

Alexandrian school ; but modern divines, besides adopting many of the results of such an interpretation, have come to no less strange ones themselves. Christians have never been contented with the evident meaning of scripture, but consciously or unwittingly have constantly *put their own sense into* scriptural language, instead of *drawing out* the writer's meaning pure from the written fount. While reading this volume in a kind of dreamy state, with their imaginations full of spiritual thoughts, they have often confounded the ideas and feelings suggested to their minds by words of scripture, for the literal meaning originally intended ; and as this has been done by various minds differently educated and constituted, the most conflicting ideas respecting what the Bible contains have necessarily resulted ; each man has read as it were his own Bible in the reflection of his own preconceived opinions. For it is clear that the historical and literal—the original meaning of the Bible, interpreted according to scientific principles, is the only one about which men can agree. Each and every other meaning must belong to the varied minds that read, and not to *one and the same book* that is read.

Thus the learned and pious Pascal, in his "Thoughts," treats all the Old Testament as figurative, just as the Jews did those parts which were in themselves of an undevo-tional character—as the Song of Solomon. Pascal regards the Law, the sacrifices and kingdoms there mentioned, not as realities but as emblems. Babylon means an offence, Egypt—iniquity. Now all this may be very clever ; it may make good sense ; it may really edify and suggest to the mind pious thoughts and feelings ; but who could regard it as *scripture* ;—is it not indeed "*Pascal's Thoughts*," and no one's else ?