

he received it from his father. His acceptance of the letter as from his father depends wholly on the character and credentials of the messenger. If these are satisfactory, he accepts the letter, because he has confidence in the messenger. This parallels the Romish view of the proximate ground of the authority of the Bible. It comes to us through the church, and the church certifies us that it is from God. Christians believe the church, and, therefore, they accept the Bible. But, with regard to the letter, a second supposition may be made. While the son values highly the testimony of the messenger through whom it reached him, when he reads the letter, the handwriting, the style, the intimate knowledge which it displays of his character, history, and circumstances, the spirit which breathes through it, and, indeed, the entire contents of the letter, assure him that it was written by his father. This illustrates the Protestant position in regard to the external and the internal evidences of the divine authorship of the Bible. Both are recognized, and both concur in producing the estimate which we put upon the Scriptures.

"The testimony of the church" may very properly move us "to a high and reverend esteem of the Holy Scripture." This specification may not cover all the external evidences, but it excludes none. And, if the testimony of the church is viewed, as we think it should be, as embracing not merely the corporate testimony of the church, but that of its individual members, then it certainly includes all that is most important in the external evidences.

But, while the *external* evidences are recognized, they are not regarded as of equal importance with the *internal*. They are not accessible to the great mass of mankind. But the Bible demands faith and obedience, wherever it comes. Were a copy picked up on a lonely island by a man who had never seen a Bible nor heard of a church, and who was entirely ignorant of the external evidences of its divine origin, he could not read it without discovering that it demands of him immediate faith in Christ and obedience to His will. To every human being it speaks with all the urgency of divine authority, and sets before him the choice of life or death. Its words run: "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him," John iii. 36. This feature of the Scriptures can be accounted for only by the