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To H. H. H.

ON FINDING FLOWERS IN MY ROOM.

BY JOHN G. WHITTIER.

I CAME a stranger, with no claim
For kindness, save an idle name,
Blown hither by the winds of fame.

And yet already round me here
I feel the sunny atmosphere
Of love, which casteth out all fear.

Dear friends, whose lavish courtesy
Has made their mountain home a free
And bright and happy home for me;

And thou whose young and thoughtful face
Suggests that pure and classic grace
The Grecian chisel loved to trace;

Child of my friend, who holds his way
Where, over Norway's hills of gray,
Shines summer's long, unsetting day.

Thanks for these flowers, whose sweet perfume,
Like whispers from their lips of bloom,
Pervades and gladdens all my room.

No sweeter ones in Ellwood's day
Bloomed round young Guilielma's way,
Herself a flower more fair than they

Like her, with outward gifts endued,
Be thou, like her, wise, calm, and good,
A crowned and perfect womanhood.

Thy mother's heart, thy father's brain
Be thine—soft blending, like the twin,
Life's sunshine and its freshening rain.

Thy daily deeds like holy psalms
Low sung, and prayer with folded palms,
Of God's good angels asking aims.

So shall thy father's heart be glad,
And averted eyes, no longer sad,
Their blessings from on high shall add.

The Inerrancy of the Bible.

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(Written for the Young Men's Page of the British Weekly.)

I.

THE question as to the existence of errors in the Bible cannot be fairly and fully dealt with, as it appears to me, without bringing into view at the outset, in its simplest and most catholic form, what may be called the orthodox position, in regard to the Bible as a whole.

The orthodox position I understand to be this: The Bible is a written revelation of the will of God to man. It is an organic and coherent whole, constructed in its main outlines and specific features, as a spiritual unity, by the Spirit of God, working in and through the instrumentality of certain human agents, whose inspiration was not mechanical or arbitrary, in the sense of overriding the free and spontaneous action of their own minds, but was at the same time infallible, as the action of the Divine Spirit within them, and in its highest exercise extending to the very words they uttered. The specific element of Divine revelation is the position it assigns to Christ. The Old Testament finds its unity in the relation it holds to the first appearance of Christ upon the earth; just as the New Testament finds its unity in the relation it holds to the living and exalted Christ. But some professors of Modern Criticism deny that it is fair exegesis to find Christ in the

Old Testament. They say that it is absurd to assume that the word has any other meaning than that which lies upon the surface. This amounts to a denial that the Old Testament has any spiritual content within and beneath its historical content. What then does Christ mean when He says: "Abraham rejoiced to see my day, and he saw it and was glad"; and how could He open up to His disciples, as He did, from beginning to end, the entire Old Testament as applying to Himself? How is it possible flatly to contradict all that in the name of scientific exegesis; and how can anyone who denies that Christ is in the Old Testament deal with the problem of the Bible? He might as well deny that God is in the universe, and that there is a soul in the body of man, as the atheistic expounder of nature does. The relation of the Bible as a whole to Christ brings into view the relation of the written word to the Incarnate Word, and all that is meant in the distinction sometimes insisted upon, between the actual revelation and the record thereof. The Bible, as written, is at once a revelation and a record of a revelation. In respect of its source, as coming to us from God, the written word is a revelation of the mind and purpose of God, such as we could not have had apart from a written word; and in respect of its end, as pointing to, and terminating in the Incarnate Word, it is the record of a revelation that is wholly embodied in Christ Himself.

To say that a revelation so given and so completed is in no sense verbally inspired is to destroy the objective authority of the book. The ease with which verbal inspiration is sometimes thrown overboard is an extraordinary thing. For, not to speak of the psychological argument as to the identity of thought and speech, or of reason and language, of which Professor Max Muller is so able and accomplished an exponent, or the fact that we cannot think at all apart from literal signs and symbols, with the fact that the highest genius in art has no appreciable existence, save as it shows itself under finished visible forms, it is perfectly manifest that the Bible itself claims an inspiration that extends to the words. Were not the words of Christ fully inspired? Was not the inspiration of Pentecost, and the gift of tongues, verbal inspiration? Did not holy men of God speak as they were moved by the Holy Ghost? The motion of the Divine Spirit within them, or upon them, was surely an influence that had something to do with the actual words they wrote or uttered. Why is the Bible, in any true sense, called the *Word* of God, if the inspiration implied in its existence has had nothing to do with the form under which it exists? If it has had anything to do with the form, it is verbally inspired to that extent. Moreover, what is meant by the Word being in the beginning, and made flesh (*i. e.*, made visible under our human form), if the form, as well as the substance of Divine Revelation, is not a matter of paramount importance? After this, what are we to say of the *dictum*: "The Bible is inspired in substance, but not in form"? One might as well say of a statue that it was inspired in respect of the rude block out of which it was chiselled, but not in respect of its beautiful and finished form. The truth is, there is no inspiration at all, in any work that is the product of inspiration or genius, apart from the form.

To be Continued.