

Editorial Reviews of Books and Periodicals.

How God Inspired the Bible: Thoughts for the Present Disquiet. By J. PATERSON SMYTH, Rector of Christ Church, Kingstown, and author of "How we Got our Bible." New York: James Pott & Company, 14 and 16 Astor Place. Toronto: Wm. Briggs. 12mo, pp. 209.

This little book is intended to meet a want of the time, and it seems to us to be well calculated to accomplish that purpose. It recognizes the fact that a large number of intelligent and thoughtful Christians are passing through a season of doubt and disquiet concerning the inspiration and authority of the Holy Scriptures; and it deals with the cause and cure of this state of things. As to the former of these, though it is partly the result of the spread of rationalistic speculation, Mr. Smyth holds it to be chiefly due to the progress of knowledge. "For centuries past men have been forcing the Bible into a false position, a position perilous to its authority, unwarranted by its own statements, and, worst of all, in a great measure obscuring the real power and beauty of its teaching. In the fierce light of modern inquiry, it is becoming more and more evident that this position cannot be maintained, and simple men are growing disquieted, thinking the Bible itself to be in danger, while those who know better are looking forward hopefully, even though in some measure anxiously, too." Their anxiety, however, is not about the fate of the Bible; they who best understand the influences which are at work and the work which is being done, have no doubt that, if the Bible is the Word of God, as we fully believe it to be, it will fully vindicate its claim to be recognized as such, and though some of the theories which have been held concerning it will be swept away as so many cobwebs, the book itself will be helped, not harmed.

The real danger to the perplexed and disquieted arises from the attitude taken up by the injudicious friends of the Bible, who, unconsciously, it may be, to themselves, identify the book with their own theories concerning it, and make its inspiration and authority depend upon their validity. "Inspiration, in its Divine largeness and freedom and grandeur, is an idea quite beyond them. Their notion is of a sort of rigid superintendence to guarantee that each little detail of the Bible history shall be absolutely correct; that its science shall be unassailable in the light of the nineteenth century; that its moral teaching in every period shall be perfect. To attempt to question this is, in their opinion, to endanger the whole foundations of religion. Such men as these are the chief causes of disquiet, and the chief cause of the discredit of the Bible. They pledge God's inspiration, they pledge Christianity itself, to their own mechanical theories. They give to the infidel his chief victories over religion. They make sad the seeking souls whom God has not made sad; they unconsciously make void the Word of God by their traditions, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men."

Under the head of "Re-assurance," Mr. Smyth discusses the question, "Is the Bible safe?" and in so doing gives an interesting and impressive summary of the internal evidence of their Divine inspiration and authority