

from the same Divine Author, and which it is in many respects important and interesting to remark and study. Is then this one of them, even the capacity of developing ever new truths to the diligent student? And as, from age to age, men are ever adding to the truths which have been drawn from the study of material nature, may they also hope to be adding to the truths which have been drawn from the revealed Word?

In dealing with this question, it has to be admitted in the first place, that the labours of those who have been most diligent and most successful in the application of their time and talents to the study—the critical and scientific study that is—of the Divine Word, have seldom resulted in what may be called discovery. They have rendered some scriptural argument more clear. They have placed in a better point of view some scriptural truth, or principle, or character. They have cleared away some of the difficulties which attach to books written in ancient times, and in languages which have long ceased to be spoken. They have illustrated allusions to customs which prevailed in remote ages and distant lands. But, after all, no great or leading truth unperceived before, unperceived from the beginning, or which was not patent to the apprehension of ordinary readers, has by means of them been attained. And when something new has been started, it has not unfrequently turned out that error was made to take the place of truth, by the application of unsound and unwarrantable principles of interpretation, to what had been more legitimately and rationally understood before.

It is to be considered, in the second place, that Christianity, in its doctrines and principles, has been in the Scriptures revealed plainly and fully to the apprehensions of plain men. Men needed such plain revelation to their attaining peace with God, and for the government of their