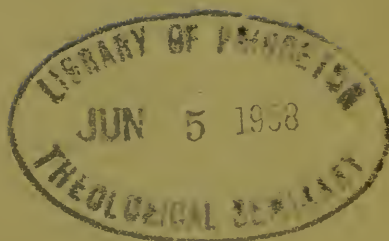


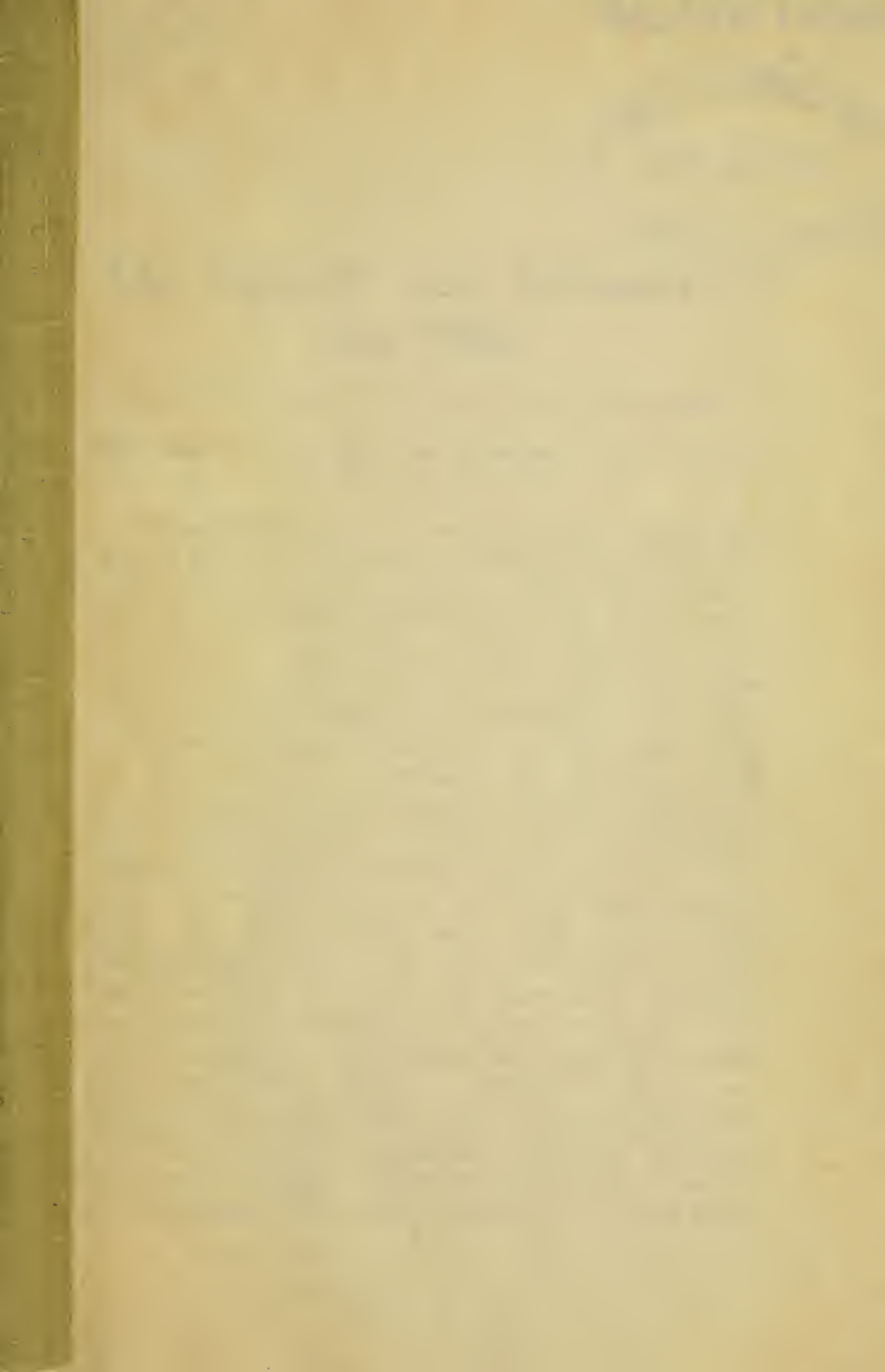
L.W. Munhall

The Integrity and
Authority of
the Bible

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The Integrity and Authority of the Bible.

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No sensible person will object to any devout and honest effort to ascertain the dates and determine the authorship—humanly speaking—of the various books composing the Bible, and the exact text of the sacred writings. We, who call ourselves orthodox Christians, are not afraid of the light: we welcome the freest and fullest investigation of the foundations of our faith, and most critical examination of our text book. But we insist that the examination and criticisms shall be made by competent persons; and that, before we will abandon the views and faith held by the historic Church for eighteen centuries; we must have, not conjectures, presuppositions and bold unprovable assumptions, but demonstrable facts. And since God's thoughts and ways are as much above man's as the heaven is above the earth, we insist, as is certainly our right, that something more than familiarity with oriental languages and literature is necessary to qualify one for this work. Paul says, "Which things also we speak, not in words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Spirit teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. Now the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are fool-

ishness unto him; and he cannot know them, because they are spiritually judged," 1 Cor. ii: 13, 14.

We also insist that there were intellectual giants and competent scholars in the Church in former times, who should not be ignored; and whose work in the field of biblical and textual criticism is not to be looked upon with contempt.

How stands the case? The integrity and authority of the Bible have been challenged from the completion of the canon. Its claims, its revelations and demands are absolutely unique, running across the currents of human thought and desire; and therefore discredited and rejected by the natural man, "For the mind of the flesh is enmity against God." The Church, from the times of Celsus and Porphyry, has easily withstood the assaults of infidelity and successfully defended the "Impregnable rock of the Scriptures." Those unfamiliar with the history of this conflict of the ages, should know that not one single objection raised against the integrity and trustworthiness of the Bible by the modern higher critic, is original with him. Speaking of the work of the modern higher critics, the late Lord Beaconsfield, in addressing a diocesan convention at Oxford, said, "I find the common characteristic of their writings is this: that their learning is always second-hand. . . . When I examine the writings of their masters, the great scholars of Germany, I find that in their labors also there is nothing new. All that inexorable logic, irresistible rhetoric, and bewildering wit, could avail to popularize these views was set in motion to impress the new learning on the minds of the two leading nations of Europe, by the English and French deistical writers of the last century, and they produced their effect in the French Revolution." Nearly every objection raised against

the integrity of the Bible by the present-day higher critics can be found in Volume VI, Didot Edition of Voltaire's works and Payne's "Age of Reason." See chapter sixteen, Highest Critics vs. Higher Critics, published by Eaton & Mains, 150 Fifth Avenue, New York City. The plan of the battle has changed. The enemy used to be outside the breastworks: he is now inside—in our pulpits, in our educational institutions and editorial chairs; but it is the same battle, and the weapons used against the book are the very same the infidels have always used. The claim, therefore, that these criticisms are the result of greater light and learning than the Church before had, is not true. That we have better light and more information on biblical matters than fifty or one hundred years ago, we all well enough know; but it has been uniformly favorable to the traditional view. Prof. A. H. Sayce, of Oxford, has recently said: "I have dealt elsewhere with the monumental corroboration of the histories we find in the Pentateuch. Here I have no space to do more than refer to them, and to emphasize the fact that the most uncompromising opponents of the results of the higher criticism are to be found in the ranks of the foremost students of Assyrian and Egyptian antiquity. In truth, those of us who have devoted our lives to the archæology of the ancient Oriental world have been forced back into the traditional position, though doubtless with a broader basis to stand upon and clearer views of the real signification of the biblical text. Year by year, almost month by month, fresh discoveries are breaking in upon us, each more marvellous than the last, but all, as regards the Pentateuch, in favor of the old, rather than of the new teaching."

Let me here call attention to a few instances. In denying the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch, the

critics proved (?) their position by boldly declaring that the art of writing was unknown in the time of Moses. Prof. Sayce has said: "We have learned not only that Moses *could* have written the Pentateuch, but that it would have been something like a miracle if he had not done so. We have long known that the use of writing for literary purposes is immensely old in both Egypt and Babylonia. Egypt was emphatically a land of scribes and readers, and so, too, was Babylonia. Already, in the days of the Old Empire, the Egyptian hieroglyphs had developed into a cursive hand, while the Babylonian cities had their libraries of clay books centuries before the Bible tells us that Abraham was born in Ur of the Chaldees. But we now know a good deal more than this. Thanks to the discovery of the cuneiform tablets of Tel-el-Amarna in Upper Egypt, we now know that in the century before the exodus people were reading and writing and corresponding with one another throughout the civilized East, from the banks of the Euphrates to those of the Nile. And this was not all. The correspondence was carried on in the cuneiform characters, and for the most part in the language of Babylonia, necessitating the existence of schools where the foreign language and script could be taught and learned. What this means can be realized only by those who have studied the vast and complicated Babylonia syllabary, with the two languages, Semitic and Sumerian, which a knowledge of it implies. The centre of all this literary activity was Canaan. At one time that country had been under the influence and domination of Babylonia, but in the age of the Tel-el-Amarna letters it had become an Egyptian province. A considerable number of the letters were written by Canaanites, and they show that a knowledge of reading and writing

must have been widely spread throughout the land. Libraries and archive chambers existed, like those of Babylonia, and editions of Babylonian literary works were made for them. In fact, Canaan, in the Mosaic age, like the countries which surrounded it, was fully as literary as was Europe in the time of *Renaissance*."

The archæologists have now in their possession more than three hundred letters written before Moses was born.

Two summers ago, at a meeting of the International Archæological Society, in the city of Paris, Prof. Shiel, in speaking of his Noachian Tablet, which corresponds so very closely to the Mosaic account of the deluge, called special and particular attention to the fact that there is indisputable evidence that it was written between 2127 and 2147 B. C., or about six hundred years before Moses was born.

Because "Sargon, the king of Assyria," mentioned in Isaiah xx: 1, is not mentioned by any other ancient writer, the critics insisted that Isaiah is historically inaccurate. "But the first Assyrian mound excavated by Botta proved to be the palace of Sargon, and Isaiah was vindicated."

Because no ancient writer, native or foreign, has anything whatever to say of Belshazzar, the mention of him in the book of Daniel has been ridiculed by the critics, and cited as an instance of the untrustworthiness of the record. But the Sippara inscription, and contract tablets discovered and deciphered by the Assyriologists, fully vindicate Daniel's record.

Because Babylonian names appear in certain Old Testament books, the critics vehemently insist that they must have been written in exile or post-exile times. Prof. Sayce says: "Canaan was overrun by Babylonian arms and influence long before the age of

Abraham. . . . Contract tablets, drawn up and dated in the reigns of Eri-Aku, or Arioch of Ellasar, and of other Babylonian kings of the same period, contain Hebrew names, which indicate that a Hebrew-speaking population was settled in Babylon at the time."

At the Bonn Vacation Conference four years ago, Prof. Meinhold declared that there were no such historic personages as the patriarchs; and denied any historic situation for the tabernacle, with its magnificent services and worship, and the desert wanderings of God's ancient people. A copy of these utterances was sent to each of the eight Protestant theological schools of Prussia, with the inquiry, "Are such views in harmony with the confessional status of the Protestant Church?" With the single exception of Greifswald, the reply was—Yes!

Such criticism is destructive of the Christian's faith and hope. If Abraham is a myth, so also is Jesus Christ, for the Bible declares He is "the Son of Abraham," Matt. i: 1-17; and the Christian religion which sprang out of Jewry and has the Abrahamic covenant for its authority that it is from God, is robbed of its credentials; and the individual Christian's life and experience are unreal, for he also is declared to be a child of Abraham, see Gal. iii: 6-9.

And now once again God vindicates His dishonored Word. Mr. Pinches has discovered among the names of witnesses to the deeds recorded on the contract tablets, the names of Abram, Jacob (el) and Joseph (el). So we now certainly know, if we ever doubted it, that what the Bible says concerning the patriarchs being real personages is most surely true.

I can multiply instances of a similar character. On the one hand, it is true that the widest learning and acutest ingenuity skepticism can command, has failed

utterly to prove demonstratively one single historic inaccuracy against the Bible; while, on the other hand, nearly every apparent error, discrepancy and contradiction can be satisfactorily explained to honest inquirers after the truth, and from the record itself.

Take three or four cases of textual criticism. The late Professor Evans, of Lane Theological Seminary, and his associate, Professor Henry Preserve Smith, justified their contention that the Bible was not always historically and chronologically trustworthy by calling attention to the statement in Gal. iii: 17, "That the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law which was four hundred and thirty years after," etc., which they said was in error; because Exodus xii: 40, 41, tells us that they were in Egypt 430 years; and as the covenant was given unto Abraham about 200 years before the children of Israel went down into Egypt, here is most certainly a discrepancy. An ordinary reader should not make the mistake these learned professors made. It is not said in Gal. iii: 17, that the law was given 430 years after the covenant was entered into with Abraham; but from the "confirmation" of the covenant. If we turn to Genesis xlv: 1-3, we find that the covenant was confirmed unto Jacob the night before he started down to Egypt.

In 2 Samuel xxiv: 24, it is said, "David bought the threshing floor and the oxen for fifty shekels of silver;" and in 1 Chron. xxi: 25, "So David gave to Ornan for the place six hundred shekels of gold by weight." Now, here is a contradiction, say the critics. But is there? I say by no means. In the first statement, it is said David paid fifty shekels of silver for the threshing-floor and the oxen—the dome of the rock, so-called: it is all under the dome of the mosque of Omar; and in the second statement it is said he paid

six hundred shekels of gold for "the place"—that is, the whole of Mount Moriah, or, at the least, so much of it as was used by Solomon for the temple and temple area. See 2 Chron. iii: 1.

In 1 Kings vi: 1, it is said, "In the four hundred and eightieth year after the children of Israel were come out of the land of Egypt, in the fourth year of Solomon's reign over Israel, in the month Zif, which is the second month, that he began to build the house of the Lord." Now, according to the generally accepted chronology, there is an error here of from eighty-two to one hundred and eleven years. But I insist that no devout and honest critic will say that the error is in the record, since there is no proof of it. It must be remembered that there are twelve kinds of chronology. Therefore, in all probability the trouble lies there. Prof. Sayce has recently shown, by Egyptian chronology, that Solomon began to build the temple 958 B. C. This agrees exactly with the time mentioned in 1 Kings vi: 1. Another possible explanation is this: It is a rule among Orthodox Jews, even to this day, to never reckon into their chronology the time they, as a people, were in captivity. The Book of Judges tells us that during the period of the Judges, the children of Israel were in captivity one hundred and eleven years, the exact time of the difference between the statement in 1 Kings vi: 1, and the chronology of Archbishop Usher:

Once again. In 2 Kings viii: 26, it is said, "Two and twenty years old was Ahaziah when he began to reign, and he reigned one year in Jerusalem;" and in 2 Chron. xxii: 2, it is said, "Forty and two years old was Ahaziah when he began to reign, and he reigned one year in Jerusalem." In looking up this case, the other day, with a scholarly friend of mine, we found

that 2 Chron. xxii: 2, reads forty-two in the Hebrew; but when we turned to the Septuagint, we found that it read twenty. Therefore, some Hebrew copyist must have written four for two.

No one at all acquainted with the situation will deny that there are difficulties, and some that appear to be insuperable; but no man is justified in saying that they are insuperable. Such an assumption would imply a claim of infallibility on his part.

It is the business of honest higher criticism to ascertain the truth respecting all apparent discrepancies, contradictions and errors in the authorized and revised texts; but I submit that it is disreputable to honest scholarship to assume that, because we may not be able to vindicate the record, therefore it never can be vindicated. Within the past ten years, very many difficulties have been solved—difficulties that appeared to be insuperable. Why may not other difficulties be solved? The historic Church has always stood for the integrity and authority of the Bible. The proof that the Church is justified in this contention is found in its wonderful progress and achievements. And further proof of this is found in the fact that as we make concessions to the skeptics, we find the Church is losing its power to uplift its members to higher and more Christlike living, and to win the lost to the Saviour of men.

Professor Hommel, of Munich, who, after Prof. Sayce, is recognized as the ablest living archæologist, and more than Prof. Sayce a scholar and critic, has recently said, with regard to the decipherments he has made of the Tel-el-Amarna tablets: "They brush aside the cobweb theories of the so-called higher critics of the Pentateuch, and place us in a position from which no future attack of skeptical criticism can hope to dis-

judge us. The theory of higher criticism must collapse inevitably and irretrievably, and the circumstance that the critics still persist in holding their views against indisputable evidence to the contrary, we can only regard as additional proof of the hopeless bankruptcy of their theories."

I know I shall be told that Canon Driver and Professors Ladd, Bacon, Terry, Briggs, Mitchell, Harper *et al*, do not agree with the extreme views of seven-eighths of the Dutch and German critics. But logically they must. Prof. Kuenen said of Doctor Driver: "He is with us, but lacks the courage to say plainly what he really believes." And I am convinced that the same may be truthfully said of the rest of these gentlemen.

It is true, there is a great variety of opinions among the critics concerning methods and views of biblical and textual criticism. The late Doctor J. W. Mendenhall, while editor of the *Methodist Review*, showed that there were 539 different theories respecting the Old Testament, and 208 of the New, or a total of 747 for the entire book. It does look as though God had again brought confusion to those who would build to heaven by their own wisdom and energy. The so-called higher critics are, however, pretty well agreed upon the following points: *First*. That the Pentateuch was not written by Moses. *Second*. That the Pentateuch is a conglomerate, gathered from many sources, and redacted into its present form by some unknown person in post-Solomonian, and possibly in post-exile times. *Third*. That not a little of this record is folklore, myths, legends and traditions, borrowed from neighboring nations; and is, therefore, in no sense the Word of God. *Fourth*. That much of the Old Testament record is historically, chronologically and

scientifically untrue; and the objections to it, urged by Voltaire, Payne, Eichhorn, Astruc, Spinoza, Hobbs *et al*, are brought forward by Christian professors and ministers to prove it with seemingly great satisfaction and delight. *Fifth.* That according to their near-horizon theory, the prophet could not see beyond his own times, or that which was inevitable to them; therefore there are no Messianic predictions. *Sixth.* That there are but few, if any, Davidic Psalms. *Seventh.* That while the son of Amoz may have written the first thirty-nine chapters of the prophecy of Isaiah, some one else certainly wrote the last twenty-seven chapters. *Eighth.* That the book of Esther is "historical fiction." *Ninth.* That the book of Job is a "fictitious drama," and belongs to the Cocma or Wisdom literature, and was written either in the time of Solomon, or in post-exile times. *Tenth.* That but few of the Old Testament books were written by those whose names they bear. *Eleventh.* That the book of Daniel was not only not written by Daniel, but by some unknown writer, some time between 335 and 168 B. C.

Because of these and other impeachments of the integrity of the Biblical record, the critics and all who accept their views, deny the authority of the Bible, especially the Old Testament, and properly so, if their claims are true. At the Vermont Epworth League State Convention, last July, in Burlington, Dr. S. P. Cadman, of New York City, said, in an address, "I preach to men of brains. They challenge what I say and demand my authority. 'Is it the Church?' they ask. I say, No! 'Is it the Bible?' I say, No!" Turning to me, he said, "Doctor Munhall says 'The Bible is authority.' I deny it! 'Where is your authority?' they ask. I answer, Jesus Christ is my

authority." But I submit, if these brainy people to whom our friend statedly ministers, have any grey matter, they will continue to ask questions somewhat after this fashion: Will you tell us, Dr. Cadman, about Jesus Christ, what He did and taught? And after Dr. Cadman performed this blessed ministry, they would further inquire: Where did you get "your information?" Dr. Cadman would then be obliged to answer, "From the Bible." Then right away they would say: "But your Bible is not authoritative, according to your own declaration; how, then, can we believe your message concerning Jesus Christ?" Do you not see the impossibility of preaching an infallible Saviour from an unauthoritative record? The inevitable logic of such a position is Unitarianism.

The Brooklyn *Times* says, in the course of a thoughtful editorial: "The weakness of every attempt to reconcile faith and the higher criticism, by asserting that while the Bible is not in itself infallible, it contains infallible truths, is that it throws upon every individual the personal responsibility for sifting the truth in the book from the error. This is a duty that cannot be delegated either to critic or to spiritual adviser. The passages of the Bible are not bracketed and marked, 'this is true,' and 'this is not true,' and there is no knowledge taught in seminary or college that gives assurance of infallible discrimination. If some is truth and some is error, and there is no authority outside of the Bible itself to guide the reader, the Church may as well disband, for its very foundations are unsettled."

I, for one, accept Jesus as infallible authority in all matters wherein He has expressed Himself. Do you? Well, let us now turn to the record and ascertain what He thought of the Old Testament. It should be remembered that the Old Testament canon was com-

pleted long before Jesus was born. Therefore the Bible He believed and used was the very same Old Testament we have to-day. He never once criticised it, or questioned its authority; but always appealed to it as authoritative with confidence and reverence; which is in striking contrast to the flippancy with which it is criticised, and the irreverence shown it by many in our pulpits and educational institutions to-day.

“He taught them as one having authority, and not as their scribes”—the higher critics of His day. These same scribes “made void the Word of God,” Matt. xv: 6. They pretended to believe in Moses and yet rejected Jesus as Messiah. But Jesus said unto them: “For if ye believed Moses, ye would have believed Me; for he wrote of Me. But if ye believe not his writings (and how can one if they are not authoritative?), how shall ye believe My words?” John v: 46, 47. Jesus here utterly refutes two postulates of the higher criticism, *i. e.*, that writing was unknown in the time of Moses, and, there are no Messianic predictions; and, also explicitly and emphatically declares that it is not possible for one even to believe in Him, much less to accept Him as authority, who disbelieves the writings of Moses. He said, “Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of Me,” John v: 39. Jesus of course, referred to the Old Testament Scriptures, for there were none other in His day. “And beginning from Moses, and from all the prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself. . . . And He said unto them, These are My words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, how that all things must needs be fulfilled which are written in the law of Moses, and the

prophets, and in the Psalms concerning Me," Luke xxiv: 27, 44. Since Jesus thus recognized the authority of the entire Old Testament, and appealed to its predictive testimony concerning Himself in vindication of His claims, can any one consistently and truly accept Him as authority and at the same time deny the trustworthiness and authority of this same record?

He bore frequent and unequivocal testimony to the authoritative, divine character of all parts of the Pentateuch. (a) Concerning the Book of Genesis, see Matt. xix: 4-8; xxiv: 37-39; Mark x: 4-9; Luke xi: 49-51; xvii: 26; John i: 45; vii: 22, 23; vii: 44, 56. (b) Concerning the Book of Exodus, see Matt. xii: 3-5; xxii: 31, 32; Mark vii: 9, 10; x: 19; John vi: 31-49. (c) Concerning the Book of Leviticus, see Mark i: 44; John vii: 22, 23. (d) Concerning the Book of Numbers, see John iii: 14; vi: 31-39. (e) Concerning the Book of Deuteronomy, see Matt. iv: 4, 7, 10; Mark x: 4-9. (f) Concerning the entire Old Testament Scriptures, and therefore also for the Pentateuch, see Matt. v: 17; xi: 13; xxvi: 54; Luke xxiv: 27, 44; John v: 39; xix: 28.

That Christ certainly regarded Moses as the writer of the Pentateuch, see Matt. viii: 4; xix: 4-8; Mark x: 4-9; Luke xvi: 29, 31; xx: 37; xxiv: 27, 44; John v: 46, 47; vii: 22, 23.

Jesus quoted from twenty-one books of the Old Testament, nineteen times in Matthew, fifteen times in Mark, twenty-five times in Luke, and eleven times in John.

He anticipated modern higher criticism; and by declaring His belief in the historical accuracy of many events recorded in the Old Testament, made it impossible for any one to deny them and at the same time claim Him consistently as authority. The following

instances will confirm my statement: *First.* Creation of man, Matt. xix: 4. *Second.* Death of Abel, Matt. xxiii: 35; Luke xi: 51. *Third.* Noah and the flood, Matt. xxiv: 37-39; Luke xvii: 26, 27. *Fourth.* Abraham, Matt. i: 1-17; xxii: 31, 32; John viii: 33, 37, 53. *Fifth.* Destruction of Sodom, Luke xvii: 28, 29, 32. *Sixth.* The burning bush, Matt. xxii: 31, 32; Mark xii: 26; Luke xx: 37. *Seventh.* Giving the manna, John vi: 31, 32. *Eighth.* The law concerning leprosy, Matt. viii: 4. *Ninth.* Cleansing of Naaman, Luke iv: 27. *Tenth.* The brazen serpent, John iii: 14. *Eleventh.* Jonah and the marine monster, Matt. xii: 40. *Twelfth.* Elijah commanding fire from heaven, Luke ix: 54-56.

His belief in the integrity of the Old Testament was of the unquestioning sort—which is in marked contrast to the conceit of those gentlemen who are wise above what is written. Hear Him: “Think not that I came to destroy the law or the prophets: I came not to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass away, one jot (*jod*, the smallest Hebrew letter) or one tittle (the marks that give the Hebrew letters their value) shall in no wise pass away from the law, till all things be accomplished,” Matt. v: 17, 18. And because the Old Testament says: “All flesh is grass, and all the goodness thereof is as the flower of the field: the grass withereth, the flower fadeth: because the Spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it: surely the people is grass. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand forever,” Isaiah xl: 6-8. He said, “The Scripture cannot be broken,” John x: 35.

And thus we see how constantly our Lord appealed to the Old Testament, and believed it to be authoritative. I am quite sure no one will go astray in his teaching who follows His example in this regard: as

no one can truly believe Him to be authority and deny the authority of the record He so much honored.

Peter believed in the integrity and authority of the Old Testament Scriptures. In the record we have of his sermon on the day of Pentecost, we find little else than quotations from the Old Testament. It is said, however, "And with many other words did he testify and exhort;" but we do not know what they were, for God did not think enough of Peter's words to preserve them. About the only thing in the sermon worth preserving were the quotations he made from the Old Testament Scriptures. But it was a wonderful sermon, judging by results. Three thousand souls saved proves to a demonstration that the word preached was with authority and power. I think the Methodist Episcopal Church in New York City is just now sadly in need of a few such sermons.

Stephen's sermon before the Council was made up almost entirely of quotations from the Old Testament. Of course, he did not have a great number converted, as did Peter, for his audience was select and small; but there is good reason for believing that this sermon was the means of Paul's conversion, and he was worth to the Church possibly as much as Peter's three thousand.

It is said of Apollos' preaching, that "he powerfully confuted the Jews, and that publicly, showing by the Scriptures that Jesus was the Christ," Acts xviii: 28. The hardest task a minister of Jesus Christ can undertake is to convince Hebrew people of the Christship of Jesus. But Apollos did it, "powerfully" and "publicly," not by his learning and eloquence, but by the Old Testament Scriptures.

"Paul and Barnabas tarried in Antioch, teaching and preaching the Word of the Lord (the Old Testa-

ment Scriptures), with many others also," Acts xv: 35.

Paul said to Timothy, "From a babe thou hast known the sacred writings (*hiera grammata*), which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus," 2 Timothy iii: 15. These writings that the critics declare are untrustworthy and unauthoritative, are by Paul said to be "sacred," and "able to make wise unto salvation."

Luke tells us that the superior nobility of the Bereans was because "they received the Word with all readiness of mind, and examined the Scriptures daily, whether these things were so," Acts xvii: 11. They recognized the authority of the Old Testament, and made their appeals to it. "Many of them therefore believed; also of the Greek women of honorable estate, and of men, not a few."

Jesus, the apostles and the early Christians always recognized the authority and trustworthiness of the Old Testament Scriptures, and preached and taught them with commanding faith, for they had been taught that "forever, O Lord, Thy Word is settled in heaven," Psalm cxix: 89; and that God had said: "For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: so shall My Word be that goeth forth out of My mouth: it shall not return unto Me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it," Isaiah lv: 10, 11. What wonder they "turned the world upside down."

Let us see to what ends the Bible is appointed—the *Bible*, and not men's views and opinions of it:

First. By it we are saved, James i: 18, 21; 1 Peter i: 23; Romans x: 17; 2 Peter i: 4.

Second. By it we are nourished, 1 Peter ii: 2; Acts xx: 28-30.

Third. By it we are cleansed, Psalm cxix: 9; Eph. v: 26; John xv: 3.

Fourth. By it we are kept, Psalm xvii: 4; cxix: 11; John xvii: 14, 15.

Fifth. By it we are developed, John xvii: 17; Acts xx: 32; 1 Thess. ii: 13.

Sixth. By it we are furnished for testimony and service, 2 Tim. ii: 15.

Seventh. By it we overcome, Eph. vi: 17; Jer. xxiii: 29; Hebrews iv: 12.

I submit, is it possible, or even thinkable, that all these glorious and blessed results, and more, can be secured by lost and dying men through a book as faulty, untruthful and unauthoritative as the critics have made the Bible appear to be? But believing "all Scripture is given by inspiration of God," we can easily understand why Paul insisted it "is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works," 2 Tim. iii: 16, 17; and, foreseeing the skepticism and unfaith of these very days, he was led by the Spirit of God, in his last sublime and heroic letter, to say, "I charge thee, in the sight of God, and of Christ Jesus, who shall judge the quick and the dead, and by His appearing and His kingdom, preach the Word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all long-suffering and teaching. For the time will come when they will not endure the sound doctrine; but, having itching ears, will heap to themselves teachers after their own lusts: and will turn away their ears from the truth, and turn aside unto fables," 2 Tim. iv: 1-4.

What further shall we say of the situation?

First. The higher criticism is now quite the fashion in most of our leading educational institutions, and many of our prominent pulpits; and is apparently viewed with favor by not a few in authority. When I was a boy, the objections now urged by the critics in the Church against the integrity of the Word of God, were used by the infidels in their assaults upon the religion of Jesus. These assaults were vigorously and successfully repelled, and the integrity of the old book vindicated; and God gloriously honored His people for their fidelity to truth; for those were the brightest and most prosperous days in the history of Methodism.

A friend of mine said to the man who is at the head of one of our leading educational institutions, not five hundred miles from here, "Doctor, the teachings of the higher critics is just what the infidels formerly urged against the Bible." "Yes, I know; but what if the infidels were right?" he answered. My friend said, "But they were not." The doctor replied, "But they were."

It is said some one asked Mr. Ingersoll recently, "Why do you not give your lecture against the Bible any more?" He replied, "The professors and preachers are doing that work so much better than I possibly can, and their influence is so much greater."

I do know that, in two of our theological schools, the Old Testament professors are giving their students all the objections against the integrity of the record, and making no attempt whatever to answer these objections. And these students are going out to fill our pulpits, with little or no knowledge of the Bible; their minds filled with objections to the book the Church commissions them to preach. Can any one reason-

ably expect spiritual results from the ministry of such men? I know of one of these young men, who, within four years of his graduation, left the Methodist Episcopal Church, became pastor of a Congregational Church, then pastor of a Unitarian Church, and then a blatant infidel, all in the same town.

A wealthy member of our Church, a delegate to the last General Conference, told me, "I sent my oldest son to a Methodist educational institution not three hundred miles from New York City. Before he left home he was considered by all who knew him to be a model Christian young man. He would conduct 'family worship,' lead the church prayer meeting; was a teacher in the Sunday school, and would speak and exhort in the meetings of the church. While at school he came under the influence of a certain professor, who is a higher critic. He came home an infidel, and has not once been inside a church since." When the father told me this, he burst into tears and said, "Brother Munhall, I would a thousand times rather my boy had lived all his days in ignorance, than to have had his faith thus shipwrecked." What moral right has any institution of our Church to employ and support such men in their faculties? These institutions were founded and endowed at great sacrifice by the fathers, for the purpose of giving our young people scholastic culture in harmony with vital Christianity, as taught in the Word of God; and as a protest against the skepticism and rationalism of the secular schools and universities. For any one of them now to employ a teacher who will promulgate infidel and rationalistic objections to the Bible is a gross betrayal of one of the most sacred trusts of the Church. I speak as a loyal member and minister of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

Second. Spiritual paralysis is an inevitable result of teaching and preaching higher criticism. The unspiritual condition of the Church in the lands of the Reformation is conclusive proof of this statement. The late Prof. Delitzsch, the greatest Hebraist of the century, notwithstanding in his later life he made concessions to the higher critics, denounced higher criticism as "Bible-hating, history manufacturing science;" and even Hitzig, an ultra-higher critic, characterized this criticism as "an abomination of desolation." Prof. Sayce recently said, "Higher criticism saves no souls, and heals no bodies." An unevangelical church soon becomes unevangelistic; and an unevangelistic church must of necessity experience spiritual inanition. How can it be otherwise? The higher critic cannot consistently preach what the Bible says about inspiration, hell, repentance, regeneration, atonement, witness of the Spirit, sanctification, priesthood and advocacy of our Lord, resurrection, the kingdom, hope and the glory, and, as a matter of fact, does not. God has ordained His Word to the salvation and spiritual enrichment of men, and nothing else can do the business. How can the work be done by men who discredit that Word and deny its authority?

The unspiritual condition of our churches is alarming. Year before last, 24,254 Methodist Episcopal churches in the country showed a net increase to their membership of 14,337—or a little more than half a member per church. The last year's reports that are at hand show a large decrease in the membership of these churches. It is said the pastors have been pruning their lists. Doubtless this will explain in part the startling situation. It is doubtless true that many who have been cut off would have been saved to the Church had the right kind of spiritual condi-

tions existed. There are, beside, many reasons alleged explanatory of the situation; but they do not wholly explain. There is an appalling unspiritual condition in Methodism. There is no use trying to disguise it. The contributions made to the missionary cause tells the story, if the membership roll does not. Revivals the past two years have been the exception—yes, the past five. The doctrine of a sanctified life is in contempt among us. Worldliness is alarmingly on the increase. Bishop Foster has said: “The Church of God is to-day courting the world. Its members, by their unchristian lives, are bringing it down to the level of the ungodly.” Bishop Fowler says: “The Church itself has degenerated into a kind of social club.” The theatre, race-track and dance-halls have been patronized the past years as never before. In many parts of the country, the Sabbath is little better respected and observed than in France. Selfishness, formality and ritualism are likewise much in evidence. Many of our leading educational institutions are permeated with skepticism and rationalism; and we have heard of but few revivals in them during the past five years. Many of our people and not a few of our pastors do not believe in revivals, because they do not believe the doctrines of the Methodist Episcopal Church. But this is not all. The very air seems to vibrate with skepticism and contempt for Bible truth. Agnosticism, rationalism, theosophy, Christian science, spiritualism and many other delusions are alarmingly upon the increase, and becoming immensely popular. And even this is not all. Intemperance, licentiousness, infidelity and crime, are increasing with rapid strides; and enmity against the Church and hatred of it is becoming more intense and bitter. The following is a clipping from the *Philadelphia Ledger*:

CONCORD, N. H., April 6th.—In announcing Thursday, April 13th, as Fast Day in this State, Governor Rollins said: "The decline of the Christian religion, particularly in our rural communities, is a marked feature of our times, and steps should be taken to remedy it. There are towns where no church bell sends forth its solemn call from January to January; there are villages where children grow to manhood unchristened; there are communities where the dead are laid away without the benison of the name of Christ and where marriages are solemnized only by justices of the peace."

What is the real cause of all this? For myself, and I have had unusually good opportunities for studying the case, and have given much time and careful thought to it, I say, It is chiefly because of the dishonor put upon God's holy Word by the higher critics. If the Bible was believed and preached as the fathers believed and preached it, the Church would be full of life and power, as it was in their day. Of this I have no doubt.

Bishop Ryle says: "And what is the source of all this mischief? I believe it is the result of the constant attacks made by the learned critics on the inspiration of the Old Testament, producing a general feeling of skepticism about the New among the large mass of people who know nothing of any criticism, but are glad of some excuse for doubting the truth of the whole Bible. The consequence is a general shakiness in men's minds about Bible religion altogether. I firmly believe that many of our modern critics mean no harm, but actually think they are doing God service. But I believe with equal firmness that one result of this higher criticism is that many people in this day never read their Bibles at all, or at any rate read less than they used to."

Third. The reaction has set in. There are religious fads. Paris sets the fashion in dress for the ladies. Germany and Holland set the fashions theologically for the preachers and teachers who are vain in their own conceits, and want to be considered progressive and up to date. These accept any teaching that bears the stamp of Germany and Holland. Prof. Christlieb once asked a friend of mine, "Why do the English and Americans so quickly gather the theological rubbish we Germans throw away?" But the fashions change.

Professor Luthardt can speak from experience on this subject. For more than forty years he has been professor of theology at Leipsic, and an effective leader among the evangelical scholars of Germany. He has combatted the rationalistic theories that were so popular and threatening a generation ago, and he has lived to see them dead and buried. Therefore he has no anxiety because of the new storms that have arisen. In a recent article he utters these encouraging words: "We have had too many experiences in this respect, have seen too many hypotheses come and go. Who knows what gravediggers already stand at the door? We older ones had experience in Baur's criticism of the New Testament, and some of us took an active part in opposing it. Where is that school now? What a stir D. F. Strauss made in his day! All who understand the matter now have abandoned the theory that the life of Jesus consists of myths. How many in Germany, even in scientific circles, compromised themselves by their attitude towards Renan's 'Life of Jesus!' Who ever speaks seriously of this French romance now?"

The critics who keep informed as to the real situation are already hedging. Prof. Harnack, of Berlin,

two years ago issued a volume on "The Chronology of the New Testament," in which he made very great concessions to the conservative school; which has influenced many of the critics to abandon not a few of their extreme views, and caused the conservatives to push the battle with vigor. Such men as Prof. Julicher, of Marburg; Adolph Zahn, of Stuttgart; Edouard Rupprecht, of Bavaria; Hoedemaker, of Amsterdam; Stosch, of Berlin; Douglass, of Glasgow; Dr. Valpy French; Prof. Green, of Princeton; Osgood, of Rochester, and a host of others on both sides of the sea, have done magnificent service in behalf of the old faith. The marvellous discoveries of archæology have brought the antiquarians all into line with the splendid services of these scholars, and the reaction is carrying everything before it. I do not doubt but that in less than ten years the higher critics of the Old Testament will be no more respected than the Tübingen school now.

Fourth. What shall we do? We have built fine churches. We have a learned and eloquent ministry. We have big organs and fine music. Some of our pulpits have been turned into lecture platforms. We have turned some of our church buildings into lunch counters and concert halls. We have had magic lanterns, broom drills and the Cecilian Troubadores. We have organized leagues, brotherhoods, circles and societies until it would puzzle a Philadelphia lawyer to keep track of them. And yet, in spite of it all, the situation has grown steadily worse. It is thought by some that if we extend the time limit, or abolish it altogether, or admit the laymen to equal representation to the General Conference, and the women, too; or abolish the presiding eldership; or abrogate the rule forbidding dancing, card-playing and theatre-going,

etc., etc., that the tide will turn. But all of these will not suffice. God's Holy Spirit has been grieved by the dishonor that has been put upon His holy Word. We have got to humble ourselves before God, got to get down low in the dust before Him and confess our sins. If we will do this, and give the Bible the place it should have in our ministry; if we will believe the Bible, live the Bible and preach the Bible, in humble dependence upon the Holy Spirit, the Methodist Episcopal Church will move forward to grander victories than she has ever known. If we will not do this, and I fear we will not, God will certainly remove our candlestick out of its place.

I have lately been studying the situation in England and France one hundred and twenty to one hundred and fifty years ago. The deists, under the leadership of Lord Bolingbroke and Voltaire, made a tremendous fight against the integrity of the Bible, particularly the Old Testament, and seemed to carry everything before them. They used the very same objections to the book as the modern higher critic. Certain learned Jewish rabbis wrote and published "Letters to Voltaire," copies of which I have in my possession, whereby all of Voltaire's criticisms of the Old Testament were utterly refuted; but their influence was so small, and Voltaire's so very great, that France followed the brilliant skeptic, and the Bible was disbelieved, disobeyed and rejected. The French Revolution and the Reign of Terror were the natural and inevitable result. It looked for a time as though nothing could possibly save England from the same fate. The objections raised against the Bible were believed by many in the Church. The doctrines of the book were not often preached and little believed. Worldliness, formality, selfishness and ritualism very gener-

ally prevailed, and the spiritual life of the Church was at a very low ebb. The educational institutions were permeated by the prevailing skepticism, and it looked as though the old book and faith were done for. But a few young men, students at Oxford, with the love of God shed abroad in their hearts by the Holy Ghost, burdened in heart and soul because of the condition of affairs, wisely went to God with their burden and besought His help. You know the result. The critics and infidels were confounded, for old England was rocked, as in earthquake throes, by the power of the Holy Ghost, and saved to Protestantism.

Such an awakening is needed in Methodism to-day. And an awakening will come. "The Word of our God shall stand forever," and "the gates of hell shall not prevail against" the Church. If we, as a Church, will not repent of our sins and put away our idols, and submit wholly to Him, to be conformable to His revealed will, He will raise up some one, as He raised up John Wesley, as a protest against the unspiritual condition of the Church, and will use him to confound skeptics, and the bringing in of right conditions, and the salvation of the lost.

I spent a little time in London some years ago, with a Church of England friend of mine. I had noticed how the Church of England kept in touch with the Salvation Army, and seemingly was fostering their work. I asked my friend for an explanation. He said: "The Church of England antagonized the work of John Wesley, and thereby drove it from them. That work and movement should have been encouraged and kept within the Church. The Church authorities saw their mistake when it was too late. They will never make a similar mistake." The awakening is coming. Hear it, ye missionary secretaries, and be

of good cheer! Hear, it, ye pastors who believe the Bible is God's holy Word, and have preached it faithfully! Hear it, ye who deny its integrity and authority, and repent of your folly before it is too late! Hear it, ye editors, and break your silence before you are put to shame and confusion. It is coming. I hear "the sound of a going in the tops of the mulberry trees." But it must come by the Holy Spirit in answer to prayer, through the Word of God, which is the only way by which we can make known the Christ who is "the Power of God and the Wisdom of God" unto salvation.

The inspired Psalmist said: "Thou hast magnified Thy Word above all Thy name." We see this in its literary and poetic beauty; in its historic, scientific, and biographical accuracy; in its ethical and philosophical profundity; in its indestructibility and elevating and transforming power; and in its prophetic and eschatological uniqueness. The written Word tells of the living Word—tells of Him who created all things; who is the "Light of the world" and Saviour of men. God gave Him "the name which is above every name." The greatness and glory of this name shall be recognized and acknowledged by all created intelligences, in heaven, in earth, and under the earth; and, at last, "every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." The names of rulers, warriors, and statesmen; of philosophers, scientists, and theologians; of critics, skeptics, and infidels, great, noble, and illustrious in the sight and estimation of men, will pale as the morning star before the rising sun, before the name of Jesus. And yet God has magnified His Word, by which He made the heavens, and which "endureth forever," above

this greatest and most glorious of names. Surely that which God has so exalted and honored we do well and wisely to love, cherish and obey. "For we can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth," 2 Cor. xiii: 8.

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