jesus gives the oft repeated injunction, "Feed my lambs;" "feed my sheep." This chapter was added to counteract the Johannine influence and exalt the Petrine teachings so dear to Rome. To give an appearance of genuineness to this forgery, "the disciple whom Jesus loved" is again introduced and declared the author of the Gospel, thus making John himself a supporter of Petrine supremacy.

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9. Some of the most important events in the life of Jesus, the Synoptics state, were witnessed by John. The author of the Fourth Gospel knows nothing about them. "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" (Greg).

10. Even Christians have tacitly admitted the hopelessness of maintaining the authenticity of both the Fourth Gospel and the Synoptics. If the Synoptics are authentic, the Fourth Gospel cannot be. Smith's "Bible Dictionary" says: "In the Fourth Gospel the narrative coincides with that of the other three in a few passages only. Putting aside the account of the Passion, there are only three facts which John relates in common with the other Evangelists" (Art. Gospels).

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11. The author of John declares Jesus to be God. The complete deification of Jesus was the growth of generations. The early Christians, including the Apostles, believed him to be a man. Later, he became a demi-god, and the writings and traditions which represented him as such formed the materials from which the Synoptics were compiled. Not until the latter part of the second century was Jesus placed among the gods, and not until this time was the Fourth Gospel written.

Alluding to the Fourth Gospel, Canon Westcott says: "The earliest account of the origin of the Gospel is already legendary."

Professor Davidson says: "The Johannine authorship has receded before the tide of modern criticism, and though this tide is arbitrary at times it is here irresistible" (Canon of the Bible, p. 127).

From a work entitled "The New Bible and Its Uses" Prof. Andrew D. White, our present minister to Germany, in his "Warfare of Science" (vol. ii, p. 306), quotes the following in relation to John, which shows how rapidly the supposed authenticity of Bible books is disappearing before the investigations of the Higher Critics:

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"In the period of thirty years ending in 1860, of the fifty great authorities in this line, four to one were in favor of the Johannine authorship.... Of those who have contributed important articles to the discussion from 1880 to 1890, about two to one reject the Johannine authorship of the Gospel in its present shape—that is to say, while forty years ago great scholars were *four to one in favor of*, they are now *two to one against*, the claim that the Apostle John wrote the Gospel as we have it."

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## The Four Gospels.

The principal reason for rejecting both the reputed authorship and the credibility of the Four Gospels is the contradictory character of their contents. If Jesus Christ

was a historical personage, as Christians believe, these alleged biographies were not written by his Apostles and their companions; neither were they compiled from authentic records.

The Greek text of the Gospels disproves their authenticity. Their assigned authors, or two of them at least, were unlearned Jews. Their work was confined chiefly to the lower classes of their countrymen, in a land where Greek was almost unknown. The absurdity of this is shown by Mrs. Besant: "The only parallel for so curious a phenomenon as these Greek Gospels, written by ignorant Jews, would be if a Cornish fisherman and a low London attorney, both perfectly ignorant of German, wrote in German the sayings and doings of a Middlesex carpenter, and as their work was entirely confined to the lower classes of the people, who knew nothing of German, and they desired to place within their reach full knowledge of the carpenter's life, they circulated it among them in German only, and never wrote anything about him in English."

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The doctrines of the immaculate conception and of a material resurrection, so prominent in the Four Gospels, are proofs of their late origin. These doctrines are not taught in the older books of the New Testament, and were unknown to the Christians of the first century.

The scholarly author of "Supernatural Religion," after a patient and exhaustive examination of every accessible document relating to the subject, writes as follows:

"After having exhausted the literature and the testimony bearing on the point, we have not found a single distinct trace of any of those Gospels during the first century and a half after the death of Jesus" (Vol. II., p. 248).

Bishop Faustus, a heretical theologian of the fifth century, referring to this so-called Gospel history, says:

"It is allowed not to have been written by the Son himself nor by his Apostles, but long after by some unknown men who, lest they should be suspected of writing things they knew nothing of, gave to their books the names of the Apostles."

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Regarding these four books and their sequel, Acts, Rev. Dr. Hooykaas, the noted theologian and critic of Holland, voices the opinion of himself and his renowned associates, Dr. Kuenen and Dr. Oort, in the following words:

"Our interest is more especially excited by the five historical books of the New Testament. If we might really suppose them to have been written by the men whose names they bear, we could never be thankful enough for such precious authorities.... But, alas! not one of these five books was really written by the person whose name it bears—though for the sake of brevity we shall still call the writers Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John—and they are all of more recent date than their headings would lead us to suppose.... We cannot say that the Gospels and the book of Acts are *unauthentic*, for not one of them professes to give the name of its author. They appeared anonymously. The titles placed above them in our Bibles owe their origin to a later ecclesiastical tradition which deserves no confidence whatever" (Bible for Learners, Vol. III., p. 24).

The Pentateuch was not written by Moses, nor the Four Gospels by Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. The authenticity of the chief books of the New Testament, like that of the chief books of the Old, must be given up. The results of our review of them may be summed up in the words of the great German, Ferdinand Christian Baur: "These Gospels are spurious, and were written in the second century."

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## CHAPTER X.

### ACTS, CATHOLIC EPISTLES, REVELATION.

In this chapter will be reviewed the so-called historical book of Acts, the Catholic Epistles, and Revelation. In some versions of the New Testament the Catholic Epistles come immediately after Acts.

## Acts of the Apostles.

The Acts of the Apostles is one of many books bearing this name which appeared during the early centuries of the church. Concerning the origin of our canonical Acts, Dr. Hitchcock says: "It was written by Luke, in considerable part from his own observations of the facts narrated, and about A.D. 63, and at Rome, during Paul's stay there."

The Gospel of Luke is addressed to Theophilus; the book of Acts is addressed to the same person, and as the author states that he has addressed a former work to him, it is inferred that both works were written by the same person. It has been shown that Theophilus lived in the latter part of the second century, and that the Gospel of Luke was written at this time. If Luke and Acts, then, were written by the same person, and Acts was written after Luke, it also must have been written late in the second century, and consequently could not have been written by Luke, the companion of Paul. [141]

It is asserted that Luke was the associate of Paul, and that he was in Rome with Paul when his book was written. This implies Paul's sanction of the book. But if the Epistles of Paul are genuine, and it is generally agreed that those bearing upon this question are, this can not be true; for the Paul of these epistles and the Paul of Acts are two entirely different characters.

The book is entitled the Acts of the Apostles; and yet the acts of Peter and Paul are almost the only apostolic acts recorded. Besides the narrative of the author, the book consists largely of discourses attributed to Peter and Paul. But the style of the "unlearned and ignorant" (iv, 13) Peter is so similar to that of Paul with his "much learning" (xxvi, 24), and both so closely resemble the style of the author, that one not strongly imbued with faith must conclude that the whole is the product of one mind.

The author cites a speech made by Gamaliel before the Jewish council, in which he uses the following language: "For before these days rose up Theudas, boasting himself to be somebody; to whom a number of men, almost four hundred, joined themselves, who were slain," etc. (v, 36). [142]

Josephus, who gives an account of this event (Antiq. Bk. xx, ch. v, sec. 1), says that it happened "while Fadus was Procurator of Judea." This was 45 or 46 A.D. Gamaliel's speech was delivered, according to the accepted chronology, 29 A.D. Thus the author of Acts makes Gamaliel refer to an event as long past which in reality did not happen until sixteen years after that time.

Continuing his speech, Gamaliel refers to another event, as follows: "After this man [Theudas] rose up Judas of Galilee in the days of the taxing, and drew away much people after him; he also perished" (37).

Here the author makes Gamaliel state that the sedition of Judas of Galilee occurred after that of Theudas, when in fact it occurred in 6 A.D.—forty years before. Such grave discrepancies could have been made only by one writing long after the date claimed.

Holtzmann, a German critic, has shown that the author of Acts borrowed from the Antiquities of Josephus. The Antiquities appeared 93 A.D.—just thirty years after the date assigned to Acts.

This book will not be given up by orthodox Christians without a struggle. The authenticity of primitive Christianity depends largely upon the authenticity of this book. Renan who was a Rationalist, and, at the same time something of an apologist for Christianity, affirms that the last pages of Acts, which are devoted almost entirely to Paul's missionary labors constitute the only historical record of the early church. At the same time, he admits that it is the most faulty book in the New Testament. The Rev. Dr. Hooykaas concedes the same. He says: [143]

"Of the earliest fortunes of the community of Jesus, the primitive history of the Christian church and the whole of the apostolic age, we should know as good as nothing if we had not the book of Acts. If only we could trust the writer fully! But we soon see that the utmost caution is necessary. For we have another account of some of the things about which this writer tells us—an account written by the very man to whom they refer, the best possible authority, therefore, as to what really took place. This man is Paul himself. In the first two chapters of the epistle to the Galatians he gives us several details of his own past life; and no sooner do we place his story side by side with that of the Acts than we clearly perceive that this

book contains an incorrect account, and that its inaccuracy is not the result of accident or ignorance, but of a deliberate design, an attempt—conceived no doubt with the best intentions—to hide in some degree the actual course of events” (Bible for Learners, Vol. III., p. 25).

The dissensions which arose in the first century between the Jewish Christians and the Gentile Christians had only increased with time, and these were among the chief obstacles in the way of uniting Christians and establishing the Catholic church. The composition of Acts was one of the many attempts made toward the close of the second century to heal these dissensions. The author was a man who cared little for either Petrine or Pauline Christianity—little for the so-called truths of Christianity in any form—but a man who cared much for church unity and church power.

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The book of Acts was little known at first. St. Chrysostom, writing in the fifth century, says: “This book is not so much as known to many. They know neither the book nor by whom it was written.”

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## James and Jude.

The seven Catholic Epistles, James, First and Second Peter, First, Second, and Third John, and Jude, have been declared spurious or doubtful by eminent Christian scholars in every age of the church. The Fathers were loath to admit them into the Bible, and their right to a place there has always been disputed.

James and Jude, the first and the last of these epistles, orthodox Christians believe, were written by James and Jude, the brothers of Jesus, in 62 and 64 A.D.

Three leading orthodox authorities, representing the three great divisions of the Christian church, Cajetan of the Roman Catholic church; Lucar of the Greek Catholic church, and Erasmus of the Protestant church, have denied the authenticity of James. Luther himself refused to accept it. He says: “The Epistle of James I account the writing of no apostle.”

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The composition of Jude and Second Peter are both placed in A.D. 64. There is no proof that either was in existence in A.D. 164. It is only necessary to read Jude and the second chapter of Second Peter to see that one borrowed from the other. While most believe that the author of Second Peter used Jude in the construction of his epistle, Luther contends that Jude is the plagiarist. He says: “The epistle of Jude is an abstract or copy of St. Peter’s Second” (Preface to Luther’s Version).

Jude cites as authentic the apocryphal book of Enoch, and the apocryphal story of Michael the archangel contending with Satan for the body of Moses. Origen, Jerome, and others in ancient, and Calvin, Grotius and others in modern times, have doubted its authenticity. Mayerhoff says it was written in the second century to combat the heresies of the Carpocratians.

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## Epistles of Peter.

Most Christians contend that the First Epistle of Peter is genuine. Some of the early Christian Fathers, however, rejected it. Irenaeus did not place it in his canon. Not until the third century was it accepted as the writing of Peter.

The celebrated Tubingen school of critics rejects the authenticity of the book. Baur and Zeller believe it to be a Pauline document. Schwegler believes that it was written to reconcile the Pauline and Petrine doctrines. The Dutch critics say that it was borrowed largely from Paul and James, and that it was probably written early in the second century. Regarding its authorship, Jules Soury, of the University of France, says:

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“Nobody, however, knows better than he [Renan] that the so-called First Epistle of Peter, full of allusions to Paul’s writings, as well as the epistle to the Hebrews and the epistle of James, dates in all probability from the year 130 A.D., at the earliest, thus placing two generations between the time of its composition and the latter years of the reign of Nero, when Peter is fabled to have been in Rome” (Jesus and the Gospels, p. 32).

All critics pronounce Second Peter a forgery. Chambers’s Encyclopedia says: “So

far as external authority is concerned, it has hardly any. The most critical and competent of the Fathers were suspicious of its authenticity; it was rarely if ever quoted, and was not formally admitted into the canon till the Council of Hippo, 393 A.D. The internal evidence is just as unsatisfactory."

Smith's "Bible Dictionary" contains the following relative to its authenticity: "We have few references to it in the writings of the early Fathers; the style differs materially from that of the First Epistle, and the resemblance amounting to a studied imitation between this epistle and that of Jude, seems scarcely reconcilable with the position of Peter.... Many reject the epistle altogether as spurious."

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It is believed by some that the original title of Second Peter was the Epistle of Simeon. Grotius argues that it is a compilation from two older epistles. The third chapter begins as follows: "This second epistle, beloved, I now write unto you." These words clearly denote the beginning of a document. Those who affirm its genuineness consider the second chapter an interpolation. Westcott says there is no evidence of the existence of this epistle prior to 170 A.D. Scaliger declares it to be a "fiction of some ancient Christian misemploying his leisure time."

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## Epistles of John.

The so-called Epistles of John, so far as the books themselves are concerned, are anonymous. They do not purport to have been written by the Apostle John, nor by anyone bearing the name of John.

Of First John, "Chambers's Encyclopedia" says: "Of the epistles it is almost certain that the First proceeded from the same writer who composed the [Fourth] Gospel. In style, language, and doctrine, it is identical with it." If John did not write the Fourth Gospel, and it is conceded by most writers that he did not, then he did not write this epistle.

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Referring to the Gospel of John, whose authenticity he denies and whose composition he assigns to the second century, Dr. Hooykaas says: "The First Epistle of John soon issued from the same school in imitation of the Gospel" (Bible for Learners, Vol. III, p. 692).

Of two passages in the First Epistle, ii, 23, and v, 7, which teach the doctrine of the Trinity, the "Bible Dictionary" says: "It would appear without doubt that they are not genuine." The Revisers of the King James version pronounced them spurious.

The second and third epistles were not written by the writer of the first. The early Fathers rejected them. Eusebius in the fourth century classed them with the doubtful books. It has been claimed that the second epistle was written for the purpose of counteracting the heretical teachings of Basilides and his followers. Basilides was a famous writer of the second century.

These epistles have the following superscriptions: "The elder [presbyter] unto the elect lady" to the first, and "The elder unto the well-beloved Gaius" to the second. The declaration that they are from an elder or presbyter proves that they are not from an apostle, and consequently not from the Apostle John. If they were written by a writer named John, it was probably John the Presbyter, who lived in the second century. Jerome states that they were generally credited to him. In his account of John the Presbyter, Judge Waite says: "He is also, not without reason, believed to have been the author of the Epistles of John" (History of the Christian Religion, p. 228).

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## Revelation.

Revelation is the last book of the Bible, and the one least understood. Christians themselves are not agreed as to its meaning. Some believe it to be a series of prophecies which have had their fulfilment in the struggles between Christianity and Paganism; others believe that its prophecies are yet to be fulfilled; still others pronounce it a symbolical poem, representing the conflict between truth and error, while not a few consider it the recorded fancies of a diseased imagination.

The book purports to be from "John to the seven churches of Asia" (i, 4). This John

is declared to be the Apostle John and its authority is based upon this claim. Smith's "Bible Dictionary" says: "The question as to the canonical authority of the Revelation resolves itself into a question of authorship. Was St. John the Apostle and Evangelist the writer of the Revelation?" If John the Apostle and the author of the Fourth Gospel were one, as assumed by the "Bible Dictionary," then the question of its authenticity and canonical authority must be abandoned, for the author of the Fourth Gospel did not write it. There is nothing in common between them. The German theologian, Lucke, says: "If all critical experience and rules in such literary questions do not deceive, it is certain that the Evangelist and Apocalypticist are two different persons." De Wette says: "The Apostle John, if he be the author of the Fourth Gospel and of the Johannine epistles, did not write the Apocalypse." Regarding this conclusion, Ewald says: "All men capable of forming a judgment are of the same opinion." Among the eminent critics and commentators who take this position are Luther, Erasmus, Michaelis, Schleiermacher, Credner, Zeller, Evanson, Baur, Renan, and Davidson.

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The Apostle John wrote neither the Fourth Gospel, the so-called Epistles of John, nor Revelation. That he did not write Revelation is shown by the following:

1. The author does not claim to be an apostle.
2. He refers to the Twelve Apostles (xxi, 14) in a way that forbids the supposition that he was one of them.
3. The Apostle John is declared to have been illiterate and incapable of writing a book.
4. It is addressed to the seven churches of Asia, and yet the seven churches of Asia, to which it is addressed, rejected it.

The Alogi maintained that it was a forgery which came from Corinth. Dionysius, Bishop of Alexandria, writing in the third century, says: "Divers of our predecessors have wholly refused and rejected this book, and by discussing the several parts thereof have found it obscure and void of reason and the title forged."

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Concerning its rejection by modern churchmen, the Edinburgh Review (No. 131) says: "The most learned and intelligent of Protestant divines here almost all doubted or denied the canonicity of the book of Revelation. Calvin and Beza pronounced the book unintelligible, and prohibited the pastors of Geneva from all attempts at interpretation." Dr. South described it as "a book that either found a man mad or left him so."

Luther, in the Preface to his New Testament (Ed. of 1522) writes: "In the Revelation of John much is wanting to let me deem it either prophetic or apostolical."

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## CHAPTER XI.

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### PAULINE EPISTLES.

Fourteen books—Romans, First and Second Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, First and Second Thessalonians, First and Second Timothy, Titus, Philemon, and Hebrews—are ascribed, some correctly, some doubtfully, and others falsely, to Paul. They were all written, it is claimed, between 52 and 65 A.D.

#### Genuine Epistles.

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The genuine Epistles of Paul, those whose authenticity is conceded by nearly all critics, are Romans, First and Second Corinthians, and Galatians. The term "genuine" is applied to the books as originally written, and not to the text as it now exists. It is probable that they have undergone various changes since they left Paul's hand. The last two chapters of Romans are believed to be interpolations. The fifteenth consists chiefly of irrelevant matter which detracts from the symmetry of the work. The sixteenth is mostly filled with salutations. In these

several women are given a prominence in church affairs that is wholly at variance with Paul's attitude toward woman. The subscription to the First Epistle to the Corinthians states that it "was written from Philippi." The 19th verse of the last chapter shows that Paul was in Asia instead of Europe, while the 8th verse expressly declares that he was at Ephesus. The Second Epistle to Corinthians, it is declared, "was written from Philippi" also. That this is doubtful is admitted even by the most orthodox authorities. The subscription to Galatians reads as follows: "Unto the Galatians, written from Rome." This book was written between 52 and 55 A.D.; Paul did not go to Rome until 61 A.D. This epistle was written from Ephesus.

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While critics are nearly unanimous in acknowledging the genuineness of these books, a few, including Professor Thudichum of Germany, Prof. Edwin Johnson of England, and W. H. Burr of this country, pronounce them forgeries, and contend that the Paul of the New Testament is a myth.

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## Doubtful Epistles.

The doubtful Epistles, those whose authenticity is accepted by some critics and rejected by others, are Philippians, First Thessalonians, and Philemon. Sixty years ago to this list of doubtful books critics would have added three others—Ephesians, Colossians, and Second Thessalonians; but the critical labors of the Tübingen school and others have relegated these to the already burdened shelf of spurious Bible books.

In regard to Philippians, Ferdinand Baur, for thirty years head of the Tübingen school and unquestionably the greatest of Bible critics, says: "The Epistles to the Colossians and to the Philippians ... are spurious, and were written by the Catholic school near the end of the second century, to heal the strife between the Jew and Gentile factions" (Paul the Apostle of Jesus Christ).

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Baur also rejects First Thessalonians. He contends that this, as well as the Second Epistle, contains teachings quite at variance with the teachings of Paul. The German critic Schrader is confident that Paul did not write First Thessalonians.

Respecting Philemon, Dr. Hitchcock says: "This brief Epistle was written at the same time with those to the Colossians and Ephesians, and was sent along with them by Tychicus and Onesimus." As Colossians and Ephesians have both been declared spurious by the ablest Christian scholars, Philemon, to say the least, is placed in bad company. This Epistle was written in behalf of one Onesimus, a zealous Christian, who is also mentioned in Colossians. There was an Onesimus, a zealous church worker, living in 175 A.D.

Holland's critics, Dr. Kuenen, Dr. Oort, and Dr. Hooykaas, are disposed to accept Philippians, First Thessalonians, and Philemon, but admit that there are grave doubts concerning the authenticity of each.

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## Spurious Epistles.

The spurious Epistles, those whose authenticity is generally denied by the critics, are Ephesians, Colossians, Second Thessalonians, First and Second Timothy, Titus, and Hebrews.

Ewald and De Wette both admit that Ephesians was not written by St. Paul. De Wette thinks it was compiled from Colossians. Davidson and Mayerhoff believe that neither Ephesians nor Colossians is genuine. I have quoted Baur's rejection of Colossians. The Encyclopedia Britannica says: "It is undeniable that the Epistle to the Colossians and the so-called Epistle to the Ephesians differ considerably in language and thought from other Pauline Epistles and that their relation to one another demands explanation."

First and Second Thessalonians are pronounced the oldest of Paul's writings, both belonging, it is claimed, to 52 A.D. The author of the Second Epistle is very desirous of having his writing accepted as a genuine Epistle of Paul. Several times he declares himself to be Paul. He warns them not to be deceived "by letter as from us" (ii, 2), and concludes with "the salutation of Paul with mine own hand, which is the token in every Epistle." This Epistle affirms the first to be a forgery.

The first was probably written at an early date, and, whether genuine or spurious, was accepted as a Pauline Epistle. In it the early advent of Christ—during Paul's lifetime—is predicted. "We, which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep" (iv, 15). "Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds" (17). Generations passed, Christ did not come, and the church was losing faith in Paul and Christianity. To restore confidence, another letter from Paul to the Thessalonians was "found," and this repudiates the first. He exhorts them not to be troubled, "neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand" (ii, 2). It teaches the second coming of Christ, but carefully leaves the time indefinite. Whatever may be said of the First Epistle, the Second is clearly a forgery.

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With respect to these Epistles, the Britannica says: "The predominant opinion of modern criticism at present is that the genuineness of the First Epistle is certain, while that of the Second must be given up."

First and Second Timothy and Titus, known as the Pastoral Epistles, and Hebrews were not written by Paul. The Pastoral Epistles are forgeries, while Hebrews is an anonymous work. The contents of these books betray a later date. Their teachings are not the teachings of Paul. Their language is utterly unlike that of the genuine Epistles. They contain two hundred words never used by Paul. Marcion, the most noted Pauline Christian of the second century, who made a collection of Paul's Epistles, excluded them. Tatian and Basilides also rejected them.

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Against the authenticity of the Pastoral Epistles may be cited nearly every modern critic, including the four great names of Baur, Eichorn, De Wette, and Davidson. Baur says they were written in the second century.

While thirteen of the so-called Pauline Epistles claim to have been written by Paul, Hebrews alone is silent regarding its authorship. Tertullian classed it with the apocryphal books, but thought it might have been written by Barnabas. In the Clermont codex it is called the Epistle of Barnabas. According to Origen, some ascribe it to Luke, others to Clement of Rome. Origen himself says: "Who it was that really wrote the Epistle, God only knows." Dr. Westcott admits that there is no evidence that Paul wrote it. Grotius attributes it to Luke, Luther to Apollos. Luther says: "That the Epistle to the Hebrews is not by St. Paul, nor, indeed, by any apostle, is shown by chapter ii, 3" (Preface to Luther's N. T.).

Concerning the seven books that we have been considering, Dr. Hooykaas says:

"Fourteen Epistles are said to be Paul's; but we must at once strike off one, namely, that to the Hebrews, which does not bear his name at all.... The two letters to Timothy and the letter to Titus were certainly composed long after the death of Paul.... It is more than probable that the letters to the Ephesians and Colossians are also unauthentic, and the same suspicion rests, perhaps, on the first, but certainly on the second of the Epistles to the Thessalonians" (Bible for Learners, Vol. III., p. 23).

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The Rev. John W. Chadwick, in his "Bible of To-day," says that the first four Epistles "are his [Paul's] with absolute certainty." Four others, Philippians, Colossians, First Thessalonians, and Philemon, he is disposed to accept, but admits that their authenticity is doubtful. The remaining books he pronounces spurious.

Persons in this age have little conception of the prevalence of literary forgeries in the early centuries of the church. Now, when books are printed in editions of 1,000 or more, such forgeries are nearly impossible and consequently rare. When books existed in manuscript only, they were neither difficult nor uncommon. Books and letters purporting to have been written by Paul, Peter, John, and other Apostles were readily "discovered" when wanted. Of these Apostolic forgeries Prof. John Tyndall says: "When arguments or proofs were needed, whether on the side of the Jewish Christians or of the Gentile Christians, a document was discovered which met the case, and on which the name of an Apostle or of some authoritative contemporary of the Apostles was boldly inscribed. The end being held to justify the means, there was no lack of manufactured testimony."

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## Conclusion.

Of these fourteen Epistles ascribed to Paul, four, then, Romans, First and Second Corinthians, and Galatians, are pronounced genuine; three, Philippians, First Thessalonians, and Philemon, are of doubtful authenticity; while seven, Ephesians, Colossians, Second Thessalonians, First and Second Timothy, Titus, and Hebrews,

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are spurious.

The genuine writings of Paul are probably the oldest Christian writings extant. Admitting the authenticity of these four books, of course, is not admitting the authenticity of Christianity. Paul was not a witness of the alleged events upon which historical Christianity rests. He was not a convert to Christianity until many years after Christ's death. He did not see Christ (save in a vision); he did not listen to his teachings; he did not learn from his disciples. "The gospel which was preached of me is not after man, for I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it" (Gal. i, 11, 12). Paul accepted only to a small extent the religion of Christ's disciples. He professed to derive his knowledge from supernatural sources—from trances and visions. Regarding the value of such testimony, the author of "Supernatural Religion" says: "No one can deny, and medical and psychological annals prove, that many men have been subject to visions and hallucinations which have never been seriously attributed to supernatural causes. There is not one single valid reason removing the ecstatic visions and trances of the Apostle Paul from this class."

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We have now reviewed the books of the Bible and presented some of the historical and internal evidences bearing upon the question of their authenticity. The authenticity of the books of the New Testament, we have seen, is but little better attested than that of the Old. The authors of twenty books—Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Acts, Ephesians, Colossians, Second Thessalonians, First and Second Timothy, Titus, Hebrews, James, First and Second Peter, First, Second, and Third John, Jude, and Revelation—are unknown. Three books—Philippians, First Thessalonians, and Philemon—are of questionable authenticity. Four books only—Romans, First and Second Corinthians, and Galatians—are generally admitted to be authentic.

Of the sixty-six books of the Bible at least fifty are anonymous works or forgeries. To teach that these books are divine, and to accept them as such, denotes a degree of depravity on the one hand, and an amount of credulity on the other, that are not creditable to a moral and enlightened people.

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## PART II.

### CREDIBILITY.

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#### CHAPTER XII.

### TEXTUAL CORRUPTIONS.

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"The Bible does not contain the shadow of a shade of error from Genesis to Revelation"—Cheever.

"Every book of it, every chapter of it, every verse of it, every word of it, is the direct utterance of the Most High."—Bunyan.

Such are the dogmatic assertions of Bibliolaters. So much confidence do they pretend to repose in the doctrine of the Bible's inerrancy that they propose the most crucial tests for its submission.

The Rev. Jeremiah Jones, one of the highest orthodox authorities on the canon, lays down this rule in determining the right of a book to a place in the canon:

"That book is apocryphal which contains contradictions; or which contains histories, or proposes doctrines contrary to those which are known to be true; or which contains ludicrous trifling, fabulous, or silly relations; or which contains anachronisms; or wherein the style is clearly different from the known style of the author whose name it bears" (New Methods, Vol. I., p. 70).

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The Rev. T. Hartwell Horne, a standard authority in the orthodox church, submits this test in determining the divinity of the Bible as a whole:

"If real contradictions exist in the Bible, it is sufficient proof that it is not divinely inspired, whatever pretenses it may make to such inspiration" (Introduction to the Scriptures, Vol. I., p. 581).

I challenge the verity of Cheever's and Bunyan's claims and proceed to apply to this book the tests of Jones and Horne. Instead of not containing the shadow of a shade of error, I shall show that it is so filled with the darkness of error that the truths existing in it are scarcely discernible. Instead of being the direct utterance of the Most High, I shall show that every book of it, every chapter of it, every verse of it, every word of it, is the direct utterance of man. I shall impeach the authority of the Christian canon and show that all of its books are apocryphal; that they contain histories and propose doctrines that are contrary to what is known to be true; that they contain ludicrous, trifling, fabulous, and silly relations; that they abound with anachronisms. If I have not already shown that the style of these books is clearly different from the known style of the authors whose names they bear, it is because the "known style" of these authors is a myth. I shall adduce enough *real* contradictions from the Bible to not only refute the claim that it is divinely inspired, but to destroy its credibility even as a human authority.

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### Errors of Transcribers.

If the Bible were a divine revelation, as claimed, it would have been divinely preserved. Not only the original writers, but the transcribers, translators, and printers, also, would have been divinely inspired. It is admitted that divine inspiration was confined to the original writers. Consequently the Bible, as we have it, cannot be an infallible revelation. If it be not an infallible revelation it cannot be a divine revelation.

It is popularly supposed that the books of the Bible, as originally written, have been preserved free from corruptions. That they are full of textual errors—that the books as they were originally written no longer exist and cannot be restored—is conceded even by the most orthodox of the Lower Critics. The principal causes of these corruptions are the following:

1. Clerical errors. The invention of printing made it possible to preserve the original text of a writer comparatively free from errors. With the works of ancient writers this was impossible. For a period of from 1,200 to 2,200 years preceding the invention of printing the only means of preserving the books of the Bible was the pen of the scribe. However careful the copyist might be, errors would creep into the text. But instead of being careful these copyists, many of them, were notoriously careless. This is especially evident in the case of numbers. Hundreds of errors were made in the transcription of these alone. Probably one-half of the numbers given in the Old Testament, and many in the New, are not those given in the original text, but are errors due to the carelessness of transcribers and a want of divine supervision.

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2. Interpolations. There are thousands of interpolations in the Bible. A considerable portion of the words printed in Italics in our version are acknowledged interpolations. Many of them appeared first in the shape of marginal notes intended to explain or correct a statement in the text. Later scribes incorporated these into the text. And thus, while God was engaged in watching sparrows and numbering the hairs in his children's heads, additions in this and various other ways were made to his word. In many instances whole chapters were added to the original documents.

3. Omissions. Much matter was carelessly omitted. To quote the Bible for Learners, "not only letters and words, but whole verses have fallen out." Objectionable matter was intentionally omitted. Chrysostom tells us that entire books were destroyed by the Jews. They were on such familiar terms with the Deity that they could obtain other and more desirable ones for the asking.

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4. Textual changes. In innumerable places the text has been wilfully changed to suit the religious and other notions of the priests. Let me cite an example. In early copies, and probably in the original text, Genesis xviii, 22, reads as follows: "The Lord yet stood before Abraham." They thought it detracted from God's dignity to stand before one of his creatures, and so they changed it to its present form, "Abraham stood yet before the Lord."

Concerning the corruptions of the scribes, Dr. Davidson says: "They did not refrain from changing what had been written, or inserting fresh matter" (Canon, p. 34).

The facts that I have mentioned apply not merely to the Old Testament, but to the

New Testament as well. Westcott, a very high authority on the canon, says: "It does not appear that any special care was taken in the first age to preserve the books of the New Testament from the various injuries of time or to insure perfect accuracy of transcription.... The original copies seem to have soon perished."

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## Errors of Translators.

These errors of the transcribers have been immeasurably increased by the translators. A perfect translation is impossible, and for these reasons: 1. No language has words to express perfectly all the words of another language. 2. Languages change with time and the words of one age have a different meaning in the next. 3. Many writers do not express themselves clearly, and it is often impossible to fully comprehend their meaning. This is especially true of Bible writers. 4. No two translators will grasp the meaning of a writer in exactly the same manner, or convey it in the same words.

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In regard to the Old Testament the Hebrew language, as anciently written, was the most difficult of all languages to translate. It was written from right to left; the words contained no vowels; there were no intervening spaces between the words, and no punctuation marks. Even with the introduction of vowel points many words in Hebrew, as in English, have more than one meaning. Without these points, as originally written, the number is increased a hundred fold. The five English words, *bag*, *beg*, *big*, *bog*, and *bug*, are quite unlike and easily distinguished. Omit the vowels, as the ancient Jews did, and we have five words exactly alike, or rather, one word with five different meanings. The Hebrew language was thus largely composed of words with several meanings. As there were no spaces between words it was sometimes hard to tell where a word began or where it ended; and as there were no punctuation marks, and no spaces between sentences, paragraphs, or even sections, it was often difficult to determine the meaning of a writer after the words had been deciphered.

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Here is the best known passage in the Bible printed in English as the Jews would have written it in Hebrew:

bllwhtmcmdgnkhtmnhtbdllhnvhntrhchwrtfR  
vgrfwsstbdrsvgrfdndrbldrdshtsvgnvhnstshtrnd  
nkhtsnhtrflvmrfsrvldtbnntpmntntnsdldnsrtbdrn  
nmrvrfrlghtdnrphtdnmdg

In the printed text there is little danger of mistaking one letter for another; in the written text there is, especially if they resemble each other. The Hebrew letters corresponding to our D and R were nearly alike and easily confounded. Consequently in Numbers i, 14, we have "Eliasaph the son of Deuel," and in Numbers ii, 14, "Eliasaph the son of Reuel." Only God knows which is correct, and he does not care to enlighten us. Therefore we must believe that both are correct or be damned.

St. Jerome says: "When we translate the Hebrew into Latin we are sometimes guided by conjecture." Le Clerc says: "The learned merely guess at the sense of the Old Testament in an infinity of places" (Sentim, p. 156). The Old Testament as we have it, then, consists largely of guesses and conjectures.

The title page of our Authorized Version of the Bible contains these words: "Translated out of the original tongues." The Old Testament is declared to be a correct translation of the accepted Hebrew. In its preparation, however, the Greek more than the Hebrew version was followed. Referring to the King James translators, the historian John Clark Ridpath says: "Following the Septuagint rather than the Hebrew original, they fell into many errors which a riper scholarship would have avoided" (Cyclopedia of Universal History. Vol. II., p. 763). Instead of being a collection of original guesses and conjectures our Old Testament is, to a great extent, merely a bad English translation of a corrupted copy of a spurious Greek translation of the original (?) Hebrew.

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On the title page of the Authorized Version of the New Testament appears another falsehood: "Translated out of the original Greek." The original Greek of the New Testament, it is claimed, belongs to the first century. The "original Greek" out of which our version was translated is less than 500 years old. The Greek version from which it was translated was made by Erasmus in 1516. Referring to the materials employed by Erasmus in the preparation of his work, the Rev. Alexander Roberts, D. D., in his "Companion to the Revised Version of the English New Testament," a work which the Committee on Revision delegated him to write and

which was approved, makes the following admissions:

“In the Gospels he principally used a cursive MS. of the fifteenth or sixteenth century.”

“In the Acts and Epistles he chiefly followed a cursive MS. of the thirteenth or fourteenth century.”

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“For the Apocalypse he had only one mutilated manuscript.”

“There are words in the professed original for which no divine authority can be pleaded, but which are entirely due to the learning and imagination of Erasmus.”

Little do Christians realize how much of the Bible is due to the imagination of theologians.

In view of the difficulties that I have mentioned, if the translators had earnestly tried to give us a faithful translation of the Bible their work would have teemed with imperfections. But they did not even attempt to give us a faithful translation. We know that in numerous instances they purposely mistranslated its words. A hundred examples might be cited. One will suffice—*sheol*.

The translators themselves ought to be the best judges of each other's work. Of Beza's New Testament, Castalio says: “It would require a large volume to mark down the multitude of errors which swarm in Beza's translation.” Of Castalio's translation, Beza says: “It is sacrilegious, wicked, and downright pagan.” Reviewing Luther's Bible, Zwingle writes: “Thou corruptest, O Luther, the Word of God. Thou art known to be an open and notorious perverter of the Holy Scriptures.” Luther, in turn, calls the translators of Zwingle's Bible “a set of fools, anti-Christ, and impostors.”

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Our Authorized Version is certainly as faulty as any of the above, and its translators have been the recipients of as severe criticisms as those quoted. The Committee on Revision, while compelled to treat it respectfully, declared against its infallibility in the following words: “The studied variety adopted by the translators of 1611 has produced a degree of inconsistency that cannot be reconciled with the principles of faithfulness” (Preface to N. V.).

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## Different Versions Contain Different Books.

That the charges that I have made concerning the corruptions of the text of the Bible are true, one fact alone amply proves—its many discordant versions and translations. Hundreds have perished, all of them differing from the original and differing from each other. A hundred still exist; no two of them alike. Excepting the English versions, which are mostly revisions of the same version, scarcely two of the principal versions contain the same books.

The received Hebrew contains 39 books (22 as divided), the Samaritan 6 (some copies but 5); the Septuagint about 50. Of the Christian versions of the Old Testament, some contain the Apocryphal books, others do not. The Gothic and Ethiopic versions exclude a part of the canonical books.

The Syriac New Testament contains but 22 books; the Italic 24 (some copies 25); the Egyptian 26; the Vulgate 27. The Ethiopic omits a canonical book and includes an apocryphal book. The Sinaitic and Alexandrian manuscripts each contain 29 books. Each contains two apocryphal books, but the books are not the same.

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The Roman Catholic and the Greek Catholic Bibles do not contain the same number of books. The Roman Catholic and the Protestant Bibles do not contain the same number; the Roman Catholic contains 75, the Protestant 66.

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## Different Versions of the Same Book Differ.

No two versions of the same book are alike. The Samaritan Pentateuch does not agree with the Hebrew Pentateuch; the Septuagint Pentateuch agrees with neither.

The Hebrew and the Septuagint have both been accepted by Christians as

authoritative. In a single chapter may be found a dozen important variations:

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Hebrew.—“And Arphaxad lived five and thirty years and begat Salah” (Gen. xi, 12).

Septuagint.—“And Arphaxad lived a hundred and thirty-five years and begat Cainan.”

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Hebrew.—“And Arphaxad lived after he begat Salah four hundred and three years” (13).

Septuagint.—“And Cainan lived a hundred and thirty years and he begat Salah, and he lived after the birth of Salah three hundred and thirty years.”

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Hebrew.—“And Salah lived thirty years and begat Eber” (14).

Septuagint.—“And Salah lived a hundred and thirty years and begat Eber.”

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Hebrew.—“And Salah lived after he begat Eber four hundred and three years” (15).

Septuagint.—“And Salah lived after he begat Eber three hundred and thirty years.”

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Hebrew.—“And Eber lived four and thirty years and begat Peleg” (16).

Septuagint.—“And Eber lived a hundred and thirty-four years and begat Peleg.”

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Hebrew.—“And Eber lived after he begat Peleg four hundred and thirty years” (17).

Septuagint.—“And Eber lived after he begat Peleg two hundred and seventy years.”

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Hebrew.—“And Peleg lived thirty years and begat Reu” (18).

Septuagint.—“And Peleg lived a hundred and thirty years and begat Ragad.”

---

Hebrew.—“And Reu lived two and thirty years and begat Serug” (20).

Septuagint.—“And Ragad lived a hundred and thirty-two years and begat Serug.”

---

Hebrew.—“And Serug lived thirty years and begat Nahor” (22).

Septuagint.—“And Serug lived a hundred and thirty years and begat Nahor.”

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Hebrew.—“And Nahor lived nine and twenty years and begot Terah” (24).

Septuagint.—“And Nahor lived a hundred and seventy-nine years and begat Terah.”

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Hebrew.—“And Nahor lived after he begat Terah an hundred and nineteen years” (25).

Septuagint.—“And Nahor lived after he begat Terah a hundred and twenty-five years.”

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Hebrew.—“And Terah took Abram his son and Lot the son of Haran, his son’s son, and Sarai his daughter-in-law, his son Abram’s wife” (31).

Septuagint.—“And Terah took Abram and Nahor his sons, and Lot the son of Haran his son’s son, and Sarai and Melcha, his daughters-in-law, the wives of his sons Abram and Nahor.”

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The early Christian versions and manuscripts contain an immense number of different readings, at least 150,000. Dr. Mill discovered 80,000 different readings in the New Testament alone.

Origen, writing in the third century, says: "There is a vast difference betwixt the several editions of the scripture, happening either through the carelessness of the transcribers, or else the forwardness of some who pretend to correct and adulterate the scripture" (Commentary on St. Matthew).

Modern versions do not agree. The readings of the Catholic and Protestant versions are quite unlike: The Protestant versions themselves contain a great variety of readings. The New Version is supposed to be simply a revision of the Authorized Version. The committee that prepared it was governed by this rule: "To introduce as few alterations as possible into the text of the Authorized Version consistent with faithfulness."

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How many alterations were made? *More than one hundred thousand!*

The following are some of the changes made in the New Testament:

Old Version.—"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine," etc. (2 Tim. iii, 16).

New Version.—"Every scripture inspired of God is also profitable for teaching," etc.

Old.—"And Joseph and his mother marveled at those things which were spoken of him" (Luke ii, 33).

New.—"And his father and his mother were marveling at the things which were spoken concerning him."

Old.—"These things were done in Bethabara beyond Jordan" (John i, 28).

New.—"These things were done in Bethany beyond Jordan."

Old.—"God was manifest in the flesh" (1 Tim. iii, 16).

New.—"He [Christ] who was manifested in the flesh."

Old.—"No man, when he hath lighted a candle, putteth it in a secret place" (Luke xi, 33).

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New.—"No man, when he hath lighted a lamp, putteth it in a cellar."

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Old.—"Because strait is the gate and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life" (Matt, vii, 14).

New.—"For narrow is the gate and straitened the way that leadeth unto life."

---

Old.—"Our Father, which art in heaven. Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done *in earth, as it is in heaven*. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors, and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from *evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen*" (Matt, vi, 9-13).

New.—"Our father, which art in heaven. Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, *as in heaven, so on earth*. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And bring us not into temptation, but deliver us from the *evil one*."

One would suppose that if Christians preserved any part of the Bible free from corruption it would be the prayer of their Lord, a little prayer containing but a few lines. And yet they have not. The so-called Lord's Prayer that our mother's taught us is not the Lord's Prayer. The prayer we learned contains sixty-six words. The Lord's Prayer contains but fifty-five. The revisers have expunged fifteen words, added some, and altered others.

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The last twelve verses of Mark, the first eleven verses of John viii, and 1 John v, 8, three important passages, are all admitted to be forgeries.

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## Different Copies of the Same Version Differ.

Different copies of the same version contain different readings. St. Jerome's version was declared a forgery, because it differed so much from the Italic version

then in use. Jerome anticipated the charge and met the objection in his preface addressed to Pope Damasus:

“Two things are my comfort under such a reproach: First, that 'tis you, the Supreme Pontiff, that have put me upon the task; and secondly, that by the confession even of the most envious, there needs be some falsity where there is so much variety. If they say that the Latin copies are to be credited, let them tell me which. *For there are almost as many different copies as there are manuscripts.*”

Prof. Wilbur F. Steele, a noted Christian scholar, relates the following relative to our own version: “In 1848 there was such confusion in the office of the American Bible Society, and such impossibility of telling what should be the reading in many places, that a man was set to work to bring order out of chaos. He took four Bibles from as many leading Bible houses of England, a copy of the American Bible Society, and a copy of the original edition of 1611, all claiming to be the same. These were carefully compared throughout; every variation, no matter how minute, was noted. The number of these variations was about 24,000” (Central Christian Advocate). *Twenty-four thousand variations found in six copies of the same version!*

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Thus we see that different versions of the Bible do not contain the same books; different versions of the same book do not contain the same readings, while even different copies of the same versions disagree. Which is the word of God?

If the Bible had originally consisted of authentic and credible documents its credibility would have been greatly impaired by these wholesale corruptions of the transcribers and translators. But if we had the originals, it is doubtful whether their credibility would be much greater than these distorted copies. Enough remains to show the general character of them, and this is bad. They consist mostly of historical and biographical narratives, interwoven with legends, myths, and fables; crude poetical compositions; the ravings of diseased religious minds, called prophecies and revelations; and theological dissertations, no two of which agree in their doctrines. A few of the books possess genuine merit and deserve a place among the literary treasures of the world, but all of them are fallible.

Remarkable, as coming from a theological professor, but fraught with truth and confirmatory of the statements made in this chapter, are these words of Professor Steele:

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“Evidently every letter of the English Bible has not been miraculously watched over. He who has neither eyes nor conscience may affirm it, but persons provided with these can not. If the affirmer hedges by saying he did not refer to translations but to the ‘original,’ we note that (1) translations are the only thing most people have to go to heaven on; and (2) that scholars of truth and conscience find equally as much fault with the ‘original.’”

“There are hundreds, if not thousands, of places in which the scholar finds conflicting testimony.”

In discussing the credibility of the Bible the question of authenticity will, for the most part, be waived. With Christians all of its books are genuine—the writings of those to whom they are ascribed—and for the sake of argument, as well as convenience, these ascribed authors will be recognized.

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## CHAPTER XIII.

### TWO COSMOGONIES OF GENESIS.

A stereotyped claim of Bible believers is this: “The account of creation given in Genesis is in harmony with the accepted teachings of science.” But which account? In the opening chapters of Genesis are presented two ancient poems, written by different authors. The first comprises the first chapter and the first three verses of the second chapter; the second comprises the remainder of the second chapter. Each poem contains a cosmogony. But neither of them agrees with the demonstrated truths of science. Above all, they do not agree with each other. The points of disagreement are many, chief of which are the following:

## 1.

In the first cosmogony the appellation of Deity is uniformly “Elohim” (the gods), translated “God.” This term occurs thirty-five times.

In the second, the appellation of Deity is uniformly “Jehovah (Yahweh) Elohim,” translated “Lord God.” This term occurs eleven times.

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The first belongs to the Priestly code, the second to the Jehovistic document. They represent different schools of Jewish thought and different periods of Jewish history.

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## 2.

In the first, earth is a chaos covered with water. The waters must be assuaged before vegetation can appear.

In the second, earth is at first a dry plain. Vegetation cannot exist because there is no moisture. “For the Lord God had not caused it to rain upon the earth” (ii, 5).

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## 3.

In the first, plants are created from the earth—are a product of the earth. “And the earth brought forth grass and herb” (i, 12).

In the second, they are created independent of the earth—are created by God and then transferred to earth. “The Lord God made the earth and the heavens, and every plant of the field before it was in the earth, and every herb of the field before it grew” (ii, 4, 5).

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## 4.

In the first, fowls, fish, and aquatic animals form one act of creation—land animals and reptiles another; the former being created on the fifth day, the latter on the sixth (i, 21-25).

In the second, fowls and land animals are created at the same time—form one creation act (ii, 19).

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## 5.

In the first, fowls are created out of the *water*. “And God said, Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life, and fowl that may fly above the earth” (i, 20).

In the second, fowls are created out of the *ground*. “Out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field and every fowl of the air” (ii, 19).

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## 6.

In the first, trees are created before man. Trees appear on the third day, while man does not appear until the sixth day.

In the second, trees are created after man. “And the Lord God formed man; ... planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed. And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree,” etc. (ii, 7, 8.)

## 7.

In the first, fowls are created before man—are created on the fifth day, while the creation of man does not occur until the sixth day.

In the second, fowls are created after man. “The Lord God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air; and brought them unto Adam to see what he would call them” (ii, 19).

## 8.

In the first, man is created after the beasts. God’s first work on the sixth day was the creation of beasts, his last work was the creation of man (i, 24-31).

In the second, man is created before the beasts. God makes man before he plants the garden of Eden, while beasts are not made until after the garden is planted (ii, 7-19).

## 9.

In the first, man and woman are created at the same time. “So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them” (i, 27).

In the second, woman is created after man. The writer supposes a considerable period of time to have elapsed between the creation of man and the creation of woman. God creates man; then he plants a garden and places the man there to tend it; next he makes the animals and birds and brings them to Adam to name; finally he concludes that Adam needs a helpmate, and taking a rib from his body, creates woman.

## 10.

The first cosmogony comprises eight distinct creations: 1. Light. 2. The firmament. 3. Dry land. 4. Vegetation. 5. Sun, moon, and stars. 6. Fish and fowls. 7. Land animals. 8. Man.

The second comprises four creations: 1. Man (Adam). 2. Trees. 3. Animals. 4. Woman (Eve).

## 11.

In the first, the heavens and the earth are created in six literal days.

In the second, no mention is made of this six days’ creation. On the contrary, the writer simply refers to “the day that the Lord God made the earth and the heavens” (ii, 4).

## 12.

In the first, God, from his throne in heaven, speaks earth’s creation into being. “God said, Let the earth bring forth, ... and it was so.”

In the second, God comes down on earth, plants a garden, molds man out of clay, breathes in his nostrils, makes woman out of a rib, makes birds and animals as a child makes mud pies, and brings them to Adam to see what he will call them.

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### 13.

In the first, man at the creation is given both fruit and herbs to subsist upon. "Behold I have given you every herb bearing seed, ... and every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat" (i, 29).

In the second, he is given fruit alone for food. Not until after he sins and the curse is pronounced does God say, "Thou shalt eat the herb of the field" (iii, 18). According to this writer the use of herbs and grain for food was a consequence of man's fall.

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### 14.

In the first, man may partake of the fruit of all the trees. "Every tree in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat" (i, 29).

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In the second, he is not permitted to partake of the fruit of all the trees. "Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden" (iii, 1). "Of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it" (ii, 17).

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### 15.

In the first, "God made the firmament, and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament" (i, 7). When moisture was needed "the windows of heaven were opened" and water discharged from the reservoir above. When enough was discharged "the windows of heaven were stopped, and the rain from heaven was restrained" (viii, 2).

In the second, when moisture was needed, "There went up a mist from the earth, and watered the whole face of the ground" (ii, 6).

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### 16.

In the first, man is given dominion over all the earth. "Let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth" (i, 26).

In the second, his dominion is confined to a garden. "And the Lord God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and keep it" (ii, 15).

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### 17.

Both cosmogonies are theological rather than scientific. The real purpose of the first, in its present form at least, is not so much to explain the creation of the universe as to inculcate a belief in the divine institution of the Sabbath. It belongs to the Priestly code, and one of the chief pillars of priestcraft is the Sabbath.

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The second contains no recognition of the Sabbath. The chief purpose of this account of the creation, if we include the third chapter, which is really a continuation of it, is to establish the doctrine of the Fall of Man.

18.

According to the first the Creator is an optimist. He views all his works and declares them "good."

According to the second the Creator is a pessimist. He sees in his works both "good and evil;" the good continuing to diminish, and the evil continuing to increase.

To establish the credibility and divine origin of Genesis it is necessary not merely to harmonize its theories with science, but to reconcile its statements with each other. The latter is as impossible as the former. Dean Stanley, in his Memorial Sermon on Sir Charles Lyell at Westminster Abbey, made this frank admission:

"It is now clear to diligent students of the Bible that the first and second chapters of Genesis contain two narratives of the creation, side by side, differing from each other in most every particular of time, place, and order."

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## CHAPTER XIV.

### THE PATRIARCHAL AGE.

In disproof of the credibility of the so-called patriarchal history of the Pentateuch, a few of its many incredible and contradictory statements will be presented here.

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1.

The following are the recorded ages of the patriarchs: Adam, 930 years (Gen. v, 5); Seth, 912 (8); Enos, 905 (11). Cainan, 910 (14); Mahalaleel, 895 (17); Jared, 962 (20); Enoch, 365 (23) Methuselah, 969 (27); Lamech, 777 (31); Noah, 950 (ix, 29); Shem, 600 (xi, 10, 11); Arphaxad, 438 (12, 13); Cainan, 460 (omitted in Hebrew Version, but given in Septuagint); Salah, 433 (14, 15); Eber, 464 (16, 17), Peleg, 239 (18, 19); Reu, 239 (20, 21); Serug, 230, (22, 23); Nahor, 148 (24, 25); Terah, 205 (32); Abraham, 175, (xxv, 7); Isaac, 180 (xxxv, 28); Jacob, 147 (xlvii, 28); Joseph, 110 (l, 26).

Eleven generations of these patriarchs (twelve if Cainan be included), Noah, Shem, Arphaxad, (Cainan), Salah, Eber, Peleg, Reu, Serug, Nahor, Terah, and Abraham, were all living at the same time.

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Noah died in the year 2006 A.M. When Adam died Noah's father was 56 years old.

Abraham was the twentieth generation from Adam. When Abraham was 56 years old, Noah, whose father was 56 years old when Adam died, was still living.

When Noah died, his great-great-great-great-great-great-great-great grandson, Abraham, was an old man.

Isaac was the eleventh generation from Shem. When Shem died Isaac was 110 years old.

Jacob was the thirteenth generation from Noah. When Noah's eldest son died Jacob was 50 years old.

The combined ages of seven patriarchs equal a sum five hundred years greater than the time that has elapsed from the creation of the world to the present time.

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2.

“Every one that findeth me shall slay me” (Gen. iv, 14).

“And the Lord set a mark upon Cain, lest any finding him should kill him” (15).

“And Cain went out from the presence of the Lord, and dwelt in the land of Nod” (16).

“And Cain knew his wife: and she conceived, and bare Enoch; and he [Cain] builded a city” (17).

Cain, believing that he had a plurality of lives, and fearing that every one who found him would take one, appealed to God, who set a mark on him so that his father and mother, the only persons in existence besides himself, would know him. Then going out from the presence of Omnipresence, he went to a country where nobody lived, married a wife, and built a city with a population of three inhabitants.

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3.

“And Methuselah lived a hundred eighty and seven years, and begat Lamech: and Methuselah lived after he begat Lamech seven hundred eighty and two years.... And all the days of Methuselah were nine hundred sixty and nine years” (Gen. v, 25-27).

“And Lamech lived a hundred eighty and two years, and begat a son: and he called his name Noah” (28, 29).

“In the six hundredth year of Noah’s life, in the second month, the seventeenth day of the month, the same day were all the fountains of the great deep broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened” (vii, 11).

“And it came to pass in the six hundredth and first year, in the first month, the first day of the month, the waters were dried up from off the earth” (viii, 13).

“And Noah lived after the flood three hundred and fifty years. And all the days of Noah were nine hundred and fifty years” (ix, 28, 29).

When the Flood began Noah was 599 years (one month and seventeen days) old; when it ended he was exactly 600 years old.

It is commonly supposed that Methuselah died before the Flood. If the foregoing passages be correct, he did not, as will be shown by the following:

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1. From the birth of Lamech to the beginning of the Flood was 182 years + 599 = 781 years; and from the birth of Lamech to the end of the Flood was 182 years + 600 years = 782 years. If Methuselah lived after he begat Lamech 782 years, he lived until the end of the Flood.

2. From the birth of Methuselah to the beginning of the Flood was 187 years + 182 years + 599 years = 968 years. From the birth of Methuselah to the end of the Flood was 187 years + 182 years + 600 years = 969 years. At the commencement of the Flood he was but 968 years old, and not until the end of it was he 969.

3. From the birth of Methuselah to the death of Noah was 187 years + 182 years + 950 years = 1319 years. As Noah died 350 years after the Flood, from the birth of Methuselah to the end of the Flood was 1319 years - 350 years = 969 years. If he lived 969 years, he lived until the end of the Flood.

As Methuselah was not one of the eight persons that went into the ark, where was he during the Flood?

According to the Septuagint Genesis, the Flood occurred fourteen years before the death of Methuselah.

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4.

“Of every living thing of all flesh, *two* of every sort shalt thou bring into the ark, to keep them alive with thee; they shall be male and female. Of fowls after their kind, and of cattle after their kind, of every creeping thing of the earth after his kind;

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*two of every sort shall come unto thee*" (Gen. vi, 19, 20).

"Of every clean beast thou shalt take to thee by *sevens*, the male and his female: and of beasts that are not clean by two, the male and his female. Of fowls also of the air by *sevens*, the male and the female" (vii, 2, 3).

Referring to the above, the celebrated Jewish commentator, Dr. Kalisch, says: "Noah was commanded to take into the ark seven pairs of all clean, and one pair of all unclean, animals, whereas he had before been ordered to take one pair of every species, no distinction whatever between clean and unclean animals having been made.... We do not hesitate to acknowledge here the manifest contradiction."

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5.

"And Noah was five hundred years old; and Noah begat Shem" (v, 32).

"And Noah was six hundred years old when the flood of waters was upon the earth" (vii, 6).

"Shem was *a hundred years old*, and he begat Arphaxad two years after the flood" (xi, 10).

If Noah was five hundred years old when he begat Shem, and six hundred years old at the time of the Flood, Shem was one hundred years old at the time of the Flood. If Shem begat Arphaxad two years after the Flood, he was *one hundred and two years old* when he begat Arphaxad.

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6.

"And Arphaxad begat Salah" (Gen. x, 24).

"And Arphaxad begat Shelah" (1 Chron. i, 18).

"And Arphaxad begat Cainan, and Cainan begat Salah" (Genesis, Sept. Ver.).

"Which was the son of Sala, which was the son of Cainan, which was the son of Arphaxad" (Luke iii, 35, 36).

According to the Hebrew Genesis and Chronicles, Arphaxad was the father of Salah; according to the Septuagint Genesis and Luke, Cainan was the father, and Arphaxad the grandfather of Salah.

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7.

"The woman [Sarah] was taken into Pharaoh's house" (Gen. xii, 15).

"And Pharaoh called Abram, and said, What is this that thou hast done unto me?" (18).

"And Abimelech king of Gerar sent, and took Sarah" (xx, 2).

"Then Abimelech called unto Abraham, and said unto him, What hast thou done unto us?" (9).

It may be claimed that both Pharaoh and Abimelech took Sarah. But it is evident that these are both legends of the same event, or, rather, different and conflicting forms of the same legend. The first belongs to the Jehovist, the second to the Elohist.

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8.

“And Abram was seventy and five years old when he departed out of Haran.... And into the land of Canaan they came” (Gen. xii, 4, 5).

“And Terah lived seventy years and begat Abram” (xi, 26).

“And the days of Terah were two hundred and five years” (32).

“When his father was dead, he [Abram] removed him into this land, wherein ye now dwell” (Acts vii, 4).

If Abram did not go to Canaan until after the death of his father, he did not go until he was 135 years old, 60 years older than stated in the first account.

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## 9.

“And Abram was four score and six years old when Hagar bare Ishmael to Abram” (Gen. xvi, 16).

“And Abraham was a hundred years old when his son Isaac was born unto him” (xxi, 5).

“And the child [Isaac] grew, and was weaned” (8).

“And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and took bread, and a bottle of water, and gave it unto Hagar, putting it on her shoulder, and the child [Ishmael], and sent her away: and she departed, and wandered in the wilderness of Beersheba. And the water was spent in the bottle, and she cast the child under one of the shrubs” (14, 15).

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When Isaac was weaned, and Hagar was sent into the wilderness, Ishmael, who was about sixteen years old, is represented as a babe in his mother’s arms.

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## 10.

“And Esau was forty years old when he took to wife Judith the daughter of Beeri the Hittite, and Bashemath the daughter of Elon the Hittite” (Gen. xxvi, 34).

“Esau took his wives of the daughters of Canaan; Adah the daughter of Elon the Hittite, and Aholibamah the daughter of Anah the daughter of Zibeon the Hivite; and Bashemath Ishmael’s daughter” (xxxvi, 2, 3).

Did Esau marry two wives, according to the first account, or three, according to the second? Was his first wife Judith, the daughter of Beeri, or Adah, the daughter of Elon? Was Bashemath the daughter of Elon the Hittite, or was she the daughter of his uncle Ishmael?

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## 11.

“I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, by the name of God Almighty: but by my name *Jehovah* was I not known to them” (Ex. vi, 3).

“I [Abraham] have lifted up mine hand unto the Lord [*Jehovah*] the most high God” (Gen. xiv, 22).

“He [Isaac] said, For now the Lord [*Jehovah*] hath made room for us” (xxvi, 22).

“He [Jacob] said, Surely the Lord [*Jehovah*] is in this place” (xxviii, 16).

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According to the writer in Exodus, Jehovah did not become the national God of Israel until after the time of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. According to the writer in Genesis, he was known to each of these patriarchs.

12.

“All the souls of the house of Jacob, which came into Egypt, were three score and ten” (xlv, 27).

“Then sent Joseph, and called his father Jacob to him, and all his kindred, three score and fifteen souls” (Acts vii, 14).

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13.

“And the *Midianites* sold him [Joseph] into Egypt unto Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh’s, and captain of the guard” (Gen. xxxvii, 36).

“And Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh, captain of the guard, an Egyptian, bought him [Joseph] of the hands of the *Ishmaelites*” (xxxix, 1).

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14.

“Now the sons of Jacob were twelve: the sons of Leah; Reuben, Jacob’s firstborn, and Simeon, and *Levi*,” etc. (Gen. xxxv, 22, 23).

“And these are the names of the sons of Levi, according to their generations: Gershon, and *Kohath*” etc. (Ex. vi, 16).

“And the sons of Kohath; *Amram*,” etc. (18).

“And Amram took him Jochebed his father’s sister to wife; and she bare him Aaron and *Moses*” (20).

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“And the children of Israel journeyed from Ramases to Succoth, about six hundred thousand on foot that were men, beside children” (Ex. xii, 37).

Levi was the son of Jacob, Kohath was the son of Levi, Amram was the son of Kohath, and Moses was the son of Amram. Moses was the fourth generation from Jacob. In the time of Moses the adult male population of Israel numbered 600,000, representing a total population of about 3,000,000. Thus in four generations the progeny of Jacob increased from twelve persons to three millions.

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15.

Judah, Jacob’s fourth son, married and had three sons—Er, Onan, and Shelah. Er grew to manhood, married Tamar, and died. Onan then married his widow, and died also. Shelah, who was much younger than Onan, grew to manhood and refused to marry his brother’s widow. Tamar then had two sons, Pharez and Zarah, by Judah himself (Gen. xxxviii). Pharez grew to manhood, married, and had two sons, Hezron and Hamil (xlv, 12), before Jacob and his family went to Egypt. When they went to Egypt, Judah was but forty-two years old.

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## CHAPTER XV.

### THE JEWISH KINGS.

Much of the Bible is devoted to events which are narrated but once. These records may be true, or they may be false. We may question their truthfulness, but it is difficult to demonstrate their falsity. Had all the events of the Bible been recorded but once its credibility could the more easily be maintained. But wherever two or more accounts of the same events occur, such as in Kings and Chronicles, where

two histories of the Jewish Kings are given, and in the Four Gospels, where four biographies of Jesus are given, we find them so filled with discrepancies as to make them unworthy of credit.

The following are some of the contradictory statements that occur in the books pertaining to the Jewish kings:

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## 1

Was David the seventh or the eighth son of Jesse?

“And Jesse begat his first-born Eliab, and Abinadab the second, and Shimma the third, Nethaniel the fourth, Raddai the fifth, Ozem the sixth, David the seventh” (1 Chron. ii, 13-15).

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“Again, Jesse made seven of his sons to pass before Samuel. And Samuel said unto Jesse, The Lord hath not chosen these. And Samuel said unto Jesse, are here all thy children? And he said, There remaineth yet the youngest [David]” (1 Sam. xvi, 10, 11).

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## 2

Who gave David the shewbread to eat when he was a fugitive from Saul?

“Then came David to Nob to *Abimelech* the [High] priest.... So the priest gave him hallowed bread: for there was no bread there but the shewbread” (1 Sam. xxi, 1, 6).

“And he [Jesus] said unto them, Have ye never read what David did when he was ahungered, he, and they that were with him? How he went into the house of God in the days of *Abiathar* the high priest, and did eat the shewbread?” (Mark ii, 25, 26).

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## 3

What relation did the High Priests Abimelech and Abiathar bear to each other?

“Abiathar the son of Abimelech” (1 Sam. xxiii, 6).

“Abimelech the son of Abiathar” (2 Sam. viii, 17).

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## 4

What sons were born to David in Jerusalem?

“And these be the names of those that were born unto him in Jerusalem: Shammuah, and Shobab, and Nathan, and Solomon, Ibhar also, and Elishua, and Nepheg, and Japhia, and Elishama, and Eliada, and Eliphalet” (2 Sam. v, 14-16).

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“Now these are the names of his children which he had in Jerusalem: Shammua, and Shobab, Nathan, and Solomon, and Ibhar, and Elishua, and *Elpalet*, and *Nogah*, and Nepheg and Japhia, and Elishama, and Beeliada, and Eliphalet” (1 Chron. xiv, 4-7).

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## 5

What was the name of David's tenth son (twelfth according to Chronicles)?

Eliada (2 Sam. v, 16).

Beeliada (1 Chron. xiv, 7).

"Eliada" means "God knows;" "Beeliada" means "Baal knows." Did David name his son for the God of the Jews, or for the God of the heathen?

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6

How many horsemen did David take from Hadadezer?

"David took from him a thousand chariots, and *seven hundred* horsemen, and twenty thousand footmen" (2 Sam. viii, 4).

"David took from him a thousand chariots, and *seven thousand* horsemen, and twenty thousand footmen" (1 Chron. xviii, 4).

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7

Was it forty thousand horsemen or forty thousand footmen that David slew of the Syrians?

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"David slew the men of seven hundred chariots of the Syrians, and forty thousand *horsemen*" (2 Sam. x, 18).

"David slew of the Syrians seven thousand men which fought in chariots and forty thousand *footmen*" (1 Chron. xix, 18).

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8

Who moved David to number the people, the Lord or Satan?

"The anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel, and he moved David against them to say, Go, number Israel and Judah" (2 Sam. xxiv, 1).

"And Satan stood up against Israel, and provoked David to number Israel" (1 Chron. xxi, 1).

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9

How many warriors had Israel and Judah?

"And there were in Israel eight hundred thousand [800,000] valiant men that drew the sword, and the men of Judah were five hundred thousand [500,000] men" (2 Sam. xxiv, 9).

"And all they of Israel were a thousand thousand and a hundred thousand [1,100,000] men that drew sword; and Judah was four hundred three score and ten thousand [470,000] men" (1 Chron. xxi, 5).

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10

Was David to suffer three or seven years of famine?

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“So Gad came to David and said unto him: Thus saith the Lord, choose thee either *three years* of famine, or three months to be destroyed before thy foes” (1 Chron. xxi, 11, 12).

“So Gad came to David and told him, and said unto him, Shall *seven years* of famine come unto thee in thy land? or wilt thou flee three months before thine enemies?” (2 Sam. xxiv, 13).

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## 11

What did David pay for the threshing floor?

“And Gad came that day to David, and said unto him, Go up, rear an altar unto the Lord in the threshing floor of Araunah [Ornan] the Jebusite.... So David bought the threshing-floor and the oxen for fifty shekels of silver [\$26.50]” (2 Sam. xxiv, 18, 24).

“Then the angel of the Lord commanded Gad to say to David, that David should go up, and set up an altar unto the Lord in the threshing-floor of Ornan the Jebusite.... So David gave to Ornan for the place six hundred shekels of gold [\$3,414]” (1 Chron. xxi, 18, 25).

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## 12

How many overseers did Solomon have while building the Temple?

“And Solomon had three score and ten thousand that bare burdens, and four score thousand hewers in the mountains; besides the chief of Solomon’s officers which were over the work, *three thousand and three hundred*” (1 Kings, v, 15, 16).

“And he set three score and ten thousand of them to be bearers of burdens and four score thousand to be hewers in the mountains, and *three thousand and six hundred* overseers to set the people awork” (2 Chron. ii, 18).

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## 13

What was the height of the pillars before the house?

“For he cast two pillars of brass, of *eighteen* cubits high apiece.... And he set up the right pillar, and called the name thereof Jachin: and he set up the left pillar, and called the name thereof Boaz” (1 Kings vii, 15, 21).

“Also he made before the house two pillars of *thirty and five* cubits high, ... and called the name of that on the right hand Jachin, and the name of that on the left Boaz” (2 Chron. iii, 15, 17).

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## 14

What was the capacity of the molten sea?

“And he made a molten sea, ten cubits from the one brim to the other.... And it was a hand-breadth thick, and the brim thereof was wrought like the brim of a cup, with flowers of lilies: it contained *two thousand* baths” (1 Kings vii, 23, 26).

“Also he made a molten sea of ten cubits from brim to brim.... And the thickness of it was a handbreadth, and the brim of it like the work of the brim of a cup, with flowers of lilies; and it received and held *three thousand* baths” (2 Chron. iv, 2, 5).

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## 15

How many overseers did Solomon have over his other works?

“These were the chief of the officers that were over Solomon’s work, *five hundred and fifty*, which bare rule over the people that wrought in the work” (1 Kings ix, 23).

“And these were the chief of King Solomon’s officers, even *two hundred and fifty*, that bare rule over the people” (2 Chron. viii, 10).

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## 16

How many stalls did Solomon have for his horses?

“And Solomon had *four thousand* stalls for horses and chariots, and twelve thousand horsemen” (2 Chron. ix, 25).

“And Solomon had *forty thousand* stalls of horses for his chariots, and twelve thousand horsemen” (1 Kings iv, 26).

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## 17

How much gold did they bring Solomon from Ophir?

“And they came to Ophir, and fetched from thence gold, *four hundred and twenty* talents, and brought it to King Solomon” (1 Kings ix, 28).

“And they went with the servants of Solomon to Ophir, and took thence *four hundred and fifty* talents of gold, and brought them to King Solomon” (2 Chron. viii, 18).

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## 18

Who was the first to die, Jeroboam or Abijah?

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“Neither did Jeroboam recover strength again in the days of Abijah: and the Lord struck him, and he died. But Abijah waxed mighty” (2 Chron. xiii, 20, 21).

“And the days which Jeroboam reigned were two and twenty years” (1 Kings xiv, 20).

“And Abijam [Abijah] slept with his fathers; and they buried him in the city of David: and Asa his son reigned in his stead. And in the twentieth year of Jeroboam king of Israel reigned Asa over Judah” (1 Kings xv, 8, 9).

Instead of Abijah waxing mighty after Jeroboam’s death, Jeroboam reigned two years after Abijah’s death.

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## 19

Who was the mother of Abijah?

“He [Rehoboam] took *Maachah the daughter of Absalom*; which bare him Abijah” (2 Chron. xi, 20).

“His [Abijah’s] mother’s name also was *Michaiah the daughter of Uriel* of Gibeah” (2 Chron. xiii, 2).

## 20

Was Asa the son or the grandson of Maachah?

“Forty and one years reigned he [Asa] in Jerusalem. And his mother’s name was Maachah, the daughter of Abishalom” (1 Kings xv, 10).

“Three years reigned he [Abijam] in Jerusalem. And his mother’s name was Maachah the daughter of Abishalom.... And Asa his son reigned in his stead” (1 Kings xv, 2, 8).

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## 21

How long did Omri reign?

“In the *thirty and first* year of Asa king of Judah began Omri to reign over Israel *twelve* years.... So Omri slept with his fathers, and was buried in Samaria: and Ahab his son reigned in his stead. And in the *thirty and eighth* year of Asa king of Judah began Ahab the son of Omri to reign” (1 Kings xvi, 23, 28, 29).

From the thirty-first to the thirty-eighth year of Asa’s reign Omri is said to have reigned twelve years.

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## 22

When did Baasha die?

“Baasha slept with his fathers, and was buried in Tirzah: and Elah his son reigned in his stead.... In the *twenty and sixth* year of Asa king of Judah began Elah the son of Baasha to reign” (1 Kings xvi, 6, 8).

“In the *six and thirtieth* year of the reign of Asa, Baasha king of Israel came up against Judah” (2 Chron. xvi, 1).

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## 23

When did Jehoram king of Israel and Jehoram king of Judah begin to reign?

“And Jehoram [of Israel] reigned in his stead in the second year of Jehoram the son of Jehoshaphat king of Judah” (2 Kings i, 17).

“And in the fifth year of Joram [Jehoram of Israel].... Jehoram the son of Jehoshaphat king of Judah began to reign” (2 Kings viii, 16).

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According to the first account, Jehoram of Israel began to reign in the second year of Jehoram of Judah; according to the second, Jehoram of Judah began to reign in the fifth year of Jehoram of Israel.

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## 24

When did Ahaziah begin to reign?

“In the *eleventh* year of Joram the son of Ahab began Ahaziah to reign over Judah” (2 Kings ix, 29).

“In the *twelfth* year of Joram the son of Ahab king of Israel did Ahaziah the son of

Jehoram king of Judah begin to reign” (2 Kings viii, 25).

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25

How old was Ahaziah when he began to reign?

“*Two and twenty* years old was Ahaziah when he began to reign; and he reigned one year in Jerusalem” (2 Kings viii, 26).

“*Forty and two* years old was Ahaziah when he began to reign; and he reigned one year in Jerusalem” (2 Chron. xxii, 2).

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26

How long did Jotham reign?

“In the second year of Pekah ... began Jotham the son of Uzziah king of Judah to reign. Five and twenty years old was he when he began to reign, and he reigned *sixteen* years in Jerusalem” (2 Kings xv, 32, 33).

“And Hoshea ... slew him [Pekah] and reigned in his stead, in the *twentieth* year of Jotham the son of Uzziab” (2 Kings xv, 30).

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27

Who was Josiah’s successor?

“Then the people of the land took *Jehoahaz* the son of Josiah, and made him king in his father’s stead” (2 Chron. xxxvi, 1).

“For thus saith the Lord touching *Shallum* the son of Josiah king of Judah which reigned instead of Josiah his father” (Jer. xxli, 11).

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28

How old was Jehoiachin when he began to reign?

“Jehoiachin was *eight* years old when he began to reign” (2 Chron. xxxvi, 9).

“Jehoiachin was *eighteen* years old when he began to reign” (2 Kings xxiv, 8).

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29

When did Evil-Merodach release Jehoiachin from prison?

“In the twelfth month, on the *seven* and twentieth day of the month” (2 Kings xxv, 27).

“In the twelfth month, in the *five* and twentieth day of the month” (Jer. lii, 31).

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30

What relation did Zedekiah, the last of the Jewish kings, bear to Jehoiachin, his predecessor?

1. He was his son. "Jechoniah [Jehoiachin] his son, Zedekiah his son" (1 Chron. iii, 16).

2. He was his brother. "Nebuchadnezzar sent and brought him [Jehoiachin] to Babylon, ... and made Zedekiah his brother king of Judah" (2 Chron. xxxvi, 10). [209]

3. He was his uncle. "The king of Babylon made Mattaniah his [Jehoiachin's] father's brother king in his stead and changed his name to Zedekiah" (2 Kings xxiv, 17).

"That Zedekiah, who in 1 Chron. iii, 16, is called 'his son,' is the same as Zedekiah his uncle (called 'his brother,' 2 Chron. xxxvi, 10), who was his [Jehoiachin's] successor on the throne seems certain" (Smith's Bible Dictionary, Art. Jehoiachin). [210]

## CHAPTER XVI.

### WHEN DID JEHOSHAPHAT DIE?

At the end of Solomon's reign the Jewish nation was divided into two kingdoms. Two tribes acknowledged the authority of Solomon's successor, Rehoboam. This was called the kingdom of Judah, of which Jerusalem was the capital. Ten tribes revolted and made Jeroboam king. This formed the kingdom of Israel, of which Samaria was the capital. The following is a brief summary of the reigns of the kings of the two kingdoms from the partition of the empire to the conquest of Israel by the Assyrians:

#### Kingdom of Judah.

"And Rehoboam the son of Solomon reigned in Judah ... and he reigned seventeen years" (1 Kings xiv, 21).

"And Rehoboam slept with his fathers ... and Abijam his son reigned in his stead" (1 Kings xiv, 31). "Three years reigned he" (xv, 2).

"And Abijam slept with his fathers ... and Asa his son reigned in his stead" (1 Kings xv, 8). "Forty and one years reigned he" (10). [211]

"And Asa slept with his fathers ... and Jehoshaphat his son reigned in his stead" (1 Kings xv, 24). "And he reigned twenty and five years in Jerusalem" (xxii, 42).

"And Jehoshaphat slept with his fathers ... and Jehoram his son reigned in his stead" (1 Kings xxii, 50). "And he reigned eight years" (2 Kings viii, 17).

"And Joram [Jehoram] slept with his fathers ... and Ahaziah reigned in his stead" (2 Kings viii, 24). "And he reigned one year" (26).

"And he [Ahaziah] fled to Megiddo and died there" (2 Kings xi, 17). "And when Athaliah the mother of Ahaziah saw that her son was dead she arose and destroyed all the seed royal. But Jehosheba took Joash the son of Ahaziah ... and he was with her [his nurse] hid in the house of the Lord six years. And Athaliah did reign over the land" (xi, 1-3).

"They slew Athaliah" (2 Kings xi, 20). "And they brought down the king [Joash] from the house of the Lord.... And he sat on the throne of the kings" (19). "Forty years reigned he in Jerusalem" (xii, 1).

"His servants smote him [Joash] and he died, ... and Amaziah his son reigned in his stead" (2 Kings xii, 21)—"and reigned twenty and nine years" (xiv, 2).

"They made a conspiracy against him [Amaziah] ... and slew him" (2 Kings xiv, 19). "And all the people of Judah took Azariah ... and made him king instead of his father, Amaziah" (21). "And he reigned two and fifty years" (xv, 2). [212]

"So Azariah slept with his fathers ... and Jotham his son reigned in his stead" (2

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Kings xv, 7). "And he reigned sixteen years" (33).

"And Jotham slept with his fathers ... and Ahaz his son reigned in his stead" (2 Kings xv, 38)—"and reigned sixteen years" (xvi, 2).

"And Ahaz slept with his fathers ... and Hezekiah his son reigned in his stead" (2 Kings xvi, 10) "In the sixth year of Hezekiah ... Samaria was taken" (xviii, 10).

From the division of the empire, then, to the conquest of Israel by the Assyrians, the reigns of Judah's kings were as follows:

|              |             |        |
|--------------|-------------|--------|
| Rehoboam,    | seventeen   | years, |
| Abijam,      | three       | „      |
| Asa,         | forty-one   | „      |
| Jehoshaphat, | twenty-five | „      |
| Joram,       | eight       | „      |
| Ahaziah,     | one         | „      |
| Athaliah,    | six         | „      |
| Joash,       | forty       | „      |
| Amaziah,     | twenty-nine | „      |
| Azariah,     | fifty-two   | „      |
| Jotham,      | sixteen     | „      |
| Ahaz,        | sixteen     | „      |
| Hezekiah,    | six         | „      |

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## Kingdom of Israel.

"They ... made him [Jeroboam] king over all Israel" (1 Kings xii, 20). "And the days which Jeroboam reigned were two and twenty years" (xiv, 20).

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"And he [Jeroboam] slept with his fathers and Nadab his son reigned in his stead" (1 Kings xiv, 20)—"and reigned over Israel two years" (xv, 25).

"And Baasha smote him [Nadab] ... and reigned in his stead" (1 Kings xv, 27, 28)—"twenty and four years" (33).

"So Baasha slept with his fathers ... and Elah his son reigned in his stead" (1 Kings xvi, 6)—"two years" (8).

"Zimri went in and smote him, and killed him [Elah] ... and reigned in his stead" (1 Kings xvi, 10)—"seven days" (15).

"Wherefore all Israel made Omri ... king over Israel" (1 Kings xvi, 16)—"to reign over Israel twelve years" (23).

"So Omri slept with his fathers ... and Ahab his son reigned in his stead" (1 Kings xvi, 28)—"twenty and two years" (29).

"So Ahab slept with his fathers and Ahaziah his son reigned in his stead" (1 Kings xxii, 40)—"and reigned two years over Israel" (51).

"So he [Ahaziah] died ... and Jehoram [his brother] reigned in his stead" (2 Kings i, 17)—"and reigned twelve years" (iii, 1).

"I have anointed thee [Jehu] king ... over Israel" (2 Kings ix, 6). "And Jehu ... smote Jehoram" (24). "And the time that Jehu reigned over Israel in Samaria was twenty and eight years" (x, 36).

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"And Jehu slept with his fathers ... and Jehoahaz his son reigned in his stead" (2 Kings x, 35)—"and reigned seventeen years" (xiii, 1).

"And Jehoahaz slept with his fathers ... and Joash his son reigned in his stead" (2 Kings xiii, 9)—"and reigned sixteen years" (10).

"And Joash slept with his fathers and Jeroboam sat upon his throne" (2 Kings xiii, 13)—"and reigned forty and one years" (xiv, 23).

"And Jeroboam slept with his fathers ... and Zachariah his son reigned in his stead" (2 Kings xiv, 29)—"six months" (xv, 8).

"And Shallum ... slew him [Zachariah] and reigned in his stead" (2 Kings xv, 10)

—“a full month” (13).

“Menahem ... slew him [Shallum] and reigned in his stead” (2 Kings xv, 14)—“and reigned ten years” (27).

“And Menahem slept with his fathers and Pekahiah his son reigned in his stead” (2 Kings xv, 22)—“and reigned two years” (23).

“Pekah ... killed him [Pekahiah] and reigned in his room” (2 Kings xv, 25)—“and reigned twenty years” (7).

“And Hoshea ... slew him [Pekah] and reigned in his stead” (2 Kings xv, 30)—“nine years” (xvii, 1). “In the ninth year of Hoshea the king of Assyria took Samaria, and carried Israel away into Assyria” (6).

From the division of the empire to the conquest of Israel the reigns of Israel’s kings, omitting Zimri’s brief reign of seven days and calling the combined reigns of Zachariah and Shallum one year, as computed by chronologists, were as follows:

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|                        |              |        |
|------------------------|--------------|--------|
| Jeroboam,              | twenty-two   | years, |
| Nadab,                 | two          | “      |
| Baasha,                | twenty-four  | “      |
| Elah,                  | two          | “      |
| Omri,                  | twelve       | “      |
| Ahab,                  | twenty-two   | “      |
| Ahaziah,               | two          | “      |
| Jehoram,               | twelve       | “      |
| Jehu,                  | twenty-eight | “      |
| Jehoahaz,              | seventeen    | “      |
| Joash,                 | sixteen      | “      |
| Jeroboam II.,          | forty-one    | “      |
| Zachariah and Shallum, | one          | “      |
| Menahem,               | ten          | “      |
| Pekahiah,              | two          | “      |
| Pekah,                 | twenty       | “      |
| Hoshea,                | nine         | “      |

The foregoing epitome of Jewish history, gleaned from 1 and 2 Kings, is presented in order that the reader may the more readily understand the following solutions (based upon statements that appear in these books) to the question that forms the topic of this chapter—When did Jehoshaphat die?

Jehoshaphat is represented as one of Judah’s best and greatest kings. He did “that which was right in the eyes of the Lord.” “The Lord was with Jehoshaphat.” “And Jehoshaphat waxed great.” “And he had riches and honor in abundance.” He died at the age of sixty, after a reign of twenty-five years. Ahaziah, king of Israel, is represented as a very wicked king. “He did evil in the sight of the Lord.” “For he served Baal, and worshiped him, and provoked to anger the Lord.” Elijah prophesied his early death, which came after a brief reign of two years. The last chapter of the first book of Kings chronicles the reign and death of Judah’s king, Jehoshaphat; the first chapter of the second book of Kings records the reign and death of Israel’s king, Ahaziah. Now when did Jehoshaphat die? Did he die before or after Ahaziah died?

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1.

“And in the twentieth year of Jeroboam king of Israel reigned Asa over Judah” (1 Kings xv, 9).

As Jeroboam reigned twenty-two years, he reigned two years after Asa became king. From the commencement of Asa’s reign, then, to the death of Ahaziah, the reigns of Israel’s kings were as follows: Jeroboam 2 years, Nadab 2 years, Baasha 24 years, Elah 2 years, Omri 12 years, Ahab 22 years, and Ahaziah 2 years. 2 years + 2 years + 24 years + 2 years + 12 years + 22 years + 2 years = 66 years.

As Asa reigned forty-one years and Jehoshaphat reigned twenty-five years, from the commencement of Asa’s reign to the death of Jehoshaphat was 41 years + 25 years = 66 years.

If from the commencement of Asa's reign to the death of Ahaziah was sixty-six years, and from the commencement of Asa's reign to the death of Jehoshaphat was sixty-six years, Jehoshaphat therefore died in the *same year* that Ahaziah died.

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2.

"Now in the eighteenth year of King Jeroboam the son of Nebat reigned Abijam over Judah" (1 Kings xv, 1).

As Jeroboam reigned 22 years, he reigned four years after the beginning of Abijam's reign. From the beginning of Abijam's reign, then, to the death of Ahaziah, the reigns of Israel's kings were: Jeroboam 4 years, Nadab 2 years, Baasha 24 years, Elah 2 years, Omri 12 years, Ahab 22 years, and Ahaziah 2 years.  $4 \text{ years} + 2 \text{ years} + 24 \text{ years} + 2 \text{ years} + 12 \text{ years} + 22 \text{ years} + 2 \text{ years} = 68 \text{ years}$ .

From the beginning of Abijam's reign to the death of Jehoshaphat the reigns of Judah's kings were: Abijam 3 years, Asa 41 years, Jehoshaphat 25 years.  $3 \text{ years} + 41 \text{ years} + 25 \text{ years} = 69 \text{ years}$ .

If from the beginning of Abijam's reign to the death of Ahaziah was sixty-eight years, and from the beginning of Abijam's reign to the death of Jehoshaphat was sixty-nine years, Jehoshaphat therefore died *one year after* Ahaziah died.

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3.

"In the thirty and first year of Asa king of Judah began Omri to reign over Israel" (1 Kings xvi, 23).

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From the accession of Omri to the death of Ahaziah the reigns of Israel's kings were: Omri 12 years, Ahab 22 years, and Ahaziah 2 years.  $12 \text{ years} + 22 \text{ years} + 2 \text{ years} = 36 \text{ years}$ .

As Omri became king in the thirty-first year of Asa's reign, Asa reigned ten years after Omri became king, and this added to Jehoshaphat's reign of twenty-five years makes thirty-five years from Omri to the death of Jehoshaphat.

If from the accession of Omri to the death of Ahaziah was thirty-six years, and from the accession of Omri to the death of Jehoshaphat was thirty-five years, Jehoshaphat therefore died *one year before* Ahaziah died.

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4.

"In the three and twentieth year of Joash the son of Ahaziah king of Judah, Jehoahaz the son of Jehu began to reign over Israel" (2 Kings xiii, 1).

From the death of Ahaziah king of Israel to the accession of Jehoahaz, Jehoram reigned 12 years, and Jehu 28 years, a total of 40 years.

From the death of Jehoshaphat to the accession of Jehoahaz, Judah's sovereigns reigned—Joram 8 years, Ahaziah 1 year, Athaliah 6 years, Joash 23 years.  $8 \text{ years} + 1 \text{ year} + 6 \text{ years} + 23 \text{ years} = 38 \text{ years}$ .

If from the death of Ahaziah to the accession of Jehoahaz was forty years, and from the death of Jehoshaphat to the accession of Jehoahaz was thirty-eight years, Jehoshaphat therefore died *two years after* Ahaziah died.

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5.

"And Jehoram [of Israel] reigned in his [Ahaziah's] stead, in the second year of

Jehoram the son of Jehoshaphat" (2 Kings i, 17).

If Ahaziah died and Jehoram of Israel became king in the second year of Jehoram of Judah, Jehoshaphat therefore died *two years before* Ahaziah died.

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6.

"And Joram [Jehoram] king of Israel and Ahaziah king of Judah went out, each in his chariot ... against Jehu" (2 Kings ix, 21), "And Jehu drew a bow with his full strength, and smote Jehoram between his arms, and the arrow went out at his heart" (24). "But when Ahaziah the king of Judah saw this he fled by way of the garden house. And Jehu followed after him, and said, Smite him also in the chariot. And they did so" (27).

Jehoram, king of Israel, and Ahaziah, king of Judah, were thus slain at the same time. Jehu succeeded Jehoram; Athaliah succeeded Ahaziah, reigned six years, and was in turn succeeded by Joash. Jehu had thus reigned six years over Israel when Joash became king of Judah. As Jehoram reigned twelve years, from the death of Ahaziah [of Israel] to the accession of Joash then, was eighteen years.

From the death of Jehoshaphat to the accession of Joash, Judah's sovereigns reigned as follows: Joram 8 years, Ahaziah 1 year, Athaliah 6 years—a total of fifteen years.

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If from the death of Ahaziah to the reign of Joash was eighteen years, and from the death of Jehoshaphat to the reign of Joash was fifteen years, Jehoshaphat therefore died *three years after* Ahaziah died.

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7.

"In the second year of Joash son of Jehoahaz king of Israel reigned Amaziah the son of Joash king of Judah" (2 Kings xiv, 1).

From the death of Ahaziah to the accession of Amaziah the reigns of Israel's kings were: Jehoram 12 years, Jehu 28 years, Jehoahaz 17 years, Joash 2 years. 12 years + 28 years + 17 years + 2 years = 59 years.

From the death of Jehoshaphat to the accession of Amaziah, Judah's kings reigned—Joram 8 years, Ahaziah 1 year, Athaliah 6 years, Joash 40 years. 8 years + 1 year + 6 years + 40 years = 55 years.

If from the death of Ahaziah to the accession of Amaziah was fifty-nine years, and from the death of Jehoshaphat to the accession of Amaziah was fifty-five years, Jehoshaphat therefore died *four years after* Ahaziah died.

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8.

"And Jehoshaphat the son of Asa began to reign over Judah in the fourth year of Ahab king of Israel" (1 Kings xxii, 41).

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If Ahab reigned twenty-two years and Jehoshaphat began to reign in the fourth year of Ahab's reign, Jehoshaphat had reigned eighteen years when Ahab died, and twenty years when Ahaziah died. As Jehoshaphat reigned twenty-five years, he therefore died *five years after* Ahaziah died.

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9.

"Ahaziah the son of Ahab began to reign over Israel in Samaria the seventeenth year of Jehoshaphat king of Judah, and reigned two years over Israel" (1 Kings,

If Ahaziah began to reign in the seventeenth year of Jehoshaphat and reigned two years before he died, he died in the nineteenth year of Jehoshaphat's reign. As Jehoshaphat reigned twenty-five years, he therefore died *six years after* Ahaziah died.

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## 10.

"Now Jehoram the son of Ahab began to reign over Israel in Samaria in the eighteenth year of Jehoshaphat king of Judah" (2 Kings iii, 1).

If Ahaziah died and Jehoram became king in the eighteenth year of Jehoshaphat's reign, Jehoshaphat therefore died *seven years after* Ahaziah died.

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## 11.

"In the second year of Pekah the son of Remaliah king of Israel began Jotham the son of Uzziah [Azariah] king of Judah to reign" (2 Kings xv, 32).

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From the death of Ahaziah to the beginning of Jotham's reign the following were the reigns of Israel's kings: Jehoram 12 years, Jehu 28 years, Jehoahaz 17 years, Joash 16 years, Jeroboam 41 years, Zachariah and Shallum 1 year, Menahem 10 years, Pekahiah 2 years, Pekah 2 years.  $12 \text{ years} + 28 \text{ years} + 17 \text{ years} + 16 \text{ years} + 41 \text{ years} + 1 \text{ year} + 10 \text{ years} + 2 \text{ years} + 2 \text{ years} = 129 \text{ years}$ .

From the death of Jehoshaphat to the beginning of Jotham's reign the following were the reigns of Judah's kings: Joram 8 years, Ahaziah 1 year, Athaliah 6 years, Joash 40 years, Amaziah 29 years, Azariah 52 years.  $8 \text{ years} + 1 \text{ year} + 6 \text{ years} + 40 \text{ years} + 29 \text{ years} + 52 \text{ years} = 136 \text{ years}$ .

If from the death of Ahaziah to the beginning of Jotham's reign was one hundred and twenty-nine years, and from the death of Jehoshaphat to the beginning of Jotham's reign was one hundred and thirty-six years, Jehoshaphat therefore died *seven years before* Ahaziah died.

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## 12.

"In the thirty and eighth year of Azariah king of Judah did Zachariah the son of Jeroboam reign over Israel" (2 Kings xv, 8).

From the death of Ahaziah to the accession of Zachariah the reigns of Israel's kings were: Jehoram 12 years, Jehu 28 years, Jehoahaz 17 years, Joash 16 years, Jeroboam 41 years.  $12 \text{ years} + 28 \text{ years} + 17 \text{ years} + 16 \text{ years} + 41 \text{ years} = 114 \text{ years}$ .

From the death of Jehoshaphat to the accession of Zachariah the reigns of Judah's kings were: Joram 8 years, Ahaziah 1 year, Athaliah 6 years, Joash 40 years, Amaziah 29 years, Azariah 38 years.  $8 \text{ years} + 1 \text{ year} + 6 \text{ years} + 40 \text{ years} + 29 \text{ years} + 38 \text{ years} = 122 \text{ years}$ .

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If from the death of Ahaziah to the accession of Zachariah was one hundred and fourteen years, and from the death of Jehoshaphat to the accession of Zachariah was one hundred and twenty-two years, Jehoshaphat therefore died *eight years before* Ahaziah died.

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## 13.

"In the fiftieth year of Azariah king of Judah, Pekahiah the son of Menahem began

to reign over Israel” (2 Kings xv, 23).

From the death of Ahaziah to the accession of Pekahiah, Israel’s kings reigned as follows: Jehoram 12 years, Jehu 28 years, Jehoahaz 17 years, Joash 16 years, Jeroboam 41 years, Zachariah and Shallum 1 year, Menahem 10 years.  $12 \text{ years} + 28 \text{ years} + 17 \text{ years} + 16 \text{ years} + 41 \text{ years} + 1 \text{ year} + 10 \text{ years} = 125 \text{ years}$ .

From the death of Jehoshaphat to the accession of Pekahiah, Judah’s kings reigned as follows: Joram 8 years, Ahaziah 1 year, Athaliah 6 years, Joash 40 years, Amaziah 29 years, Azariah 50 years.  $8 \text{ years} + 1 \text{ year} + 6 \text{ years} + 40 \text{ years} + 29 \text{ years} + 50 \text{ years} = 134 \text{ years}$ .

If from the death of Ahaziah to the accession of Pekahiah was one hundred and twenty-five years, and from the death of Jehoshaphat to the accession of Pekahiah was one hundred and thirty-four years, Jehoshaphat therefore died *nine years before* Ahaziah died.

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14.

“In the twelfth year of Ahaz king of Judah began Hoshea the son of Elah to reign in Samaria over Israel” (2 Kings xvii, 1).

From the death of Ahaziah to the accession of Hoshea the reigns of Israel’s kings were: Jehoram 12 years, Jehu 28 years, Jehoahaz 17 years, Joash 16 years, Jeroboam 41 years, Zachariah and Shallum 1 year, Menahem 10 years, Pekahiah 2 years, Pekah 20 years.  $12 \text{ years} + 28 \text{ years} + 17 \text{ years} + 16 \text{ years} + 41 \text{ years} + 1 \text{ year} + 10 \text{ years} + 2 \text{ years} + 20 \text{ years} = 147 \text{ years}$ .

From the death of Jehoshaphat to the accession of Hoshea the reigns of Judah’s kings were: Joram 8 years, Ahaziah 1 year, Athaliah 6 years, Joash 40 years, Amaziah 29 years, Azariah 52 years, Jotham 16 years, Ahaz 12 years.  $8 \text{ years} + 1 \text{ year} + 6 \text{ years} + 40 \text{ years} + 29 \text{ years} + 52 \text{ years} + 16 \text{ years} + 12 \text{ years} = 164 \text{ years}$ .

If from the death of Ahaziah to the accession of Hoshea was one hundred and forty-seven years, and from the death of Jehoshaphat to the accession of Hoshea was one hundred and sixty-four years, Jehoshaphat therefore died *seventeen years before* Ahaziah died.

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15.

“And it came to pass in the fourth year of King Hezekiah, which was the seventh year of Hoshea son of Elah king of Israel, that Shalmaneser king of Assyria came up against Samaria and besieged it” (2 Kings xviii, 9).

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From the death of Ahaziah to the commencement of the siege of Samaria the reigns of Israel’s kings were: Jehoram 12 years, Jehu 28 years, Jehoahaz 17 years, Joash 16 years, Jeroboam 41 years, Zachariah and Shallum 1 year, Menahem 10 years, Pekahiah 2 years, Pekah 20 years, Hoshea 7 years.  $12 \text{ years} + 28 \text{ years} + 17 \text{ years} + 16 \text{ years} + 41 \text{ years} + 1 \text{ year} + 10 \text{ years} + 2 \text{ years} + 20 \text{ years} + 7 \text{ years} = 154 \text{ years}$ .

From the death of Jehoshaphat to the siege of Samaria the reigns of Judah’s kings were: Joram 8 years, Ahaziah 1 year, Athaliah 6 years, Joash 40 years, Amaziah 29 years, Azariah 52 years, Jotham 16 years, Ahaz 16 years, Hezekiah 4 years.  $8 \text{ years} + 1 \text{ year} + 6 \text{ years} + 40 \text{ years} + 29 \text{ years} + 52 \text{ years} + 16 \text{ years} + 16 \text{ years} + 4 \text{ years} = 172 \text{ years}$ .

If from the death of Ahaziah to the commencement of Samaria was one hundred and fifty-four years, and from the death of Jehoshaphat to the siege of Samaria was one hundred and seventy-two years, Jehoshaphat therefore died *eighteen years before* Ahaziah died.

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16.

"In the twenty and seventh year of Jeroboam king of Israel began Azariah son of Amaziah king of Judah to reign" (2 Kings xv, 1).

From the death of Ahaziah to the accession of Azariah the reigns of Israel's kings were: Jehoram 12 years, Jehu 28 years, Jehoahaz 17 years, Joash 16 years, Jeroboam 27 years.  $12 \text{ years} + 28 \text{ years} + 17 \text{ years} + 16 \text{ years} + 27 \text{ years} = 100 \text{ years}$ .

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From the death of Jehoshaphat to the accession of Azariah the reigns of Judah's kings were: Joram 8 years, Ahaziah 1 year, Athaliah 6 years, Joash 40 years, Amaziah 29 years.  $8 \text{ years} + 1 \text{ year} + 6 \text{ years} + 40 \text{ years} + 29 \text{ years} = 84 \text{ years}$ .

If from the death of Ahaziah to the accession of Azariah was one hundred years, and from the death of Jehoshaphat to the accession of Azariah was eighty-four years, Jehoshaphat therefore died *sixteen years after* Ahaziah died.

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## Recapitulation.

When did Jehoshaphat's death occur? Did it occur before or after Ahaziah's death occurred? The following is a recapitulation of the various answers to this question which the preceding solutions have disclosed:

1. The same year.
2. One year after.
3. One year before.
4. Two years after.
5. Two years before.
6. Three years after.
7. Four years after.
8. Five years after.
9. Six years after.
10. Seven years after.
11. Seven years before.
12. Eight years before.
13. Nine years before.
14. Seventeen years before.
15. Eighteen years before.
16. Sixteen years after.

Here are sixteen different answers to a simple historical question. But one of them can possibly be correct; fifteen of them must necessarily be incorrect. And yet I challenge the theologian to demonstrate the incorrectness of one of them without at the same time demonstrating the fallibility of the Bible and its unreliability as a historical record.

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## Notes and Explanations.

The history of Judah's and of Israel's sovereigns is recorded in Kings and repeated in Chronicles. Had I used both Kings and Chronicles in the preparation of this chapter, the number of various answers would have been increased. Some Christian scholars, however, admit that Chronicles is not entirely free from errors, while Kings, on the other hand, is denominated a "marvel of accuracy." To avoid any objections that might be raised were Chronicles used—to assail only that which is deemed unassailable—I have confined myself to Kings.

To prevent confusion in regard to names, the reader should remember that Israel had two kings named Jeroboam, and that Israel and Judah each had kings named Ahaziah, Jehoram, and Jehoash. In Israel Jehoram succeeded Ahaziah; in Judah, Ahaziah succeeded Jehoram. The contracted form of *Jehoram* is *Joram*, and of *Jehoash*, *Joash*. Both forms are used. *Azariah* is also called *Uzziah*.

In computing time, ordinal numbers are reckoned the same as cardinal numbers. It may be urged that the phrase, "in the eighteenth year," does not denote the full period of eighteen completed years. In justification of the method pursued, I may say that it is not only the method generally followed by chronologists, but it is the method authorized by the Bible. See 2 Kings xvii, 1; 2 Kings xvii, 6. Also 1 Kings xv, 9, 10; 2 Chron. xvi, 13. Its adoption simplifies the form without increasing the

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number of solutions.

To reconcile other discrepancies, some Bible chronologists have assumed an interregnum of eleven years between the reigns of Jeroboam II. and Zachariah, and another of nine years between Pekah and Hosea. The language of the Bible utterly precludes these assumptions.

“And Jeroboam slept with his fathers, even with the kings of Israel, and Zachariah his son reigned in his stead” (2 Kings xiv, 29).

“And Hoshea the son of Elah made a conspiracy against Pekah the son of Remaliah, and smote him, and slew him, and reigned in his stead” (2 Kings xv, 30).

That these interregnums did not occur, nor indeed any interregnums between the reigns of Israel’s kings, is attested by Josephus, who by Christians is esteemed an authority second only to the writers of the Scriptures. The ninth book of his “Antiquities” bears the following title: “Containing the interval of one hundred and fifty-seven years from the death of Ahab to the captivity of the ten tribes.” This forbids the idea of any interregnum.

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But if it could be shown that these or other interregnums really did occur, the fact would increase rather than diminish the difficulties connected with the solution of this question.

We search the writings of Bible commentators in vain for an explanation or attempted reconciliation of many of the conflicting statements to be found in the passages that I have quoted. These exegetes have either been ignorant of their existence, or have purposely ignored them. Some of the more noticeable ones they have attempted to reconcile; but the explanations offered are of such a character as to make it seemingly impossible for an honest scholar to advance them, or an intelligent reader to accept them.

These pretended reconciliations have been abridged, and, in the shape of marginal notes, transferred to the popular editions of the Bible. Where different and conflicting dates are assigned for the commencement of a king’s reign, opposite the first will be found such explanatory notes as “prorex,” “viceroy,” “in consort,” or “in partnership with his father;” and opposite the last, “began to reign alone;” and all this without a word or hint, either in the Bible or elsewhere, to authorize it.

The demonstration of a single error in the Bible destroys the dogmas of its divinity and infallibility. Yet notwithstanding this single error, or even twenty errors, it might still be valuable as a historical record. But when it can be demonstrated that it abounds with glaring contradictions, that its every chapter teems with flagrant errors, it is utterly unworthy of credit, and must be rejected even as a human record of events.

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## CHAPTER XVII.

### INSPIRED NUMBERS.

In the second chapter of Ezra is given a register of the Jews who returned from Babylon to Jerusalem. The register begins with these words:

“Now these are the children of the province that went up out of the captivity, of those which had been carried away, whom Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon had carried away unto Babylon, and came again unto Jerusalem and Judah, every one unto his city.”

In the seventh chapter of Nehemiah, beginning with the sixth verse, is a copy of the same register. Nehemiah says:

“And I found a register of the genealogy of them which came up at the first, and found written therein,

“These are the children of the province, that went up out of the captivity, of those that had been carried away, whom Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon had carried away, and came again to Jerusalem and to Judah, every one unto his city.”

Then follows in each a list of the families with the number of persons belonging to them. But in transcribing the numbers, either Ezra or Nehemiah has made many errors. A careful examination reveals no less than twenty, as shown by the

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following:

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1.

“The children of Arah, *seven hundred and seventy-five*” (Ez. ii, 5).

“The children of Arah, *six hundred fifty and two*” (Neh. vii, 10).

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2.

“The children of Pahath-moab, of the children of Jeshua and Joab, two thousand eight hundred and *twelve*” (Ez. ii, 6).

“The children of Pahath-moab, of the children of Jeshua and Joab, two thousand and eight hundred and *eighteen*” (Neh. vii, 11).

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3.

“The children of Zattu, *nine hundred forty and five*” (Ez. ii, 8).

“The children of Zattu, *eight hundred forty and five*” (Neh. vii, 13).

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4.

“The children of Bani, six hundred forty and *two*” (Ez. ii, 10).

“The children of Binnui, six hundred forty and *eight*” (Neh. vii, 15).

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5.

“The children of Bebai, six hundred twenty and *three*” (Ez. ii, 11).

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“The children of Bebai, six hundred twenty and *eight*” (Neh. vii, 16).

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6.

“The children of Azgad, *a thousand two hundred twenty and two*” (Ez. ii, 12).

“The children of Azgad, *two thousand three hundred twenty and two*” (Neh. vii, 17).

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7.

“The children of Adonikam, six hundred sixty and *six*” (Ez. ii, 13).

“The children of Adonikam, six hundred three score and *seven*” (Neh. vii, 18).

8.

“The children of Bigvai, two thousand *fifty and six*” (Ez. ii, 14).

“The children of Bigvai, two thousand *three score and seven*” (Neh. vii, 19).

9.

“The children of Adin, *four hundred fifty and four*” (Ez. ii, 15).

“The children of Adin, *six hundred fifty and five*” (Neh. vii, 20).

10.

“The children of Bezai, three hundred twenty and *three*” (Ez. ii, 17).

“The children of Bezai, three hundred twenty and *four*” (Neh. vii, 23).

11.

“The children of Hashum, *two hundred twenty and three*” (Ez. ii, 19).

“The children of Hashum, *three hundred twenty and eight*” (Neh. vii, 22).

12.

“The children of Beth-lehem, a hundred twenty and three.

“The men of Netophah, *fifty and six*” (Ez. ii, 21, 22).

[The number of both is one hundred and *seventy-nine*].

“The men of Beth-lehem and Netophah, a hundred *four score and eight*” (Neh. vii, 26).

13.

“The men of Beth-el and Ai, *two hundred twenty and three*” (Ez. ii, 28).

“The men of Beth-el and Ai, *a hundred twenty and three*” (Neh. vii, 32).

14.

“The children of Magbish, a hundred fifty and six” (Ez. ii, 30).

[This family is omitted from Nehemiah’s list.]

## 15.

“The children of Lod, Hadid, and Ono, seven hundred twenty and *five*” (Ez. ii, 33).

“The children of Lod, Hadid, and Ono, seven hundred twenty and *one*” (Neh. vii, 37).

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## 16.

“The children of Senaah, three thousand and *six hundred* and thirty” (Ez. ii, 35).

“The children of Senaah, three thousand *nine hundred* and thirty” (Neh. vii, 38).

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## 17.

“The singers: the children of Asaph, a hundred *twenty* and eight” (Ez. ii, 41).

“The singers: the children of Asaph, a hundred *forty* and eight” (Neh. vii, 44).

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## 18.

“The children of the porters: the children of Shallum, the children of Ater, the children of Talmon, the children of Akkub, the children of Hatita, the children of Shobai, in all a hundred thirty and *nine*” (Ez. ii, 42).

“The porters: the children of Shallum, the children of Ater, the children of Talmon, the children of Akkub, the children of Hatita, the children of Shobai, a hundred thirty and *eight*” (Neh. vii, 45).

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## 19.

“The children of Delaiah, the children of Tobiah, the children of Nekoda, six hundred *fifty* and two” (Ez. ii, 60).

“The children of Delaiah, the children of Tobiah, the children of Nekoda, six hundred *forty* and two” (Neh. vii, 62).

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## 20.

“And there were among them two hundred singing men and singing women” (Ez. ii, 65).

“And they had two hundred *forty and five* singing men and singing women” (Neh. vii, 67).

The following is a table of the census of all the families, as given by Ezra and Nehemiah respectively:

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| <b>FAMILY.</b> | <b>EZRA. NEHEMIAH</b> |       |
|----------------|-----------------------|-------|
| Parosh         | 2,172                 | 2,712 |
| Shephatiah     | 372                   | 372   |
| Arah           | 775                   | 652   |

|                         |       |       |
|-------------------------|-------|-------|
| Pahath-Moab, etc        | 2,812 | 2,818 |
| Elam                    | 1,254 | 1,254 |
| Zattu                   | 945   | 845   |
| Zaccai                  | 760   | 760   |
| Bani                    | 642   | 648   |
| Bebai                   | 623   | 628   |
| Azgad                   | 1,222 | 2,322 |
| Adonikam                | 666   | 667   |
| Bigvai                  | 2,056 | 2,067 |
| Adin                    | 454   | 655   |
| Ater                    | 98    | 98    |
| Bezai                   | 323   | 324   |
| Jorah (Hariph)          | 112   | 112   |
| Hashum                  | 223   | 328   |
| Gibbar (Gibeon)         | 95    | 95    |
| Beth-lehem and Netophah | 179   | 188   |
| Anathoth                | 128   | 128   |
| Azmaveth                | 42    | 42    |
| Kirjath-arim, etc       | 743   | 743   |
| Ramah and Gabah         | 621   | 621   |
| Michmas                 | 122   | 122   |
| Bethel and Ai           | 223   | 123   |
| Nebo                    | 52    | 52    |
| Magbish                 | 156   |       |
| Elam                    | 1,254 | 1,254 |
| Harim                   | 320   | 320   |
| Lod, Hadid, and Ono     | 725   | 721   |
| Jericho                 | 345   | 345   |
| Senaah                  | 3,630 | 3,930 |
| Jedaiah                 | 973   | 973   |
| Immer                   | 1,052 | 1,052 |
| Pashur                  | 1,247 | 1,247 |
| Harim                   | 1,017 | 1,017 |
| Jeshua, etc             | 74    | 74    |
| Asaph                   | 128   | 148   |
| Shallum, etc            | 139   | 138   |
| The Nethinim, etc       | 392   | 392   |
| Delaiah, etc            | 652   | 642   |
| Servants                | 7,337 | 7,337 |
| Singers                 | 200   | 245   |

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In the above table are twenty discrepancies. Twenty errors in forty-three numerical statements is a bad showing for an infallible record.

Ezra and Nehemiah both state that the whole congregation, exclusive of the servants and singers, numbered 42,360. Yet the sum total of each is much less than this, that of Ezra being but 29,818, and Nehemiah, 31,089.

In the number of domestic animals Ezra and Nehemiah agree. In the oblations they disagree. According to Ezra they gave 61,000 drams of gold, 5,000 pounds of silver, and 100 priests' garments. According to Nehemiah they gave in all 41,000 drams of gold, 4,200 pounds of silver, and 597 priests' garments.

When bibliolaters affirm that there is not one error in the Bible, refer them to this register, where in two chapters may be found two dozen errors.

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## CHAPTER XVIII.

### HARMONY OF THE GOSPELS.

The more intelligent of orthodox Christians admit that the Bible as a whole is not

infallible and divine, but claim that it contains a divine revelation—that a part of it is the work of God and a part the work of man. And yet they cannot separate the one from the other, cannot agree as to which is divine and which human. Concerning this claim Prof. Goldwin Smith writes:

“When we are told there are in the Old Testament scriptures both a human and a divine element, we must ask by what test the divine is to be distinguished from the human? Nobody would have thought of ‘partial inspiration’ except as an expedient to cover retreat. We but tamper with our own understanding and consciences by such attempts at once to hold on and let go; to retain the shadow of the belief when the substance has passed away. Far better it is, whatever the effort may cost, honestly to admit that the sacred books of the Hebrews, granting their superiority to the sacred books of other nations, are, like the sacred books of other nations, the works of man and not of God.”

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Others admit the fallibility and human origin of the Old Testament and claim infallibility and divinity for the New Testament alone. But they cannot consistently claim infallibility and divinity for the New and not for the Old. The New Testament is based upon the Old. If the foundation be fallible the superstructure must be fallible also. Both have been declared canonical; both are bound in the same volume and labeled Holy Bible. The chief apostles declared the writings of the Old Testament to be divine, a claim they did not make for the writings of the New. Besides, the New Testament is as full of errors as the Old.

It has been shown that the Four Gospels are not genuine—that they were not written by Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. It is to their credit that they were not. A knowledge of the fact relieves the Apostles and their companions of a very discreditable imputation. Were four witnesses to testify in a court of justice and contradict each other as the Evangelists do, they would be prosecuted for perjury.

In another work five hundred errors to be found in the Four Gospels will be exposed. In this chapter twenty, selected largely at random, will suffice to disprove the credibility of these books:

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## 1.

When was Jesus born?

“In the days of Herod the king” (Matt. ii, 1).

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“When Cyrenius was governor of Syria” (Luke ii, 2).

Between Matthew and Luke there is a discrepancy of fully nine years. If Jesus was born in the days of Herod he was born at least three years before the beginning of the Christian era: if he was born in the time of Cyrenius he was born at least six years after the beginning of the Christian era.

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## 2.

Where was Jesus born, in a house, or in a manger?

“And when they were come into the *house*, they saw the young child with Mary his mother” (Matt. ii, 11).

“And they came with haste and found Mary and Joseph and the babe lying in a *manger*” (Luke ii, 16).

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## 3.

What did his parents do with him?

“When he [Joseph] arose, he took the young child and his mother by night, and departed into Egypt; and was there until the death of Herod” (Matt. ii, 14, 15).

“And when the days of her [Mary’s] purification according to the law of Moses were accomplished, they brought him to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord.... And when they had performed all things according to the law of the Lord, they returned into Galilee, to their own city Nazareth” (Luke ii, 22, 39).

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4.

What were the names of the twelve apostles?

“Now the names of the twelve Apostles are these: The first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother; Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas, and Matthew the publican; James the son of Alpheus, *and Lebbeus, whose surname was Thaddeus*; Simon the Canaanite, and Judas Iscariot” (Matt. x, 2-4).

“He chose twelve, whom also he named apostles: Simon (whom he also named Peter), and Andrew his brother, James and John, Philip and Bartholomew, Matthew and Thomas, James the son of Alpheus, and Simon called Zelotes, *and Judas the brother of James*, and Judas Iscariot” (Luke vi, 13-16).

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5.

Whom did Jesus call from the receipt of custom?

“He saw a man named Matthew, sitting at the receipt of custom; and he saith unto him, Follow me” (Matt. ix, 9).

“He went forth, and saw a publican, named Levi, sitting at the receipt of custom: and he said unto him, Follow me” (Luke v, 27).

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6.

When Jesus sent out his Apostles, did he command them to provide themselves with staves?

“And he commanded them that they should take nothing for their journey, save *a staff only*; no scrip, no bread, no money” (Mark vi, 8).

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“And he said unto them, Take nothing for your journey, *neither staves*, nor scrip, neither bread, neither money” (Luke ix, 3).

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7.

What did Jesus’ neighbors say of him?

“Is not this the carpenter?” (Mark vi, 3).

“Is not this the carpenter’s son?” (Matt. xiii, 55.)

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8.

Was it one man or two men possessed with devils who came out of the tombs?

“There met him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit” (Mark v, 2).

“There met him two possessed with devils, coming out of the tombs” (Matt. viii,

28).

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9.

As Jesus was going to Jerusalem, how many blind men sat by the wayside?

“A certain blind man sat by the way side begging.... And he cried, saying, Jesus thou Son of David, have mercy on me” (Luke xviii, 35).

“Two blind men sitting by the way side, when they heard that Jesus passed by, cried out, saying, Have mercy on us, O Lord, thou Son of David” (Matt. xx, 30).

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10.

What was Jesus’ prediction regarding Peter’s denial?

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“Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice” (Matt. xxvi, 34).

“Before the cock crow *twice* thou shalt deny me thrice” (Mark xiv, 30).

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11.

What was the color of the robe placed on Jesus during his trial?

“And they stripped him, and put on him a *scarlet* robe” (Matt. xxvii, 28).

“And they put on him a *purple* robe” (John xix, 2).

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12.

At what time during the day was he crucified?

“And it was the third hour [9 A.M.], and they crucified him” (Mark xv, 25).

“And it was the preparation of the Passover, and about the sixth hour [noon].... Then delivered he him unto them to be crucified” (John xix, 14, 16).

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13.

What did they give him to drink?

“They gave him vinegar to drink mingled with gall” (Matt. xxvii, 34).

“They gave him to drink wine mingled with myrrh” (Mark xv, 23).

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14.

Did both thieves revile him on the cross?

“And they that were crucified with him reviled him” (Mark xv, 32).

“And one of the malefactors which were hanged railed on him.... But the other

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answering rebuked him" (Luke xxiii, 39, 40).

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15.

Certain words were inscribed on the cross; what were these words?

"The King of the Jews" (Mark xv, 26).

"*This is the King of the Jews*" (Luke xxiii, 38).

"*This is Jesus the King of the Jews*" (Matt. xxvii, 37).

"*Jesus of Nazareth the King of the Jews*" (John xix, 19).

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16.

Was it lawful for the Jews to put Jesus to death?

"The Jews therefore said unto him, It is not lawful for us to put any man to death" (John xviii, 31).

"The Jews answered him, We have a law, and by our law he ought to die" (John xix, 7).

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17.

What women visited the sepulchre on the morning of the resurrection?

"The first day of the week cometh Mary Magdalene, early when it was yet dark, unto the sepulchre" (John xx, 1).

"In the end of the Sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene, and the other Mary, to see the sepulchre" (Matt. xxviii, 1).

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"Now upon the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they came unto the sepulchre.... It was Mary Magdalene, and Joanna, and Mary the mother of James, and other women" (Luke xxiv, 1, 10).

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18.

At what time in the morning did they visit the tomb?

"At the rising of the sun" (Mark xvi, 2).

"When it was yet dark" (John xx, 1).

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19.

Whom did they see at the tomb?

"The angel" (Matt. xxviii, 2).

"A young man" (Mark xvi, 5).

"Two men" (Luke xxiv, 4).

“Two angels” (John xx, 12).

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20.

Where did Jesus first appear to his disciples?

“Then said Jesus unto them [the women], Be not afraid; go tell my brethren that they go into Galilee, and there shall they see me.... Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, into a mountain where Jesus had appointed them. And when they saw him they worshiped him; but some doubted” (Matt. xxviii, 10, 16, 17).

“And they rose up the same hour, and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven gathered together, and them that were with them, saying, The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon.... And as they thus spake, Jesus himself stood in the midst of them” (Luke xxiv, 33, 34, 36).

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The first time I read Paine’s “Age of Reason” I was amazed to learn that the Bible contains as many errors as he exposes. But when a little later I made a more thorough study and analysis of the Pentateuch, the so-called historical books of the Old Testament, and the Four Gospels, I found that Paine had only selected here and there one of a multitude of errors—that in a single book of the Bible were to be found more errors than he had cited from its sixty-six. The briefest exposé of all the errors of the Bible would require a larger volume than the Bible itself. And yet, this book which contains more errors than any other book in Christendom, is the only book for which Christians claim inerrancy.

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## CHAPTER XIX.

### PAUL AND THE APOSTLES.

In this chapter will be presented some passages from Paul and the other Apostles pertaining to their writings, their teachings, and their characters, which affect the credibility of the remaining books of the New Testament.

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1.

It is popularly supposed that Jesus and his twelve Apostles formulated the doctrines of Christianity and founded the Christian church. Paul was the real author of this religion and the founder of the church.

“Then departed Barnabas to Tarsus, for to seek Saul: and when he had found him, he brought him unto Antioch. And it came to pass, that a whole year they assembled themselves with the church, and taught much people. And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch” (Acts xi, 25, 26).

Jesus Christ was a Jew. Peter, John, James, and the other Apostles in Palestine were not Christians, but Jews—orthodox Jews—who differed from other Jews chiefly in accepting Jesus as the expected Jewish Messiah. Paul and his followers were the first Christians. The Dutch critics frankly admit that “Christianity has to thank him more than any other for its existence,” that he was “the founder of the Christian church,” and that “without him it would have remained an insignificant or forgotten Jewish sect” (Bible for Learners, Vol. III. pp. 20, 642, 643).

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2.

The conversion of Paul is described as follows:

"And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus: and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven: and he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest" (Acts ix, 3-5).

This was simply a hallucination; and upon this hallucination of the diseased mind of Paul the whole system of Christian theology is based.

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3.

The effect of Paul's miraculous conversion upon his companions is thus related:

"And the men which journeyed with him *stood* speechless" (Acts ix, 7).

"We were all *fallen* to the earth" (xxvi, 14).

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4.

"And the men which journeyed with him stood speechless, *hearing a voice*, but seeing no man" (Acts ix, 7).

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"And they that were with me saw indeed the light, and were afraid; but they *heard not the voice* of him that spake to me" (xxii, 9).

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5.

After his conversion Acts states that "straight-way he preached Christ in the synagogues" (ix, 20) at Damascus; that when, soon after, the Jews sought to kill him he escaped and went immediately to Jerusalem; that "Barnabas took him, and brought him to the apostles" (27); "And he was with them coming in and going out at Jerusalem" (28).

Paul denies this. Referring to his conversion he says:

"Immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood: neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me; but I went into Arabia, and returned again unto Damascus. Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter and abode with him fifteen days. But other of the apostles saw I none, save James the Lord's brother" (Gal. i, 16-19).

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6.

Paul declares that his mission was to the Gentiles alone.

"I am the Apostle of the Gentiles" (Rom. xi, 13).

"That I should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles" (xv, 16).

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According to Acts (ix, 20-22; xiii, 5, 14-43; xiv, 1; xvii, 1, 2, 10; xviii, 4, 19; xxviii, 17), from the beginning to the end of his ministry, he was continually preaching in the synagogues to the Jews.

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7.

While Paul proclaims himself the apostle to the Gentiles he declares that Peter's

mission was confined to the Jews.

“The gospel of the uncircumcision was committed unto me, as the gospel of the circumcision was unto Peter” (Gal. ii, 7).

Peter contends that his mission was to the Gentiles.

“And when there had been much disputing, Peter rose up, and said unto them, Men and brethren, ye know how that a good while ago God made choice among us, that the Gentiles by *my* mouth should hear the word of the gospel” (Acts xv, 7).

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## 8.

The chief of Paul’s theological teachings is Justification by Faith alone.

“Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified” (Gal. ii, 16).

“If righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain” (21).

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“Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law” (Rom. iii, 28).

James declares this doctrine to be false and pernicious.

“But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead” (James ii, 20).

“For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also” (26).

“Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only” (24).

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## 9

The two great miracles of the Gospels are the immaculate conception and the bodily resurrection of Jesus. The Evangelists teach the doctrine of the immaculate conception. Paul and Peter declare Jesus to be simply a man.

Paul: “The man Christ Jesus” (1 Tim. ii, 5).

Peter: “A man approved of God” (Acts ii, 22).

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## 10.

The Evangelists teach the resurrection of the natural body—a body of flesh and blood. Paul teaches a spiritual resurrection only.

“It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body” (1 Cor. xv, 44).

“Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God” (50).

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## 11.

Paul both affirms and denies the immortality of man: “Glory and honor and immortality” (Rom. ii, 7). “This mortal must put on immortality” (1 Cor. xv, 53).

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“The King of kings, and Lord of lords [Christ]; who only hath immortality” (1 Tim. vi, 15, 16).

## 12.

Paul: "Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come we are no longer under a schoolmaster" (Gal. iii, 24, 25).

"But now we are delivered from the law" (Rom. vii, 6).

Jesus: "Think not that I am come to destroy the law.... I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law" (Matt. v, 17, 18).

## 13.

"We which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven, ... and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds" (1 Thes., iv, 15-17).

Paul believed that Christ had appeared to him. It was a delusion. He expected Christ to come again. He was mistaken.

## 14.

The following is an example of Paul's reasoning:

"Wherefore tongues are for a sign, not to them that believe, but to them that believe not; but prophesying serveth not for them that believe not, but for them which believe. If, therefore, the whole church be come together into one place, and all speak with tongues, and there come in those that are unlearned, or unbelievers, will they not say ye are mad? But if all prophesy, and there cometh in one that believeth not, or one unlearned, he is convinced of all" (1 Cor. xiv, 22-24).

Speaking with tongues is for the unbeliever. Therefore if you speak with tongues the unbeliever is not convinced.

Prophesying is not for the unbeliever. Therefore if you prophesy the unbeliever is convinced.

"Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you; as also in all of his epistles, speaking in them of these things; *in which are some things hard to be understood*" (2 Peter iii, 15, 16).

The Duke of Somerset says: "There is scarcely a single passage in the Pauline Epistles, or a single doctrine in the Pauline theology, which is not darkened or embroiled by the ambiguity of the expression" (Christian Theology and Modern Scepticism, p. 116).

## 15.

The following passage of seven verses from Paul (Rom. iii, 12-18) is borrowed from six different chapters of the Old Testament. Is it a medley of misquotations, or a mosaic of plagiarisms?

"They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one.

"Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips.

“Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness.

“Their feet are swift to shed blood.

“Destruction and misery are in their ways.

“And the way of peace have they not known.

“There is no fear of God before their eyes.”

---

“They are all gone aside, they are all together become filthy: there is none that doeth good, no, not one” (Ps. xiv, 3).

“Their throat is an open sepulchre; they flatter with the tongue (Ps. v, 9). Adders’ poison is under their lips” (cxl, 3).

“His mouth is full of cursing and deceit” (Ps. x, 7).

“Their feet run to evil and they make haste to shed innocent blood” (Is. lix, 7).

“Wasting and destruction are in their paths” (Ibid).

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“The way of peace they know not” (8).

“There is no fear of God before his eyes” (Ps. xxxvi, 1).

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## 16.

The following words are ascribed to Jesus by Paul:

“Remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive” (Acts xx, 85).

No such words are to be found in the recorded sayings of Jesus.

“But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him” (1 Cor. ii, 9).

The above is quoted by Paul as scripture, but the scriptures do not contain this passage.

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## 17.

“Who his [Christ’s] own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree” (1 Peter ii, 24).

The Epistles of Peter are devoted largely to Christ’s suffering and death, but no mention is made of his crucifixion. The words “cross” and “crucify” are not to be found in them. In Acts Peter speaks of Jesus’ death as follows:

“Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree” (v, 30).

“God anointed Jesus of Nazareth ... whom they slew and hanged on a tree” (x, 38, 93).

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## 18.

“For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one” (1 John v, 7).

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This is the chief text relied upon to support the doctrine of the Trinity, and this text all Christian scholars admit to be a forgery.

## 19.

"And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousand of his saints" (Jude 14).

Jude's scriptural authority is an apocryphal book.

Genesis, Chronicles, and Luke all agree that Enoch was not the seventh, but the sixth from Adam.

"Adam ... begat ... Seth" (Gen. v, 3); "Seth ... begat Enos" (6); "Enos ... begat Cainan (9); "Cainan ... begat Mahalaleel" (12); "Mahalaleel ... begat Jared" (15); "Jared ... begat Enoch" (18).

"Adam, Sheth, Enoch, Kenan, Mahalaleel, Jared, Henoch" (1 Chron. i, 1-3).

"Which was the son of Enoch, which was the son of Jared, which was the son of Maleleel, which was the son of Cainan, which was the son of Seth, which was the son of Adam" (Luke iii, 37, 38).

## 20.

"Now Peter sat without in the palace: and a damsel came unto him, saying, Thou also wast with Jesus of Galilee. But he denied before them all, saying, I know not what thou sayest" (Matt. xxvi, 69, 70).

"And again he denied with an oath, I do not know the man" (72).

"Then began he to curse and to swear, saying, I know not the man" (74).

"But when Peter was come to Antioch, I [Paul] withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed. For before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles; but when they were come, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision. And the other Jews dissembled likewise with him" (Gal. ii, 11-13).

"Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church" (Matt. xvi, 18).

## 21.

"Him [Timothy] would Paul have to go with him, and took and circumcised him because of the Jews which were in those quarters" (Acts xvi, 3).

"Thou seest, brother [Paul], how many thousands of Jews there are which believe, and they are all zealous of the law.... Do therefore this that we say to thee: We have four men which have a vow on them; them take and purify thyself with them. Then Paul took the men, and the next day purifying himself with them entered into the temple" (Acts xxi, 20-26).

Paul rebuked Peter for his hypocrisy. But if he practiced circumcision, and took the vow of a Nazarite, as claimed, he was a greater hypocrite than Peter; for Saul the Jew was not more violently opposed to the religion of Christ than Paul the Christian was to the religion of the Jews. That he was addicted to hypocrisy and dissimulation is shown by the following admissions in his genuine epistles:

"Being crafty I caught you with guile" (2 Cor. xii, 16).

"Unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews" (1 Cor. ix, 20).

"I am made all things to all men" (22).

22.

John impeaches the credibility of Paul and denounces him as a liar. Critics agree that portions of Revelation, including the following, are aimed directly at Paul:

“Thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars” (ii, 2).

23.

“And he saith unto me, Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book: for the time is at hand” (Rev. xxii, 10).

Among much that is unintelligible, the writer of Revelation clearly predicts the destruction of Rome (xvii, 16, 18); asserts that Nero, who was really dead, was yet alive (xiii, 3); proclaims the immediate coming of Christ (i, 7; xxii, 7, 12), the avenging of the persecuted prophets and apostles (xviii, 20), the binding of Satan for a thousand years (xx, 2), and the establishment of God’s kingdom (xxi).

“We know how completely these expectations were disappointed. Jerusalem, where the temple at least was never to be violated, fell utterly, and the sanctuary was laid low never to rise again; while Rome, instead of being turned to a desert, still held her rank and fame. Nero, the Antichrist, was dead and never returned to life; but neither did the Christ come back to earth. The martyrs were not avenged, but fresh persecutions awaited the faithful. The kingdom of Satan held its own, and the kingdom of God came not” (Bible for Learners, Vol. III., p. 655).

## CHAPTER XX.

### THE BIBLE AND HISTORY.

About one-half of the books of the Bible purport to be, to a considerable extent at least, historical. But from Genesis to Revelation there is scarcely a book which can be accepted as a reliable record of events. Nearly all of them abound with manifest absurdities, exaggerations, and contradictions. Their authors, for the most part, deal with matters concerning which the ancient profane historians take no cognizance; and this, in a measure, conceals their errors. But when they do refer to known historical events, they exhibit such an ignorance of the facts, or such a desire to pervert them, as to destroy their credibility. In this chapter will be presented some “sacred” history which reason rejects or the demonstrated facts of profane history disprove.

1.

“In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.”

The Bible, it is affirmed, contains a connected and reliable historical and chronological record of events from the Creation down to the universally accepted dates of profane history. And yet between the three versions of the Jewish Bible there is an utter disagreement. The creation of the world, according to these versions, was as follows:

|             |           |
|-------------|-----------|
| Hebrew,     | 4004 B.C. |
| Samaritan,  | 4700 ..   |
| Septuagint, | 5872 ..   |

The Talmud and Josephus, based upon the above, agree with neither, nor with

each other. According to the Talmud, the Creation occurred 5344 B.C.; according to Josephus, 4658 B.C.

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2.

“And the children of Israel journeyed from Rameses to Succoth, about six hundred thousand on foot that were men, beside children. And a mixed multitude went up also with them; and flocks, and herds, even very much cattle. Even the selfsame day it came to pass, that all the hosts of the Lord went out from the land of Egypt” (Ex. xii, 37, 38, 41).

“And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and the Lord caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all that night.... And the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea upon the dry ground.... Thus the Lord saved Israel that day out of the hand of the Egyptians” (Ex. xiv, 21, 22, 30).

The Exodus of the Israelites from Egypt is represented as having taken place in an incredibly brief space of time. It was after midnight when Moses was ordered to notify his people to depart. Before morning they were all *en route* from Rameses to the Red Sea, which they reached in three days and crossed in a few hours.

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As there were 600,000 men, the total number of persons must have been nearly 3,000,000. Three millions is a number easily spoken and quickly written. But neither the author of this story nor those who accept it as history have the slightest conception of its meaning. They evidently think that three million people—old and young; men, women, and children; the sick and the lame, together with their flocks and herds, their household effects and provisions—could be moved with the celerity of a few hundred men. When Napoleon crossed the Nieman in 1812, it took his army of trained soldiers, inured to hardships and accustomed to rapid marches, three days and nights to cross the river in close file on three bridges. Had his army been as large as this body of Israelites, to have crossed the river on one bridge, allowing the necessary time for rest, would have taken six months. It would have required months to notify, assemble, and organize this vast population of slaves in readiness for their migration. And when the journey began, if the head of the column had left Rameses in the spring the rear of the column would not have been able to move before autumn.

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3.

“Behold the land of Canaan, which I give unto the children of Israel for a possession” (Deut. xxxii, 49).

In the twelfth chapter of Joshua is given a list of thirty-one kingdoms which were conquered by them. This was in the fifteenth century B.C. From this time forward they are represented as a mighty nation by Bible historians.

Rameses III. overran Canaan and conquered it between 1280 and 1260 B.C. The Egyptian records give a list of all the tribes inhabiting it. The children of Israel—the Hebrews—were not there. In the fifth century B.C., when Herodotus, the father of history, was collecting materials for his immortal work, he traversed nearly every portion of Western Asia. He describes all its principal peoples and places; but the Jews and Jerusalem are of too little consequence to merit a line from his pen. Not until 332 B.C. do the Jews appear upon the stage of history, and then only as the submissive vassals of a Grecian king.

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4.

1. “Elhanan, the son of Jair, the Bethlehemite, slew Goliath of Gath, the shaft of whose spear was like a weaver’s beam” (2 Sam. xxi, 19, H. V.).

2. “Elhanan the son of Jair slew Lahmi the brother of Goliath the Gittite, whose spear staff was like a weaver’s beam” (1 Chron. xx, 5).

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3. "Elhanan the son of Jaare-oregim, a Bethlehemite, slew *the brother of Goliath* the Gittite, the staff of whose spear was like a weaver's beam" (2 Sam. xxi, 19, A. V.).

The above are three versions of the same passage. The first is a correct translation of the passage as it appears in the Hebrew. It is a part of one of the two discordant narratives used by the compiler of Samuel. The compiler of Chronicles saw the discrepancy and interpolated the words "Lahmi the brother of." Our translators interpolated the words "*the brother of.*"

Critics admit that if the killing of Goliath is a historical event, which is improbable, it was Elkanah, and not David, who slew him. The story of David and Goliath given by the other narrator in 1 Samuel is a myth. This writer says: "And David took the head of the Philistine, and brought it to Jerusalem," evidently believing that the Israelites then occupied Jerusalem, whereas the duel between David and Goliath is said to have occurred 1062 B.C., while the conquest and occupancy of Jerusalem by the Israelites did not occur until 1047 B.C., fifteen years later.

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5.

"And Solomon sent to Hiram, saying, ... Behold, I purpose to build an house unto the name of the Lord my God, ... and my servants shall be with thy servants, and unto thee will I give hire for thy servants" (1 Kings v, 2, 5, 6).

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"And Solomon had three score and ten thousand that bare burdens, and four score thousand hewers in the mountains; beside the chief of Solomon's officers which were over the work, three thousand and three hundred" (15, 16).

"So was he seven years in building it" (vi, 38)

"And the house which King Solomon built for the Lord, the length thereof was threescore cubits, and the breadth thereof twenty cubits, and the height thereof thirty cubits" (2).

The main building of Solomon's Temple, then, was about 96 feet long, 32 feet wide, and 48 feet high. One hundred and fifty thousand men engaged seven years in building a house as large as a village church or a country store! The mountain labored and brought forth a mouse!

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6.

"And the children of Israel fled before Judah: and God delivered them into their hand. And Abijah and his people slew them with great slaughter: so there fell down slain of Israel five hundred thousand chosen men" (2 Chron. xiii, 16, 17).

Five hundred thousand slain in one battle! At the battle of Gettysburg, one of the greatest battles of modern times, for three long days, two mighty armies of America engaged in deadly conflict, and when it was ended, the defeated army had less than five thousand killed. And yet we are asked to believe that this puny race of Hebrews, too insignificant to attract the notice of ancient historians, marshaled in battle two contending armies, the carnage of which equaled that of a hundred Gettysburgs.

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Talk about oriental exaggeration! If you wish to find its choicest specimens, search not the pages of Persian and Arabian romance, but read a chapter of sacred history.

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7.

"And Pul the king of Assyria came against the land; and Menahem gave Pul a thousand talents of silver, that his hand might be with him to confirm the kingdom in his hand" (2 Kings xv, 19).

The king who reigned in Assyria at this time was Iva-lush. Assyria never had a king

8.

“Belshazzar the king made a great feast to a thousand of his lords, and drank wine before the thousand. Belshazzar, while he tasted the wine, commanded to bring the golden and silver vessels which his father Nebuchadnezzar had taken out of the temple which was in Jerusalem; that the king, and his princes, his wives, and his concubines, might drink therein” (Dan. v, 1, 2).

“In the same hour came forth fingers of a man’s hand and wrote over against the candlestick upon the plaister of the wall of the king’s palace” (5).

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“And this is the writing that was written: MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN” (25).

“In that night was Belshazzar the king of the Chaldeans [Babylon] slain. And Darius the Median took the kingdom” (30, 31).

As a dramatic piece of fiction Belshazzar’s Feast is good; as a chapter of ancient history it is bad. Belshazzar was not the son of Nebuchadnezzar; neither was he king of Babylon. Darius the Mede did not take the kingdom.

9.

“And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed. (And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.)... And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem (because he was of the house and lineage of David), to be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child” (Luke ii, 1–5).

This cannot be accepted as historical for the following reasons:

1. Caesar Augustus never issued a decree that all the world should be taxed, nor even one that all the Roman world should be taxed.
2. If he had issued such a decree Joseph and Mary would not have been subject to taxation, because they lived in Galilee, an independent province.
3. Had they been subject to taxation they would have been enrolled in their own country and not in some distant kingdom.
4. Cyrenius did not become governor of Syria until nearly ten years after the death of Herod, and Jesus was born, it is claimed, in the days of Herod.

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10.

“Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the wise men, was exceeding wrath, and sent forth and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under” (Matt. ii, 16).

The statement that Herod the Great, who was firmly established in his government, and who had full-grown male heirs to succeed him, was afraid that the babe of an obscure Nazareth carpenter would supplant him in his kingdom, is enough to cause a Covenanter to laugh on Sunday. Had Herod issued such a decree his friends, instead of executing it, would have had him confined in a madhouse. The fact that the Roman and Jewish historians of that age—one of whom, an enemy, gives a full and complete record of his life—know nothing of this awful tragedy, that an anonymous author writing nearly two centuries afterward is the only one who mentions it, is of itself sufficient to brand it as an atrocious falsehood.

## 11.

“That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias son of Barachias whom ye slew between the temple and the altar” (Matt. xxiii, 35). [269]

The divine historian ascribes these words to Jesus. Jesus was crucified, it is claimed, about 29 A.D. Zacharias was slain in 69 A.D., forty years after the death of Jesus. Some contend that Jesus refers to the Zachariah mentioned in 2 Chronicles (xxiv, 20, 25). But this Zachariah was the son of Jehoiada. Besides, the accusation of Jesus is intended to cover all time from the first to the last offense, and to name this Zachariah would be to admit that they had shed no righteous blood for 850 years.

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## 12.

“For before these days rose up Theudas, boasting himself to be somebody; to whom a number of men, about four hundred, joined themselves: who was slain; and all, as many as obeyed him, were scattered, and brought to nought.

“After this man rose up Judas of Galilee in the days of the taxing, and drew away much people after him: he also perished” (Acts v, 36, 37).

According to Acts the sedition of Theudas occurred before the taxing, which was about 6 A.D. It really occurred while Fadus was procurator of Judea, about 46 A.D.—forty years after the date assigned in Acts. [270]

The Bible is largely a medley of fables, mythologies, and legends. These legends contain a modicum of truth—how much cannot be determined. The reliable historian faithfully presents the facts contained in the materials at his command. These so-called sacred historians do not. With them history is secondary to theology and made subservient to it. Every event is represented as a special act of divine Providence and is tortured to uphold and serve their theological notions. Referring to the author or compiler of Judges, Dr. Oort says: “The writer has drawn most of his narratives from trustworthy sources.... Our gratitude to him would indeed be still greater than it is, if he had given us all that he found in his authorities unmixed and unaltered. But to an Israelite historian this seems to have been a simple impossibility” (Bible for Learners, Vol. I., p. 363). [271]

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## CHAPTER XXI.

## THE BIBLE AND SCIENCE.

“There is a beautiful harmony between the principles of science and the teachings of the Bible.”—Dr. Cheever.

Bibliolaters, unacquainted with the principles of science, and scientists unacquainted with the teachings of the Bible, may accept this statement; those conversant with both cannot. In the Bible a thousand scientific errors may be found. The limits of this work preclude a presentation of them all. Enough will be given, however, to show that the teachings of the Bible conflict with the teachings of the ten principal sciences—Astronomy, Geology, Geography, Botany, Zoology, Ethnology, Physiology, Chemistry, Physics, and Mathematics.

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## Astronomy.

“And God said, Let there be light, and there was light” (Gen. i, 3).

“And God called the light day, and the darkness he called night. And the evening and the morning were the first day” (5).

"And God made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day and the lesser light to rule the night; he made the stars also ... and the evening and the morning were the fourth day" (16, 19).

The cause is supposed to precede the effect; but here the effect precedes the cause. Light and darkness, morning and evening, day and night exist before the sun.

The Bible teaches us that the earth is older than the sun; science teaches us that the sun is older than the earth.

In the creation of the universe God devoted five-sixths of his time to the creation of this little world of ours, while but a fragment of the remaining time was needed to create the countless worlds that exist outside of our solar system. Five brief words, "He made the stars also," record the history of their creation.

According to the Bible, the oldest star is less than six thousand years old. What says the scientist?

"I have observed stars, of which the light, it can be proved, must take two millions of years to reach this earth."—Sir William Herschel.

"Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon; and thou, Moon, in the valley of Ajalon."

"So the sun stood still in the midst of heaven, and hasted not to go down about a whole day" (Josh. x, 12, 13).

"Behold, I [the Lord] will bring again the shadow of the degrees, which is gone down in the sun dial of Ahaz, ten degrees backward. So the sun returned ten degrees" (Isaiah xxxviii, 8).

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The Bible teaches the geocentric theory that the sun revolves around the earth; Science teaches the heliocentric theory that the earth revolves around the sun.

Luther, accepting the Bible and rejecting science, wrote:

"The fool [Copernicus] wishes to reverse the entire science of Astronomy. But sacred Scripture tells us that Joshua commanded the sun to stand still and not the earth."

"Biblical astronomy," says the celebrated Jewish commentator, Dr. Kalisch, "is derived from mere optical appearance."

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## Geology.

"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth" (Gen. i, 1).

"And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit" (i, 11).

"And God said, Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life, and fowl that may fly above the earth" (i, 20).

"And God said, Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind, cattle and creeping things" (i, 24).

"And God said, Let us make man in our image" (i, 26).

"In six days the Lord made heaven and earth" (Ex. xx, 11).

According to the Bible, the earth was created in six days about six thousand years ago. Geology tells us that the earth was old six million years ago.

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To make room for the earth's development, theologians now contend that a vast period of time elapsed between the work recorded in the first verse and in those following. To this Bishop Colenso replies:

"We are plainly taught in the book of Genesis, according to the simple, straightforward meaning of the words, that Elohim created the heaven and the earth in the beginning of these six days—that is, taking into account the chronological data of the Bible, about six thousand years ago" (The Pentateuch, Part IV, p. 94).

Again, theologians claim that these six days were not six literal days, but six long

epochs of time. The Rev. Moses Stuart, Professor of Sacred Literature in Andover Theological Seminary, one of the ablest Hebrew scholars, says:

“When the sacred writer in Genesis i says, the first day, the second day, etc., there can be no possible doubt—none.... What puts this beyond all question in philology is that the writer says specifically, the evening and the morning were the first day, the second day, etc. Now, is an evening and a morning a period of some thousands of years? Is it, in any sense, when so employed, an indefinite period? The answer is so plain and certain that I need not repeat it. If Moses has given us an erroneous account of the creation, so be it. Let it come out, and let us leave the whole. But do not let us turn aside his language to get rid of difficulties that we may have in our speculations.”

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The Jewish scholar, Dr. Kalisch, not only rejects this interpretation of the word *day*, but admits that it would not reconcile Genesis with science if allowed. He says:

“The device that the days denote epochs is not only arbitrary, but ineffective, for the six epochs of the Mosaic creation correspond in no manner with the gradual formation of cosmos.”

According to Genesis the creation of organic life occupied but three of these six days. The order of creation for these three days, or periods, is as follows: 1. (3d day) Land plants; 2. (5th day) aquatic animals, birds; 3. (6th day) Mammals, reptiles, man.

Is this confirmed by science? Passing Lyell by, let us cite our more orthodox Dana. Dr. Dana, who professed to believe that the study of Geology tended “to strengthen faith in the Book of books,” gives the several geological ages, together with the successive appearances of organic life, as follows: 1. Archaean Age—Lowest marine life, if any; 2. Silurian Age—Invertebrates, marine plants; 3. Devonian Age—Fish, earliest appearance of land plants; 4. Carboniferous Age—Luxuriant vegetation, lowest forms of reptiles; 5. Reptilian Age—Highest forms of reptiles; 6. Tertiary Age—Birds, mammals; 7. Quaternary Age—Man.

Even Dana cannot reconcile Genesis with Geology. Genesis tells us that the earliest organic life was terrestrial vegetation; Geology tells us that ages of organic life passed before terrestrial plants appeared. Genesis tells us that fish and fowls were created at the same time; Geology tells us that the finny tribes existed ages before the feathered tribes appeared. Genesis tells us that mammals and reptiles were created at the same time; Geology tells us that while reptiles existed in the Carboniferous age, mammals did not appear until the close of the Reptilian age. Genesis tells us that birds appeared before reptiles; Geology tells us that reptiles existed first. Genesis tells us that life existed first upon the land; Geology tells us that the sea teemed with animal and vegetable life ages before it appeared upon the land.

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The seven ages of Geology comprise twenty-five geological periods. Genesis recognizes but six periods in the creation of the entire universe; Geology recognizes twenty-five periods in the formation of earth’s crust alone. According to Bible chronology, the universe is less than six thousand years old; according to Geology, the mere existence of life upon earth’s crust, which is as but a day compared with the existence of the universe, is probably nearly fifty millions of years. Dr. Dana says:

“If time from the commencement of the Silurian included 48 millions of years, which some geologists would pronounce much too low an estimate, the Paleozoic part [Silurian, Devonian, and Carboniferous], according to the above ratio, would comprise 36 millions, the Mesozoic [Reptilian] 9 millions, and the Cenozoic [Tertiary and Quaternary] 3 millions” (Text Book of Geology, p. 329).

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When Geology was in its infancy scientists attempted to reconcile its teachings with the teachings of the Bible. No scientist worthy of the name attempts to reconcile them now.

Writing over thirty years ago, Carl Vogt thus records the triumph of Geology over Genesis:

“It is hardly twenty years since I learned from Agassiz: transitional strata, palaeozoic formations—kingdom of fishes; there are no reptiles in this period, and cannot be any, because it would be contrary to the plan of creation; secondary formations (Trias, Jura, chalk)—kingdom of reptiles; there are no mammals and cannot be any, for the same reason; tertiary strata—kingdom of mammals; there are no men and cannot be any; present creation—kingdom of man. What is become of this plan of creation, with its exclusiveness? Reptiles in the Devonian strata, reptiles in the coal, reptiles in the Dyas. Farewell, kingdom of fish! Mammals in

the Jura, mammals in Purbeck chalk, which some reckon as the lowest chalk formation; good-by, kingdom of reptiles! Men in the highest tertiary strata, men in the diluvial forms—*au revoir*, kingdom of mammals!”

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## Geography.

“The world also shall be stable, that it be not moved” (1 Chron. xvi, 30).

“Who laid the foundations of the earth that it should not be removed forever” (Ps. civ, 5).

“For the pillars of the earth are the Lord’s, and he hath set the world upon them” (1 Sam. ii, 8).

“I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth” (Rev. vii, 1).

“The devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world” (Matt. iv, 8).

The science of Geography describes the earth as spherical in form, with a daily revolution on its axis and an annual revolution around the sun. The Bible describes it as stable, flat, and angular.

“And a river went out of Eden to water the garden; and from thence it was parted, and became into four heads.

“The name of the first is Pison” [Indus or Ganges] (Gen. ii, 10, 11).

“And the name of the second river is Gihon [Nile]: the same is it that compasseth the whole land of Ethiopia.

“And the name of the third river is Hiddekel [Tigris]: ... And the fourth river is Euphrates” (ii, 13, 14).

Bible geography makes the Nile and the Euphrates both branches of the same river.

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“Then cometh he to a city of Samaria, which is called Sychar” (John iv, 5).

Samaria contained no city of this name.

“These things were done in Bethany beyond Jordan” (John i, 28, New Ver.).

Bethany was a suburb of Jerusalem and not located beyond the Jordan.

“He departed from Galilee, and came into the coasts of Judea beyond Jordan” (Matt. xix, 1).

The dead sea and the Jordan formed the eastern boundary of Judea, and no coasts of Judea existed beyond the Jordan.

“Which was of Bethsaida of Galilee” (John xii, 21).

Bethsaida was not of Galilee, but of Perea.

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## Botany.

“And the earth brought forth grass, and herb yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed was in itself, after his kind” (Gen. i, 12).

“And the evening and the morning were the third day” (i, 13).

“And God made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day” (i, 16).

“And the evening and the morning were the fourth day” (i, 19).

The Bible states that the earth was covered with vegetation, that grass and herbs and trees flourished without the heat and light of the sun. Science denies it.

“Cursed is the ground for thy sake.... Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to

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thee" (Gen. iii, 17, 18).

Thorns and thistles are represented as resulting from a curse. They are no more the result of a curse than are grapes and corn.

"And again he sent forth the dove out of the ark; and the dove came in to him in the evening; and, lo, in her mouth was an olive leaf plucked off" (Gen. viii, 10, 11).

Hebrew commentators state that it was a fresh olive leaf. The Bible writer supposes that the earth could be submerged for nearly a year without the vegetable kingdom being destroyed. Had this deluge really occurred, all vegetation, save, perhaps, a few aquatic plants, would have died.

"He planteth an ash, and the rain doth nourish it" (Is. xlv, 14).

Not in Western Asia, for the tree does not grow there. Bible commentators believe that the pine is meant.

The authors of Genesis (xxx, 37) and Ezekiel (xxxi, 8) both mention the chestnut-tree. But it is admitted that the chestnut did not grow where they stated. Referring to this error, Smith's Bible Dictionary says: "The 'plane-tree' ought probably to have been substituted. The context of the passages where the word occurs indicates some tree which thrives best in low and rather moist situations, whereas the chestnut-tree is a tree which prefers dry and hilly ground."

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"Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit" (John xii, 24).

If it die it bringeth forth no fruit.

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## Zoology.

"Of clean beasts, and of beasts that are not clean, and of fowls, and of everything that creepeth upon the earth, there went in two and two [or by sevens of clean according to another account] unto Noah into the ark" (Gen. vii, 8, 9).

The animal kingdom, including insects, etc., comprises more than 1,000,000 species. According to the Bible, two or more of every species from every clime—polar animals accustomed to a temperature of fifty degrees below zero, and tropical, to one hundred degrees above—were brought together and preserved for a year in an ark. If the teachings of Natural History be true, this Bible story is false.

The Bible pronounces unclean and unfit for food the following animals:

"The camel, because he cheweth the cud, but divideth not the hoof" (Lev. xi, 4).

"The coney, because he cheweth the cud, but divideth not the hoof" (xi, v).

"The hare, because he cheweth the cud, but divideth not the hoof" (xi, 6).

"The swine, though he divideth the hoof, and be cloven-footed, yet he cheweth not the cud" (xi, 7).

Every statement proclaims the writer's ignorance of the simple facts of Zoology. The camel does divide the hoof; the coney does not chew the cud; the hare does not chew the cud; the swine is not cloven-footed (bisulcate), but four-toed.

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*"All ruminants have the foot cleft, and they only have it."*—Cuvier.

"Every one of the four instances or illustrations brought forward by the Biblical writer is necessarily erroneous; any attempt at defending them implies an impotent struggle against Science."—Dr. Kalisch.

Scarcely less erroneous are the following passages: "And these are they which ye shall have in abomination among the fowls: ... the stork, the heron after her kind, and the lapwing and the *bat*."

"All fowls that creep, going upon all four, shall be an abomination unto you.

"Yet these may ye eat of every flying creeping thing that goeth upon all four, which have legs above their feet, to leap withal upon the earth;

"Even these of them may ye eat: the locust after his kind, and the bald locust after

his kind, and the beetle after his kind, and the grasshopper after his kind. But all other flying creeping things, which have four feet, shall be an abomination unto you" (Lev. xi, 13-23).

"And the Lord said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life" (Gen. iii, 14).

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The serpent does not eat dust, while Science shows that it crawled upon its belly before the curse just as it did afterward.

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## Ethnology.

According to the Bible, all mankind have sprung from a single pair created by God six thousand years ago. Science does not admit that man is the result of a divine creative act, that all the races have descended from a single pair, or that his existence here is confined to the brief period of sixty centuries. She is not able to tell yet, even approximately, when man's advent upon the earth occurred, but she has long since proved the Biblical record false, and shown that instead of his having occupied the earth but six thousand years he has been here at the least from ten to fifty times six thousand years.

Referring to the Biblical origin of man, Professor Huxley says: "Five-sixths of the public are taught this Adamitic monogenism as if it were an established truth, and believe it. I do not; and I am not acquainted with any man of science, or duly instructed person, who does" (Methods and Results of Ethnology).

"There were giants in the earth in those days" (Gen. vi, 4).

The Bible, like the mythical records of other early nations, represents the earth as peopled with a race of giants. Yet the stature of man is as great to-day as it was five thousand years ago.

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"And all the days that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years" (Gen. v, 5).

The Bible says that for a period of two thousand years men lived for centuries, that at least seven patriarchs attained to an age of nearly 1,000 years. The Egyptian records of that period show that man's longevity was no greater then than it is now.

Not only the size and age of men, but their numbers are exaggerated by Bible writers. The Israelites, at the time they settled in Palestine, numbered, it is claimed, two or three millions. Out of this country, to make room for them, God cast "seven nations greater and mightier than" the Israelite nation (Deut. vii, 1). Palestine must then have sustained a population as great as Spain does now with a territory thirty times as large.

The census of Israel and Judah, taken in the time of David, places the number of warriors at 1,570,000 (1 Ch. xxi, 5). This makes the whole population twice as great as that of Illinois with an area nine times as large as Palestine and a soil ten times as fertile.

"And the whole earth was of one language, and of one speech" (Gen. xi, 1):

"Let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech" (Gen. xi, 7).

The origin of the various languages of men is here attributed to a miraculous confusion of tongues. Science shows that languages had no such origin. Renan says:

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"Far from placing unity at the beginning of language, it is necessary to look at such a unity as the slow and tardy result of an advanced civilization. In the beginning there were as many dialects as families."

This Bible account of the confusion of tongues is contradicted by the preceding chapter of Genesis (x, 5, 20, 31), which, referring to the children of Japheth, Ham, and Shem, says they were divided "every one after his tongue," "after their families, after their tongues."

## Physiology.

“And the ark rested in the seventh month ... upon the mountains of Ararat” (Gen. viii, 4).

“And in the second month [of the following year] was the earth dried” (viii, 14).

Here on the top of Ararat, three miles above the surrounding country, and three thousand feet above the region of perpetual snow, for months, the respiratory organs of man and all the animals of earth performed their functions without difficulty!

“Wherefore think ye evil in your hearts?” (Matt. ix, 4).

“What reason ye in your hearts?” (Luke v, 22).

Jesus recognizes the heart as the seat of reason and intelligence.

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“In sorrow shalt thou bring forth children” (Gen. iii, 16).

“She was found with child of the Holy Ghost” (Matt. i, 18).

“Come out of the man, thou unclean spirit” (Mark v, 8).

“And the prayer of faith shall save the sick” (James v, 15).

Attributing the pains of parturition to a curse, recording the generation of a child without a natural father, ascribing nervous and other disorders to demons, and healing the sick by prayer are Biblical, but not scientific.

“And all the first-born males [of Israel] ... were twenty and two thousand two hundred and three score and thirteen” (Num. iii, 43).

As the population of Israel was about 3,000,000, this would give 130 persons to each family and an average of 128 children to each mother. Faith may accept this, but physiological science rejects it.

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## Chemistry.

“And he lifted up the rod and smote the waters that were in the river, ... and all the waters that were in the river were turned to blood” (Ex. vii, 20).

“Jesus saith unto them, Fill the water-pots with water. And they filled them up to the brim. And he saith unto them, Draw out now and bear unto the governor of the feast. And they bare it. When the ruler of the feast had tasted the water that was made wine,” etc. (John ii, 7-9).

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“But his wife looked back from behind him, and she became a pillar of salt” (Gen. xix, 26).

“And he took the [golden] calf which they had made and burnt it in the fire, and ground it to powder, and strewed it upon the water, and made the children of Israel drink of it” (Ex. xxxii, 20).

Turning a river into blood, water into wine, flesh into salt, and burning and grinding gold into powder and holding it in solution, cannot be harmonized with the teachings of science.

But it is not merely to a few Biblical passages, to a few so-called miraculous changes in the elements of nature, that the science of chemistry is opposed. It is opposed to the entire Bible as a divine revelation. The central ideas of this book, a Creator, a Providence, and a Mediator, are all overthrown by this science.

Referring to this, Comte truthfully observes:

“However imperfect our chemical science is, its development has operated largely in the emancipation of the human mind. Its opposition to all theological philosophy is marked by two general facts, ... first the prevision of phenomena, and next our voluntary modification of them” (Positive Philosophy, Book IV., chap. i).

“In this way, Chemistry effectually discredits the notion of the rule of Providential will among its phenomena. But there is another way in which it acts no less strongly: by abolishing the idea ... of creation in nature” (Ibid).

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## Physics.

"I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth. And it shall come to pass, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the bow shall be seen in the cloud: and I will remember my covenant, which is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall no more become a flood, to destroy all flesh" (Gen. ix, 13-15).

The Bible writer did not know that it was the refraction and reflection of the sun's rays on the drops of water which produced the prismatic colors of the rainbow; he did not know that the phenomenon was as old as rain and sunshine, but believed it to be a postdiluvian sign thrown on the dark canvas of clouds by the Almighty.

"It seems plain," says the Bishop of Natal, "that the writer supposes the bow to have been seen for the first time when the deluge was over."

"The words which Moses spake unto all Israel" (Deut. i, 1).

"And Moses called all Israel and said unto them" (v, 1).

"There was not a word of all that Moses commanded, which Joshua read not before all the congregation of Israel" (Josh. viii, 35).

Nature's temple must have possessed wonderful acoustic properties to enable Moses and Joshua to reach the ears of a multitude of three millions. [289]

"Let us build a city, and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven" (Gen. xi, 4).

God himself, ignorant of pneumatics, believes the project possible, and confounds their language to prevent it.

"And the waters were divided. And the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea upon the dry ground: and the waters were as a wall unto them on the right hand, and on their left" (Ex. xiv, 21, 22).

A fundamental principle of hydrostatics is the following: "When a pressure is exerted on any part of the surface of a liquid, that pressure is transmitted undiminished to all parts of the mass, and in all directions."

## Mathematics.

"For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one" (1 John v, 7).

"The incomprehensible jargon of the Trinitarian arithmetic, that three are one and one is three!"—Thomas Jefferson.

Matthew concludes his genealogy of Jesus as follows:

"So all the generations from Abraham to David are fourteen generations; and from David until the carrying away into Babylon are fourteen generations; and from the carrying away into Babylon unto Christ are fourteen generations" (Matt. i, 17). [290]

This genealogy, including both Abraham and Jesus, contains but forty-one generations. Here we have an inspired scholar performing the mathematical solution of dividing forty-one generations by three and obtaining fourteen generations for a quotient.

"The whole congregation together was forty and two thousand three hundred and three score" (Ezra ii, 64).

This number, 42,360, is given as the whole number of persons belonging to the families that returned from Babylon. Adding together the numbers given in the census register, of which the above is declared to be the sum total, we find the whole number to be only 29,818—a difference and a discrepancy of 12,542.

The foregoing are but three of three hundred mathematical errors to be found in the Bible.

It is not merely in a few unimportant scientific details, but in the fundamental principles of the most important sciences—of astronomy, of geology, of geography, and of man—that the Bible errs. Its writers evince no divine knowledge of the facts of nature. Their works exhibit the crude notions of the age in which they lived. Some of their teachings are in harmony with the accepted truths of Science; but these prove no more than a human origin. The wisest of mankind do not know all; the most ignorant know something. While there are phenomena too complex for the mind of a Newton or a Darwin to grasp, there are others regarding which the first impressions of a child are correct.

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To assert that the Bible is in harmony with the teachings of Modern Science is to assert that no advancement has been made in Science for two thousand years, when all know that many of the most marvelous scientific discoveries are less than two hundred years old. The scientific attainments of Bible writers were not above those of the age and country in which they lived, and probably far below; for the Bible is largely the work of theologians, and theologians have ever been behind their age in scientific knowledge. The mission of the theologians is not to advance, but to retard Science. They have waged a relentless but ineffective warfare against it. In the words of Huxley: "Extinguished theologians lie about the cradle of every science, as the strangled snakes beside that of Hercules."

"The Hebrew Pentateuch," says Gerald Massey, "has not only retarded the growth of science for eighteen centuries, but the ignorant believers in it as a book of revelation have tried to strangle every science at its birth. There could be and was but little or no progress in Astronomy, Geology, Biology, or Sociology until its teachings were repudiated by the more enlightened among men."

Of the Bible and Science thus writes America's eminent scientist and author, Dr. John W. Draper:

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"It is to be regretted that the Christian church has burdened itself with the defense of these books, and voluntarily made itself answerable for their manifest contradictions and errors.... Still more, it is to be deeply regretted that the Pentateuch, a production so imperfect as to be unable to stand the touch of modern criticism, should be put forth as the arbiter of science" (Conflict Between Religion and Science, p. 225).

"The world is not to be discovered through the vain traditions that have brought down to us the opinions of men who lived in the morning of civilization, nor in the dreams of mystics who thought that they were inspired" (Ibid, p. 33).

"For her [Science] the volume of inspiration is the book of Nature, of which the open scroll is ever spread forth before the eyes of every man. Confronting all, it needs no societies for its dissemination. Infinite in extent, eternal in duration, human ambition and human fanaticism have never been able to tamper with it. On the earth it is illustrated by all that is magnificent and beautiful, on the heavens its letters are suns and worlds" (Ib., p. 227).

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## CHAPTER XXII.

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### PROPHECIES.

"Prophecy is a demonstration of divine knowledge; as miracles, in the restricted acceptance of the word, are a demonstration of divine power. Prophecies being true, revelation is established as a fact."—Keith.

"The predictions respecting Christ are so clear, so detailed and circumstantial, as to constitute together one of the most important proofs of the inspiration of the Bible and of the truth of Christianity."—Hitchcock.

A prophet, according to the orthodox and popular signification of the term, is one who predicts. A prophecy is a prediction, and the writings of the prophets are a collection of predictions regarding future events. Prophet and prophecy, as used in the Bible, have no such meaning. The prophet might make a prediction, just as any one may make a prediction, but this was not necessarily any part of his office. The functions of the prophet were those of preacher, poet, and musician. There were not merely a score of them, but thousands of them. The more talented prophets became authors—composed the poems, recorded the history, and wrote the religious works of the Hebrews. Some of these prophets were moral reformers—labored earnestly to reform their people. The wicked were exhorted to forsake

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their sins, and threatened with divine retribution if they did not. When their countrymen were in bondage they consoled them with the promise that God would liberate them. The oppressed and the captive longed for a deliverer. The prophet gave utterance to these longings, and this gave birth to the Messianic idea.

The more important of these so-called prophecies will now be examined.

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## 1.

“And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees’ excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. It shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation; neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there; neither shall the shepherds make their fold there. But wild beasts of the desert shall lie there; and their houses shall be full of doleful creatures; and owls shall dwell there, and satyrs shall dance there. And the wild beasts of the islands shall cry in their desolate houses, and dragons in their pleasant palaces; and her time is near to come, and her days shall not be prolonged” (Isaiah xiii, 19-22).

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Had this prophecy been literally fulfilled, it would not have evinced supernatural prescience on the part of the prophet. It is the fate of cities to flourish for a time and then decay. The world contains the ruins, not of Babylon alone, but of a thousand cities.

The enemies of Babylon wished for and hoped for its destruction. The prophet voiced that wish and hope. Perhaps at that very moment the victorious armies of the Persian were leveling its walls.

But this prophecy has not been literally fulfilled. Babylon was not as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah; it has been inhabited; it has been dwelt in from generation to generation; the Arabian has pitched his tent there; shepherds have made their fold there; satyrs have not danced there; dragons have not occupied her palaces; her days were prolonged. The ancient glory of Babylon has faded, but a thriving city still exists there, a standing refutation of the claim that Isaiah’s prophecy has been fulfilled.

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## 2.

“For thus saith the Lord God: Behold I will bring upon Tyrus Nebuchadrezzar [Nebuchadnezzar], king of Babylon.... With the hoofs of his horses shall he tread down all thy streets: he shall slay thy people by the sword, and thy strong garrison shall go down to the ground. And they shall make a spoil of thy riches, and make a prey of thy merchandise.... And I will make thee like the top of a rock: thou shalt be a place to spread nets upon; thou shalt be built no more: for I the Lord have spoken it” (Ezekiel xxvi, 7, 11, 12, 14).

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Here is a specific prediction. But it was not fulfilled. Nebuchadnezzar did not destroy, nor even conquer, Tyre. “He reduced the whole sea coast except Tyre, which stood a thirteen years’ siege by water and by land, ending, not in subjection, but ... leaving the native sovereigns on their thrones and their wealth and power untouched” (Chambers’s Encyclopedia).

A thousand years after Ezekiel uttered his prophecy, Jerome, the foremost Christian of his age, declared it to be “the most noble and beautiful city in Phœnicia.” Twenty-four hundred years have passed, and Tyre still survives.

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## 3.

“Behold, Damascus is taken away from being a city, and it shall be a ruinous heap” (Isaiah xvii, 1).

This prophecy was spoken nearly twenty-seven hundred years ago, and yet during all these centuries Damascus has flourished, and is to-day the most prosperous

4.

“And I will make the land of Egypt utterly waste and desolate, from the tower of Syene even unto the borders of Ethiopia. No foot of man shall pass through it, nor foot of beast shall pass through it, neither shall it be inhabited forty years” (Ezekiel xxix, 10, 11).

This and a score of other prophecies concerning Egypt have never been fulfilled.

5.

“For thus Amos saith, Jeroboam shall die by the sword, and Israel shall surely be led away captive out of their own land” (Amos vii, 11).

Jeroboam did not die by the sword, and Israel was not led away captive, as predicted. “And the Lord said not that he would blot out the name of Israel from under heaven: but he saved them by the hand of Jeroboam the son of Joash. Now the rest of the acts of Jeroboam and all that he did, and his might, how he warred, and how he recovered Damascus and Hamath, which belonged to Judah, for Israel, are they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel? And Jeroboam slept with his fathers, even with the kings of Israel” (2 Kings xiv, 27-29).

6.

“Thus saith the Lord of Jehoiakim king of Judah: He shall have none to sit upon the throne of David; and his dead body shall be cast out in the day to the heat and in the night to the frost” (Jeremiah xxxvi, 30).

This prophecy was not fulfilled. “So Jehoiakim slept with his fathers: And Jehoiachin his son reigned in his stead” (2 Kings xxiv, 6).

7.

“And this whole land shall be a desolation and an astonishment; and these nations shall serve the King of Babylon seventy years” (Jeremiah xxv, 11).

It is now conceded by all critics that the book of Jeremiah, as a whole, was not composed before the Captivity. But even if these words were uttered before the Captivity, they are fatal to the claim of Bible inerrancy; for either the prophecy was not fulfilled, or Bible history is false. According to the historical books of the Bible, the Captivity did not last seventy, but only about fifty years.

Referring to this and similar prophecies, Matthew Arnold says: “The great prophecies of Isaiah and Jeremiah are, critics can now see, not strictly predictions at all” (Literature and Dogma, p, 114).

8.

“And the Lord shall scatter thee among all people, from the one end of the earth even unto the other” (Deut. xxviii, 64).

These words were uttered, not as a prophecy, but as a warning or threat. If they obey the Lord’s statutes a long list of blessings are promised; if they do not obey

them, a hundred evils are threatened, among which is the one quoted. One of the most dreaded and one of the most common calamities in that age was the conquest or dispersion of one tribe or nation by another. In an enumeration of all known evils, it would be strange if this, the one most often threatened, had been omitted.

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9.

“Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel” (Isaiah vii, 14).

This is cited as a prophecy of Jesus Christ. The only thing in it suggestive of the story of Jesus is the word “virgin.” The word thus translated, however, does not necessarily mean virgin in the common acceptation of this term, but simply “young woman,” either married or single. Correct this error and the text reads: “Behold, a young woman shall conceive, and bear a son.” All that is suggestive of the miraculous conception vanishes. But this is not the only error. The forms of the verbs have been changed. The passage should read as follows: “Behold, a young woman is with child and beareth a son.” The woman was with child when the prophet wrote. This precludes the possibility of a reference to Jesus Christ. Not only this, the context utterly forbids it. All the events named by the prophet, including the birth of this child, occurred more than seven hundred years before Christ.

Michaelis rejects this prophecy. He says: “I cannot be persuaded that the famous prophecy in Isaiah (chap. vii, 14) has the least reference to the Messiah.”

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10.

“I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS” (Jer. xxiii, 5, 6).

The correct rendering of this passage is as follows:

“I will raise unto David a righteous branch, and a king shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the land. In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely; and this is the name whereby they shall call themselves: The Eternal is our righteousness.”

In order to make a Messianic prophecy of this passage and give it effect, no less than eight pieces of trickery are employed: 1. The word “branch” is made to begin with a capital letter. 2. The word “king” also begins with a capital. 3. “The name” is rendered “*his* name.” 4. The pronoun “they,” relating to the people of Judah and Israel, is changed to “he.” 5. The word “Eternal” is translated “Lord.” 6. “The Lord our righteousness” is printed in capitals. 7. In the table of contents at the head of the chapter are the words “Christ shall rule and save them.” 8. At the top of the page are the words “Christ promised.”

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11.

“The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, ... until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be” (Gen. xlix, 10).

The meaning of Shiloh being somewhat obscure, it was made to apply to Christ. It is now known that Shiloh was the national sanctuary before the Jews occupied Jerusalem. A correct translation of the passage reads as follows:

“The pre-eminence shall not depart from Judah so long as the people resort to Shiloh; and the nations shall obey him.”

But even if the writer meant “The sceptre shall not depart from Judah until Christ comes,” as claimed, the prediction was not fulfilled; for the sceptre departed from Judah six hundred years before Christ came.

## 12.

“For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be declared Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace” (Isaiah ix, 6).

This passage, even if genuine, is not applicable to Jesus Christ. But it is not genuine. Professor Cheyne, the highest authority on Isaiah, pronounces it a forgery.

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## 13.

“Know therefore and understand that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem, unto Messiah the Prince, shall be seven weeks, and three score and two weeks” (Daniel viii, 25).

It is claimed that “week” here means a period of seven years, and assumed, of course, that by Messiah is meant Christ. Seven weeks and three score and two weeks are sixty-nine weeks, or 483 years, the time that was to elapse from the command to rebuild Jerusalem to the coming of Christ, if the prophecy was fulfilled.

The decree of Cyrus to rebuild Jerusalem and the temple was made 536 B.C. According to the accepted chronology, Christ was born 4 B.C. From the decree of Cyrus, then, to the coming of Christ was 532 years instead of 483, a period of seven weeks, or forty-nine years, longer than that named by Daniel.

Ezra, the priest, went to Jerusalem 457 B.C. This event, however, had nothing whatever to do with the decree for rebuilding Jerusalem and the temple. It occurred 79 years after the decree was issued, and 58 years after the temple was finished. But a searcher for Messianic prophecies found that from the time of Ezra to the beginning of Christ’s ministry was about 483 years, or 69 prophetic weeks; and notwithstanding there was a deficiency of 79 years at one end of the period, and an excess of 30 years at the other, it was declared to fit exactly.

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## 14.

“The days shall come, in the which there shall not be left one stone [of the temple] upon another, that shall not be thrown down.”

“And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles” (Luke xxi, 6, 24).

It has been shown that the books containing this so-called prophecy of Jesus were written one hundred years after the conquest and destruction of Jerusalem.

## 15.

“The sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light. And the stars of heaven shall fall, and the powers that are in heaven shall be shaken. And then shall they see the Son of man coming in the clouds with great power and glory.... Verily I say unto you, That this generation shall not pass, till all these things be done” (Mark xiii, 24-26, 30).

That generation did pass, and more than eighteen centuries have followed, and yet the Son of man has not come and these things have not been done. Christ was a false prophet.

16.

“And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet.... And upon her forehead was a name written, Mystery, Babylon the Great, the Mother of Harlots” (Revelation xvii, 4, 5).

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Protestant churches have no difficulty in recognizing in this Mother of Harlots the Church of Rome, apparently forgetting that they are her daughters.

The following, relative to Bible prophecies, is from the pen of William Rathbone Greg:

“A prophecy, in the ordinary acceptance of the term, signifies a prediction of future events which could not have been foreseen by human sagacity, and the knowledge of which was supernaturally communicated to the prophet. It is clear, therefore, that in order to establish the claim of any anticipatory statement, promise, or denunciation to the rank and title of a prophecy, four points must be ascertained with precision, viz., what the event was to which the alleged prediction was intended to refer; that the prediction was uttered in specific, not vague, language before the event; that the event took place specifically, not loosely, as predicted; and that it could not have been foreseen by human sagacity.”

“It is probably not too much to affirm that we have no instance in the prophetic books of the Old Testament of a prediction in the case of which we possess, at once and combined, clear and unsuspecting proof of the date, the precise event predicted, the exact circumstances of that event, and the inability of human sagacity to foresee it. There is no case in which we can say with certainty—even where it is reasonable to suppose that the prediction was uttered before the event—that the narrative has not been tampered with to suit the prediction, or the prediction modified to correspond with the event” (Creed of Christendom, pp. 128, 131.)

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## CHAPTER XXIII.

### MIRACLES.

That curious volume of exaggerated fiction known as the Baron Munchausen stories has delighted many. Works of this character fill a legitimate place in literature. The humorists have contributed much to the health and happiness of mankind.

A charming store of wit and humor of the Munchausen variety is to be found in the Bible. Here are a thousand and one stories as marvelous and amusing as are to be found in the whole realm of modern fiction.

Unfortunately those who profess to value this book the most derive the least benefit from it. They mistake the meaning and purpose of its writers. They accept as facts its most palpable fictions. Its most laughable stories are read with the most solemn visages. This serious method of treating the ridiculous has produced an army of morose dyspeptics who mistake indigestion for religion, and intolerance for virtue.

To afford a little relaxation from the duller chapters of this work, to furnish a few grains of pepsin to aid in the digestion of a Sunday dinner, a small collection of these funny tales of ancient wits—the Baron Munchausen writers of old times—is given. He who can read them without a smile must be either dull of comprehension or without appreciation of humor.

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The First Cutlet.

PRACTICAL JOKE PLAYED UPON A SLEEPY MAN BY HIS FACETIOUS CREATOR.

And the Lord God said, It is not good that the man should be alone. I will make him

an help meet for him.... And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept; and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof. And the rib which the Lord God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man (Gen. ii, 18, 21, 22).

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## The Great Freshet.

A STORY CALCULATED TO PARALYZE A KENTUCKY COLONEL.

The same day were all the fountains of the great deep broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened. And the rain was upon the earth forty days and forty nights.... And the waters prevailed exceedingly upon the earth; and all the high hills, that were under the whole heaven, were covered. Fifteen cubits upward did the waters prevail; and the mountains were covered (Gen. vii, 11, 12, 19, 20).

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## Ringstreaked, Speckled, and Spotted.

THE DOCTRINE OF PRENATAL INFLUENCES LAUGHABLY BURLESQUED.

And Jacob took him rods of green poplar, and of the hazel and chestnut tree; and pilled white streaks in them, and made the white appear which was in the rods. And he set the rods which he had pilled before the flocks in the gutters in the watering troughs when the flocks came to drink, that they should conceive when they came to drink. And the flocks conceived before the rods, and brought forth cattle ringstreaked, speckled, and spotted (Gen. xxx, 37-39).

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## The Waters Were Divided.

MOSES TELLS, WITH A WINK, ABOUT THE STRONGEST GALE OF WIND KNOWN TO HISTORY.

And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and the Lord caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea dry land, and the waters were divided. And the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea upon the dry ground; and the waters were a wall unto them on their right hand, and on their left (Ex. xiv, 21, 22).

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## Quails!!!

THE MODERN BIRD HUNTER WILL SAY: "I LOVE A LIAR, BUT THIS ONE SUITS ME TOO WELL!"

And there went forth a wind from the Lord, and brought quails from the sea, and let them fall by the camp, as it were a day's journey on this side, and as it were a day's journey on the other side, round about the camp, and as it were two cubits high upon the face of the earth. And the people stood up all that day, and all that night, and all the next day, and they gathered the quails: he that gathered least gathered ten homers [over 100 bushels] (Num. xi, 31, 32).

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## Three Good Snake Stories.

"WINE IS A MOCKER, STRONG DRINK IS RAGING."

And the Lord said unto him [Moses], What is that in thine hand? And he said, A rod. And he said, Cast it on the ground. And he cast it on the ground, and it

became a serpent; and Moses fled from before it. And the Lord said unto Moses, Put forth thine hand, and take it by the tail. And he put forth his hand, and caught it, and it became a rod in his hand (Ex. iv, 2-4).

And the Lord sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people; and much people of Israel died.... And the Lord said unto Moses, Make thee a fiery serpent, and set it upon a pole: and it shall come to pass, that every one that is bitten, when he looketh upon it shall live. And Moses made a serpent of brass, and put it upon a pole, and it came to pass, that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived (Num. xxi, 6, 8, 9).

And Aaron cast down his rod before Pharaoh, and before his servants, and it became a serpent. Then Pharaoh also called the wise men and the sorcerers: now the magicians of Egypt, they also did in like manner with their enchantments. For they cast down every man his rod and they became serpents: but Aaron's rod swallowed up their rods (Ex. vii, 10-12).

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## More of Aaron's Tricks.

INCLUDING, AMONG OTHERS, ONE VERY LOUSY TRICK.

And he [Aaron] lifted up the rod and smote the waters that were in the river, in the sight of Pharaoh and in the sight of the servants; and all the waters that were in the river were turned to blood (Ex. vii, 20).

And Aaron stretched out his hand over the waters of Egypt; and the frogs came up and covered the land of Egypt (viii, 6).

Aaron stretched out his hand with his rod and smote the dust of the earth, and it became lice in man and in beast; all the dust of the land became lice throughout all the land of Egypt (viii, 17).

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## The Sun Stood Still.

"IS NOT THIS WRITTEN IN THE BOOK OF JASHER?"

And he [Joshua] said in the sight of Israel, Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon; and thou, moon, in the valley of Ajalon. And the sun stood still, and the moon stayed, until the people had avenged themselves upon their enemies. Is not this written in the book of Jasher? So the sun stood still in the midst of heaven, and hasted not to go down about a whole day (Josh. x, 12, 13).

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## Samson's Feats.

AS DESCRIBED BY THE HUMORIST WHO WROTE THE BOOK OF JUDGES.

And he [Samson] found a new jawbone of an ass, and put forth his hand and took it, and slew a thousand men therewith. And Samson said, With the jawbone of an ass, heaps upon heaps, with the jawbone of an ass have I slain a thousand men (Judges xv, 15, 16).

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And Samson went and caught three hundred foxes, and took firebrands, and turned tail to tail, and put a firebrand in the midst between two tails. And when he had set the brands on fire, he let them go into the standing corn of the Philistines and burnt up both the shocks, and also the standing corn, with the vineyards and olives (Judges xv, 4, 5).

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## The Loquacious Ass.

## REMARKS OF A QUADRUPED THAT STOOD ON HER RECORD.

And Balaam rose up in the morning, and saddled his ass, and went with the princes of Moab.... And when the ass saw the angel of the Lord, she fell down under Balaam: and Balaam's anger was kindled, and he smote the ass with a staff. And the Lord opened the mouth of the ass, and she said unto Balaam, What have I done unto thee that thou hast smitten me these three times? And Balaam said unto the ass, Because thou hast mocked me: I would there were a sword in mine hand, for now would I kill thee. And the ass said unto Balaam, Am not I thine ass, upon which thou hast ridden ever since I was thine unto this day? Was I ever wont to do so unto thee? And he said, Nay (Num. xxii, 21, 27-30).

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## A Bear Story.

EDIFYING TALE OF A BALDHEADED MAN, SOME NAUGHTY CHILDREN, AND TWO BEARS.

And he [Elisha] went up from thence unto Beth-el: and as he was going up by the way, there came forth little children out of the city, and mocked him, and said unto him, Go up, thou baldhead; go up, thou baldhead. And he turned back and looked on them, and cursed them in the name of the Lord. And there came forth two she-bears out of the wood, and tare forty and two children of them (2 Kings ii, 23, 24).

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## The Boy Sneezed.

HOW A PROPHET'S WHISKERS TICKLED A SHAMMING KID AND BROUGHT HIM OUT OF HIS TRANCE.

And when Elisha was come into the house, behold, the child was dead, and laid upon his bed. And he went in therefore, and shut the door upon them twain, and prayed unto the Lord. And he went up and lay upon the child, and put his mouth upon his mouth, and his eyes upon his eyes, and his hands upon his hands; and he stretched himself upon the child: and the flesh of the child waxed warm. Then he returned, and walked in the house to and fro, and went up, and stretched himself upon him: and the child sneezed seven times, and the child opened his eyes (2 Kings, iv, 32-35).

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## Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego.

THREE OF SATAN'S SUBJECT ASTONISH THE OFFICIALS OF NEBUCHADNEZZAR.

These men were bound in their coats, their hosen, and their hats, and their other garments, and were cast into the midst of the burning fiery furnace.... And the princes, governors, and captains, and the king's counselors, being gathered together, saw these men upon whose bodies the fire had no power, nor was a hair of their head singed, neither were their coats changed, nor the smell of fire had passed on them (Dan. iii, 19, 21, 27).

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## Take Me Up.

A DIVERTING YARN, CALCULATED TO CAUSE MUCH MERRIMENT AMONG THE MARINES.

Then they said unto him [Jonah], What shall we do unto thee that the sea may be calm unto us? for the sea wrought and was tempestuous. And he said unto them, Take me up and cast me forth in the sea.... So they took up Jonah, and cast him forth into the sea; and the sea ceased from her raging.... Now the Lord had prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish

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three days and nights.... And the Lord spake unto the fish, and it vomited out Jonah upon the dry land (Jonah i, 11-17; ii, 10).

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## The Confiding Husband.

A TIMELY DREAM SAVES THE REPUTATION OF A YOUNG WOMAN.

Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost. Then Joseph her husband being a just man, and not wishing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privily. But while he thought on these things, behold the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost.... Then Joseph being raised from sleep did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife; and knew her not till she had brought forth her first-born son; and he called his name Jesus (Matt. i, 18-25).

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## They Did Eat and Were Filled.

INTERESTING APPLICATION OF HYPNOTISM BY WHICH A MULTITUDE WERE CONVINCED THAT THEY HAD DINED.

And they say unto him, We have here but five loaves and two fishes. He said, Bring them hither to me. And he commanded the multitude to sit down on the grass and took the five loaves and the two fishes, and looking up to heaven, he blessed, and brake, and gave the loaves to his disciples, and the disciples to the multitude. And they did all eat, and were filled; and they took up the fragments that remained twelve baskets full. And they that had eaten were about five thousand men beside women and children (Matt. xiv, 15-21).

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## Lazarus Come Forth.

JESUS APPRISES THE BROTHER OF MARTHA THAT THE JOKE HAS BEEN CARRIED FAR ENOUGH.

When Jesus came, he found that he [Lazarus] had lain in the grave four days already.... Jesus therefore again groaning in himself cometh to the grave. It was a cave, and a stone lay upon it. Jesus said, Take ye away the stone. Martha, the sister of him that was dead, saith unto him, Lord, by this time he stinketh, for he hath been dead four days.... He [Jesus] cried with a loud voice, Lazarus come forth. And he that was dead came forth (John xi, 17, 38, 39, 43, 44).

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These Bible stories, which Christians profess to believe, are unworthy of serious consideration. They are not historical, but fabulous. A miracle is a fable. The miraculous is impossible; the impossible untrue. If miracles were possible and necessary in that age they are possible and necessary now. This is an age of unbelief. Give us *one* miracle and we will believe. Let Jesus visit earth again and with his divine touch revivify the inanimate dust of Lincoln and give him back to the nation that loved him so well, and we will acknowledge his divinity and believe that the Bible is inspired. Had he restored to life the decaying corpse of Lazarus the Jews would have believed in him. The Jews did not believe in him, therefore the miracle was not performed.

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The divine origin of the Bible cannot be established by miracles because the possibility of a miracle itself cannot be established. In the language of Hume, "a miracle is a violation of the laws of nature; and as a firm and unalterable experience has established these laws, the proof against a miracle, from the very nature of the fact, is as entire as any argument from experience can possibly be imagined."

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## CHAPTER XXIV.

### THE BIBLE GOD.

The Bible, it is claimed, is the word of God—a revelation from God to man. It was written or inspired by God, and deals chiefly with God and his works.

Who and what is this God of the Bible? What is the nature and character of this divine author? Is he omnipresent, or has he a local habitation merely? Is he omnipotent, or is he limited in power? Is he omniscient, or is his knowledge circumscribed? Is he immutable, or is he a changeable being? Is he visible and comprehensible, or is he invisible and unknowable? Is he the only God, or is he one of many gods? Does he possess the form and attributes of man, or is he, as Christians affirm, without body, parts, or passions? Let God through his inspired penmen answer.

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#### Is God Omnipresent?

Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith the Lord (Jer. xxiii, 24).

The heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain him (2 Ch. ii, 6).

If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there; if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall thy hand lead me (Ps. cxxxix, 8-10).

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The Lord was not in the wind: ... the Lord was not in the earthquake (1 Kings xix, 11).

And Cain went out from the presence of the Lord, and dwelt in the land of Nod (Gen. iv, 16).

And he said unto Balak, Stand here by thy burnt offering, while I meet the Lord yonder (Num. xxiii, 15).

Go down, charge the people, lest they break through unto the Lord to gaze (Ex. xix, 21).

God is come into the camp. And they said, Woe unto us! for there hath not been such a thing heretofore (1 Sam. iv, 7).

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#### Is God Omnipotent?

With God all things are possible (Matt. xix, 26).

I know that thou canst do everything (Job xlii, 2).

There is nothing too hard for thee (Jer. xxxii, 17).

For the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth (Rev. xix, 6).

And the Lord was with Judah, and he [the Lord] drove out the inhabitants of the mountain, but could not drive out the inhabitants of the valley, because they had chariots of iron (Jud. i, 19).

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#### Is He Omniscient?

God ... knoweth all things (1 John iii, 20).

The eyes of the Lord are in every place (Prov. xv, 3).

He knoweth the secrets of the heart (Ps. xlv, 21).

No thought can be withholden from thee (Job xlii, 2).

The Lord thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, ... to know what was in thine heart (Deut. viii, 2).

God left him, to try him, that he might know all that was in his heart (2 Ch. xxxii, 31).

The Lord said, Because the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grievous, 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, 20, 21).

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## Is He Immutable?

I am the Lord, I change not (Mal. iii, 6).

With whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning (James i, 17).

My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips (Ps. lxxxix, 34).

He is not a man that he should repent (1 Sam. xv, 29).

I [God] am weary with repenting (Jer. xv, 6).

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It repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth (Gen. vi, 6).

The Lord repented that he had made Saul king over Israel (1 Sam. xv, 35).

And God repented of the evil that he said he would do unto them; and he did it not (Jonah iii, 10).

The Lord God of Israel saith, I said indeed that thy house and the house of thy father should walk before me forever: but now the Lord saith, Be it far from me (1 Sam. ii, 30).

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## Is He Visible and Comprehensible?

I have seen God face to face (Gen. xxxii, 30).

And they saw the God of Israel (Ex. xxiv, 10).

For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead (Rom. i, 20).

No man hath seen God at any time (John i, 18).

Whom no man hath seen, nor can see (1 Tim. vi, 16).

There shall no man see me and live (Ex. xxxiii, 20).

God is great, and we know him not (Job xxxvi, 26).

Touching the Almighty, we cannot find him out (Job xxxvii, 23).

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## Is There One God Only?

There is one God; and there is none other but he (Mark xii, 32).

Before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me (Is. xliii, 10).

I am the first, and I am the last; and besides me there is no God (Is. xliv, 6).

Thou shalt not revile the gods (Ex. xxii, 28).

And the Lord God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us (Gen. iii, 22).

Who is like unto thee, O Lord, among the gods? (Ex. xv, 11).

Among the gods, there is none like unto thee, O Lord (Ps. lxxxvi, 8).

The Lord is a great God, and a great King above all gods (Ps. xcv, 3).

God standeth in the congregation of the mighty; he judgeth among the gods (Psalms lxxxii, 1?).

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## In What Form Does God Exist?

“There is but one living and true God, everlasting, without body, parts, or passions.”—*Thirty-nine Articles*.

Compare the above conception of Deity with the anthropomorphic character of God portrayed in the following one hundred passages:

God created man in his own image (Gen. i, 27).

The *hair* of his [God’s] *head* (Dan. vii, 9).

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Thou canst not see my [God’s] *face* (Ex. xxxiii, 20).

The *eyes* of the Lord run to and fro (2 Ch. xvi, 9).

And his [God’s] *ears* are open (1 Pet. iii, 12).

These are a smoke in my [God’s] *nose* (Is. lxxv, 5).

There went up a smoke out of his [God’s] *nostrils* (2 Sam. xxii, 9).

That proceedeth out of the *mouth* of God (Matt. iv, 4).

His [God’s] *lips* are full of indignation (Is. xxx, 27).

And his [God’s] *tongue* as a devouring fire (Ibid).

He shall dwell between his [God’s] *shoulders* (Deut. xxxiii, 12).

Thou [God] hast a mighty *arm* (Ps. lxxxix, 13).

The right *hand* of the Lord (Ps. cxviii, 16).

This is the *finger* of God (Ex. viii, 19).

I [God] will show them the *back* (Jer. xviii, 17).

Out of thy [God’s] *bosom* (Ps. lxxiv, 11).

My [God’s] *heart* maketh a noise in me (Jer. iv, 19).

My [God’s] *bowels* are troubled (Jer. xxxi, 20).

The appearance of his [God’s] *loins* (Ezek. i, 27).

Darkness was under his [God’s] *feet* (Ps. xviii, 9).

The *mind* of the Lord (Lev. xxiv, 12).

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The *breath* of his [God’s] nostrils (2 Sam. xxii, 16).

In the light of thy [God’s] *countenance* (Ps. lxxxix, 15).

Thou God *seest* me (Gen. xvi, 13).

My God will *hear* me (Micah vii, 7).

The Lord *smelled* a sweet savour (Gen. viii, 21).

Will I [God] *eat* the flesh of bulls? (Ps. 1, 13.).  
Will I [God] *drink* the blood of goats? (Ibid.)  
The hand of God hath *touched* me (Job xix, 21).  
We have heard his [God's] *voice* (Deut. v, 24).  
God doth *talk* with man (Ibid).  
The Lord shall *laugh* at him (Ps. xxxvii, 13).  
Now will I [God] *cry* (Is. xlii, 14).  
He [God] shall give a *shout* (Jer. xxv, 30).  
Why *sleepest* thou, O Lord? (Ps. xlv, 23.)  
Then the Lord *awaked* (Ps. lxxviii, 65).  
God *sitteth* upon the throne (Ps. xlvii, 8).  
God *riseth* up (Job xxxi, 14).  
The Lord *stood* by him (Acts xxiii, 11).  
I [God] will *walk* among you (Lev. xxvi, 12).  
Thou [God] didst *ride* upon thine horses (Hab. iii, 8).  
He [God] *wrestled* with him (Gen. xxxii, 25).  
The Lord will *work* (1 Sam. xiv, 6).  
I [God] am *weary* (Is. i, 14).  
He [God] *rested* on the seventh day (Gen. ii, 2).  
The Lord God *planted a garden* (Gen. ii, 8).  
God is able to *graft* (Rom. xi, 23).  
The Father is a *husbandman* (John xv, 1).  
He [God] hath *fenced* up my way (Job xix, 8).  
The Lord is my *shepherd* (Ps. xxiii, 1).  
The Lord *build* the house (Ps. cxxvii, 1).  
The *tables* were the *work* of God (Ex. xxxii, 16).  
Thou [God] our *potter* (Is. lxiv, 8).  
The Lord God *made coats* of skin (Gen. iii, 21).  
And [I God] *shod* thee with badger's skin (Ezek. xvi, 10).  
The Lord *shave* with a razor (Is. vii, 20).  
I [God] will *cure* them (Jer. xxxiii, 6).  
And he [God] *buried* him (Deut. xxxiv, 6).  
Thy God which *teacheth* thee (Is. xlvi, 17).  
*Musical instruments* of God (1 Ch. xvi, 42).  
He [God] *wrote* upon the tables (Ex. xxxiv, 28).  
Thy *book* which thou [God] hast *written* (Ex. xxxii, 32).  
O Lord, I have heard thy *speech* (Hab. iii, 2).  
The Lord is our *lawgiver* (Is. xxxiii, 22).  
The Lord is our *judge* (Ibid).  
For God is the *king* of all the earth (Ps. xlvii, 7).  
He [God] is the *governor* (Ps. xxii, 8).

God himself is ... our *captain* (2 Ch. xiii, 12).

The Lord is a *man of war* (Ex. xv, 3).

The Lord hath *opened* his *armory* (Jer. i, 25).

The Lord shall *blow the trumpet* (Zech. ix, 14).

I [God] myself will *fight* (Jer. xxi, 5).

He [God] will *whet* his *sword* (Ps. vii, 12).

He [God] hath *bent* his *bow* (Lam. ii, 4).

God shall *shoot* at them (Ps. lxiv, 7).

*Rocks are thrown* down by him [God] (Nahum i, 6).

I [God] will *kill* you (Ex. xxii, 24).

Thou [God] art become *cruel* to me (Job. xxx, 21).

I [God] *sware* in my wrath (Ps. xcvi, 11).

I [God] have *curse*d them already (Mal. ii, 1).

Thy God hath *blessed* thee (Deut. ii, 7).

The Lord *repented* (Amos vii, 6).

God did *tempt* Abraham (Gen. xxii, 1).

O Lord thou hast *deceived* me (Jer. xx, 7).

He [God] hath *polluted* the kingdom (Lam. ii, 2).

He [God] is mighty in *strength* (Job ix, 4).

With him [God] is *wisdom* (Job xii, 13).

I [God] was a *husband* (Jer. xxxi, 32).

The only begotten of the *Father* (John i, 14).

The *sons of God* saw the daughters of men (Gen. vi, 2).

The *love* that God hath to us (1 John iv, 16).

These six things doth the Lord *hate* (Prov. vi, 16).

The *joy* of the Lord (Neh. viii, 10).

It *grieved* him [God] at his heart (Gen. vi, 6).

The Lord *pitieth* them that fear him (Ps. ciii, 13).

I [God] *feared* the wrath of the enemy (Deut. xxxii, 27).

The Lord ... is a *jealous* God (Ex. xxxiv, 14).

The fierce *anger* of the Lord (Num. xxv, 4).

With the Lord there is *mercy* (Ps. cxxx, 7)

*Vengeance* is mine ... saith the Lord (Rom. xii, 10).

While many of these texts are simply metaphorical allusions to a Deity, as a whole they clearly reveal the anthropomorphic conception of God that prevailed among Bible writers generally. This God was represented as a being of power and glory, yet a being possessing the form, the attributes, and the limitations of man. He was a colossal despot—a king of kings.

The God of the Bible is a product of the human imagination. God did not make man in God's image, as claimed, but man made God in man's image. Man is not the creation of God, but God is the creation of man.

This God who was supposed to have created the universe out of nothing has himself gradually been resolved into nothingness in the minds of his votaries, and to-day, enthroned in the brain of Christendom, there reigns a mere phantom, "without body, parts, or passions"

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PART III.

MORALITY.

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CHAPTER XXV.

THE BIBLE NOT A MORAL GUIDE.

We are asked to accept the Bible as the revealed will of an all-powerful, all-wise and all-just God. We are asked to revere it beyond all other books, to make a fetish of it. Above all, we are asked to accept it as a divine and infallible moral guide. Christians profess to accept it as such; and many who are not Christians—many who reject the authenticity of the most of it, and who doubt the credibility of much of it—parrot-like, repeat the claims of supernaturalists, dwell upon its “beautiful moral teachings,” and abet the efforts of the clergy to place it in our public schools, seemingly oblivious to the fact that it is not in any sense a moral guide.

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What is Morality?

What is morality? Paley, by many considered the chief of modern Christian authorities, basing his conception of morality on the Bible, defines it as “the doing good to mankind, in obedience to the will of God [as revealed in the Bible], and for the sake of everlasting happiness [and to escape everlasting misery].” Supernaturalism and selfishness are thus its sole principles; supernaturalism being its source and selfishness being the motive for its observance. Here virtue does not bring its own reward, the will of God is not omnipotent, and mankind, like a spoiled child, must be bribed or frightened to obey its precepts.

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This is the Christian conception of morality. But it is a false conception. Morality is not supernatural and divine, but natural and human. It is purely utilitarian. Utility, regardless of the will of God, is its all-pervading principle. Whatever is beneficial to man is right, is moral; and whatever is injurious to him is wrong, is immoral. The end and aim of moral conduct, according to Hobbes, is self-preservation and happiness; not everlasting happiness in another world, as taught by Paley, but life-lasting happiness in this. Dr. Priestley’s phrase, “The greatest happiness of the greatest number,” is pronounced by Jeremy Bentham, one of the most eminent of ethical writers, “a true standard for whatever is right or wrong, useful, useless, or mischievous in human conduct.”

More and more, as men become civilized and enlightened, the egoistic principles of religionists give way to the altruistic principle of Rationalists. “Live for others” is the sublime teaching of the Positivist Comte. In obeying this noble precept we are not sacrificing, but augmenting our own happiness. “To do good is my religion,” said Thomas Paine. The rewards and punishments of this religion, which is here but another name for morality, are happily expressed by Abraham Lincoln: “When I do good I feel good, and when I do bad I feel bad.” The husband and wife who labor for each other’s happiness, regardless of their own; the father and mother who deprive themselves to make their children happy; men, like Sir Moses Montefiore and Baron Hirsch, and women, like Florence Nightingale and Clara Barton, who devote their time and wealth to aid in removing the poverty and alleviating the sufferings of humanity—these, by increasing the happiness of others, increase their own.

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When the true principles of morality are universally understood and accepted, divine revelations will be cast aside and supernatural religions will die; the zealot’s visions of a celestial paradise will vanish, and the philanthropist’s dream of a heaven on earth will be realized.

## Bible Codes.

The Ten Commandments in the Old Testament and the Sermon on the Mount, including the Golden Rule, in the New, are supposed to comprise the best moral teachings of the Bible. They are declared to be so far superior to all other moral codes as to preclude the idea of human origin.

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The Decalogue is a very imperfect moral code; not at all superior to the religious and legislative codes of other ancient peoples. The last six of these commandments, while not above criticism, are in the main just, and were recognized alike by Jew and Gentile. They are a crude attempt to formulate the crystallized experiences of mankind. The first four (first three according to Catholic and Lutheran versions) possess no moral value whatever. They are simply religious emanations from the corrupt and disordered brain of priestcraft. They only serve to obscure the principles of true morality and produce an artificial system which bears the same relation to natural morality that a measure of chaff and grain does to a measure of winnowed grain.

As a literary composition and as a partial exposition of the peculiar tenets of a heretical Jewish sect, the Sermon on the Mount is interesting; but as a moral code it is of little value. Along with some admirable precepts, it contains others, like the following, which are false and pernicious: "Blessed are the poor in spirit;" "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth;" "If thy right eye offend thee pluck it out;" "If thy right hand offend thee cut it off;" "Whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery;" "Resist not evil;" "Whosoever shall smite thee on the right cheek, turn to him the other also;" "If any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also;" "Love your enemies;" "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth;" "Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on;" "Take therefore no thought for the morrow."

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Christians claim that unbelievers have no moral standard, that they alone have such a standard—an infallible standard—the Bible. If we ask them to name the best precept in this standard they cite the Golden Rule. And yet the Golden Rule is in its very nature purely a human rule of conduct. "Whatsoever ye [men, not God] would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them." This rule enjoins what Christians profess to condemn, that every person shall form his own moral standard. In this rule the so-called divine laws are totally ignored.

The Golden Rule, so far as the Bible is concerned, is a borrowed gem. Chinese, Greek, and Roman sages had preached and practiced it centuries before the Sermon on the Mount was delivered. This rule, one of the best formulated by the ancients, is not, however, a perfect rule of human conduct. It does not demand that our desires shall always be just. But it does recognize and enjoin the principle of reciprocity, and is immeasurably superior to the rule usually practised by the professed followers of Jesus: Whatsoever we would that you should do unto us, do it; and whatsoever we wish to do unto you, that will we do.

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The three Christian virtues, faith, hope, and charity, fairly represent this whole system of so-called Bible morals—two false or useless precepts to one good precept. Charity is a true virtue, but "faith and hope," to quote Volney, "may be called the virtues of dupes for the benefit of knaves." And if the knaves have admitted charity to be the greatest of these virtues, it is because they are the recipients and not the dispensers of it.

## Bible Models.

The noblest types of manhood, like Bruno, Spinoza, Paine, and Ingersoll, have been slandered, anathematized, and slain by Christians, while the gods, the heroes, the patriarchs, the prophets, and the priests of the Bible have been presented as the highest models of moral excellence. Of these, Jehovah, Abraham, Jacob, Moses, David, Paul, and Christ are represented as the greatest and the best.

Who was Jehovah? "A being of terrific character—cruel, vindictive, capricious, and unjust."—Jefferson.

Who was Abraham? An insane barbarian patriarch who married his sister, denied his wife, and seduced her handmaid; who drove one child into the desert to starve,

and made preparations to butcher the other.

Who was Jacob? Another patriarch, who won God's love by deceiving his father, cheating his uncle, robbing his brother, practicing bigamy with two of his cousins, and committing fornication with two of his housemaids.

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Who was Moses? A model of meekness; a man who boasted of his own humility; a man who murdered an Egyptian and hid his body in the sand; a man who exterminated whole nations to secure the spoils of war, a man who butchered in cold blood thousands of captive widows, a man who tore dimpled babes from the breasts of dying mothers and put them to a cruel death; a man who made orphans of thirty-two thousand innocent girls, and turned sixteen thousand of them over to the brutal lusts of a savage soldiery.

Who was David? "A man after God's own heart." A vulgar braggadocio, using language to a woman the mere quoting of which would send me to prison; a traitor, desiring to lead an enemy's troops against his own countrymen; a thief and robber, plundering and devastating the country on every side; a liar, uttering wholesale falsehoods to screen himself from justice; a red-handed butcher, torturing and slaughtering thousands of men, women, and children, making them pass through burning brick-kilns, carving them up with saws and axes, and tearing them in pieces under harrows of iron; a polygamist, with a harem of wives and concubines; a drunken debauchee, dancing half-naked before the maids of his household; a lecherous old libertine, abducting and ravishing the wife of a faithful soldier; a murderer, having this faithful soldier put to death after desolating his home; a hoary-headed fiend, foaming with vengeance on his dying bed, demanding with his latest breath the deaths of two aged men, one of whom had most contributed to make his kingdom what it was, the other a man to whom he had promised protection.

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Who was Paul? A religious fanatic; a Jew and a Christian. As a Jew, in the name of Jehovah, he persecuted Christians; as a Christian, in the name of Christ, he persecuted Jews; and both as a Jew and a Christian, and in the name of both Jehovah and Christ, he practiced dissimulation and hallowed falsehood.

Who was Christ? He is called the "divine teacher." Yes,

"He led  
The crowd, he taught them justice, truth, and peace,  
In semblance; but he lit within their souls  
The quenchless flames of zeal, and blessed the sword  
He brought on earth to satiate with the blood  
Of truth and freedom his malignant soul."

—Shelley.

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## Immoral Teachings of the Bible.

In the modern and stricter sense of the term, morality is scarcely taught in the Bible. Neither *moral*, *morals*, and *morality*, nor their equivalents, *ethical* and *ethics*, are to be found in the book. T. B. Wakeman, president of the Liberal University of Oregon, a life-long student of sociology and ethics, says:

"The word 'moral' does not occur in the Bible, nor even the idea. Hunting for morals in the Bible is like trying to find human remains in the oldest geologic strata—in the eozoon, for instance. Morals had not then been born."

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I refuse to accept the Bible as a moral guide because it sanctions nearly every vice and crime. Here is the long list of wrongs which it authorizes and defends:

- |                         |                                  |
|-------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. Lying and Deception. | 11. Adultery and Prostitution.   |
| 2. Cheating.            | 12. Obscenity.                   |
| 3. Theft and Robbery.   | 13. Intemperance.                |
| 4. Murder.              | 14. Vagrancy.                    |
| 5. Wars of Conquest.    | 15. Ignorance.                   |
| 6. Human Sacrifices.    | 16. Injustice to Woman.          |
| 7. Cannibalism.         | 17. Unkindness to Children.      |
| 8. Witchcraft.          | 18. Cruelty to Animals.          |
| 9. Slavery.             | 19. Tyranny.                     |
| 10. Polygamy.           | 20. Intolerance and Persecution. |

The Bible is, for the most part, the crude literature of a people who lived 2,000 years, and more, ago. Certain principles of right and wrong they recognized, but the finer principles of morality were unknown to them. They were an ignorant people. An ignorant people is generally a religious people, and a religious people nearly always an immoral people. They believed that they were God's chosen people—God's peculiar favorites—and that because of this they had the right to rob and cheat, to murder and enslave the rest of mankind. From these two causes, chiefly, ignorance and religion, *i. e.*, superstition, emanated the immoral deeds and opinions which found expression in the writings of their priests and prophets.

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The passages in the Bible which deal with vice and crime may be divided into three classes:

1. There are passages which condemn vice and crime. These I indorse.
2. There are many passages in which the crimes and vices of the people are narrated merely as historical facts without either sanctioning or condemning them. The book merits no censure because of these.
3. There are numerous passages which sanction vice and crime. These, and these alone, in the chapters which follow, I shall adduce to prove the charges that I make against the Bible as a moral guide.

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## CHAPTER XXVI.

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### LYING—CHEATING—STEALING.

#### Lying.

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I refuse to accept the Bible as a moral guide because it sanctions lying and deception.

"And the Lord said, Who shall persuade Ahab that he may go up and fall at Ramoth-gilead? And one said on this manner, and another said on that manner. And there came forth a spirit and stood before the Lord, and said, I will persuade him. And the Lord said unto him, Wherewith? And he said, I will go forth, and I will be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets. And he said, Thou shalt persuade him, and prevail also; go forth and do so. Now therefore, behold the Lord hath put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these, thy prophets" (1 Kings xxii, 20-23).

"If the prophet be deceived when he hath spoken a thing, I the Lord have deceived that prophet" (Ezek. xiv, 9).

"O Lord, thou hast deceived me" (Jer. xx, 7).

"Wilt thou [God] be altogether unto me as a liar?" (Jer. xv, 18.)

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"God shall send them strong delusion that they should believe a lie" (2 Thess. ii, 11).

Respecting the forbidden fruit God said: "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die" (Gen. ii, 17). But the serpent said, "Ye shall not surely die" (iii, 4). Satan's declaration proved true, God's declaration proved untrue. Thus, according to the Bible, the first truth told to man was told by the devil; the first lie told to man was told by God.

In regard to the promised land God says: "Doubtless ye shall not come into the land, concerning which I swore to make you dwell therein, ... and ye shall know my *breach of promise*" (Num. xiv, 30-34).

God commands Moses to deceive Pharaoh (Ex. iii, 18), he rewards the midwives for their deception (Ex. i, 15-20), and instructs Samuel to deceive Saul (1 Sam. xvi, 2).

"And the Lord said unto Samuel, ... fill thine horn with oil, and go, I will send thee to Jesse the Beth-lehemite: for I have provided me a king among his sons. And Samuel said, How can I go? if Saul hear it he will kill me. And the Lord said, Take

a heifer with thee, and say, I am come to sacrifice to the Lord.”

Would an omnipotent and a just God use falsehood and deceit? If there be such a God we must believe that he is an honest and a truthful Being. But this God of the Bible violates nearly every pledge he makes, and instructs his children to lie and deceive.

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The patriarchs all follow his example and instructions. Abraham tries to deceive Pharaoh and Abimelech (Gen. xii, 13-19; xx, 2); Sarah tries to deceive the Lord himself (Gen. xviii, 13-15). Abraham becomes the parent of a liar. Isaac said of Rebecca, his wife, “She is my sister” (Gen. xxvi, 7). Rebecca in turn deceives her husband (Gen. xxvii, 6-17). Jacob sustains the reputation of the family for lying.

“And he came unto his father, and said, My father; and he said, Here am I; who art thou, my son? And Jacob said unto his father, I am Esau, thy first-born.... And he discerned him not, so he blessed him. And he said, Art thou my very son, Esau? And he said, I am” (Gen. xxvii, 18-24).

Jacob’s wives, Leah and Rachel, both used deceit. The former deceived her husband (Gen. xxix, 25); the latter deceived her father (Gen. xxxi, 34, 35). His twelve sons were all addicted to the same vice (Gen. xxxvii; xlii, 7), and these became the founders of the twelve tribes of Israel, God’s chosen people.

David, Elisha, and Jeremiah, three of God’s holiest men, were liars (1 Sam. xxvii, 8-11; 2 Kings, viii, 7-15; Jer. xxxviii, 24-27).

Speaking of the Hebrews and Bible writers prior to the Exile and the introduction of Persian ethics, Dr. Briggs says:

“They seem to know nothing of the sin of speaking lies as such. What is the evidence from this silence? They were altogether unconscious of its sinfulness. The holiest men did not hesitate to lie, whenever they had a good object in view, and they showed no consciousness of sin in it. And the writers who tell of their lies are as innocent as they.”

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The Decalogue itself does not forbid lying. It forbids perjury; but mere lying is not forbidden.

Christ taught in parables that he might deceive the people.

“And he said unto them, Unto you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God, but unto them that are without, all these things are done in parables: That seeing they may see, and not perceive; and hearing they may hear, and not understand; lest at any time they should be converted, and their sins should be forgiven them” (Mark iv, 11, 12).

Paul used deception and boasted of it. He says:

“Being crafty, I caught you with guile” (2 Cor. xii, 16).

“Unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews” (1 Cor. ix, 20).

“I am made all things to all men” (1 Cor. ix, 22).

“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.)

The primitive Christians, accepting the Bible as infallible authority, naturally regarded lying for God’s glory not a vice but a virtue. Mosheim in his “Ecclesiastical History” says:

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“It was an established maxim with many Christians, that it was pardonable in an advocate for religion to avail himself of fraud and deception, if it were likely they might conduce toward the attainment of any considerable good.”

Dean Milman, in his “History of Christianity,” says: “It was admitted and avowed that to deceive into Christianity was so valuable a service as to hallow deceit itself.”

Dr. Lardner says: “Christians of all sorts were guilty of this fraud.”

Bishop Fell writes: “In the first ages of the church, so extensive was the license of forging, so credulous were the people in believing that the evidence of transactions was grievously obscured.”

M. Daillé, one of the most distinguished of French Protestants, says: “For a good end they made no scruple to forge whole books.”

Dr. Gieseler says they “quieted their conscience respecting the forgery with the idea of their good intention.”

Dr. Priestley says they “thought it innocent and commendable to lie for the sake of truth.”

Scaliger says: “They distrusted the success of Christ’s kingdom without the aid of lying.”

That these admissions are true, that primitive Christianity was propagated chiefly by falsehood, is tacitly admitted by all Christians. They characterize as forgeries, or unworthy of credit, three-fourths of the early Christian writings. [344]

The thirty-second chapter of the Twelfth Book of Eusebius’s “Evangelical Preparation” bears this significant title: “How far it may be proper to use falsehood as a medicine, and for the benefit of those who require to be deceived.”

Bishop Heliodorus affirms that a “falsehood is a good thing when it aids the speaker and does no harm to the hearers.”

Synesius, another early Christian bishop, writes: “The people are desirous of being deceived; we cannot act otherwise with them.”

That is what most modern theologians think. With Dr. Thomas Burnett, they believe that “Too much light is hurtful to weak eyes.”

That the methods employed in establishing the church are still used in perpetuating its power, a glance at the so-called Christian literature of the day will suffice to show. Read the works of our sectarian publishers, examine the volumes that compose our Sunday-school libraries, peruse our religious papers and periodicals, and you will see that age has but confirmed this habit formed in infancy.

Every church dogma is a lie; and based upon lies, the church depends upon fraud for its support. The work of its ministers is not to discover and promulgate truths, but to invent and disseminate falsehoods. In the words of Isaiah, they well might say: “We have made lies our refuge, and under falsehood have we hid ourselves.”

The church offers a premium on falsehood and imposes a punishment for truthfulness. With a bribe in one hand and a club in the other, she has sought to prolong her sway. The allurements of the one and the fear of the other have filled the world with hypocrisy. In our halls of Congress, in the editorial sanctum, in the professor’s chair, behind the counter, in the workshop, at the fireside, everywhere, we find men professing to believe what they know to be false, or wearing the seal of silence on their lips, while rank imposture stalks abroad and truth is trampled in the mire before them. [345]

Every truth seeker is taunted and ridiculed; every truth teller persecuted and defamed; the scientist and philosopher are discouraged and opposed; the heretic and Infidel calumniated and maligned. In proof of this, witness the abuse heaped upon the Darwins and Huxleys, see the countless calumnies circulated against the Paines and Ingersolls.

It is said that Paulus Jovius kept a bank of lies. To those who paid him liberally he gave noble pedigrees and reputations; those who did not he slandered and maligned. Paulus is dead, but the church, guided by Bible morality, continues his business.

## Cheating.

I refuse to accept the Bible as a moral guide, because it sanctions cheating and the use of dishonorable methods in obtaining wealth and power. [346]

“And Jacob sod [boiled] pottage; and Esau came from the fields, and he was faint; and Esau said to Jacob, Feed me, I pray thee, with that same red pottage; for I am faint.... And Jacob said, Sell me this day thy birthright. And Esau said, Behold, I am at the point to die; and what profit shall this birthright do me? And Jacob said, Swear to me this day; and he sware unto him; and he sold his birthright unto Jacob. Then Jacob gave Esau bread and pottage of lentils; and he did eat and rose up and went away” (Gen. xxv, 29-34).

This transaction, one of the basest recorded, receives the sanction of the Bible. Jacob, with God’s assistance, by using striped rods, cheated Laban out of his

cattle:

“And it came to pass, whensoever the stronger cattle did conceive, that Jacob laid the rods before the eyes of the cattle in the gutters, that they might conceive among the rods.

“When the cattle were feeble, he put them not in; so the feebler were Laban’s and the stronger Jacob’s. And the man increased exceedingly, and had much cattle” (Gen. xxx, 41-43).

“If he [Laban] said thus, The speckled shall be thy wages; then all the cattle bare speckled; and if he said thus, The ringstreaked shall be thy hire; then bare all the cattle ringstreaked. Thus God hath taken away the cattle of your father and given them to me” (Gen. xxxi, 8, 9).

Thus, by defrauding his uncle, his famishing brother, and his blind and aged father, this God-beloved

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patriarch stands forth the prince of cheats—the patron saint of rogues.

The Israelites obtain the Egyptians’ property by false pretenses.

“And I [God] will give this people favor in the sight of the Egyptians; and it shall come to pass that when ye go, ye shall not go empty; but every woman shall borrow of her neighbor, and of her that sojourneth in her house, jewels of silver and jewels of gold, and raiment; and ye shall put them upon your sons and upon your daughters; and ye shall spoil [rob] the Egyptians” (Ex. iii, 21, 22).

“And the Lord said unto Moses, ... Speak now in the ears of the people, and let every man borrow of his neighbor, and every woman of her neighbor, jewels of silver, and jewels of gold” (Ex xi, 1, 2).

“And the children of Israel did according to the word of Moses; and they borrowed of the Egyptians jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment; and the Lord gave the people favor in the sight of the Egyptians, so that they lent unto them such things as they required; and they spoiled the Egyptians” (Ex. xii, 35, 36).

Here obtaining goods under false pretenses and embezzlement are commended by God himself. It may be claimed that the Egyptians had wronged the Israelites. Suppose they had; could God secure justice for them only by treachery and fraud? Suppose your son worked for a farmer, and that farmer defrauded him of his wages; would you advise your son to borrow a horse of his employer and decamp with it in order to obtain redress, especially when you had the power to obtain redress by lawful means? Instead of encouraging these slaves in an act that would eventually lead them to become a race of thieves and robbers, an honest God would have taken their masters by the collar and said, “You have received the labor of these men and women; pay them for it!”

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In the Mosaic law we find the following beautiful statute:

“Ye shall not eat of anything that dieth of itself; thou shalt give it unto the stranger that is in thy gates, that he may eat it, or thou mayest sell it unto an alien” (Deut. xiv, 21).

“Anything that dieth of itself” is diseased. Diseased flesh is poisonous. To authorize its use, even if those receiving it are not deceived, is immoral.

Out West, a family, good Christians, had a hog to die of some disease. What did they do with it? Eat it? No, their Bible told them this would be wrong. They dressed it nicely, took it into an adjoining neighborhood, and sold it to strangers. Was this right? The Bible says it was.

With the widespread influence of a book inculcating such lessons in dishonesty, what must be the inevitable result? Men distrust their fellow men; along our business thoroughfares Fraud drives with brazen front; in almost every article of merchandise we buy we find a lie enshrined; at every corner sits some Jacob slyly whittling spotted sticks to win his neighbor’s flocks.

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## Stealing.

I refuse to accept the Bible as a moral guide because it sanctions theft and robbery.

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Its pages teem with accounts of robberies, and in many instances God is said to have planned them and shared in the spoils. He instructs Moses to send a marauding expedition against the Midianites. They put the inhabitants to the sword, and return with 800,000 cattle. Of this booty God exacts 800 head for himself and 8,000 head for his priests. The remainder he causes to be divided between the soldiers and citizens. So elated are the Israelites with their success, so grateful to God for his assistance, that they make him a gift of 16,000 shekels of stolen gold (Num. xxxi).

When Joshua took Jericho, "they burnt the city with fire, and all that was therein; only the silver, and the gold, and the vessels of brass and of iron they put into the treasury of the Lord" (Josh, vi, 19-24).

When he captured Ai, "the cattle and the spoils of that city Israel took for a prey unto themselves, according unto the word of the Lord which he commanded Joshua" (Josh, viii, 27).

Jehovah gets the spoils of Jericho, and Israel those of Ai.

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David, a modest shepherd lad, is placed under the tutelage of Jehovah only to become the cruelest robber of his time. On one occasion, purely for plunder, he despoiled three nations and "saved neither man nor woman alive to bring tidings to Gath, saying, Lest they should tell on us" (1 Sam. xxvii, 8-12).

It is said that the Italian bandit never plans a robbery without invoking a divine blessing upon his undertaking, doubtless believing that the God of David, of Moses, and of Joshua still reigns.

Jacob's wives, Leah and Rachel, were both thieves. Leah appropriated the property of her son; Rachel stole her father's jewels. Neither act was condemned.

"When thou comest into thy neighbor's vineyard, then thou mayest eat grapes thy fill at thine own pleasure, but thou shalt not put any in thy vessel.

"When thou comest into the standing corn of thy neighbor, then thou mayest pluck the ears with thine hand; but thou shalt not move a sickle unto thy neighbor's standing corn" (Deut. xxiii, 24, 25).

"Men do not despise a thief, if he steal to satisfy his soul when he is hungry" (Prov. vi, 30).

Grand larceny is condemned, but petty larceny is commended.

Christ enjoined submission to robbery: "Of him that taketh away thy goods ask them not again" (Luke vi, 30).

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## CHAPTER XXVII.

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### MURDER—WAR.

#### Murder.

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I refuse to accept the Bible as a moral guide because it sanctions murder.

It is true the Sixth Commandment says, "Thou shalt not kill;" but this law is practically annulled by innumerable commands from the same source, like the following, to kill:

"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).

"Spare them not, but slay both man and woman, infant and suckling" (1 Sam. xv, 3).

"Slay utterly old and young, both maids and little children" (Ezek. ix, 6)

"Cursed be he that keepeth back his sword from blood" (Jer. xlvi, 10).

For the leader and legislator of his chosen people, God selects a murderer. The first recorded act of Moses was premeditated murder. "He looked this way and that way, and when he saw that there was no man, he slew the Egyptian, and hid him in the sand" (Ex. ii 12).

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For committing a murder, Phinehas is rewarded by Jehovah with "the covenant of an everlasting priesthood" (Num. xxv, 6-13).

Samuel "hewed Agag," a captive king, "in pieces before the Lord" (1 Sam. xv, 32, 33).

Jehu murders all the house of Ahab, and God rewards him for it:

"And Joram turned his hands and fled, and said to Ahaziah, There is treachery, O Ahaziah. And Jehu drew a bow with his full strength, and smote Jehoram between his arms, and the arrow went out at his heart and he sunk down in his chariot.

"But when Ahaziah, the king of Judah, saw this, he fled by the way of the garden house. And Jehu followed after him, and said, Smite him also in the chariot. And they did so.

"And when Jehu was come to Jezreel, Jezebel heard of it, and she painted her face, and tired her head, and looked out at a window. And as Jehu entered in at the gate she said, Had Zimri peace who slew his master? And he lifted up his face to the window, and said, Who is on my side? Who? And there looked out to him two or three eunuchs. And he said, Throw her down. So they threw her down, and some of her blood was sprinkled on the wall, and on the horses; and he trode her under foot. And when he was come in, he did eat and drink, and said, Go, see now this cursed woman, and bury her; for she is a king's daughter. And they went to bury her, but they found no more of her than the skull, and the feet, and the palms of her hands."

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The dogs had devoured her.

"And Ahab had seventy sons in Samaria. And Jehu wrote letters and sent to Samaria... And it came to pass when the letter came to them, that they took the king's sons, and slew seventy persons, and put their heads in baskets, and sent him them to Jezreel."

"So Jehu slew all that remained of the house of Ahab in Jezreel, and all his great men, and his kinsfolks, and his priests, until he left him none remaining."

"And the Lord said unto Jehu, Because thou hast done well in executing that which is right in mine eyes, and hast done unto the house of Ahab according to all that was in mine heart, thy children of the fourth generation shall sit on the throne of Israel" (2 Kings ix, 23, 24, 27, 30-35; x, 1, 7, 11, 30).

The assassination of Eglon by Ehud was characterized by the basest treachery and brutality. Eglon was king of Moab. Ehud carried a present to him, and after he had delivered the present he told the king that he had a private message for him. Eglon ordered his attendants to retire, and when alone Ehud drew a large dagger from beneath his cloak and thrust it through the body of the king. And the Bible tells us that God raised up Ehud expressly for this work (Jud. iii, 15-23).

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The warmest eulogy in the Bible is bestowed upon a murderess. Sisera is a fugitive from battle. He reaches in safety the tent of Heber, his friend. Heber is absent, but Jael, his wife, receives the fugitive, and bids him welcome. She gives him food, spreads a soft couch for him, and covers him with her mantle. Wearied with his retreat, and unconscious of impending danger, Sisera soon sinks into a profound slumber. With a tent nail in one hand and a hammer in the other, Jael approaches the bedside of her sleeping guest. She bends over him, listens to assure herself that he is asleep, then places the nail against his temple, and with a blow drives it through his head. A struggle, and Sisera is dead, a victim of one of the most damnable deeds ever committed.

In honor of this assassination, God's favorite prophetess, Deborah, sings:

"Blessed above women shall Jael, the wife of Heber the Kenite, be; blessed shall she be above women in the tent. He asked water, and she gave him milk; she brought forth butter in a lordly dish. She put her hand to the nail, and her right hand to the workman's hammer; and with the hammer she smote Sisera, she smote off his head, when she had pierced and stricken through his temples. At her feet he bowed, he fell, he lay down; at her feet he bowed, he fell: where he bowed, there he fell down dead. The mother of Sisera looked out at a window, and cried through the lattice, Why is his chariot so long in coming? Why tarry the wheels of

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his chariot?" (Jud. v, 24-28.)

We wish to place before our children, for their emulation, good and noble characters. We have been taught that in the Bible such characters may be found. You desire a model woman to place before your daughter. What one will you select? Here is a woman whom the Bible pronounces "blessed above women." This must be a suitable model, then. Blessed for what? For committing one of the most infamous of murders.

We had a Kansas girl who followed in the footsteps of this "blessed woman." Years ago, across the prairies of southern Kansas stretched a lonely road. By its side, far from other habitations, stood an unpretentious dwelling, inhabited by four persons—father, mother, son, and daughter. But the daughter was the ruling spirit there. Their only volume, we are told, was a Bible, and this the daughter read. The house contains two rooms besides the cellar. The rooms are separated simply by a curtain. In the front room is kept a small stock of groceries. Here, too, with its back against the curtain, and fastened to the floor, stands a chair. Above the door is a sign with this inviting word, "Provisions." A traveler enters and makes some purchases, displaying a well-filled purse. He is treated hospitably, and invited to remain awhile and rest. Wearied, he drops into the chair, his head pressing against the curtain. Armed with a hammer, this follower of Jael now approaches from the rear. One well-directed blow, and the tired traveler sinks into eternal rest. His pockets are rifled, and his body thrown into the cellar, to be taken out at night and buried in the little garden behind the dwelling. Time rolls on; the traveler does not return. Day after day his wife at home, with anxious heart, peers through the window and sighs, "Why don't he come?" At length suspicion rests upon this den of infamy. A search is instituted, and the garden is found to be a cemetery, filled with the bodies of murdered travelers—one a little child. In the mean time this female monster with her kin has fled. Detectives are still searching for her. They'll never find her. Where is she? In heaven with Jael. Now let some modern Deborah sing, "Blessed above maidens shall Kate Bender be!"

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## War.

I refuse to accept the Bible as a moral guide because it sanctions wars of conquest and extermination.

"Blessed be the Lord, my strength, which teacheth my hands to war and my fingers to fight" (Ps. cxliv, 1).

The Old Testament is largely a record of wars and massacres. God is represented as "a man of war." At his command whole nations are exterminated.

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"Ye shall drive out all the inhabitants of the land from before you, ... and ye shall dispossess the inhabitants of the land, and dwell therein" (Num. xxxiii, 52, 53).

"And thou shalt consume all the people which the Lord thy God shall deliver thee; thine eye shall have no pity upon them" (Deut. vii, 16).

"Of the cities of these people, which the Lord thy God doth give thee for an inheritance, thou shalt save alive nothing that breatheth: but thou shalt utterly destroy them" (Deut. xx, 16, 17).

"And they warred against the Midianites, as the Lord commanded Moses; and they slew all the males.... And the children of Israel took all the women of Midian captives, and their little ones, and took the spoil of all their cattle, and all their flocks, and all their goods. And they burnt all their cities wherein they dwelt, and all their goodly castles with fire" (Num. xxxi, 7-10).

Moses is angry because the women and children have been saved, and from this fiendish conqueror comes the mandate: "Kill every male among the little ones, and kill every woman that hath known man."

The mourning remnants of twenty thousand families are thus to be destroyed. The fathers, far away, lie still in death beside the smouldering ruins of their once fair homes; and now their wives and little ones are doomed to die. The signal is sounded, and the massacre begins. The mothers, on bended knees, with tearful eyes and pleading lips, are ruthlessly cut down. Their prattling babes, in unsuspecting innocence, smile on the uplifted sword as if it were a glittering toy, and the next moment feel it speeding through their little frames. The daughters only are spared—spared to be the wretched slaves of those whose hands are red with the life-blood of their dear ones.

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And this is but a prelude to the sanguinary scenes that are to follow.

“Rise ye up, take your journey, and pass over the river Arnon; behold I have given into thine hand Sihon the Amorite, king of Heshbon, and his land: begin to possess it, and contend with him in battle. This day will I begin to put the dread of thee and the fear of thee upon the nations that are under the whole heaven, who shall hear report of thee, and shall tremble, and be in anguish because of thee.”

“And we took all his cities at that time, and utterly destroyed the men, and the women, and the little ones of every city, we left none to remain” (Deut. ii, 24, 25, 34).

“The Lord our God delivered into our hands Og also, the king of Bashan, and all his people, and we smote him until none was left to him remaining. And we took all his cities at that time, there was not a city which we took not from them, threescore cities.... And we utterly destroyed them as we did unto Sihon king of Heshbon, utterly destroying the men, women, and children of every city” (Deut. iii, 3-6).

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Moses dies, and Joshua next leads Jehovah’s troops.

“And the Lord said unto Joshua, See, I have given into thine hand Jericho.... And they utterly destroyed all that was in that city, both man and woman, young and old” (Josh. vi, 2, 21).

“And the Lord said unto Joshua, Stretch out the spear that is in thy hand toward Ai; for I will give it into thine hand.... And so it was, that all that fell that day, both of men and women, were twelve thousand.... And Joshua burnt Ai, and made it a heap forever” (Josh. viii, 18, 25, 28).

“And Joshua passed from Libnah, and all Israel with him, unto Lachish, and encamped against it, and fought against it. And the Lord delivered Lachish into the hands 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” (Josh. x, 31, 32).

“And from Lachish Joshua passed unto Eglon, and all Israel with him; and they encamped against it, and fought against it. And they took it on that day, and smote it with the edge of the sword, and all the souls that were therein he utterly destroyed that day” (Josh. x, 34, 35).

Thus city after city falls, and nation after nation is vanquished, until thirty-one kingdoms have been destroyed. And still there “remaineth much land to be possessed,” and many millions more of unoffending people to be slain to please this God of War.

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Christ came, heralded as the “Prince of Peace.” But he “came not to send peace but a sword”—a sword his own arm was too weak to wield, but which his followers have used with dire effect. Expunge from the history of Christendom the record of its thousand wars and little will remain. From the time that Constantine inscribed the emblem of the cross upon his banner to the present hour, the church of Christ has been upheld by the sword. Five million troops maintain its political supremacy in Europe to-day. To “express our national acknowledgment of Almighty God as the source of all authority in civil government; of the Lord Jesus Christ as the ruler of nations, and of his revealed will as of supreme authority;” in short, to make this a “Christian nation,” as Bible moralists demand, means a standing army in this country of five hundred thousand men.

The Bible has inspired more wars in Christendom than all else combined. It is a fountain of blood, and the crimson rivers that have flowed from it would float the navies of the world.

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## CHAPTER XXVIII.

### HUMAN SACRIFICES—CANNIBALISM—WITCHCRAFT.

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Human Sacrifices.

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I refuse to accept the Bible as a moral guide because it sanctions human sacrifices.

“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).

God commands Abraham to sacrifice his son:

“Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering” (Gen. xxii, 2).

The order was countermanded, but the perusal of this text has driven thousands to insanity and murder.

That a famine may cease, David sacrifices the sons of Saul:

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“Wherefore David said unto the Gibeonites, What shall I do for you? and wherewith shall I make the atonement, that ye may bless the inheritance of the Lord?... And they answered the king, The man that consumed us and devised against us.... Let seven men of his sons be delivered unto us, and we will hang them up unto the Lord.... And the king said, I will give them. And he delivered them unto the hands of the Gibeonites, and they hanged them in the hill before the Lord; and they fell all seven together, and were put to death in the days of the harvest” (2 Sam. xxi).

The sacrifice, we are told, was accepted, and the famine ceased.

Five of these innocent victims, if the Bible be true, were the sons of Michal, David’s own wife. Two were the sons of Rizpah. Throughout that long summer—from April till October—in the heat and glare of the day and the chill and darkness of the night, Rizpah, broken-hearted, tenderly watches and protects the decaying bodies of her dead sons and relatives.

“And Rizpah the daughter of Aiah took sackcloth, and spread it for her upon the rock, from the beginning of harvest until water dropped upon them out of heaven, and suffered neither the birds of the air to rest on them by day, nor the beasts of the field by night.”

When I dwell on this dark tragedy, and contrast the love and devotion of this agonized and despairing Hebrew mother with the malignant hatred and heartless cruelty of this Bible God and his despicable agent, humanity rises to the highest heaven and divinity sinks to the lowest hell.

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The pathetic story of Jephthah’s daughter is familiar to all. Jephthah is a warrior, and makes a vow that if he is permitted to conquer the children of Ammon, upon his return the first that meets him at the door will be offered up for a burnt offering unto the Lord. He is successful; the Lord permits him to defeat the children of Ammon. Upon his return the first to meet him is his daughter, an only child. He tells her of his vow. She prays for two brief months to live. Her prayer is granted, and at the expiration of this time, the Bible tells us that Jephthah “did with her according to the vow which he had vowed” (Jud. xi, 26-40).

Describing the fulfilment of this terrible vow, Dr. Oort says:

“This victim, crowned with flowers, was led round the altar with music and song in honor of Yahweh. She met her cruel fate without shrinking. But who shall say how sick at heart her father was when he struck that fatal blow with his own hand and saw the blood of his darling child poured out upon the sacred stone, while her body was burned upon the altar?” (Bible for Learners, Vol. I., p. 408.)

“In that frightful sacrifice that he performed—breaking the holiest domestic ties—we do but see the disastrous results of a mistaken faith” (Ibid., p. 411).

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The celebrated Jewish commentator, Dr. Kalisch, while endeavoring to palliate as far as possible the crimes of his people, admits that human sacrifices were not uncommon among them:

“The fact stands indisputable that human sacrifices offered to Jehovah were possible among the Hebrews long after the time of Moses, without meeting a check or censure from the teachers and leaders of the nation” (Leviticus, Part I., p. 385).

“One instance like that of Jephthah not only justifies, but necessitates, the influence of a general custom. Pious men slaughtered human victims, not to Moloch, nor to any other foreign deity, but to the national God, Jehovah” (Ibid., p.

Jules Soury says: "Nothing is better established than the existence of human sacrifices among the Hebrews in honor of Iahveh, and that down to the time of Josiah, perhaps even until the return from the Babylonish captivity" (Religion of Israel, p. 46).

The Church, having received the benefits of a sacrificed God, deems human sacrifices no longer necessary. But what can be said of the Church as a whole cannot be said of all its individual members. Scarcely a year passes without the sacrifice of human beings by those who believe the Bible to be inspired, and who believe that what was right three thousand years ago is right to-day. [365]

The sacrifice of little Ben Smith at Los Angeles, in 1882, is still remembered by some. His father was converted at a Methodist revival. He became very religious. The press dispatches stated that "for several months he devoted his time to the study of the Bible until he not only convinced himself that he ought to make a human sacrifice, but brought his wife and their only child, a boy of thirteen, to acquiesce, in his views." I quote from the mother's testimony:

"When he talked to me and persuaded me that a good wife ought to think as her husband did, I got so as to take whatever he said as the truth. He made us fast, and when Ben asked him if God had ordered us to starve he said yes. When he announced that the boy must be killed we both remonstrated, but finally thought it was all right. On the day appointed for the ceremony he called Ben out of the house and told him he had to die for our savior. The little fellow knelt down and I got on my knees by his side; John raised the knife, looked hard into the boy's face, and then drove the knife into his breast."

Here the mother was overcome with grief. Regaining her composure, she continued: "I am always thinking of Ben; I am always hearing him in the night asking to be brought in and laid on his bed, and begging for a little water before he died." [366]

Let me recall another half-forgotten scene. In a quiet village of New England live a pair whom nature meant for good, kind citizens. But they have become infatuated with the Bible. They believe it to be infallible. Day after day they pore over its pages. They dwell with especial interest upon the story of Abraham and Isaac, until at last they become impressed with the belief that they, too, are called upon to offer up their child. The fatal hour arrives. Nerved for the cruel deed, they approach the bedside of their child, a sweet-faced, curly-haired girl of four. How placidly she rests! Folded upon her breast are dimpled hands, white as the winter snow; curtained in slumber are eyes as mild as the summer sky. How beautiful! How pure! We would risk our lives to save that pretty thing from harm. How dear, then, must she be to that father and that mother! She is their idol. But that idol is about to be sacrificed upon the altar of superstition. There they stand—the mother with a lamp in her hand, the father with a knife. They gaze for a moment upon their sleeping victim. Then the father lifts his arm and plunges the knife into the heart of his child! A quiver—the blue eyes open, and cast a reproachful look upon the parent. The little lips exclaim, "O papa!" and the sacrifice is made!

You may say these people were insane. Aye, but what made them insane? And what, more than almost any other cause, is filling our asylums with these unfortunate people? The vain attempt to reconcile with reason the irreconcilable teachings of the Bible. [367]

## Cannibalism.

I refuse to accept the Bible as a moral guide because it teaches the horrible custom of cannibalism.

"The fathers shall eat the sons in the midst of thee, and the sons shall eat their fathers" (Ezek. v, 10).

"And ye shall eat the flesh of your sons, and the flesh of your daughters shall ye eat" (Lev. xxvi, 29).

"And I will cause them to eat the flesh of their sons and the flesh of their daughters, and they shall eat every one the flesh of his friend" (Jer. xix, 9).

"And thou shalt eat the fruit of thine own body, the flesh of thy sons and of thy daughters.... So that the man that is tender among you, and very delicate, his eye

shall be evil toward his brother, and toward the wife of his bosom, and toward the remnant of his children which he shall leave; so that he will not give to any of them the flesh of his children whom he shall eat.... The tender and delicate woman among you, which would not adventure to set the sole of her foot upon the ground for delicateness and tenderness, her eye shall be evil toward the husband of her bosom, and toward her son, and toward her daughter, ... for she shall eat them" (Deut. xxviii, 53-57).

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"The hands of the pitiful women have sodden [boiled] their own children" (Lam. iv, 10).

"And the king said unto her, What aileth thee? And she answered, This woman said unto me, Give thy son that we may eat him to-day, and we will eat my son to-morrow. So we boiled my son, and did eat him. And I said unto her on the next day, Give thy son that we may eat him; and she hath hid her son" (2 Kings vi, 28, 29).

You will say that these were punishments inflicted upon these people for their sins. And you will have us believe that these punishments were just. Strange justice! a merciful God compelling a starving mother to kill and devour her own child!

"Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, ye have no life in you" (John vi, 53).

The church perpetuates the idea, if not the practice, of cannibalism. The Christian takes a piece of bread, and tries to make himself and the world believe that he is eating the body of Christ; he takes a sup of wine, and says, "This is Christ's blood." Your sacramental feast points to the time when savage priests gathered around the festal board and supped on human flesh and blood.

Primitive Christians, many of them, were guilty of cannibalism. In their Agapae they were accustomed to kill and eat an infant. Dr. Cave in his "Primitive Christianity" (Part III., ch. i) says:

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"Epiphanius reports that the Gnostics (a sect of primitive Christians) at their meetings were wont to take an infant begotten in their promiscuous mixtures, and, beating it in a mortar, to season it with honey and pepper and some other spices and perfumes to make it palatable, and then like swine or dogs to devour it, and then to conclude all with prayer."

Meredith, in "The Prophet of Nazareth," says:

"So well known were those horrid vices to be carried on by Christians in their nocturnal and secret assemblies, and so certain it was thought that every one who was a Christian participated in them, that for a person to be known to be a Christian was thought a strong presumptive proof that he was guilty of these offenses.... It would appear, however, that, owing to the extreme measures taken against them by the Romans, both in Italy and in all the provinces, the Christians, by degrees, were forced to abandon entirely in their Agapae infant murders, together with every species of obscenity, retaining, nevertheless, some of them, such as the kiss of charity, and the bread and wine, which they contended was transubstantiated into real flesh and blood."

In the remote districts of Christian Russia, where the rays of our civilization have not yet penetrated the darkness of theology, where Bible morals are still supreme, we are told that even at the present time a more terribly real form attaches to this eucharistic ceremony. From Harper's Weekly I quote the following:

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"We hear of horrid sects at present in Russia, practicing cannibal and human sacrifices with rites almost more devilish than any recorded in history. 'The communism of the flesh of the Lamb' and 'the communism of the blood of the Lamb' really seem to have been invented by the lowest demons of the bottomless pit. The subject is too revolting to be pursued in detail; it is enough to say that an infant seven days old is bandaged over the eyes, stretched over a dish, and a silver spoon thrust into the side so as to pierce the heart. The elect suck the child's blood—that is 'the blood of the Lamb!' The body is left to dry up in another dish full of sage, then crushed into powder and eaten—that is 'the flesh of the Lamb!'"

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## Witchcraft.

I refuse to accept the Bible as a moral guide because it recognizes as a verity the delusion of witchcraft and punishes with death its victims.

The God that inspired the account of Saul's interview with the witch of Endor was as thorough a believer in witchcraft as the most superstitious crone of the Middle Ages.

Manasseh "used enchantments, and used witchcraft, and dealt with a familiar spirit, and with wizards" (2 Chron. xxxiii, 6).

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Isaiah speaks of "wizards that peep and mutter" (Isa. viii, 19).

Samuel (1 Sam, xv, 23) and Micah (v, 12) and Nahum (iii, 4) and Paul (Gal. v, 20) all admit the reality of witchcraft.

The decline in the belief of wizards and witches denotes a decline of faith in the Bible. Until a very recent period, those who professed to believe in the divinity of the Bible also professed to believe in the reality of witchcraft. "Giving up witchcraft," says John Wesley, "is, in effect, giving up the Bible" (Journal, 1768).

Sir William Blackstone says: "To deny the possibility—nay, actual existence—of witchcraft and sorcery is at once flatly to contradict the revealed word of God in various passages both of the Old and New Testaments."

Sir Matthew Hale says: "The Bible leaves no doubt as to the reality of witchcraft and the duty of putting its subjects to death."

"I should have no compassion on these witches." said Luther; "I would burn them all" (Table Talk).

"Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live" (Ex. xxii, 18).

"A man also or a woman that hath a familial spirit, or that is a wizard, shall surely be put to death" (Lev. xx, 27).

Oh, that I could bring to view the suffering and death these texts have caused! Millions have died because of them. One thousand were burned at Como in one year; 800 were burned at Würzburg in one year; 500 perished at Geneva in three months; 80 were burned in a single village of Savoy; nine women were burned in a single fire at Leith; sixty were hanged at Suffolk; 3,000 were legally executed during one session of Parliament, while thousands more were put to death by mobs; Remy, a Christian judge, executed 800; 600 were burned by one bishop at Bamberg; Boguet burned 600 at St. Cloud; thousands were put to death by the Lutherans of Norway and Sweden; Catholic Spain butchered thousands; Presbyterians were responsible for the death of 4,000 in Scotland; 50,000 were sentenced to death during the reign of Francis I.; 7,000 died at Treves; the number killed in Paris in a few months is declared to have been "almost infinite." Dr. Sprenger places the total number of executions for witchcraft in Europe at *nine millions*. For centuries witch fires burned in nearly every town of Europe, and this Bible text, "Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live," was the torch that kindled them.

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Four hundred were burned at Toulouse in one day. Think of it! Four hundred women—guilty of no crime, save that which exists in the diseased imaginations of their accusers—four hundred mothers, wives, and daughters, taken out upon the public square, chained to posts, the fagots piled around them, and burned to death! See them writhing in the flames—listen to their piteous shrieks—four hundred voices raised in one wild chorus of agony! And all because the Bible says, "Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live."

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Only a few years ago, in the province of Novgorod, Russia, a woman was burnt for witchcraft. Agrafena was a soldier's widow, and possessed of more than ordinary gifts of mind. But ignorance and superstition prevailed around her. Every strange occurrence, every disease that could not be accounted for, was the result of witchcraft. One day a farmer's daughter was seized with some violent disease, and in her paroxysms of pain she chanced to breathe the name of Agrafena. That was enough; Agrafena was a witch. A mob was raised and led to the widow's dwelling. They called her to the door, parleyed with her a moment, then thrust her back into the house, fastened its doors, and set it on fire. And while it was burning, this mob, led by Christian priests, stood around it, singing praises to God—their strains blended with the shrieks of this dying woman—dying because the Bible says, "Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live."

And in our own America the blighting influence of this delusion and this brutal statute has been felt. With the soil of our Republic is mingled the dust of murdered women—murdered because the Bible says, "Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live."

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## SLAVERY—POLYGAMY.

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## Slavery.

I refuse to accept the Bible as a moral guide because it sanctions the infamous crime of human slavery.

“Both thy bondmen and thy bondmaids, which thou shalt have, shall be of the heathen that are round about you; of them shall ye buy bondmen and bondmaids. Moreover, of the children of the strangers that do sojourn among you; of them shall ye buy, and of their families that are with you, which they begat in your land; and they shall be your possession. And ye shall take them as an inheritance for your children after you, to inherit them for a possession; they shall be your bondmen forever” (Lev. xx. v, 44-46).

In certain cases they were even permitted to enslave the members of their own race.

“If thou buy a Hebrew servant, six years he shall serve; and in the seventh he shall go out free for nothing. If he came 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 him sons or daughters, the wife and her children shall be her master’s and he shall go out by himself” (Ex. xxi, 2-4).

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If he desires his liberty he must desert his wife and little ones. To become a freeman he must become an exile.

“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 ears through with an awl; and he shall serve him forever” (5, 6).

“And he said, Cursed be Canaan; a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren.

“And he said, Blessed be the Lord God of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant.

“God shall enlarge Japheth, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant” (Gen. ix, 25-27).

Nor is it the Jewish Scriptures alone which sanction slavery. The Christian Scriptures are not less emphatic in their indorsement of it.

“Let as many servants as are under the yoke count their own masters worthy of all honor” (1 Tim. vi, 1).

“Exhort servants to be obedient unto their masters” (Titus ii, 9).

“Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling” (Eph. vi, 5).

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“Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward” (1 Pet. ii, 18).

It may be urged that the term “servant” here refers to a hired servant. Not so; wherever the word “servant” occurs in the New Testament, it means slave in its worst sense.

The Fugitive Slave law, which made us a nation of kidnappers, derived its authority from the New Testament. Paul had established a precedent by returning a fugitive slave to his master.

Referring to this act of Paul, the Rev. Dr. Stringfellow of Virginia wrote:

“Oh, how immeasurably different Paul’s conduct to this slave and master, from the conduct of our abolition brethren! This is sufficient to teach any man that slavery is not, in the sight of God, what it is in the sight of the abolitionists” (Scriptural View of Slavery).

The Rev. Moses Stuart of Massachusetts wrote:

"What, now, have we here? Paul sending back a Christian servant, who had run away from his Christian master.... Paul's conscience sent back the fugitive slave. Paul's conscience, then, like his doctrines, was very different from that of the abolitionists."

It was no easy task to convince the Bible moralist that slavery was wrong. When the French Revolutionists rejected the Bible, they abolished slavery in the colonies. When the church regained control of the government, the Bible came back, and with it slavery. When Clarkson's bill for the abolition of slavery was before Parliament, Lord Chancellor Thurlow characterized it as a "miserable and contemptible bill," and "contrary to the Word of God."

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Charles Bradlaugh, in the North American Review, writing of his own Christian England, says:

"George III., a most Christian king, regarded abolition theories with abhorrence, and the Christian House of Lords was utterly opposed to granting freedom to the slave. When Christian missionaries, some sixty years ago, preached to Demerara negroes under the rule of Christian England, they were treated by Christian judges, holding commission from Christian England, as criminals for so preaching. A Christian commissioned officer, member of the Established Church of England, signed the auction notices for the sale of slaves as late as 1824."

The most zealous defenders of slavery in this country were Bible moralists. The Rev. Alexander Campbell wrote: "There is not one verse in the Bible inhibiting slavery, but many regulating it. It is not then, we conclude, immoral."

The Rev. E. D. Simms, professor in Randolph-Macon College, wrote: "These extracts from Holy Writ unequivocally assert the right of property in slaves."

The Rev. R. Furman, D. D., Baptist, of South Carolina, said: "The right of holding slaves is clearly established in the Holy Scriptures, both by precept and example."

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Rev. Thomas Witherspoon, Presbyterian, of Alabama, said: "I draw my warrant from the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament to hold the slave in bondage."

Said the Rev. Mr. Crowder, Methodist, of Virginia: "Slavery is not only countenanced, permitted, and regulated by the Bible, but it was positively instituted by God himself."

You say that this is the testimony of interested parties, that the South was interested in perpetuating slavery. True, but where did your Northern theologians stand?

Rev. Dr. Wilbur Fisk, President of Wesleyan University, thus wrote: "The New Testament enjoins obedience upon the slave as an obligation due to a present rightful authority."

The Rev. Dr. Nathan Lord, President of Dartmouth College, wrote: "Slavery was incorporated into the civil institutions of Moses; it was recognized accordingly by Christ and his apostles. They regulated it by the just and benevolent principles of the New Testament. They condemned all intermeddlers with it."

Professor Hodge, of Princeton, said: "The Savior found it around him, the Apostles met with it in Asia, Greece, and Italy. How did they treat it? Not by denunciation of slave-holding as necessarily sinful."

Said the Rev. Dr. Taylor, Principal of the Theological Department of Yale College: "I have no doubt that if Jesus Christ were now on earth, he would, under certain circumstances, become a slaveholder."

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It is now half-forgotten that the North as well as the South once practiced slavery—that New England, New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania all held slaves. Christian New England, which made the Bible both its legal and moral code, for more than one hundred years, held Negroes and Indians in slavery, and even sold Quaker children into bondage. "Parish ministers all over New England," says the Rev. William Goodell, "owned slaves" (American Slave Code, p. 106).

Clerical slaveholders in the South trampled under foot the relations of wife and mother; and clerical slaveholders in the North did the same. Mr. Goodell says:

"Even in Puritan New England, seventy years ago, female slaves, in *ministers'* and magistrates' families, bore children, black or yellow, without marriage. No one inquired who their fathers were, and nothing more was thought of it than of the breeding of sheep or swine" (Ibid., p. 111).

"A Congregational minister at Hampton, Conn. (Rev. Mr. Mosely), separated by

sale a husband and wife who were both of them members of his own church, and who had been, by his own officiating act as a minister, united in marriage" (Ibid., p. 114).

Let me cite one of the laws of the Bible relative to the treatment of slaves—a law which demons would blush to indorse, but which a merciful (?) God enacted for the guidance of his children:

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"If a man smite his servant, or his maid, with a rod, and he die under his hand, he shall be surely punished. Notwithstanding, if he continue a day or two, he shall not be punished: for he is his money" (Ex. xxi, 20, 21).

Here a master may brutally beat his slave, and if that slave linger in the agonies of death a day or two before dying, he shall not be punished, because the slave "is his money."

Goodell's "American Slave Code," a work written by a Christian clergyman, and which I have already quoted, contains four hundred pages of outrages, like the following, committed by men who accepted the Bible as their moral guide:

"A minister in South Carolina, a native of the North, had a stated Sabbath appointment to preach, about eight miles from his residence. He was in the habit of riding thither in his gig. Behind him ran his negro slave on foot, who was required to be at the place of appointment as soon as his master, to take care of his horse. Sometimes he fell behind, and kept his master waiting for him a few minutes, for which he always received a reprimand, and was sometimes punished. On one occasion of this kind, after sermon, the master told the slave that he would take care to have him keep up with him, going home. So he tied him by the wrists, with a halter, to his gig behind, and drove rapidly home. The result was that, about two or three miles from home, the poor fellow's feet and legs failed him, and he was dragged on the ground all the rest of the way by the wrists! On alighting and looking round, the master exclaimed, 'Well; I thought you would keep up with me this time!' So saying, he coolly walked into the house. The servants came out and took up the poor sufferer for dead. After a time he revived a little, lingered for a day or two, *and died!*"

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Was this brutal minister punished? He was not. "If he continue a day or two, he shall not be punished: for he is his money." Was he silenced from preaching? was he even reprimanded by the church? No. Without punishment, without censure, he continued to preach Bible morals and abuse his slaves.

Frederick Douglass, the greatest of his race and a slave, says: "My master found religious sanctity for his cruelty.... I have seen him tie up a lame young woman and whip her with a heavy cowskin upon her naked shoulders, causing the warm red blood to drip; and, in justification of the bloody deed, he would quote this passage of Scripture: 'He that knoweth his master's will and doeth it not shall be beaten with many stripes.'"

Slavery flourished on this continent because the Bible taught that it was lawful and just. To oppose slavery was to oppose the plainest teachings of this book. The Abolition movement was an Infidel movement. The Emancipation Proclamation was a nullification of "God's law." The great Rebellion was a contest between Bible morality and natural morality. The latter triumphed, but the conflict filled half a million graves, brought grief to many million hearts, and covered the land with desolation.

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And this advocate of slavery is the idol Protestants worship; this is the book they wish to become the law of our land; this is the moral guide they wish to place in our public schools! In the name of those who died for the freedom of their fellow-men; in the name of those made childless, fatherless, and companionless by this cruel strife; in the name of those whose backs still bear the scars of the master's lash; in the name of human liberty, I protest against this retrogressive movement!

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## Polygamy.

I refuse to accept the Bible as a moral guide because it sanctions that other twin relic of barbarism, polygamy.

The Mosaic law provides that "if a man have two wives, one beloved and another hated," he shall not ignore the legal rights of the hated wife's children (Deut. xxi, 15-17). This statute recognizes both the existence and the validity of the institution.

Another statute (Deut. xxv, 5) provides that if a man die, his surviving brother shall become the husband of his widow, and this regardless as to whether the brother be married or single.

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The first eighteen verses of the eighteenth chapter of Leviticus are devoted to what is termed "unlawful marriages." Here polygamy is recognized and regulated to the extent of prohibiting a man from marrying the sister of a living wife.

But there is one statute which places the validity of this institution, so far as the Bible is concerned, beyond all controversy. Deuteronomy (xxiii, 2) declares that no illegitimate child shall enter into the congregation of the Lord, even up to the tenth generation. Now, polygamy was either lawful or unlawful. If unlawful, then the children of polygamists were illegitimate children, and disqualified for the sanctuary. But the children of polygamists were not thus disqualified. The founders of the twelve tribes of Israel were all children of a polygamist.

The most renowned Bible characters were polygamists. Abraham had two wives, and when he died the Lord said, "Abraham obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws" (Gen. xxvi, 6).

Jacob was a polygamist, and after he had secured four wives and concubines, God blessed him and said, "Be fruitful and multiply" (Gen. xxxv, 11).

Gideon had "many wives" (Jud. viii, 30), and it was to him an angel came and said, "The Lord is with thee" (Jud. vi, 12).

David had a score of wives and concubines, and "David was a man after God's own heart;" "David did right in the eyes of the Lord." God himself said to David, "I delivered thee out of the hands of Saul; and I gave thee thy master's house and thy master's wives" (2 Sam. xii, 7, 8).

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"And God gave Solomon wisdom and understanding exceeding much, and largeness of heart"—sufficient to hold a thousand wives and concubines.

Many years ago the Mormon, Orson Pratt, wrote a defense of polygamy, based upon the Bible. A noted lawyer of New York sent a copy of it to the Rev. Dr. W. B. Sprague with the interrogation, "Can you answer this?" Back came the frank reply, "No; can you?"

It is claimed that the New Testament is opposed to polygamy. It is not. William Ellery Channing says:

"There is no prohibition of polygamy in the New Testament. It is an indisputable fact that although Christianity was first preached in Asia, which had been from the earliest ages the seat of polygamy, the Apostles never denounced it as a crime, and never required their converts to put away all wives but one."

Elizabeth Cady Stanton says: "It was at a Jewish polygamous wedding that Jesus performed his first miracle, and polygamy was practiced by Christians for centuries."

It is true that many primitive Christians did not practice polygamy. And why? Because Pagan Greece and Rome had taught them better. It was to them, and not to their Scriptures, that they were indebted for the monogamic system of marriage. The Roman Catholic church did not generally sustain polygamy; but it did sustain a system of concubinage which was certainly as bad. For centuries the keeping of concubines was almost universal among the Catholic clergy, one abbot keeping no less than seventy.

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The founders of the Protestant church, however, accepting the Bible as their guide, attaching to it a degree of authority which had never been attached to it before, were candid and consistent enough to admit the validity of the institution. Referring to this subject, Sir William Hamilton, a Christian and a Protestant, says:

"As to polygamy in particular, which not only Luther, Melancthon, and Bucer, the three leaders of the German Reformation, speculatively adopted, but to which above a dozen distinguished divines among the Reformers stood formally committed" (Discussions on Philosophy and Literature).

Speaking of Luther and Melancthon, Hamilton says:

"They had both promulgated opinions in favor of polygamy, to the extent of vindicating to the spiritual minister a right of private dispensation, and to the temporal magistrate the right of establishing the practice if he chose by public law" (Ibid).

In accordance with these views, John of Leyden, a zealous Protestant, established

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polygamy at Munster, and murdered or drove from their homes all who dared to oppose the odious custom. Other Protestants followed his example.

On the 19th of December, 1539, at Wittenberg, Luther and Melanchthon drew up the famous "Consilium," authorizing the landgrave, Philip of Hesse, to have a plurality of wives. This instrument bears the signatures of Martin Luther, Philip Melanchthon, Martin Bucer, Dionysius Melander, John Lening, Antony Corvinus, Adam Kraft, Justus Winther, and Balthasar Raida, nine of the leading Protestant divines of Germany.

It is a well-known fact that Luther advised Henry VIII. to adopt polygamy in his case, but by divorcing two wives, and murdering two more, the founder of the English church avoided it.

The advocacy of polygamy by the chief Reformers prevented Ferdinand I. from declaring for the Reformation. The German princes, too, generally opposed it; and this opposition, coupled with the fact that the most licentious sects espoused it, finally caused a reaction in favor of monogamy.

Protestants, it ill became you to point the finger of scorn at the Mormons of Utah. Yet with characteristic consistency you were demanding the suppression of polygamy in the territories, while at the same time you were endeavoring to have the whole country accept as infallible authority a book which sanctions the pernicious custom. Make the Bible the fundamental law of the land, as you demand, and polygamy will become, in theory at least, a national instead of a local institution.

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## CHAPTER XXX.

### ADULTERY—OBSCENITY.

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#### Adultery.

I refuse to accept the Bible as a moral guide because it sanctions adultery and prostitution.

Adultery is made prominent by the recital of the numerous adulteries of Abraham, Lot, Jacob, Judah, Samson, David, and other Bible saints, and sanctified by the approved adulteries of Abraham and Jacob.

Both Abraham and Isaac were willing to sell the virtue of their wives to save themselves from harm.

Two instances are recorded of fathers having offered their own daughters to gratify the lust of a sensual mob, and these abominable acts are represented as especially meritorious. Read the nineteenth chapter of Genesis and the nineteenth chapter of Judges; dwell upon the eighth verse of the former and the twenty-fourth verse of the latter; and then, if you can indorse the spirit of these narratives, you are unfit to be the parent of a daughter.

The Mosaic law authorizes a father to sell his daughter for a concubine or mistress (euphemistically translated "maid servant"). God's instructions respecting the thirty-two thousand captive Midianite maidens impliedly sanction concubinage and prostitution.

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These Bible teachings have been the cause of countless outrages against the chastity of woman. John Wesley says:

"Almost all the soldiers in the Christian world ... have claimed, more especially in time of war, another kind of liberty: that of borrowing the wives and daughters of the men that fell into their hands" (Wesley's Miscellaneous Works, Vol. III., p. 117).

Luther, drawing his morality from the Bible, gave concubinage his indorsement:

"There is nothing unusual in princes keeping concubines; and although the lower

orders may not perceive the excuses of the thing, the more intelligent know how to make allowance" (Consilium).

Luther might with equal truthfulness have said, "There is nothing unusual in priests and preachers keeping concubines," and he might have helped to confirm it by a few leaves from his own private history. In a letter to his confidential friend, Spalatin, he confessed to numerous adulteries.

God instructs his prophet Hosea to marry a prostitute. He subsequently commands him to love and hire an adulteress (Hosea i, 2, 3; iii, 1, 2).

Christ forgave the woman taken in adultery, while his favorite female companion was a reformed (?) prostitute. Referring to his female ancestors, Dr. Alexander Walker, a Christian, says:

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"It is remarkable that in the genealogy of Christ only four women have been named: Tamar, who seduced the father of her late husband; Rachab, a common prostitute; Ruth, who, instead of marrying one of her cousins, went to bed with another of them, and Bathsheba, an adultress, who espoused David, the murderer of her husband" (Woman, p. 330).

The early Christians were notorious for their adulteries. Dr. Cave, in his "Primitive Christianity" (Part II., ch. v), says it was commonly charged "that the Christians knew one another by certain privy marks and signs, and were wont to be in love almost before they knew one another; that they exercised lust and filthiness under a pretense of religion, promiscuously calling themselves brothers and sisters, that by the help of so sacred a name their common adulteries might become incestuous."

Of the Carpocratians, who Dr. Lardner says "are not accused of rejecting any part of the New Testament," Dr. Cave says: "Both men and women used to meet at supper (which was called their love-feast), when after they had loaded themselves with a plentiful meal, to prevent all shame, if they had any remaining, they put out the lights, and then promiscuously mixed in filthiness with one another" (Ibid).

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In his Epistle to the Corinthians, Paul says: "It is reported commonly that there is fornication among you, and such fornication as is not so much as named among the gentiles" (1 Cor. v, 1).

It is an indisputable fact that the most notorious adulterers are those whose profession makes them most familiar with the teachings of the Bible, and compels them to accept its teachings as divine.

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## Obscenity.

I refuse to accept the Bible as a moral guide, and protest against its being placed in the hands of the young, because its pages are defiled with obscenity.

Aside from thousands of coarse and vulgar expressions contained in it, there are at least a hundred passages so obscene that their appearance in any other book would exclude that book from the mails and send its publisher to prison. The United States courts have declared parts of the Bible to be obscene. There are entire chapters, such as the thirty-eighth chapter of Genesis, that reek with obscenity from beginning to end.

In proof of the charge of obscenity, I refer you to the following: Isaiah xxxvi, 12; Ezek. iv, 12-15; Gen. xix, 30-36; xxx, 1-16; xxxviii; 2 Kings xviii, 27; Lev. xv, 16-33; Job xl, 16, 17; 1 Kings xiv, 10; Isaiah iii, 17.

That portions of the Bible are obscene and unfit to be read, is admitted even by Christians. Noah Webster, a Protestant, edited an expurgated edition of the Bible. In vindication of his work, he says:

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"Many passages are expressed in language which decency forbids to be repeated in families and in the pulpit."

The Rev. Dr. Embree, Methodist, of Kansas, in a speech before the Topeka School Board advocating the reading of Bible selections in the public schools of that city, recently said:

"I would not want the Bible read indiscriminately. I think some of it unfit to be read by any one."

The Rev. Father Maguire, Catholic, in his debate with the Rev. Mr. Greg, at Dublin, gave utterance to the following:

“I beg of you not to continue such a practice; it is disreputable. I will ask Mr. Greg a question (and I beg of you, my brethren of the Protestant church, to bear this in mind), I will ask him if he dare to take up the Bible and read from the book of Genesis the fact of Onan—I ask him will he read that? Will he read the fact relative to Lot and his two daughters? Will he read these and many other passages which I could point out to him in the Holy Bible, which I would not take one thousand guineas, nay, all the money in the world, and read them here to-day?”

Richard Lalor Shiel, M. P., and Privy Counselor to the Queen, thus wrote:

“Part of the Holy Writings consist of history, and the narration of facts of a kind that cannot be mentioned in the presence of a virtuous woman without exciting horror. Shall a woman be permitted to read in her chamber what she would tremble to hear at her domestic board? Shall she con over and revolve what she would rather die than utter?”

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And if unfit for the perusal of a matured woman, shall innocent childhood be polluted by these vile, indecent tales?

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## CHAPTER XXXI.

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### INTEMPERANCE—VAGRANCY—IGNORANCE.

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#### Intemperance.

I refuse to accept the Bible as a moral guide because it fosters the evil of intemperance.

While the sacred books of Buddhists and Mohammedans, by forbidding the use of intoxicating drinks, have contributed to make drunkenness among these people disreputable and rare, the Bible, by encouraging their use, has made intemperance in Christian countries frightfully prevalent and almost respectable.

“Thou shalt bestow that money for whatsoever thy soul lusteth after, for oxen or for sheep, or for wine, or for strong drink” (Deut. xiv, 26).

“Give strong drink unto him that is ready to perish, and wine unto those that be of heavy hearts. Let him drink and forget his poverty, and remember his misery no more” (Prov. xxxi, 6,7).

“Drink no longer water, but use a little wine for thy stomach’s sake” (1 Tim. v, 23).

“Go thy way, eat thy bread with joy, and drink thy wine with a merry heart, for God now accepteth thy works” (Eccles. ix, 7).

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“Corn shall make the young men cheerful, and new wine the maids” (Zech. ix, 17).

“They shall plant vineyards and drink the wine thereof” (Amos ix, 14).

“Wine that maketh glad the heart of man” (Ps. civ, 15).

“Wine which cheereth God and man” (Jud. ix, 13).

“In the holy place shalt thou cause the strong wine to be poured unto the Lord for a drink offering” (Num. xxviii, 7).

Will that wing of the Prohibition army which accepts the Bible as its guide inscribe these texts upon its banner?

As a reward for the Jews keeping the judgments of the Lord he was to bless their wine (Deut. vii, 13).

Liberal giving to the Lord was to be rewarded with an abundance of wine.

"Honor the Lord with thy substance, and with the first fruits of all thine increase: so shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine" (Prov. iii, 9, 10).

One of the most direful calamities was a wine famine.

"Awake, ye drunkards, and weep; and howl, all ye drinkers of wine, because of the new wine; for it is cut off from your mouth.... The drink offering is cut off from the house of the Lord; the priests, the Lord's ministers, mourn.... Gird yourselves and lament, ye priests howl, ye ministers of the altar; come, lie all night in sackcloth, ye ministers of my God; for ... the drink offering is withholden from the house of your God" (Joel i, 5, 9, 13).

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God's especial favorites had a weakness for wine. When he drowned the world's inhabitants he saved Noah, knowing that as soon as the waters subsided he would plant a vineyard, make wine, and become intoxicated. When Sodom was destroyed the only righteous man he found was that foul drunkard, Lot. When David made his celebrated feast in honor of the Lord he gave to every man and woman a flagon of wine. He kept some for himself and so merry did his heart become that he "danced before the Lord with all his might."

Thus joyously sings Solomon: "I have drunk my wine with my milk [milk punch]; eat, O friends! drink, yea, drink abundantly." In the morning he sings another song: "Open to me ... my love ... for my head is filled with dew." How many a wayward fellow like Solomon has risen from the gutter, sorrowfully wended his way home, and serenaded his sleeping spouse with that same melody!

When Solomon erected his temple to God he gave to his laborers "twenty thousand baths [nearly 175,000 gallons] of wine" (2 Chron. ii, 10).

The Nazarite, it is claimed, was commanded to abstain from wine. Yes, but only during the period of his separation. "After that the Nazarite may drink wine" (Num. vi, 20).

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God commanded Jeremiah to tempt with wine those who abstained from its use:

"Go unto the house of the Rechabites and speak with them, and bring them into the house of the Lord, into one of the chambers, and give them wine to drink" (Jer. xxxv, 2).

Christ spoke as follows:

"John the Baptist came neither eating bread nor drinking wine.... The Son of Man is come eating and drinking; and ye say, Behold a gluttonous man and a winebibber" (Luke, vii, 33, 34).

This censure was evidently not unmerited. The first act in Christ's ministerial career was to manufacture three barrels of wine for a wedding feast; his last recorded act was a benediction upon the wine cup.

Theology being no longer in demand, the Protestant clergy, contrary to the teachings of the Bible, and the traditions of the church, now find it popular and profitable to espouse the cause of temperance. But in championing one rational virtue they employ two Christian vices, hypocrisy and intolerance. The most inconsistent, the most uncharitable opponents of the liquor traffic to-day are these fresh converts who profess to be doing their master's will and who claim that his Word is the advocate of total abstinence and prohibitory laws. With fierce invective they declaim against the old God Bacchus, yet every anathema they hurl at him will apply with equal justice to their God and Christ.

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One of the most unscrupulous arguments ever adduced in support of any cause is that now advanced by some Christian temperance advocates to the effect that the wine sanctioned in the Bible was not intoxicating. With the same ease that they declare that in the Bible "black" means "white," that "hate" means "love," and "day" means "age," they declare that Bible wine does not mean wine, but unfermented grape juice.

The Rev. Dr. W. M. Thompson, Rev. William Wright, Rev. S. H. Calhoun, Rev. C. V. A. Van Dyke, and other able Hebrew and Sanscrit scholars of Western Asia, who have made the history and customs of its people both ancient and modern a life study, affirm that such a thing as non-intoxicating wine was unknown, that the unfermented juice of the grape was never recognized as wine. Dr. Philip Schaff, the foremost Bible scholar of this country, affirms the same:

"The wine of the Bible was no doubt pure and unadulterated.... It was genuine and real wine, and, like all wine in use in grape-growing countries, exhilarating. To lay down the principle that the use of intoxicating drink as a beverage is a sin—*per se*

—is to condemn the greater part of Christendom, to contradict the Bible, and to impeach Christ himself, who drank wine and made wine by miracle to supply the marriage guests.”

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At the General Assembly of the Presbyterian church held at Belfast, Ireland, in 1870, an exhaustive examination and discussion was given this subject. The result was the adoption by an almost unanimous vote of the following resolution offered by the Rev. Robert Wales, Professor of Dialectic Theology, Belfast:

“As the wine used in the oblations of the Old Testament time at the Passover and by our Lord Jesus Christ himself in the institution of the supper was the ordinary wine of the country, that is, the fermented juice of the grape, we cannot sanction the use of the unfermented juice of the grape as a symbol in the ordinance.”

That the sacramental wine used by the early Christians was intoxicating, and that they were addicted to using it to excess at the Lord’s Supper, is admitted by Paul (1 Cor. xi, 20-34).

Referring to this subject, the Christian Register says: “We deplore intemperance, and welcome every truthful argument against it, but the argument founded on the non-intoxicating character of Bible wine is a weak and diluted fallacy.”

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## Vagrancy.

I refuse to accept the Bible as a moral guide because it encourages poverty and vagrancy.

Jesus Christ was the panegyrist of poverty and the promoter of vagrancy:

“Blessed be ye poor” (Luke vi, 20).

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“But woe unto you that are rich” (Luke vi, 24).

“A rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven” (Matt. xix, 23).

“It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God” (Mark x, 25).

“Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth” (Matt. vi, 19).

When the judicious use of wealth is promotive of human happiness, and when poverty is the source of so much misery and crime, such teachings are not only false, but pernicious.

“Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body what ye shall put on.... Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns.... And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin.... Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed?... The morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof” (Matt. vi, 25-34).

To-day our land is infested with an army of tramps. Their skirmishers are deployed along every highway; their points of attack are the kitchen and the haymow; their text-book on military science is the Sermon on the Mount. “They sow not, neither do they reap;” “They toil not, neither do they spin.” They beg and steal. These are Christ’s followers—the truest followers he has on earth to-day.

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In the streets of our cities we see men clad in rags, idle, and drunken, and penniless. We see them arrested for vagrancy, thrust into prison, or made to labor for their bread. These are Christ’s martyrs.

Poor tramp and vagrant! How you are “persecuted for righteousness’ sake!” Men despise you; the farmer drives you from his door; the social economist racks his brain to devise a plan for your suppression; state governments legislate against you; everywhere you are treated as an outcast—and all because, taking the Bible for your guide, you endeavor faithfully to conform to its teachings.

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## Ignorance.

I refuse to accept the Bible as a moral guide because it condemns the use of reason and the acquisition of knowledge.

“Of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it” (Gen. ii, 17).

“She took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat. And the eyes of them both were opened” (iii, 6, 7).

“Therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden” (23).

“He that believeth not shall be damned” (Mark xvi, 16).

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For partaking of the fruit of the tree of knowledge, our parents were banished from Paradise; for obeying the dictates of reason, we are consigned to hell.

Education, physical, moral, and intellectual, is discouraged.

BODILY EXERCISE PROFITETH LITTLE.—*Paul.*

BE NOT RIGHTEOUS OVERMUCH.—*Solomon.*

NEITHER MAKE THYSELF OVER WISE.—*Solomon.*

Choice mottoes, the above, to hang up on the walls of the school-room!

“Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy” (Col. ii, 8).

“Knowledge puffeth up” (1 Cor. viii, 1).

“Thy wisdom and thy knowledge it hath perverted thee” (Isa. xlvi, 10).

“I gave my heart to know wisdom, and to know madness and folly; I perceived that this also is vexation of spirit. For in much wisdom is much grief; and he that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow” (Ecles. i, 17, 18).

“If any man be ignorant let him be ignorant” (1 Cor. xiv, 38).

“The wisdom of this world is foolishness with God” (1 Cor. iii, 19).

“The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge” (Prov. i, 7).

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of ignorance. This fear has kept the world in intellectual bondage. It is a flaming sword that priestcraft has placed in every highway of learning to frighten back the timid searchers after truth.

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“The clergy, with a few honorable exceptions,” says Buckle, “have in all modern countries been the avowed enemies of the diffusion of knowledge, the danger of which to their own profession they, by a certain instinct, seem always to have perceived.”

The Bible, and the religion emanating from it, are the fruitful parents of ignorance and idiocy. They demand a sacrifice of the very attribute which exalts the man of sense above the idiot; they bid him pluck out the eyes of Reason, and in their place insert the sightless balls of Faith.

“Reason should be destroyed in all Christians,” says Luther (L. Ungedr. Pred. Bru., p. 106).

“One destitute of reason,” is a phrase employed by Webster to define the word “fool.”

“We are fools for Christ’s sake,” exclaims Paul (1 Cor. iv, 10).

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## CHAPTER XXXII.

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# INJUSTICE TO WOMEN—UNKINDNESS TO CHILDREN —CRUELTY TO ANIMALS.

I refuse to accept the Bible as a moral guide because it has degraded woman.

The holy offices of wife and mother it covers with reproach. Its teachings carried out, as they were during the centuries of Christian rule, leave woman but two paths in which to tread—the one leading into slavery, the other into exile. Servitude in the house of a husband, or self-banishment into a convent—these are the sad alternatives presented for her choice.

“Thy desire shall be to thy husband and he shall rule over thee” (Gen. iii, 16).

“Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands” (Col. iii, 18).

“As the church is subject unto Christ so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything” (Eph. v, 24).

“Let your women keep silence in the churches, for it is not permitted unto them to speak, but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law. And if they will learn anything, let them ask their husbands at home; for it is a shame for a woman to speak in the church” (1 Cor. xiv, 34, 35).

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“Ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands.... For after this manner in the old time the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection to their own husbands; even as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord” (1 Peter iii, 1-6).

“Let woman learn in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence. For Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression” (1 Tim. ii, 11-14).

Oh! the unspeakable outrage that woman has suffered because of that old Jewish fable!

The teachings of the Bible respecting marriage are an insult to every married woman. Christ discouraged marriage (Matt. xix, 10-12), while a more despicable dissertation on marriage than Paul gives in the seventh chapter of 1 Corinthians was never penned.

In contracting matrimonial alliances, woman's rights and choice are not consulted. The father does his daughter's courting, and sells or gives her to whom he pleases. A father is even allowed to sell his daughter for a slave (Ex. xxi, 7). In the Decalogue the wife is classed with slaves and cattle as a mere chattel.

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Kidnapping is commanded for the purpose of obtaining wives.

“Therefore they [God's priests] commanded the children of Benjamin, saying, Go and lie in wait in the vineyards; and see, and, behold, if the daughters of Shiloh come out to dance in dances, then come ye out of the vineyards, and catch you every man his wife of the daughters of Shiloh, and go to the land of Benjamin.... And the children of Benjamin did so, and took them wives according to their number of them that danced whom they caught” (Jud. xxi, 20-23).

The Levitical law makes motherhood a sin that can be expiated only by offering a sin offering at the birth of every child. The degree of sinfulness depends upon the sex of the child; giving birth to a daughter being esteemed a greater sin than giving birth to a son (Lev. xii).

The laws of the Bible in regard to divorce are most unjust. A husband is permitted to divorce his wife if she displease him, while a wife is not allowed to obtain a divorce for any cause whatever.

“When a man hath taken a wife, and marries her, and it come to pass that she find no favor in his eyes, ... then let him write her a bill of divorcement, and give it in her hand, and send her out of his house” (Deut. xxiv, 1).

“When thou goest forth to war against thine enemies, and the Lord thy God hath delivered them into thine hands, and thou hast taken them captive, and seest among the captives a beautiful woman, and hast a desire unto her, that thou wouldst have her to thy wife; then thou shalt bring her home to thine house.... And it shall be, if thou have no delight in her, then thou shalt let her go whither she will” (Deut. xxi, 10-14).

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Wives were compelled to suffer outrage for the sins of their husbands.

“Thus saith the Lord, Behold, I will raise up evil against thee out of thine own

house, and I will take thy wives before thine eyes, and give them unto thy neighbor, and he shall lie with thy wives in the sight of this sun" (2 Sam. xii, 11).

"Their houses shall be spoiled and their wives ravished" (Is. xiii, 16).

"I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle; and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished" (Zech. xiv, 2).

"Let their wives be bereaved of their children and be widows" (Jer. xviii, 21).

The teachings of the Bible have been used by the church to keep woman in a subordinate position.

"There is not a more cruel chapter in history," says Dr. Moncure D. Conway, "than that which records the arrest by Christianity of the natural growth of European civilization regarding woman. In Germany it found woman participating in the legislative assembly, and sharing the interests and counsels of man, and drove her out and away.... Even more fatal was the overthrow of woman's position in Rome. Read the terrible facts as stated by Gibbon, by Milman, and Sir Henry Maine; read and ponder them, and you will see the tremendous wrong that Christianity did to woman."

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Even the priceless virtue of chastity, in the name of law and in the name of the Bible, was trampled under foot. Mrs. Gage, in "Woman, Church, and State," says:

"Women were taught by the church and state alike that the feudal lord, or seigneur, had a right to them, not only against themselves, but as against any claim of husband or father. The law known as *Marchetta*, or Marquette, compelled newly-married women to a most dishonorable servitude. They were regarded as the rightful prey of the feudal lord from one to three days after their marriage.... France, Germany, Prussia, England, Scotland, and all Christian countries where feudalism existed, held to the enforcement of Marquette."

Respecting this law, Michelet writes: "The lords spiritual had this right no less than the lords temporal. The parson, being a lord, expressly claimed the first fruits of the bride" (La Sorcerie, page 62).

In this country, while the most illiterate and depraved man is clothed with the rights of a sovereign, the noblest woman is held in a subordinate position; and from the Bible, priests and politicians have procured the chains that hold her in subjection.

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Referring to the Bible, America's greatest woman, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, says: "I know of no other books that so fully teach the subjection and degradation of woman" (Eighty Years and More).

Brave Helen Gardener says: "Every injustice that has ever been fastened upon women in a Christian country has been 'authorized by the Bible' and riveted and perpetuated by the pulpit" (Men, Women, and Gods, page 14).

"Women are indebted to-day for their emancipation from a position of hopeless degradation, not to their religion nor to Jehovah, but to the justice and honor of the men who have defied his commandments. That she does not crouch to-day where St. Paul tried to bind her, she owes to the men who are grand and brave enough to ignore St. Paul, and rise superior to his God" (Ibid, page 30).

George W. Foote of England says it will yet be the proud boast of woman that she never contributed a line to the Bible.

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## Unkindness to Children.

I refuse to accept the Bible as a moral guide because its teachings respecting the treatment of children are cruel and unjust.

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It advocates the use of corporal punishment for children.

"Thou shalt beat him with the rod" (Prov. xxiii, 14).

"Withhold not correction from the child: for if thou beatest him with the rod he shall not die" (Ibid xxiii, 13).

"Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child; but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him" (Ibid xxii, 15).

"The rod and reproof give wisdom" (Ibid xxix, 15).

It advocates capital punishment for children:

"If a man have a stubborn and rebellious son, which will not obey the voice of his mother, and that when they have chastened him will not hearken unto them; then shall his father and his mother lay hold on him, and bring him out unto the elders of his city, and unto the gate of his place.... And all the men of the city shall stone him with stones that he die" (Deut. xxi, 18, 19, 21).

It advocates the indiscriminate and merciless slaughter of little children:

"Their children also shall be dashed to pieces before their eyes" (Isa. xiii, 16).

"Samaria shall become desolate; for she hath rebelled against her God; they shall fall by the sword: their infants shall be dashed in pieces" (Hosea xiii, 16).

"As he [Elisha] was going up by the way, there came forth little children out of the city, and mocked him.... And he turned back, and looked on them, and cursed them in the name of the Lord. And there came forth two she bears out of the wood, and tare forty and two children of them" (2 Kings ii, 23, 24).

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It advocates the punishment of children for the misdeeds of their parents.

"I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children" (Ex. xx, 5).

"I will stir up the Medes against them, ... their eye shall not spare children" (Isa. xiii, 17, 18).

"I will also send wild beasts among you, which shall rob you of your children" (Lev. xxvi, 22).

David prays that the children of his adversaries may become vagabonds and beggars; and Jeremiah, that the children of his enemies may perish by famine.

God kills Bath-sheba's child:

"And the Lord struck the child that Uriah's wife bore unto David, and it was very sick.... And it came to pass on the seventh day that the child died" (2 Sam. xii, 15-18).

Poor babe! tortured and murdered for its parents' crime!

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## Cruelty to Animals.

I refuse to accept the Bible as a moral guide because it sanctions and enjoins unkindness and cruelty to animals.

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Portions of the Old Testament, and particularly those relating to sacrifices, are calculated to foster a spirit of brutality, and a total disregard for animal life. God revels in the blood of the innocent. The offering of fruits made by Cain is rejected by him; the bloody sacrifice of Abel is accepted.

Nearly the entire book of Leviticus is devoted to such laws as these:

"If he offer a lamb for his offering, then shall he offer it before the Lord. And he shall lay his hand upon the head of his offering, and kill it before the tabernacle of the congregation; and Aaron's sons shall sprinkle the blood thereof round about upon the altar" (Lev. iii, 7, 8).

"And if the burnt sacrifice for his offering to the Lord be of fowls, then he shall bring his offering of turtle-doves, or of young pigeons. And the priest shall bring it unto the altar, and wring off his head, and burn it on the altar; and the blood thereof shall be wrung out at the side of the altar" (Lev. i, 14, 15).

The minutest directions for conducting these bloody sacrifices come from the lips of Jehovah himself, and are too brutal and disgusting to repeat.

The number of animals sacrificed was incredible. At times whole herds were killed. On one occasion Asa sacrificed 700 oxen and 7,000 sheep. David made an offering of 1,000 bullocks and 2,000 sheep. At the dedication of the temple, 142,000 domestic beasts were sacrificed by Solomon.

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And this wholesale slaughter of innocent animals, we are told, was highly pleasing to the Lord. But

“What was his high pleasure in  
The fumes of scorching flesh and smoking blood,  
To the pain of the bleating mothers, which  
Still yearned for their dead offspring? or the pangs  
Of the sad ignorant victim underneath  
The pious knife?”

—Byron.

A God of mercy, it would seem, ought to protect the weaker orders of his creation; but the God of the Bible manifests an utter disregard for them. When the being created in his own image proved too true a copy, and he wished to destroy it, he sent a deluge, “and all flesh died that moved upon the earth.” To wreak his vengeance upon Pharaoh, he visited with disease and death his unoffending cattle. In times of war, he ordered his followers to “slay both man and beast.” Saul’s great transgression, the chief cause of his dethronement and death, was that he saved alive some sheep and oxen instead of killing them as God desired. David and Joshua, God’s favorite warriors, houghed the horses of their enemies, and thus disabled turned them loose to die.

We teach a child that it is wrong to rob the nests of birds. It opens the Bible and reads:

“If a bird’s nest chance to be before thee in the way in any tree, or on the ground, whether they be young ones, or eggs, and the dam sitting upon the young, or upon the eggs, thou shalt not take the dam with the young; but thou shalt in any wise let the dam go, *and take the young to thee*” (Deut. xxii, 6, 7). [414]

Throughout Christendom “man’s inhumanity to man” is only equaled by his cruelty to the inferior animals. The Buddhist, who has not the Bible for his guide, considers it a sin to harm the meanest creature. Even the savage kills only what he needs for food, or such as threaten him with danger. But the Christian, whose Bible gives him dominion over the beasts of the field and the fowls of the air, maims and murders in pure wantonness, and after years of patient service, even turns his beast of burden out to die of hunger and neglect.

For the sake of these dumb creatures, would that our world had less theology, and more humanity; had fewer Moodys, and more Henry Berghs! [415]

## CHAPTER XXXIII.

### TYRANNY—INTOLERANCE.

#### Tyranny. [Contents]

I refuse to accept the Bible as a moral guide because it enjoins submission to tyrants.

“Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man, ... whether it be to the king as supreme; or unto governors” (1 Pet. ii, 13).

“Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God; and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation” (Rom. xiii, 1, 2).

And these sentiments were uttered when a Nero sat upon the throne—when Palestine was being crushed beneath the iron heel of despotism—when brave and patriotic men were struggling for freedom.

The Bible has ever been the bulwark of tyranny. When the oppressed millions of France were endeavoring to throw off their yoke—when the Washingtons, the Franklins, the Paines, and the Jeffersons were contending for American liberty—craven priests stood up in the pulpit, opened this book, and gravely read: “The [416]

powers that be are ordained of God; they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation.”

In the American Revolution every Tory was a Christian, and nearly every orthodox Christian was a Tory. Writing in 1777, John Wesley says:

“I have just received two letters from New York.... They inform me that all the Methodists there were firm for the government, and on that account persecuted by the rebels” (Wesley’s *Miscellaneous Works*, Vol. III., page 410).

Referring to our Revolutionary fathers, Robert Dale Owen says:

“I know not what the private opinions of those sturdy patriots were, who, in the old Philadelphia State House, appended their signatures to the immortal document. But this I do know, that when they did so, it was in defiance of the Bible; it was in direct violation of the law of the New Testament.

“If a Being who cannot lie penned the Bible, then George Washington and every soldier who drew sword in the Republic’s armies for liberty expiate, at this moment, in hell-fire, the punishment of their ungodly strife! There, too, John Hancock and every patriot whose name stands to America’s Title Deed, have taken their places with the devil and his angels! All resisted the power; all, unless God lie, have received to themselves damnation” (Bachelier-Owen Debate, Vol. II., page 230).

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From the first century to the twentieth—from Paul to Leo—these Bible teachings have dominated the Christian world. Of the early Christian Fathers, Lecky writes:

“The teaching of the early Fathers on the subject is perfectly unanimous and unequivocal. Without a single exception, all who touched upon the subject pronounced active resistance to the established authorities to be under all circumstances sinful” (Rationalism in Europe, Vol. II., page 136).

Jeremy Taylor, one of the greatest of modern divines, speaking not for himself alone, but for all Christians, says:

“The matter of Scripture being so plain that it needs no interpretation, the practice and doctrine of the church, which is usually the best commentary, is now but of little use in a case so plain; yet this also is as plain in itself, and without any variety, dissent, or interruption universally agreed upon, universally practiced and taught, that, let the powers set over us be what they will, we must suffer it and never right ourselves” (Ductor Dubitantium, Book III., chapter iii).

This has been the chief cause of Christian triumph and Christian supremacy. It has secured for the church the adherence and support of every tyrant in Christendom. Thomas Jefferson truly says:

“In every country and in every age the priest has been hostile to liberty; he is always in alliance with the despot, abetting his abuses in return for protection to his own.”

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Writing of his country and his country’s church, Macaulay says:

“The Church of England continued to be for more than 150 years the servile handmaid of monarchy, the steady enemy of public liberty. The divine right of kings and the duty of passively obeying all their commands were her favorite tenets. She held these tenets firmly through times of oppression, persecution, and licentiousness, while law was trampled down, while judgment was perverted, while the people were eaten as though they were bread” (Essays, Vol. I., page 60).

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## Intolerance.

I refuse to accept the Bible as a moral guide because its teachings have filled the world with intolerance and persecution.

“If thy brother, 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 [that is, accept another religion] ... thou shalt not consent unto him; neither shall thine eye pity him; neither shalt thou spare, neither shalt thou conceal him; but thou shalt surely kill him; thine hand shall be first upon him to put him to death, and afterwards the hand of all the people” (Deut. xiii, 6–9).

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Kill your friend, kill your brother, kill your wife, kill your child, for accepting another religious belief!

Did a merciful God inspire this prayer?

“Let his days be few; and let another take his office. Let his children be fatherless, and his wife a widow. Let his children be continually vagabonds, and beg; let them seek their bread also out of their desolate places. Let the extortioner catch all that he hath; and let the strangers spoil his labor. Let there be none to extend mercy unto him; neither let there be any to favor his fatherless children” (Ps. cix, 8-12).

“In the literature of the world there is nothing more heartless, more infamous, than the 109th Psalm.”—Ingersoll.

Let me quote from the New Testament:

“He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned” (Mark xvi, 16).

“Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire” (Matt. xxv, 41).

“These shall go away into everlasting punishment” (Matt. xxv, 46).

“Cast into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched” (Mark ix, 45).

These passages ought to consign to everlasting abhorrence the being who uttered them, the book containing them, and the church indorsing them. This dogma of endless punishment is the dogma of fiends, the most infamous dogma that human lips have ever breathed! What needless terror it has inspired! What misery it has caused! Think of the millions of innocent children whose young lives it has filled with gloom! This horrible nightmare of hell has strewn the pathway of childhood with thorns where flowers should have been made to bloom; it has filled the minds of children with fear and made them wretched when their hearts should have been filled with joy; it has robbed home of wife and mother, it has driven thousands of pure and loving women to madness and despair. I had rather trace my descent to the tiger or hyena than to the creation of a God who dooms his creatures to eternal pain; and the time will come when the remembrance of the theologians who have taught this hideous lie will provoke more shame and pity than the ancestral apes do now.

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“If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house” (2 John i, 10).

Amid the storms of a winter night, a traveler, perishing with cold and hunger, knocks at your door and begs for food and shelter. You interrogate him as to his religious belief, and finding that he is not a member of your church you forbid him to enter. In the morning when you discover his lifeless body by the roadside, how impressed you will be with the transcendent beauty of Bible morals!

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Paul preached a sermon on charity, and then wrote to the Galatians as follows:

“If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed” (Gal. i, 9).

From the same pen, too, came this sneaking, infamous hint:

“I would they were even cut off which trouble you” (Gal. v, 12).

What ghastly fruits these teachings have produced! We see earth covered with the yellow bones of murdered heretics and scholars; we see the persecutions and butcheries of Constantine, of Theodosius, of Clovis, of Justinian, and of Charlemagne; we see the Crusades, in which nearly twenty millions perish; we see the followers of Godfrey in Jerusalem—see the indiscriminate massacre of men, women, and children—see the mosques piled seven deep with murdered Saracens—the Jews burnt in their synagogues; we see Cœur de Lion slaughter in cold blood thousands of captive Saracens; we see the Franks in Constantinople, plundering, ravishing, murdering; we see the Moors expelled from Spain; we see the murder of the Huguenots and Waldenses—the slaughter of German peasants—the desolation of Ireland—Holland covered with blood; we witness Smithfield and Bartholomew; we see the Inquisition with its countless instruments of fiendish cruelty; we see the *Auto-da-fé*, where heretics, clad in mockery, are led to torture and to death; we see men stretched upon the rack, disjointed, and torn limb from limb; we see them flayed alive—their bleeding bodies seared with red-hot irons; we see them covered with pitch and oil and set on fire; we see them hurled headlong from towers to the stony streets below; we see them buried alive; we see them hanged and quartered; we see their eyes bored out with heated augers—their tongues torn out—their bones broken with hammers—their bodies pierced with a thousand needles; we

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see aged women tied to the heels of fiery steeds—see their mangled and bleeding bodies dragged with lightning speed over the frozen earth; we see new-born babes flung into the flames to perish with their mothers, or with their mothers sewed in sacks and sunk into the sea; in short, on every hand, as a result of this book's teachings, we see hate, torture, death!

But, thanks to the brave Infidels who have gone before, you, Bible moralists, can use these instruments of cruelty to silence heretics to Christianity no more.

“Where are the hands which once for this foul creed,  
'Mid flame and torture, made an Atheist bleed?  
Gone—like the powers your fathers used so well  
To send souls heavenward through the flames of hell.  
And you, poor palsied creatures! you, ere long,  
With them thrice cursed shall swell Gehenna's throng.  
Your God is dead; your heaven a hope bewrayed;  
Your hell a by-word, and your creed a trade;  
Your vengeance—what? A mere polluting touch—  
cripple striking with a broken crutch!”

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## CHAPTER XXXIV.

### CONCLUSION.

Twenty crimes and vices—lying, cheating, stealing, murder, wars of conquest, human sacrifices, cannibalism, witchcraft, slavery, polygamy, adultery, obscenity, intemperance, vagrancy ignorance, injustice to woman, unkindness to children, cruelty to animals, tyranny, persecution—are, we have seen, sanctioned by the Bible. Scattering this book broadcast over the land, making it the chief text-book of the Sunday-school and, above all, placing it in our public schools and compelling our youth to accept it as infallible authority, is a monstrous wrong; and you who advocate it are the enemies of virtue and the promoters of vice. James Anthony Froude says: “Considering all the heresies, the enormous crimes, the wickedness, the astounding follies, which the Bible has been made to justify, and which its indiscriminate reading has suggested; considering that it has been, indeed, the sword which our Lord said he was sending, and that not the devil himself could have invented an implement more potent to fill the hated world with lies and blood and fury, I think certainly that to send hawkers over the world loaded with copies of this book, scattering it in all places, among all persons, ... is the most culpable folly of which it is possible for man to be guilty.”

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There are within the lids of this Bible a hundred chapters sanctioning the bloodiest deeds in all the annals of crime; and this is the book you wish to place in the hands of our sons! There are within the lids of this Bible a hundred chapters which no modest woman can read without her cheek becoming tinged with the blush of shame; and this is the book you wish to place in the hands of our daughters! If you delight to feast upon such carrion you have the right to do so, but you have no right to thrust it down the throats of your neighbors. As a Liberal, I concede to the Christian cuckoo the right to propagate her species; but I protest against her laying her eggs in the secular nest and having them hatched by the state.

I contend that the Bible does not present an infallible moral standard, and I have given many valid reasons why it does not. I expect the defenders of this book to complete the task that I have here essayed. They will claim that the Bible is opposed to crime. They will, no doubt, cite numerous passages in confirmation of this claim. Let them do this. Then place the results of our labors side by side. This will show that the Bible abounds with teachings that conflict. This fact established, the dogma of its divinity must fall. And this is what I am endeavoring to do—to tear this dogma from the human brain. Not until this is done can we have a pure morality. So long as men's minds are confused and corrupted by these conflicting and demoralizing teachings, so long will immorality prevail. You cannot make men moral while they accept as their moral guide a book which sanctions every crime and presents as the best models of human excellence the most notorious villains. You cannot make them moral by teaching them that a lie is better for being called inspired, that a vice becomes a virtue with age, that a dead rogue should be canonized and a live one killed.

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Not until this dogma is destroyed can you appreciate what is meritorious in the Bible. There are in it some noble precepts. It contains along with the false much that is true; along with the bad much that is good; but while you are compelled to

accept all—the true and the false, the good and the bad, as alike infallible, as alike divine—it can be of no value to you.

You may contend that I mistake the meaning of what I have quoted from this book. But the language is too plain to be mistaken. Do not tell me that it states one thing and means another. This is, you affirm, the word of your God. Is your God wanting in candor?

So far as the Bible is concerned, the criminal has as much to support the justness of his crime as the Christian has to sustain the truthfulness of his creed. The various doctrines of the church are not upheld by stronger Scripture proofs than have been cited in justification of the crimes that I have named.

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Bible apologists tell us that it is only in this book that wrongdoers confess and record their sins, and that this is evidence of its divinity. Were this true we might say that the Bible is the only book whose authors are so devoid of shame as to parade their sins. But this claim is not true. It was not the sinners who wrote these accounts of their sins any more than it is the criminals to-day who write and publish the accounts of their crimes.

Bible lands, we are told, are more moral than other lands. This is false. The morality of Pagan China and Japan, without the Bible, is not inferior to that of Christian Europe with it. Modern Europe with its partial rejection of the Bible is superior in morality to medieval Europe with its full acceptance of it. The morals of the people have improved in about the same ratio that their faith in the book has declined. A further declension of faith will bring a further improvement in morals. In Christian countries those who have discarded its teachings are morally superior to those who still accept them. It is the ignorant who are the most devout believers in this book, and it is the ignorant who are the most immoral. The intelligence and morality to be found in Christian lands are not the results of Bible teachings, but exist in spite of them.

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That some great and good men have commended the Bible as a moral guide is true. These commendations are given wide publicity. But the testimonials of these men are, for the most part, not the result of careful reading and study. They have been inspired by the teachings of childhood, by the sentiment that prevails around them, or by a perusal of only the choicest portions of the book. These testimonials, too, are mostly from men who, while expressing admiration for many of its teachings, do not believe and do not profess to believe in its divinity. Many of these testimonials are forgeries.

"If you discard the Bible, what," asks the Christian, "will you give us as a moral guide?" Enter a public library blindfolded; take from its shelves a volume at random, and you will scarcely select a worse one. The book you select may not pertain to morals. It may not even contain the word "moral." But neither does the Bible. Must we go to the ignorant past for our morality? Does human experience count for nothing? Have the most marvelous advances been made in every other department of human knowledge during the past two thousand years and none in ethical science? Read Bentham, Mill, and Spencer. Let your children study Count Volney's "Law of Nature," and Miss Wixon's "Right Living." These books are not infallible and divine, they are fallible and human; but they are immeasurably superior to any books that supernaturalists can offer. Not in Moses nor Jesus, not in the Decalogue nor Sermon on the Mount, is there to be found a statement of moral duties so just and so comprehensive as the following from Volney:

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*"What do you conclude from all this?"* I conclude from it that all the social virtues are only the habitude of actions useful to society and to the individual who practices them; that they all refer to the physical object of man's preservation; that nature having implanted in us the want of that preservation, has made a law to us of all its consequences, and a crime of everything that deviates from it; that we carry in us the seed of every virtue, and of every perfection; that it only requires to be developed that we are only happy inasmuch as we observe the rules established by nature for the end of our preservation; and that all wisdom, all perfection, all law, all virtue, all philosophy, consist in the practice of these axioms founded on our own organization:—PRESERVE THYSELF; INSTRUCT THYSELF; MODERATE THYSELF; live for thy fellow-men, that they may live for thee."

The Bible moralist would have us believe that from this book all morality has been derived; that God is the author and the Bible the revelation and sole repository of moral laws. But it is not from Gods and Bibles that these laws have come. In the words of Tyndall, "Not in the way assumed by our dogmatic teachers has the morality of human nature been propped up. The power that has molded us thus far has worked with stern tools upon a rigid stuff.... That power did not work with delusions, nor will it stay its hands when such are removed. Facts, rather than dogmas, have been its ministers—hunger, shame, pride, love, hate, terror, awe—such were the forces, the interaction and adjustment of which during the

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immeasurable ages of his development wove the triplex web of man's physical, intellectual, and moral nature, and such are the forces that will be effectual to the end."

Accepting the Bible—not for what it is claimed to be, the word of God, but for what it is, the work of man—I can excuse, in a degree, the crude ideas of right and wrong and the laxity of morals that prevailed among the people whose history it purports to record. The age in which they lived, the circumstances that surrounded them, must palliate, to some extent, their deeds and theories. But it is humiliating to think that in these better times, illuminated by the light of a glorious civilization, there are those who spurn the robes of virtue that Reason in the loom of grave Experience has woven, and who from the dark and musty closets of the past drag forth for use the soiled and blood-stained garments that barbarians wore.

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With this chapter our review of the Bible ends. We have examined successively the authenticity of its books, the credibility of its statements, and the morality of its teachings. The authenticity of the Bible must be abandoned. It will be abandoned, and abandoned soon. Its credibility, impaired by a knowledge of its lack of authenticity and the exposure of its numberless errors, will be contended for awhile longer. But this, in turn, will go. When its credibility has been destroyed, and it is acknowledged to be mostly a volume of fables and legends, priestcraft continuing to survive, the clergy, as a *dernier resort*, will descant upon the divine lessons of morality taught by these fables and legends. But the relentless iconoclasts of criticism will break this image also, and the Bible as a moral guide and religious authority will be laid away forever.

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## APPENDIX.

Arguments Against the Divine Origin and in Support of the Human Origin of the Bible.

A celebrated theologian has used with much ingenuity and effect the watch as an argument in support of the divine origin of the universe. I have a watch. Like other watches it is not infallible. But supposing that I should claim for it infallibility and divinity; that while other watches are of human invention and workmanship, this particular make of watches is the work of God. The claim would be deemed too absurd for serious consideration. I would be regarded as a lunatic or a jester. Now, it is no more absurd to claim infallibility and divinity for a watch than it is to claim infallibility and divinity for a book. Yet millions of people of recognized sanity and intelligence profess to believe, and many of them do sincerely believe, that a book called the Bible is divine. How do we account for this? It is simply the result of centuries of religious education. I could have taken my children and taught them that my watch is divine. Had I kept them isolated as far as possible from other people, had I commanded them to shun discussion, and forbidden them to reason about it, as the clergy do in regard to the Bible, they would probably believe it. I was taught that the Bible is divine. I believed it. But in a fortunate hour I listened to the voice of Reason; I examined the claims of its advocates; I read it; and the halo of holiness surrounding the old book vanished.

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As a supplement to my review of the Bible I shall present some arguments, thirty-six in number, against the divine origin and in support of the human origin of the Bible. The brevity and incompleteness of many of them will, I admit, justify the conclusion not proven. I have space for little more than a mere statement of them. The evidence supporting them will be found in the preceding chapters of this book.

In a discussion of this question the champion of the Bible is placed at a tremendous disadvantage—is handicapped as it were—at the very commencement by this fact: While both the advocates and opponents of Bible divinity admit that man exists and has written books, it has not been proven that a God even exists, much less that he has written or inspired a book. But let us concede, for the sake of argument, that there is a God; that he is all-powerful, all-wise, and all-just; and that he can write or inspire a book. Is the Bible the work of such a Being? It is not. The following are my arguments:

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1. *Its mechanical construction and appearance.* The Bible is printed with type made by man, on paper made by man, and bound in a volume by man. In its mechanical construction and appearance it does not differ from other books.

2. *The character of its contents.* The contents of this book consist of thoughts—human thoughts—every thought bearing unmistakable evidence of having emanated from the human mind. There is not a thought expressed in the Bible, the meaning of which can be comprehended, that is beyond the power of man to conceive. If it contains thoughts, the meaning of which cannot be comprehended, they are not a revelation, and are self-evidently human.

3. *The manner in which its contents were communicated to man.* These thoughts are expressed in human language. The Bible originally appeared, it is claimed, in the Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek languages, two of them obscure languages of Western Asia. The president of the United States does not issue an important proclamation in the Cherokee or Tagalese language, and the ruler of the universe would not have issued a message intended for all mankind in the most obscure languages of the world. Had he given a message to man he would have provided a universal language for its transmission.

4. *Lack of divine supervision in its translation into other tongues.* Failing to provide a universal language for its transmission, God would at least have supervised its translation into other languages. Only in this way could its inerrancy and divinity have been preserved. Yet no divine supervision has been exercised over the translators, the transcribers, and the printers of this book. Divine supervision, it is admitted, was confined to the original writers.

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5. *Not given to man until at a late period in his existence.* This is an argument advanced by Napoleon Bonaparte. Napoleon rejected the Bible. He said that if it had been given to man at the creation he might have accepted it, but that its late appearance proved to him that it was of human origin.

6. *Not given as a guide to all mankind, but only to an insignificant portion of it.* Not only has the Bible been confined to a small period of man's existence, it is nearly all addressed to one small race of earth's inhabitants. While Christians affirm that it is a universal message intended for all, its doctrines and ceremonies pertain to the Jews. This is wholly true of the Old Testament, and, with the exception of a few doubtful passages, true of the Four Gospels, the chief books of the New Testament. Now, is it reasonable to suppose that this great and just All-Father, as he is called, would for centuries take into his special confidence and care a few of his children and ignore and neglect the others?

7. *It deals for the most part, not with the works of God, but with the works of man.* What man does and knows is not a divine revelation. Paine says: "Revelation, therefore, cannot be applied to anything done upon earth, of which man himself is the actor or witness; and consequently all the historical and anecdotal part of the Bible, which is almost the whole of it, is not within the meaning and compass of the word revelation, and therefore is not the word of God."

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8. *But one of many Bibles.* There are many Bibles. The world is divided into various religious systems. The adherents of each system have their sacred book, or Bible. Brahmins have the Vedas and Puranas, Buddhists the Tripitaka, Zoroastrians the Zend Avesta, Confucians the five King, Mohammedans the Koran, and Christians the Holy Bible. The adherents of each claim that their book is a revelation from God—that the others are spurious. Now, if the Christian Bible were a revelation—if it were God's only revelation, as affirmed—would he allow these spurious books to be imposed upon mankind and delude the greater portion of his children?

9. *Many versions of this Bible.* Not only are there many Bibles in the world, there are many versions of the Christian Bible. The believers in a divine revelation have not been agreed as to what books belong to this revelation. The ancient Jews, who are said to have sustained more intimate relations with God than any other race, were not agreed in regard to this. The accepted Hebrew version contains 39 books (22 as divided by the Jews), the Samaritan version contains but 6 books (some copies 5); while the Septuagint version contains 50. The early Christians were not agreed. The Syriac version of the New Testament contains 22 books; the Italic 24 (some copies 25); the Egyptian 26; the Vulgate 27. The Sinaitic and Alexandrian MSS. each contains 29 books, but they are not all the same. The Gothic version omitted four books in the Old Testament. The Ethiopic omitted books in both the Old and New Testaments which are now accepted, and included books in both which are now rejected. The Bibles of the Roman Catholic, of the Greek Catholic, and of the Protestant churches do not contain the same books. This disagreement regarding the books of the Bible is proof of their human origin.

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10. *Incompetency of those who determined the canon.* If the Bible were the word of God it would not have required the deliberations of a church council to determine the fact. And yet the Christian canon was determined in this manner; and it took centuries of time and many councils to make a collection of books that was acceptable to the church. Not until the close of the fourth century were all the books of the Bible adopted.

It is commonly supposed that the members of these councils were men of great learning and still greater honesty. On the contrary, they were mostly men of little learning and less honesty. They were ignorant, fanatical, and immoral. Their deliberations were characterized by trickery, lying, mob violence, and even murder. Many of them, so far from being able to read and critically examine the books of the Bible, could not read their own names. Even the molders of their opinions concerning the canon—Irenaeus, Tertullian, Clement of Alexandria, Jerome, and Augustine—were they living now, would be considered very ordinary clay. The historical facts in regard to the formation of the Bible, if generally known, would be sufficient to dispel all illusions respecting its divinity.

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11. *Books belonging to this so-called revelation lost or destroyed.* There were many other Jewish and Christian writings for which divinity was claimed and which Bible writers themselves declare to be of as much importance and authority as those which still exist. The transitory and perishable nature of these books proves their human origin, and shows that while those that remain are more enduring they are not immortal and imperishable, and hence not divine.

12. *Different versions of the same book do not agree.* There are a hundred versions and translations of the books of the Bible. No two versions of any book agree. The translators and copyists have altered nearly every paragraph. The earlier versions alone contain more than 100,000 different readings. The original text no longer exists and cannot be restored. Every version, it is admitted, abounds with corruptions. Now, to assert that a book is at the same time divine and corrupt is a contradiction of terms. God, it is affirmed, is all-wise, all-powerful, and all-just. If he is all-wise he knew when his work was being corrupted; if he is all-powerful he could have prevented it; if he is all-just he would have prevented it. This God, it is declared, is everywhere and sees everything. He watches the sparrows when they fall, and numbers the hairs of our heads. He knows the secrets of every heart. If he made a revelation to his children, upon the acceptance and observance of which depends their eternal happiness, and then knowingly and wilfully allowed this revelation to be perverted and misunderstood, he is not a just God, but an unjust devil.

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13. *The mutability of its contents.* The alterations made by transcribers and translators demonstrate the mutability of its contents, and this disproves its divine character. To admit that man can alter the work of God is to admit that human power transcends divine power. If the thoughts composing the Bible were divine man could not alter them.

14. *The anonymous character of its books.* If the Bible is to be accepted even as a reliable human record its authors ought, at least, to be persons of acknowledged intelligence and veracity. And yet almost nothing is known of its authors. The authorship of fully fifty books of the Bible is absolutely unknown. Its books are nearly all either anonymous or self-evident forgeries. This is true of the most important books. The Pentateuch we know was not written by Moses, nor the Four Gospels by Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. Aside from the anonymous character of the writings of the Bible, with a few exceptions, they evince neither a superior degree of intelligence nor a high regard for the truth.

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15. *Its numerous contradictions.* If the Bible were divine there would be perfect harmony in all its statements. One contradiction is fatal to the claim of inerrancy and divinity. Now the Bible contains not merely one, but hundreds of contradictions. Nearly every book contains statements that are contradicted by the writers of other books. This is especially true of the Four Gospels. The writers of these agree that a being called Jesus Christ lived and died; but regarding nearly every event connected with his life and death they disagree. Human discord, and not divine harmony, dwells in its pages.

16. *Its historical errors.* If the Bible were divine its history would be infallible. But it is not. It presents as historical facts the most palpable fictions, and denies or misstates the best authenticated truths of history. Referring to Bible writers, the eminent Dutch divines, Drs. Kuenen, Oort, and Hooykaas, in their preface to "The Bible for Learners," say: "As a rule, they concern themselves very little with the question whether what they narrated really happened so or not." Its history is fallible and human.

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17. *Its scientific errors.* God, the alleged author of this book, it is claimed, created the universe. He ought, then, to be familiar with his own works. The writers of the Bible, on the contrary, display a lamentable ignorance of the universe and its phenomena. The Rev. Dr. Lindsay Alexander, orthodox Calvinist, in his "Biblical Theology," referring to these writers, says: "We find in their writings statements which no ingenuity can reconcile with what modern research has shown to be scientific truth." The demonstrated truths of modern science were unknown to them. They give us the crude ideas of primitive man and not the infallible knowledge of an omniscient God.

18. *Its alleged miracles.* The Bible is filled with marvelous stories. The sun and moon stand still; the globe is submerged with water to the depth of several miles; rods are transformed into serpents, dust into lice, and water into blood and wine; animals hold converse with man in his own language; men pass through fiery furnaces unharmed; a child is born without a natural father; the dead arise from the grave and walk the earth again. These marvelous stories—these miracles—are adduced to prove the divine origin of the Bible. They prove its human origin. If these miracles prove the divinity of the Bible, then nearly all the books of old are divine, for they abound with these same miracles. If these stories be true, if these miracles occurred, the laws of nature were arrested and suspended. The laws of nature are immutable. If the laws of nature are immutable they cannot be suspended. The laws of nature cannot be suspended; they never have been suspended; these stories are false; and being false, the Bible is not divine.

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19. *Its immoral teachings.* If the Bible were of divine origin its moral teachings would be divine. It would be what its adherents affirm it to be, an infallible moral guide. But its moral teachings are not divine; it is not an infallible moral guide. It contains, like other Bibles, some moral precepts; but it also sanctions nearly every crime and vice. War and murder, bigotry and persecution, tyranny and slavery, demonism and witchcraft, adultery and prostitution, drunkenness and vagrancy, robbery and cheating, falsehood and deception, are all authorized and commended by this book. It cannot, therefore, be divine.

20. *Its inferior literary character.* If the Bible were the word of God, as a literary composition it would be above criticism. It would be as far superior to all other books as God is superior to man. Its rhetoric would transcend in beauty the glorious coloring of a Titian. Its logic would be faultless. The Bible is not such a book. It contains some admirable pieces and these owe much of their literary merit to the translators, appearing as our version did in the golden age of English literature. As a whole it is far inferior to the literature of ancient Greece and Rome; inferior to the literature of modern Italy, of France, of Germany, and of England. If the Bible be the word of God it is a long way from God up to Shakespeare.

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21. *Its writers do not claim to be inspired.* Had the writers of the Bible been inspired they would have known it and would have proclaimed it. Had they claimed to be inspired it would not prove the Bible to be divine, for like Mohammed, they might have been deluded, or, like a more recent finder of a holy book, impostors. But they do not even claim that their books are divine revelations. Some of these books contain what purport to be divine revelations, but the books themselves do not pretend to be divine. The only exception is the book called Revelation, admittedly the most doubtful book of the Bible.

“All scripture is given by inspiration.” Waiving the questions of authenticity and correct translation, who wrote this? Paul. What was the scripture when he wrote? The Old Testament, the Old Testament alone. The writers of the Old Testament do not claim to be divinely inspired. This is a claim made by the later Jews and by the early Christians. Paul and the other writers of the New Testament do not claim that their writings are divine. This, too, is a claim made by others long after they were written.

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The fact that the writers of the Bible do not believe and do not assert that their books are of divine origin, that this claim was first made many years after they were composed, by those who knew nothing of their origin, is of itself, in the absence of all other evidence, sufficient to demonstrate their human origin.

22. *God has never declared it to be his word.* The Bible does not, as we have seen, purport to be the word of God. Nowhere, neither in the book nor outside of it, has he declared it to be his revealed will. It contains various messages, chiefly of local concern, which he is said to have delivered to man; but the book, as such, is not ascribed to him nor claimed by him.

23. *Whatever its origin it cannot be a divine revelation to us.* Even supposing that the writers of the Bible had claimed to be inspired and that these books really were a divine revelation to them, they would not, as Paine justly argues, be a divine revelation to us. The only evidence we would have of their divinity would be the claim of the writer—a claim that any writer might make—a claim that even an honest writer might make were he, like many religious writers, the victim of a delusion.

24. *A written revelation unnecessary.* To affirm the necessity of a written revelation from God to man, as Christians do, is to deny his divine attributes and ascribe to him the limitations of man. If God be omnipotent and omnipresent a written revelation is unnecessary. To impute to him an unnecessary act is to impute to him an imperfection, and to impute to him an imperfection is to impugn his divinity. We do not write a communication to one who is present. Think of an

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infinite, all-powerful, and ever-present God communing with his living children through an obscure and corrupted message said to have been delivered to a tribe of barbarians three thousand years ago!

25. *Its want of universal acceptance.* A divine revelation intended for all mankind can be harmonized only with a universal acceptance of this revelation. God, it is affirmed, has made a revelation to the world. Those who receive and accept this revelation are saved; those who fail to receive and accept it are lost. This God, it is claimed, is all-powerful and all-just. If he is all-powerful he can give his children a revelation. If he is all-just he will give this revelation to all. He will not give it to a part of them and allow them to be saved and withhold it from the others and suffer them to be lost. Your house is on fire. Your children are asleep in their rooms. What is your duty? To arouse them and rescue them—to awaken all of them and save all of them. If you awaken and save only a part of them when it is in your power to save them all you are a fiend. If you stand outside and blow a trumpet and say, "I have warned them, I have done my duty," and they perish, you are still a fiend. If God does not give his revelation to all; if he does not disclose its divinity to all; if he does not make it comprehensible and acceptable to all; in short, if he does not save all, he is the prince of fiends.

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If all the world's inhabitants but one accepted the Bible and there was one who could not honestly accept it, its rejection by one human being would prove that it is not from an all-powerful and an all-just God; for an all-powerful God who failed to reach and convince even one of his children would not be an all-just God. Has the Bible been given to all the world? Do all accept it? Three-fourths of the human race reject it; millions have never heard of it.

26. *Non-agreement of those who profess to accept it.* If the Bible were the work of God there would be no disagreement in regard to its teachings. Its every word would be as clear as the light of day. Yet those who profess to accept it as divine are not agreed as to what it means. In the Christian world are a hundred sects, each with a different interpretation of its various teachings. Take the rite of baptism. Baptism is enjoined by the Bible. But what is baptism? The three leading Protestant denominations of this country are the Baptist, the Presbyterian, and the Methodist. I ask the Baptist what constitutes baptism, and he tells me immersion; I ask the Presbyterian, and he tells me sprinkling; I ask the Methodist which is proper, and he tells me to take my choice. Sectarianism is conclusive proof that the Bible is human.

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27. *Inability of those who affirm both a human and a divine element in it to distinguish the one from the other.* Confronted by its many glaring errors and abominable teachings, some contend that a part of it is the work of man and a part the work of God. And yet they are unable to separate the one from the other. If a hundred attempts were made by them to eliminate the human from the divine no two results would be the same. Their inability to distinguish this supposed divine element from the human is proof that both have the same origin—that both are human.

28. *The character of its reputed divine author.* The Bible is an atrocious libel on God. It traduces his character, and denies his divinity. The God of the Bible is not this all-powerful, all-wise, and all-just Ruler of the universe, but a creature of the human imagination, limited in power and knowledge, and infinite only in vanity and cruelty.

29. *The belief of primitive Christians in its divinity not an immediate conviction but a growth.* Had the books of the Bible been divinely inspired their divinity would have been recognized at once. When they originally appeared they were believed and known to be the works of man and accepted as such.

Referring to the Old Testament, Dr. Davidson says: "The degree of authority attaching to the Biblical books grew from less to greater, till it culminated in a divine character, a sacredness rising even to infallibility" (The Canon of the Bible, p. 274).

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Of the New Testament Dr. Westcott says: "It cannot, however, be denied that the idea of the inspiration of the New Testament, in the sense in which it is maintained now, was the growth of time" (On the Canon of the New Testament, p. 55).

The admitted fact that these books were originally presented and received as human productions, and that the idea of inspiration and divinity was gradually and slowly developed by the priesthood, is conclusive proof that they are of human and not of divine origin.

30. *Its acceptance by modern Christians the result of religious teaching.* In India the people believe that the Vedas and other sacred books or Bibles are divine. Why do they believe it? Because for a hundred generations they have been taught it by

their priests. The Turks believe that the Koran came from God. They believe it because for twelve centuries this has been their religious teaching. For nearly two thousand years Christian priests have taught that the Holy Bible is the word of God. As a result of this the masses of Europe and America believe it to be divine. Each generation, thoroughly impregnated with superstition, transmitted the disease to the succeeding one and made it easy for the clergy to impose their teachings on the people and perpetuate their rule. The belief of Christians in the divinity of the Bible, like the belief of Hindoos in the divinity of the Vedas, and of Mohammedans in the divinity of the Koran, is the result of religious teaching.

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The ease with which a belief in the divine character of a book obtains, even in an enlightened age, is illustrated by the inspired (?) books that have appeared in this country from time to time, and for several of which numerous adherents have been secured. About seventy-five years ago a curious volume, called the Book of Mormon, made its appearance. A few impostors and deluded men proclaimed its divinity. A priesthood was established; Mormon education and Mormon proselytism began their work, and already nearly a million converts have been made to the divinity of this book.

Dr. Isaac Watts says: "The greatest part of the Christian world can hardly give any reason why they believe the Bible to be the Word of God, but because they have always believed it, and they were taught so from their infancy." Really the entire Christian world—pope, bishop, priest, and layman—the learned and the unlearned—can give no other valid reason.

Profoundly true are these words of the historian Lecky: "The overwhelming majority of the human race necessarily accept their opinions from authority. Whether they do so avowedly, like the Catholics, or unconsciously, like most Protestants, is immaterial. They have neither time nor opportunity to examine for themselves. They are taught certain doctrines on disputed questions as if they were unquestionable truths, when they are incapable of judging, and every influence is employed to deepen the impression. This is the origin of their belief. Not until long years of mental conflict have passed can they obtain the inestimable boon of an assured and untrammelled mind. The fable of the ancient is still true. The woman even now sits at the portal of life, presenting a cup to all who enter in which diffuses through every vein a poison that will cling to them for ever. The judgment may pierce the clouds of prejudice; in the moments of her strength she may even rejoice and triumph in her liberty; yet the conceptions of childhood will long remain latent in the mind to reappear in every hour of weakness, when the tension of the reason is relaxed, and when the power of old associations is supreme" (History of Rationalism, Vol. II., pp. 95, 96).

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Schopenhauer says: "There is in childhood a period measured by six, or at most by ten years, when any well inculcated dogma, no matter how extravagantly absurd, is sure to retain its hold for life." Considering the impressionable character of the immature mind, and how nearly impossible it is to eradicate the impressions of childhood, the wonder is not that so many believe in the divinity of the Bible, unreasonable as the belief is, but rather that so many disbelieve it.

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31. *An article of merchandise.* Bibles are manufactured and sold just as other books are manufactured and sold. Some are printed on poor paper, cheaply bound, and sold at a low price; while others are printed on the best of paper, richly bound, and sold at a high price. But all are sold at a profit. The publisher and the book seller, or Bible agent, derive pecuniary gain from their publication and sale. It may be urged that the Bible can be obtained for the asking, that millions of copies are gratuitously distributed. But this is done in the interest of Christian propagandism. Nearly all religious, political, and social organizations, to promote their work, make a free distribution of their literature.

The printing and selling of Bibles is as much a part of the publishing business as the printing and selling of novels. One of the leading publishing houses of this country is that of the American Bible Society. Wealthy and deluded Christians have been successfully importuned to contribute millions to this Society. Directly or indirectly the clergy reap the harvest, leaving the gleanings to the lay employees, many of whom labor at starvation wages. In Great Britain the crown has claimed the sole and perpetual right to print the Bible (A. V.). For monetary or other considerations her kings have delegated this right to publishers who have amassed fortunes from its sale. Twenty years ago Bible publishing was characterized as the worst monopoly in England. If the Bible were divine God would not allow it to be used as merchandise. It would be as free as light and air.

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32. *A pillar of priestcraft.* Not only is the Bible printed and sold like other books, but its so-called divine teachings themselves are used as merchandise. There are in Christendom half a million priests and preachers. These priests and preachers are supported by the people. Even the humble laborer and the poor servant girl are obliged to contribute a portion of their hard earnings for this purpose. In this

country alone two thousand million dollars are invested for their benefit; while two hundred million dollars are annually expended for their support. For what are these men employed? To interpret God's revelation to mankind, we are told. An all-powerful God needing an interpreter! According to the clergy, God though omnipotent has had to send a communication to his children, and though omniscient he cannot make them understand it. Those ignorant of other tongues and unable to make known their wants require interpreters. The various Indian tribes employ them. For the sake of gain these men degrade their God to the level of an American savage, representing him as incapable of expressing his thoughts to man, and representing themselves as the possessors of both human and divine wisdom and authorized to speak for him.

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These Bibles are simply the agents employed by priests to establish and perpetuate their power. They claim to be God's vicegerents on earth. As their credentials they present these old religious and mythological books. These books abound with the marvelous and mysterious—the impossible and unreasonable—and are easily imposed upon the credulous. If the contents of a book be intelligible and reasonable you can not convince these people that it is other than natural and human; but if its contents be unintelligible and unreasonable it is easy to convince them that it is supernatural and divine. Smith's Bible Dictionary says: "The language of the Apostles is intentionally obscure." Of course; if it were not obscure there would be no need of priests to interpret it, and what is Scripture for if not to give employment to the priests?

We are triumphantly told that the Bible has withstood the assaults of critics for two thousand years. But as much can be said of other sacred books. Any business will thrive as long as it is profitable. Bibles will be printed as long as there is a demand for them; and there will be a demand for them as long as priests do a lucrative business with them. Considering their abilities the vendors of the Gospel are among the best paid men in the world to-day. The wealth of men and the smiles of women are bestowed upon them more lavishly than upon any other class. There are thousands in the ministry enjoying comfortable and even luxurious livings who would eke out a miserable subsistence in any other vocation.

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33. *Its advocates demand its acceptance by faith rather than by reason.* In the Gospels and in the Pauline Epistles, the principal books of the New Testament, Christ, the reputed founder, and Paul, the real founder of the Christian religion, both place religious faith, *i. e.*, blind credulity, above reason. This evinces a lack of divine strength and is a confession of human weakness.

Modern advocates of the Bible in presenting the dogma of divine inspiration ask us to discard reason and accept it by faith. In the affected opinion of these men, to examine this question is dangerous, to criticise the Bible is impious, and to deny or even doubt its divinity is a crime. What is this but a tacit acknowledgment that the faith they wish us to exercise is wanting in themselves? This condemnation of reason and commendation of credulity is an insult to human intelligence. A dogma which reason is obliged to reject, and which faith alone can accept, is self-evidently false; and its retention is not for the purpose of supporting a divine truth, but for the purpose of supporting a human lie.

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34. *The refusal of its advocates to correct its acknowledged errors.* That the clergy are controlled by mercenary motives rather than a love of truth is attested by the fact that they continue to teach the admitted errors of the Bible. Our Authorized version, it is conceded by Christian scholars, contains hundreds of errors. That the Revisers corrected many of these errors is admitted. Yet the clergy cling to these errors and refuse to accept a corrected text. The principal reasons assigned for retaining the Old version instead of adopting the New are these: 1. The English of three hundred years ago possesses a certain charm which distinguishes the Bible from more modern works and secures for it a greater reverence. 2. Its division into chapters and verses renders it more convenient. 3. The adoption of the New would expose the errors of the Old, suggest the possible fallibility of the New, and sow the seeds of doubt. Thus expediency prompts them to teach the acknowledged errors of man in preference to what they claim to be the truths of God. This proves the human character of the Bible and the insincerity of its professed exponents.

35. *Its authority maintained by fraud and force.* For sixteen hundred years—from the time that Constantine, to gain a political advantage over his rivals, became a convert to the Christian faith—corruption and coercion have been the predominant agents in maintaining its supremacy. Fagot, and sword, and gun, and gibbet, and rack and thumbscrew, and every artifice that cunning and falsehood could devise, have been used to uphold the dogma of this book's divinity. To-day, in nearly every nation of Europe, the powers of the state are employed to compel allegiance to it. And in this free Republic, everywhere, with bribe and threat, the authorities are invoked to force its bloody and filthy pages into the hands of innocent school girls to pollute with superstition, lust, and cruelty their young and tender minds. These deeds of violence, these pious frauds, these appeals to the civil powers, all prove it

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to be the work of man and not the word of God.

36. *The intelligence of the world for the most part rejects it.* If the Bible were divine the wise would be the best qualified to realize and appreciate the fact; for while all may err the judgment of the intelligent is better than the judgment of the ignorant. In Christendom the ignorant nearly all believe the Bible to be the infallible word of God, every verse of which is to be accepted literally. A more intelligent class reject the objectionable portions of it, or give to them a more rational and humane interpretation. Those of the highest intelligence—the great leaders of the world in national affairs, in the domain of literature, in science and philosophy, and in Biblical and religious criticism—the Washingtons and Lincolns, the Franklins and Jeffersons, the Fredericks and Napoleons, the Gambettas and Garibaldis; the Shakespeares and Byrons, the Goethes and Schillers, the Carlyles and Emersons, the Eliots and de Staëls; the Humboldts and Darwins, the Huxleys and Haeckels, the Drapers and Tyndalls, the Comtes and Spencers; the Humes and Gibbons, the Voltaires and Renans, the Bauers and Strausses, the Paines and Ingersolls—all these reject its divinity. A Gladstone is an anomaly.

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Dr. Watson of Scotland gives frank expression to a fact of which his fellow clergymen are fully cognizant, but which they are loth to admit. He says: "The great, and the wise, and the mighty, are not with us. These men, the master minds, the imperial leaders among men are outside our most Christian church."

The ignorant suppose that the intelligent accept the Bible; because the intelligent, dependent in a large degree upon the ignorant, and knowing that of all passions religious prejudice and hatred are the worst, do not care to arouse their antagonism by an unnecessary avowal of their disbelief. This is especially true of men in public life. But these men think; and to their intellectual friends they talk.

In his "History of the Bible," Bronson C. Keeler says: "The only men distinguished for their learning who now believe it to be the inspired word of God, are the men who are, either directly or indirectly, making their living out of it." Do these learned divines themselves believe it? Nearly every intelligent clergyman entertains and confidentially expresses opinions regarding the Bible which he dare not proclaim from the pulpit. But master and slave are alike growing weary—the master of his duplicity, the slave of his burden. Emancipation for both is approaching. To-day the clergy smile when they meet; some day they will laugh outright, this stupendous farce will be ended, and man will be free.

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