

them as the work of Moses. If the narratives in Chronicles be not authentic history, but history tampered with in the interests of the sacerdotal class, it is an abuse of words to speak of them as inspired by God. "God is not a man, that He should lie." We cannot conceive of Him as the inspirer of ingenious literary frauds. And to represent such productions as in any sense inspired by Him is to strike at the root both of morality and religion. It were better to embrace Agnosticism, with its frank confession of ignorance about God, than to worship a God who not merely winks at the deliberate falsification of facts for a purpose, but is actually in collusion with those who have done so. In saying this, it is not in the least degree desired to narrow unduly the liberty the Catholic Church has ever allowed to her children on the subject of Inspiration. It has always been an open question whether there be any liability to error on the part of the writers of the Old and New Testaments, and if there be, how far such liability extends. But to deny that they were the channels of a revelation whereby God was pleased to speak to His people, is a virtual denial of their inspiration. To admit that their writings were "idealized," for any purpose, however excellent, is to place their credit far below that of an ordinary Christian historian, and scarcely on a level with that of any respectable moral or religious work.¹ We should all cry shame on the Roman Catholic Church if she attempted at the present time to palm off on the Christian world a Bible remodelled to suit her system as the veritable Scriptures of the Old and New Testament. We may make what allowances we please for the spirit of the age and the circumstances of the compilers; but if the Jewish sacerdotal class, subsequent to the exile, attempted and accomplished a similar feat, it was a dishonest act, even if excusable, and we

¹ Mr. Gore now writes to say that no one would think of stigmatizing the books of Chronicles as unhistorical. They are, he adds, the faithful record of tradition. In other words, they are not "idealized" history, conscious or "unconscious," as he represents them to be in *Lux Mundi*, p. 353. There is no reading into the history anything that was not there originally, but they contain a faithful record of what has been handed down. The traditions may be true or false. That is matter for argument. But they are at least honestly narrated as they reached the writer.