

an *exact* picture of what happened. The difficulty of doing this well is marvellous. Even the children's picture books are full of slight errors. Turn one over. What do we see? Absalom hanging by his *hair*, Goliath lying on his *back*, the Magi worshipping at the *manger*, the brazen serpent coiled round the pole in the attitude of a *live* snake (a mistake which destroys the whole force of the emblem). Men's minds have also a curious habit of reading into the text what is *not* there. For example:—where do we find in Genesis any account of the creation of rocks or coal? The omissions of Scripture are sometimes very strange.

If we put together all that is said in the Bible of any one person, we get some idea of his character. We want to be able to *see* Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, in our mind's eye. They must be living people to us, not only names. The Scriptures contain such varieties of character. Human nature is the same in all ages. Thus we find sympathetic characters like Jonathan, son of Saul, and Ahimaaz, son of Zadok; unstable characters like Rehoboam and Zedekiah; faithful characters like Deborah, Rebekah's nurse, or Abraham's steward; men whom every one loved, like Benjamin, St. John and St. James; self-seeking characters like Joab and Abner; reserved characters like the great lady at Shunem; outspoken characters like St. Peter; and so we might go on with a never-ending list.

The study of geography is another help. The works and maps of the Palestine Exploration Fund are a great boon to Bible students. The description travellers give of the Desert of Sinai is positively romantic. Accurate geographical knowledge throws much light on such events as the journey of Jeroboam's wife from Tirzah to Shiloh and back, or on the escape of Ahaziah, King of Judah.

Every word of the Bible is full of meaning, and a reverent imagination will help us to grasp that meaning. By study of this kind we shall come to see more of the glory of Christ. All Scripture points to Him, plainly, or in type or figure. May we not reverently say that imagination will help us to realize Him, "Whom having not seen, we love." And, though our eyes be holden, will not our hearts