

THE PRESBYTERIAN AND REFORMED REVIEW

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I.

THE BEGINNING AND GROWTH OF THE CANON OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

OUR LORD and His apostles were accustomed to refer to the Jewish Scriptures as to a well-known, definite body of sacred writings that had been handed down from past ages. They assumed that there was agreement among the people of the Jews as to the particular books that constituted these Scriptures; and they actually quoted from the great majority of them as of unquestionable authority in matters of doctrine and duty. It could not occur to any reader of the New Testament that in the time of Christ the Canon of the Old Testament had not yet been determined, or that it was still an open question whether certain books should be received into it, or should be excluded from it. It is inconceivable, too, that Josephus could have written as he has done of the books which he describes as "justly believed to be divine" and held to be most sacred by all Jews,* if the rabbis of his time had felt themselves at liberty to add to, or to take away from the number of these sacred books. When Strack wrote his article on the Canon of the Old Testament,† he could affirm that there was then unanimity among critics of opposite schools in regarding the Canon of Josephus as embracing neither more nor less than the thirty-nine books of our present Hebrew Bible. He attached no importance, as bearing on the extent of the Canon, to the discussions which rabbis of the first century engaged in with respect to

* *Contra Apion*, i, 8.

† Herzog's *Real-Encyk.*, 2d ed., vii, p. 428.

V.

THE PLACE OF REASON IN THEOLOGY.

BY Reason, is now meant, in general, the cognizing, comparing and inferring faculty of the mind. By Theology is meant, in general, the science of the revealed truth of God. Assuming the meaning of these untechnical terms to be sufficiently clear, it is in mind to affirm the true and legitimate function of reason in all theological discipline. It is not strange that when reason is arrogating too much to itself there should arise a tendency, with its temptation, to claim too little. It may not be amiss to reverse the common attitude of contemporary evangelicalism and for once to champion affirmatively the indisputable rights of reason, while at the same time, by a silence the rarity of which is its strongest emphasis, passing by its unwarranted and usurping invasions. All the difference between life and death lies between a Christianity that is rational and a Christianity that is rationalistic; and even Mr. Spencer* has found it well to warn this age against the superstition that makes a fetich of the reason.

It is not forgotten that without spiritual enlightenment, reason is a fickle and untrustworthy guide. But the theologian may be presumed to be a Christian believer. His, then, is a reason quickened by divine grace into spiritual perception; a reason made cognizant of the realities of an invisible world; a reason measurably freed from the native moral obtuseness of the sinful state; a reason moved and ruled by a sincere desire for the truth both for its own sake and for the sake of the good which the truth alone can insure. Reason, then, viewed now as exclusive of the transcending intuitions, cannot be regarded as a source of knowledge in religion, but rather as a power or organ of the mind by which it is enabled to cognize, recognize, consider and digest any knowledge whencesoever it may come.

Theology is the science of divinity. Science is classified knowledge. Knowledge viewed either as the act or the object of intellectual cognition may not at once involve the rational faculty, but when its scope covers a large and varied tract of phenomena, the very attempt at classification elicits the reason, and in so

**Principles of Psychology*, Vol. ii, p. 315.

far forth as the science-forming classification is discriminating and accurate, the discursive faculty has done its work. Science is subjectively possible because the scientist is a reasoning man and, whatever the subject matter of the science itself, reason is in every case the chief architect in the constructive work. Whether it be rocks, or stars, or tissues, or statutes, or ideas, or heavenly visions, if it is to be contemplated in a systematic and intelligible manner, the principles that are to govern the treatment of it, will be in every case the same. The materials of theology are divine, but the forms of theology are human. God made the stars, but man made astronomy. God gave us the Bible, and the Calvins and Wesleys have given us our theologies. Nor does this in anywise discredit or disparage theology. The Maker of the stars is the great proto-astronomer. God is the divine Master Scientist. The systems of men are true only as they approach the thought of God; and theology, classified and scientific as the work of man, becomes more accurate and more purely true as it is based upon the unclassed but classable, revealed truths of the ever-living God.

I. REASON IS NEEDED TO TEST AND ATTEST THE SCRIPTURE
CREDENTIALS OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION AS A
SYSTEM OF DIVINE TRUTH.

Whatever may be conceived to be the exact relation between Christianity and the Holy Scriptures, we are bound to regard it as very intimate and very important. Historically, they have been practically inseparable. If the religion of Jesus is much more, it is still correct to say that it is a book-religion. If Islam has its Koran and Buddhism its Tri-pitakas, Christianity has its Bible. In that book, held sacred throughout Christendom, are gathered its historical facts, its doctrinal elements, its ethical precepts, its inspiring promises. Christianity has never dominated an age or land in which men's backs were turned upon Christianity's book; while, on the other hand, the spirit of that religion has been potent and controlling wherever men have regarded with intelligent reverence the contents of the volume they have believed to be the Word of God.

Such a book must fall like sear autumn leaves upon the frosted sod if it do not meet the just demand that it shall prove that its claims, and hence its contents, are true. It is not enough that much which it contains should be *prima facie* true; Newton's *Principia*, Pascal's *Pensées*, Shakespeare's tragedies give us many truths, but they do not exact from us a religious faith. It is not enough that its ethics should be pure and its incentives ennobling; other books

present ethical gems and high ideals. Much less is it enough that it should only claim devout assent; for while it may be true that the *à priori* presumption is in favor of a supernatural revelation to mankind in a fallen state, it is also true that, in view of so many claimants to be such in history, a strong prejudice actually exists against any one as over against and exclusive of so many others. If the book record sayings beyond the reach of human wisdom, if it portray characters above the plane of the world's achievement, if it breathe a spirit purer and holier than that of earth, if it convey truths extra-scientific but not contra-scientific which fit into and in some degree explain the mysteries to which human learning can only lead us, if it propose motives transcending all that the human heart has ever felt or known before, if it tell of a divinely beneficent force moving upon the minds and working through the lives of men; and if, under favoring conditions, such contents of the volume find verification in the concrete facts of history, then any hostile presumption is certainly broken down. Moreover, if its authors are evidently sane and honest men; if its utterances are neither the vapid fanaticisms of the enthusiast nor the shallow cant of the impostor; if its tone is sober, its lessons appropriate to human need, its contents harmonious with the best moral consciousness of the race, and its proposed objects worthy of the heavenly forces which are subsidized for their accomplishment; then, in candid minds, a strong positive presumption must be admitted in its favor. All this, interpreted in the light of the *à posteriori* considerations of Christian history, is suited to prepare the mind to weigh the claims that such a book puts forth in its own behalf.

Of the nature of these claims, the reader of the Scriptures can be neither ignorant nor in doubt. The Bible writers unquestionably predicated of themselves a supernatural guidance that differentiated their productions from all the literatures of the past. "Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." "All Scripture is given by inspiration." The principle now under consideration is not affected by any legitimate translation one may adopt. It might have been "profitable" and yet not "by inspiration," but of a very important part of Scripture it is true that had it not been given *ab extra*, it would not have been given at all. The claims of supernatural revelation in Holy Scripture must ever be largely tested by and rested upon those portions of its contents which are super-human in the sense that they were inaccessible to mere human research. The Bible as a book is not at once to be regarded as inspired simply because it is true. Inspiration is of persons—not of things. Inspiredness is not a quality that differences one genus of truth from another. It has rather to do with the means and meth-

ods by which we attain to the objective possession of it. Christianity is more than a "republication of natural religion," and yet whatever in it *is* more, is not more true than natural religion, for the one reason, namely, that man being in himself unable to discover *de novo* what is revealed, God has graciously communicated it to man. It is the office of inspiration to certify God's truth to the world by enabling otherwise erring men to convey it to their fellows.

Such, in general, are the claims of Christianity's book. But reason is presupposed in the very proposing of such claims. The question of the validity of them is the very first to be met and answered. A man may deny inspiration, and yet accept much of the Bible as true in substance and good in effect; but remembering its testimony concerning itself, he cannot accept the whole Bible without regarding it as a supernaturally given volume. But accepting it or rejecting it, he must do it because his reason leads him to do so. It is a question of evidence, evidence tallying with claim, and only reason is suited to the task.

Obviously, therefore, the Christian Scriptures must satisfy the fair exactions of honest and impartial criticism. It is a position of weakness because of unfairness to insist that the Bible should be exempt from any pertinent and legitimate test. It begs the question by covertly inserting the conclusion into the premise. The Word of God cannot make its way through the world of thought upon the courtesy of gratuitous passports. No intelligent believer complains of the keenest scrutinies of a candid and competent textual, or historical, or literary criticism; he rather rejoices at the tendencies that are bringing the pages of Scripture under the searching gaze of men. It is the abuse of proper methods and the arrogance of improper ones, it is the crude conjectures that are too easily and too often substituted for ripe and assured results, that evangelical scholarship deploras. Only let the methods be appropriate, the inferences cautious, the utterances becomingly diffident and the spirit devoutly reverent and fearless of everything save to do violence to the very truth of God, and, with the gracious guidance of the overruling Spirit, the Church will not be solicitous as to the permanent results in the end.

This *judicium contradictionis* is a preliminary condition of the very inception of an intelligent faith. It is not meant that there should be such an "implicit faith" as accepts, in the wholesale, all the contained teachings of the sacred volume. Reason must first by cognition receive what it will afterward deliberately accept as true or reject as false. A revelation of truth from God to man is the Creator's compliment to the God-like reason with which He has endowed His noblest mundane creature. We accept the Bible as

true because, in view of all its evidences, internal and external, historical and moral, it is in the judgment of calm reason easier to accept it than to reject it. Nor is this rationalism, unless granting the reasonableness of being a believer in the Word of God merits the name. If, as Dr. Martineau insists,* the exclusive alternative is between authority on the one side and rational evidence on the other, we may still decline the choice and fairly demand reasonable evidence that the authority is worthy of our credence. If an angel from heaven should herald to an isolated tribe a body of truth for the ascertainment of which they were by some defect of nature constitutionally unfitted, they would be unrational beings indeed if they should not require that the angel should prove to the active faculties, with which nature had not forgotten to favor them, that he had an angel's heavenly credentials for the lofty errand on which he came. Jesus Christ, the living Word, recognized the fairness of such a signatory test—"or else believe me for the very work's sake." The written Word, in its way and sphere, must not yield less. This age, preëminently, demands it. It is a devout mistake to shirk the challenge. The secret of the believer's confidence is in the assurance that it can be triumphantly met.

No ground less high or bold than this can evangelical scholarship afford to take. No champion of the truth need be cowardly out of regard for the interests of his client. We believe in the Word of God because we believe it is the truth of God. Much of it is to us evidently true; what we cannot comprehend bears the seal that its origin is divine. The golden line lies between Rationalism—deferring finally to the oracles and criteria of the Reason, which is as untrustworthy as the fallen man whose faculty it is—and what Coleridge † has called "Ultra-fidianism," exclaiming with old Tertullian, *Certum est quia impossibile est*. On the very threshold of an intellectual acceptance of the contained elements of Christian theology, reason is needed to pass upon the preliminary question of the credibility of the claims of Holy Scripture and the validity of the evidence urged in their support.

II. REASON IS NEEDED TO PERCEIVE THE SUPREME PLACE OF THIS BODY OF TRUTH IN THE GRAND PERSPECTIVE OF HUMAN THOUGHT AND LIFE.

The outlines of this *ensemble* are substantially the same from age to age. Systems of philosophy are but interpretations of it. Every human eye beholds the sceneries of earth; every human soul gazes

* *Seat of Authority in Religion*, p. 129.

† *Aids to Reflection*, p. 205.

upon the visions of truth. Geologies are inferences; so also are philosophies. In this world of mind the Christian religion has its place. All truth is a unit in the sense that one truth cannot contradict another truth. What is theologically true cannot be philosophically false. Scientific orthodoxy cannot be religious heresy. What is true at Princeton or San Anselmo cannot be false at Harvard or Palo Alto. Pascal says that right has its epochs, and that truth on this side the Pyrenees is error on that side; but it is sheer fallacy to regard such a remark as applicable to the tenets of an abstract philosophy or a universal religion. At the very best it is inaccurate to speak of a conflict between science and theology. It is no more conceivable than a conflict between science and astronomy or botany or chemistry. Theology *is* science. Science means method, not material. Science is commonly inductive and advances from observed objective facts to subjective abstract generalizations. Theology is inductive. The Word of God furnishes its facts, which form the basis of the superstructure, and while blind to no truth beyond its own horizon, it addresses itself to the task of a scientific treatment of the data thus brought to its hand. No man needs the true scientific temper more than the theologian, and no man has a better opportunity for its healthy exercise.

If the scientist find in his laboratory that which stubbornly contradicts what his good parson tells him from his pulpit, either the laboratory or the pulpit must yield. Carefully and cautiously he repeats his test of experimentation; carefully and cautiously he consults the sources whence his pastor gleaned his pulpit message; and then if the hiatus still exist, he becomes a skeptic with David Hume and doubts his own power to know what is the truth; or—much the same thing—he becomes an agnostic with Herbert Spencer, and traces all phenomena back to the persistent mysteries of the Unknowable; or, he becomes a sensationalist and coldly says with Goethe, “I am a believer in the five senses;” or, he becomes an ultra-fidianist and says with Sir Thomas Brown in his *Religio Medici*, “There are not impossibilities enough in religion for our active faith.” Any one of these consequences is disastrous; the first is intellectual nihilism; the second is religious atrophy; the third is ultimate atheism, and the fourth is a sort of insipid pseudo-piety. No thoughtful man can be a Christian with the haunting suspicion in his soul that he must needs turn his back upon certain facts which if he should but squarely face them would rob him of his faith.

Now it is the task of reason to dissolve such apparent antinomies. By processes of exegesis, the elements of Christianity, as conveyed in Scripture, are developed and rationally apprehended. And then

by orderly classification the task of systematic theology is to be performed. But truth, supernaturally communicated and vested from above with supernatural potentialities, is not *ipso facto* intrinsically more true than some other truth which somehow manifested itself naturally to the human perception. The realistic philosophy declares the creature to exist as assuredly as does the Creator, the human as assuredly as the divine. The microscopic insect whose three-score and ten is limited to the single revolution of the minute-hand on the watch-dial as certainly exists during the fleeting moment as does the deathless archangel of the heavens. The life that now is is as much of a fact as the life that is to come. Original or derived, existence is reality and is hardly a thing of degree. A physical fact may be less sacred because less saving than a fact of revelation. Redemption is infinitely more important than a geometrical theorem; and yet if it could be that the *pons asinorum* squarely contradicted the essential idea of the atonement, then, however reluctantly, the reason must announce that the less important but absolutely assured truth would effectually negative the vastly more important error.

It is exceedingly interesting to observe how, amid the restless activities of mind, the genius of modern secular thought, not wholly puritanical in tone, often unwittingly pays its tribute to the fundamental doctrines of the Word of God. Modern thought builds much on heredity, and Christian theology has always held to the solidarity of the race with the racial hamartology of Paul in the fifth of Romans. John Fiske* says that while theology has had much to say of Original Sin, it is really neither more nor less than the brute inheritance which every man carries with him—thus conceding the fact, while reserving the right of interpretation. German pessimism sees the fact of damning sin, minus the Gospel optimism of redemption.† James Bryce‡ says, in discussing the faults of democracy, that experience recognizes such universal tendencies to evil in human nature as theologians call total depravity. The most popular scientific book of the last few years argues even too strongly that not nature, but supernatural religion, is the only source of ethics, and flatly charges modern science with having regarded too lightly this divine force in human society.§ Materialism is ancient history, and it is now conceded that if there were nothing but matter, then matter would be physically impossible and metaphysically inconceivable.¶ Mr. Spencer's "transfigured realism" denies the

* *Destiny of Man*, p. 103.

† Orr's *The Christian View of the World*, p. 196.

‡ *American Commonwealth*, 1st edition, Vol. ii, p. 451.

§ Kidd's *Social Evolution*, pp. 79, 101, 20.

¶ Ed. Caird's *Evolution of Religion*, Vol. i, p. 326.

likeness of the mental image to the external object, and—philosophy making science—the agnostic after all joins hands with the idealist in the inevitable march to skepticism,* and so bereaves the mind of all trustworthy knowledge of things in heaven or things on earth; only, the skepticism born of idealism, waking from its nightmare-haunted sleep, invariably insures its own refutation at the last. The inequalities among men “make atheists of mankind;” and yet Carlyle could say the study of the French Revolution saved him from atheism; indeed, a systematic study of the past is possible because Augustinian foreordination had ordered the course of its events. It would be in truth a valuable volume that would gather up the unconscious orthodoxy of un-christened philosophic and scientific literature and present it to the world. Like the French actor who had been speaking prose all his life without knowing it, untheological thought is, without knowing it, often profoundly theological, and it is Weismann who says for us: “Behind the coöperating forces of Nature is a Cause . . . of which we can only say one thing, that it must be theological.”

And if we reverse the method, reason must likewise perceive that Bible truth contradicts no other truth. That great initial miracle, creation *de novo*, contradicts nothing; for science is first empirical, then rational, and so assumes an existent cosmos. The atonement is the Biblical interpretation of a historic fact and the mysteries involved abundantly vindicate themselves by their salutary historical results. Trinitarianism, if true, must be not contra- but super-rational.

Reason whispers a probable guess concerning a future life; the Son of Mary died to bring immortality to light. Regeneration is not unscientific so long as its efficient Cause is that ever-living Source whence all life sprang. Where reason has no positive dictum, she can make no negative objection: “The absence of all proof is tantamount to a proof to the contrary.”

“ Strong Son of God, immortal Love,
Whom we that have not seen Thy face
By faith and faith alone embrace,
Believing what we cannot prove.”

To omniscience no contradictions appear. Rationalism may be the cult of infinite wisdom. In theology, as in religion, “we walk by faith, not by sight;” only we see nothing which, rightly interpreted, negatives the faith. Dr. Thomas Arnold said: “Faith is reason leaning on God.” While reason can often only say, “I do not know,” faith, with assurance, exclaims, “I believe!” and, gathering boldness as it shouts, even affirms, “I know whom I have believed.”

* *Principles of Psychology*, Vol. ii, p. 494.

III. REASON IS NEEDED TO GUARD THIS BODY OF TRUTH AGAINST THE CORRUPTING INFLUENCE OF HOSTILE TENDENCIES OF THOUGHT.

Systems of error are not self-consistent enough always to be wrong. The native rational sense in man is not dead to all the evidential symptoms of the truth. By wrong methods the thoughts of men sometimes reach results not inconsistent with the truth of God. Because Christianity is not a philosophy, it need not, therefore, contradict all philosophy. Pascal says: "To scorn philosophy is truly to philosophize;" but his epigram slanders the divinely established laws of the human mind, and he comes nearer to the truth himself when he elsewhere says, "To think well is the principle of ethics." A man's conclusion may be better than his premise, simply because there may be a blessed flaw in his logic. If Martineau is right in saying that "we may reverence aright whilst we think amiss," it is because we are saved by a blunder in our ratiocination. Still, the laws of mind trace not its blunders but its normal methods; psychology is the science of sane minds and logic the science of sound reasoning.

It is a delicate task to sift the false from the true and put the right label on the theories of men. Many of the most dangerous errors spring from hallowed soil, and give forth their plausible words in the very name of Christ. Men may avow theories and disavow the necessary inferences which sound logic attaches to them, and then comes the unwelcome duty of balancing between the claims of charity for devout but rotten logic and those of loyalty to the truth. Certain it is that he is a poor prophet who bases his predictions on any other principle than that, in the long run, the developments of history will verify the logical tendencies of thought. A utilitarian age may depreciate the importance of rightness and wrongness in abstract thinking, but the course of history is a voluminous commentary upon the opposite view. Cold philosophy filters down to the lowest strata and moulds the faith of the common people. Sir William Hamilton was the intellectual aristocrat of Edinburgh; he learnedly affirmed man's impotence to know the Infinite. Mansell, the ecclesiastic, turned Hamilton's philosophy into a religious channel, and Herbert Spencer steals his fire from Hamilton and Mansell in support of his agnosticism, which has certainly been a menace to a contemporary evangelical Christian faith. Hegel's philosophy gave birth to the destructive criticism of the Tübingen school, and to-day, in our own America, the heads of many are turned who are ignorant of the alphabet of Hegel's notions. God made man to be a philosopher, and at his

best or at his worst the abstract ideas he entertains will do much to shape his character and fix his conduct.

It is the sacred prerogative of reason, once convinced of the truth, to preserve the Christian faith from degrading compromises with alien systems. Cheerfully welcoming the true, it must as sternly decline the false. The eternal Father, ever immanent, ever transcendent, is a personal, just and holy God. Sin is disharmony with God; and so long as it continues, its consequences must be visited upon the sinner. Man is created by his God—not the chance product of incident forces. The Saviour of the world is the theanthropos of the ages; whatever robs Him of deity or manhood is false. It is not uncommon to hear theology denounced as positively hurtful to Christian enthusiasm. Ritschlianism has many champions that never heard of the new German school of thought; and it is strongly urged that religion has to do with the practical, not the theoretical reason. The only valid objection to the statement that theology moulds life, that dogma fixes duty, lies in the fact that men are not always true to their convictions. Ethically, he who is better than his creed is saved by his bad logic, and he who is worse than his creed is lost through his bad heart.

Still, on the whole, mankind are truer to their creeds than is commonly thought. It is dangerous to risk the salvation of the world on the *non sequitur* of human logic and conduct. "Death ends all;" "Life is but an empty dream:" homicide and suicide alarmingly prevail. "One world at a time:" humanity eating, drinking and making merry becomes inhuman. "The preservation of the body conditions the immortality of the soul:" the pyramids of Egypt stand as the hoary monuments of a dogma. "There is no God:" atheism orphans mankind. "Fate is God:" the faithful cries "Kismet," and dies with his face in the dust. "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he:" ethics ever banks up against religion. What men believe about themselves will determine what they will do with themselves, and what men believe God is will fix what they themselves are to be.

It is not accidental that the age that witnesses such confusion in theological thought sees also such chaos in the ethical conduct of men. Principles determine practices; ideas are formative; thought is the seed-germ of action. The Christian religion addresses men as rational beings, and assumes that intellectual enlightenment is a condition of spiritual life. If the elements of Christianity cannot be theologized, then they cannot be contemplated in a manner satisfactory to a rational mind, and man at his best is bound to discredit its teachings.

And yet, it is far from the religion of the lowly Nazarene to

be but a philosophical system. Our Lord Himself was in thought and manner farthest removed from the mere academician. Athens had its philosophy; Judea, its faith. The peerless apostle whose mental fibre fitted him for noblest heights of rationalizing speculation, expressly disclaimed the methods of human wisdom. The Bible is at once the least philosophical and the most philosophical book ever published to the world; no truth-loving sage need be less thoughtful, less true to the laws of mind, less loyal to the criteria of sound reason because, illumined by the divine Spirit and led by His gracious guidance, he accepts its principles as the philosophy of his own life, and cherishes its teachings as the sole adequate though only partially comprehended solution of the mysteries of His immortal being.

It is a doubtful tendency that clamors for the absolute identification of the secular and the sacred. All truth is of God, but all truth is not alike salutary to the race nor beneficent to the individual. "Truth is in order to goodness," but all truth is not equally rich and prolific of the blessing. It may be equally true that Alexander conquered the East, and that Jesus was born in Bethlehem; it may be equally true that Socrates died of the hemlock, and that the Nazarene died on the cross. But it is the wickedness of folly to affirm that the meaning of all this is alike charged with blessings to mankind. Bible truth may not be truer than other truth, but it is more importantly true, more savingly true, more sacredly true. Prince Siddartha doubtless lived and died in India, and historically the fact is of unquestioned interest and value. Jesus Christ lived and died in Palestine, and that fact, rightly apprehended, may save a soul from sin. What saves from sin is sacred.

"The world by wisdom knew not God." Man's highest upward reach has always been a failure save by the interposition of a graciously self-revealing Father. Whenever the believers in the Word of God have lost their hold upon the purity of its truth, whenever they have mingled Christless hypotheses with the clear elements of the faith, whenever they have lowered the standard of its ineffable teachings to the tempting plane of mere philosophy, they have forfeited their new birthright and in the end brought shame upon themselves. Accordingly reason is needed, not to revise or amend the system of Christian truth, but rather, by the guidance of the Spirit, to preserve it, in its unalloyed integrity from the corroding touch of an unsanctified human philosophism.

IV. REASON IS NEEDED TO COMMEND THIS SYSTEM OF TRUTH TO MEN AS THE ONLY EFFECTUAL MEANS FOR THE ENLIGHTENMENT AND DELIVERANCE OF A LOST WORLD.

The Church of Christ on earth, beautiful and glorious as she is, is yet here as a means to an end. The Bride of the Lamb is commissioned to carry a message which He was unwilling to commit to a less loyal or sacred keeping. Every fact and phase of our holy religion is in its way apologetical. Like Nehemiah's rebuilders of Jerusalem, every champion of the truth must work with his sword girded by his side. All theology is apologetics. The Word of God is the charter of universal missions.

No man on earth needs to be a reasoning man, as well as a reasonable man, more than the preacher of the Gospel. It is a wholesome tendency that is just now emphasizing the importance of psychology in homiletic training. Hearers must regard the message as reasonable or they will none of it. A man who, unenlightened or unconvinced, gives his heart to the Lord has sadly failed to understand the meaning of what he only imagines that he has done. The intellect must first be informed. The judgment must be convinced. Only then can the will surrender to the call of God. Transform the motive; influence the choice by enlightening the mind. There is no liberty of indifference in human action. The will is the man, and only as the man sees reasons for a changed course of action will he care to change. Confining the view just now to the human side of the critical change, the true psychology of the will contemplates that the divine message which the preacher conveys is so rational as to eventuate in a voluntary, because intelligent response; and no action that is not voluntary is worthy of man or acceptable to God. The will is the man choosing; the choice indexes the largest motive, but the knowledge of the intellect, kindling the emotions, will determine the judgment and dictate the motive.

It has always been the peculiar glory of the Reformed Churches, that they have stood for that interpretation of the Christian system which contemplates voluntary faith upon most enlightened intelligence. In the verdict of swift and superficial judgment, this has been the weakness of Presbyterianism; but in the grand aggregate of results, in the moral influence exerted upon the affairs of men and in the course of history, in the strength and stability of the institutions founded and sustained by its representatives, the granitic intellectuality of Presbyterianism has weathered the storms of many latitudes and longitudes, and by the blessing of God gives promise of continuing strong and sturdy for the conflicts that are yet to

come. It is fatal to regard religion as a thing of the intellect only ; it is just as fatal to regard it as not at all of the intellect. If the Church of Christ is to win the heart of humanity, she must not be wholly unmindful of the brain as well.

It does us good, in these times of bread-and-butter education, to remember that after all, the faith condition of salvation is profoundly philosophical and thoroughly psychological. In early stages, God said to men : " Do this and live." But after a fuller revelation of His will He said : " Believe this and live ;" " believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved." Believe intellectually all that is involved in the historical career, the stainless character, the marvelous spirit, the shameful death and the attested resurrection of Jesus, in the light of what is the most credible *rationale* of it all ; but the object of the faith required is not an abstraction, it is the personal, living, risen, reigning Christ, and when the object of the soul's faith is such a person, that faith becomes trust, and the surrendering will, subtly and unconsciously led by the impact of the blessed Spirit, seals the creed of the intellect with the glowing affections of the heart. The divine Psychologist knows that when the judgment is convinced, the will modifies its mandates, and, by grace given, the life is quick to respond.

On pagan soil and among non-doing knowers of the truth, for the winning of an indifferent secularism and the conquest of a reflective irreligion, reason is needed successfully to commend the truth of God to the minds of men. To solicit men's deeds without convincing their creeds is to assume that they are mere men of wood ; to solicit their faith while only directing their sequent deeds along lines of healthy and appropriate endeavor is to pursue the methods sanctioned by a correct psychology, honored by our blessed Lord and His apostles, and ever most successful throughout the history of the Christian Church.

In all this it is not forgotten that sin has broken the link that binds the premise in the creed with the conclusion in the life. It is not to be denied that there is often a sad breach between knowing the true and doing the right. It is not denied that paralyzed faculties are disabled from their appropriate tasks, that intellectuality alone in religion is death and that the most lucid and luminous conceptions of divine truth which unregenerate minds can entertain are but as the dim flickerings of a light, which at best is but as the blackness of darkness within. All that has been written had a hundred times better been unwritten were it not borne in mind that the gracious Spirit, the third person of the adorable Trinity, illumines, convinces, persuades, enables, guides and sanctifies. The sweet reasonableness of the teachings of the Christian religion

becomes more and more apparent as we yield ourselves to that holy heavenly influence. Willing obedience with a teachable spirit is the sure pledge of promotion in the college of faith. It is the high crime of rationalism that it presumes to measure and mould infinite truth by the finite faculties of the human soul; it is not less the high crime of intellectual indolence or mock modesty that it presumes that we are wholly unable to apprehend God's truth, and so, declining the grace that enlightens, leaves unexplored the beautiful and richly laden fields of truth which he has opened up before us to challenge the exercise and to promote the development of the noblest powers which constitute us in his own image.

If thoughtful men are to be converted to God, it will not be when they are asleep. The credentials of Christian theology are in the spiritual constitution of man, and with the Word of God in our hands it is the privilege of the grand old Church that graciously claims us as her own, to lead the ripening thought of the race reverently to the intelligent acceptance of the very truth of God, and to the recognition that in this very humility of spirit, it thus does that which is the proof and promise of its grandest achievement in knowing, in believing, in acting and in being.

SAN FRANCISCO.

HENRY COLLIN MINTON.