

find out God, who can find out the Almighty unto perfection?"—yet it claims that, though this knowledge is incomplete, it may be correct as far as it goes, that we apprehend Him whom we cannot comprehend, that now we know only in part but that we look for the perfect knowledge yet to come. Buddhism, which has a larger number of professed adherents than any other form of religion, presents a vision of rest that is dear to the heart of the oriental, a dream of "nirvana," for the attainment of which the worshipper would gladly give up life on earth. Perhaps the true way of meeting this is to show how Christ gives rest to the weary and heavy-laden, to say to the Buddhist and, indeed, to every other heathen worshipper, as Paul said to the Athenians, "Whom ye ignorantly worship Him declare I unto you." The Christian student may gladly recognize whatever element of truth he finds outside of his own religion, may welcome it, and may try to show, as Professor Orr says, that "in Christianity, as nowhere else, the severed portions of truth found in all other systems are organically united, while it completes the body of truth by discoveries peculiar to itself."

The history of Christian doctrine, again, illustrates the need of the truth-loving spirit. If we trace, for instance, the doctrine of the person of Christ as developed through the conflicting opinions of successive generations, we may see that the whole truth was never on one side in the conflict; and yet controversialists were often unwilling to recognize the truth stated by their opponents. Controversy aims often at triumph rather than at truth, just as party spirit in politics often seeks victory for its own side rather than the public good. But, as we review the steps by which through conflict, continued perhaps for centuries, truth has been brought forth, as we see how, now from one side and now from another, a helpful contribution has come, we may recognize that nothing is finally settled in such controversy until it is settled right, and that nothing so greatly aids that settlement as the sincere and persistent love of truth.

Of recent years much controversy has been carried on about the Scriptures, and we have not yet seen the end. The Bible, and especially the Old Testament, has been brought under a more searching, microscopic, and scientific examination than ever before in the history of the Church. Some of this minute examination has been conducted by men who reject the idea of special Divine revelation; and yet may we not be grateful to them for all the facts which their scrutiny has found, even though those facts may constrain us to modify some previous interpretations? Some of the ancient records on Assyrian or Egyptian tablets may have been discovered and deciphered by men who reject the message of redemption, but yet, none the less, we may thank them if their labors have helped to make plain to us the meaning of our Old Testament Scriptures.

In every field of research, scientific, philosophic, historical, or literary, wherever truth is disclosed and by whomsoever it is brought to light, the student of theology should welcome such disclosure. He who fears to receive it shows, by that fear, that he is doubting the God of all truth.

Again: the spirit of theological enquiry should be reverent, reverent and, therefore, humble. Indeed this is a characteristic of the spirit that