

or controvert any theory of inspiration whatever. How difficult it is for Dr. Watts to conceive of a biblical science that is not controlled by a dogmatic purpose may be seen from the following classification which he gives of the biblical facts: "The phenomena presented in the Bible may be divided into two classes—the explicit, didactic statements it makes regarding the question of its inspiration and consequent infallibility and inerrancy—statements in reference not only to particular portions of its contents, but statements of unlimited reference, embracing its entire contents. Besides this class there is another, consisting of apparent discrepancies, some passages appearing to contradict others in regard to matters of fact, and passages which, it is alleged, commend or command the perpetration of immoralities." Dr. Watts probably would not be willing to stand by this classification as exhaustive, but it plainly includes all that of which he supposes the higher critics to take cognizance. For he says again: "Having reduced the positive evidence to a minimum, and after rifling that minimum of its point and force, they proceed to construct their theory upon the basis of alleged discrepancies, and whatever else may be construed as inconsistent with a genuine plenary, verbal inspiration of the sacred text. Is this," Dr. Watts asks, "a scientific procedure? Genuine critical science," he replies, "pursues a very different course. It begins with the positive evidence, and is anxiously careful to note and record and take into account every particle of that evidence. Having done so, it is then prepared to take up and deal with objections." That is to say, for Dr. Watts there is no "genuine critical science" of the Bible except that which proposes as its distinct aim the defence of a dogmatic proposition about the Bible, the truth of which cannot possibly be known without clearly understanding what the Bible itself says, and the assumption of which as true presupposes the work not only of the Higher Criticism itself, but also of the lower criticism, of exegesis and of systematic theology. He expects every branch of biblical science to be apologetic, on the defensive, fighting for a preconceived opinion. But it is surely no disparagement of the Higher Criticism that it is not exegesis, or dogmatics, or apologetics—something different from what it is, and something it never claimed to be! If it tried to follow Dr. Watts's method, it would make no progress at all—it would never get anywhere. It is not constructed for any such locomotion. A fish is an awkward animal on dry land. We do not expect textual criticism to tell us how the canon of Scripture was formed, nor Hebrew grammar to masquerade in the panoply of speculative theology; neither can dogmatics tell us who wrote the Pentateuch, nor the Higher Criticism champion a dogmatic opinion about inspiration. Attempts to bring such things about are sure to end in disaster—a disaster which not only harms the reputation of those who make the attempt, but also endangers the faith of those who are misled by them.

IV. It is hardly necessary to examine Dr. Watts's third point, in which he handles the "unscientific *à priori* postulate," that the "verbal