

of dwelling further upon the aspect of religious controversy and the causes which mould its character, let me ask, as the resolution suggests, is this conflict of opinion, this struggle inside and outside the Church, productive of evil alone, and in no way destined to do good? We answer, it has done good already, and it will do more; it has called forth the talent of the Church, and turned her learning to account, and will continue to expand her learning in departments hitherto neglected. We have not yet seen the worst forms of error, nor the strongest bulwarks of truth. We have still to witness the transplantation to our soil of many European errors of which most of us are now happily ignorant. This we cannot prevent; book-makers and book-readers must have their own way; but upon the heels of their errors come a fuller discovery and wider dissemination of truth than we have ever known. The history of the past leads me to entertain this view. Every student of history knows that scepticism respecting existing opinions has been, if not the cause, at least the occasion, of the greatest advances in science and religion. Astronomers doubted, and so were led to discover new laws, and new planets. Navigators doubted old opinions and foregone conclusions, and thus discovered islands and continents. Theologians doubted, and disbelieved the dogmas of a benighted church, and then the light of the Reformation dawned upon the world. Luther cast the bulls of the Pope into the fire, and so the world was emancipated. And so we may feel confident that the things which are now happening will "fall out rather unto the furtherance of the Gospel." Thousands will spring up, and be called out from their silence and repose to pierce the armour of our learned infidels, and to expose the imperfections of their logic. Indeed, those men in spite of themselves help forward the cause of truth. Thus Renan, in his *Life of Jesus*, has marked a multitude of references to the New Testament, sufficient, if turned to and read, to enlighten all Europe.

Since therefore we are able to trace so many favourable indications in the present state of religious controversy, let me ask, what have we to contend for? I answer, for a book, for a revelation from heaven. It is true that the wants of the individual soul are met by presenting a personal Saviour; by telling of guiltless blood shed for the guilty, of a sufficient and perfect atonement made by a Divine Saviour, and a free pardon and complete sanctification through his blood; but these great peculiar and central doctrines of the gospel are only revealed in the word of God—not expressed by the sublime science of astronomy—not uttered by the brooks and rills that adorn our earth—not discovered by *pure reason*—not taught by natural laws—they are only found in the book of God, and therefore we must contend earnestly for the book as containing the faith delivered unto the saints. We must not fail to teach men that natural laws and secondary causes are nothing apart from God; that these laws are only his fixed order of procedure; that in Him and not in them we can see personality and power. We must not fear to teach men that in addition to all the indications of Divine wisdom and power given in these laws, God has distinctly spoken out, "spoken at sundry times and in diverse manners." We must fight the battle of Inspiration, for it is the great battle of the present day; we must enter the arena of the evidences, and adapt our arguments to present forms of error; not, indeed, despising the work of our fathers,