

is to be believed, unless some one can bring forward absolute evidence of its falsity in a given case?

*Creditur olim,
Vellifactus Athos et quidquid Græcia mendax,
Audet in historia.*

If the same easy faith is to be given to every statement of Scripture, while the theories and statements of "clever men" are to be subjected to the severest examination and only accepted, if at all, when the evidence in their favour is overwhelming, it is to be that the historic sense of our school children will be developed in a very one-sided manner.

It is a great satisfaction to have to deal with a candid opponent. Had the Rev. Mr. Macdonell not been a candid man, and a brave man too, he would not have admitted, as frankly as he has done, the truth of my statement that many persons have little idea how repugnant much that is contained in the Bible is to the instinctive morality of children. The explanation he gives of the fact has the merit of familiarity, but I fail to see that it has any other. Christ himself, he observes, has told us that many things were suffered in earlier times on account of the hardness of men's hearts. Alas, alas, that won't do. It is not the hardness of *men's* hearts that troubles us in the Bible history; it is the distinct attribution to the Deity of the worst deeds that the book records. Who hardened Pharaoh's heart? What had the hardness of men's hearts to do with the punishment inflicted at an earlier period upon the unfortunate Egyptians on account of an act into which their king was directly led by the duplicity and cowardice of the Father of the Faithful? What had the hardness of men's hearts to do with the smiting to death of well-meaning Uzzah? What had the hardness of men's hearts to do with the express

commands given by Jehovah to the Israelites to wage a war of utter extermination against the unhappy inhabitants of Palestine? When Saul was not hard-hearted enough to cut the trembling Agag down in the place where he stood, who was it that rushed forward and hewed the wretched captive in pieces before the Lord in Gilgal? It was Samuel the priest of the Lord and the utterer of His Counsel. What had the hardness of men's hearts to do with the slaughter of some scores of thousands of King David's subjects for the offence committed by the King in numbering the people? If it be said that God was not the author of these things, but that the hardness of men's hearts was such that they required to have these deeds of cruelty and caprice attributed to their God in order that they might fear Him at all, it becomes a serious question how far a book which records such enormities and represents God as having either wrought them himself or enjoined them on others is profitable reading for the children of to-day.

There is another point of view from which the "hardness of heart" theory will not work. If the truer precepts of the New Testament were not applicable to the ancient Jews, how is it that they were applicable to the Greek and Roman world that had had no such special enlightenment or instruction as had been vouchsafed to the Jewish race? We do not read that Paul, on account of the hardness of heart of his Ephesian and Corinthian converts, was compelled to deliver to them very imperfect moral precepts, or to represent God to them in any doubtful not to say repellent light. Whence or how had these Gentile "dogs," as a zealous Jew would have called them, obtained a preparation of heart for the higher teachings of Christianity?

The Rev. Mr. Macdonell is per-