

## OUR CONTRIBUTORS.

### THE RULE OF FAITH.

MR. EDITOR.—Permit me to give you a few thoughts on the above subject.

*Infallibility* is an essential mark of a genuine rule of faith. By revelation knowledge is communicated, while inspiration secures infallibility in the communication of that knowledge, so that faith rests upon the God of truth. Upon inspiration the rule of faith must stand or fall. The Jews may justly be blamed for many things, still they had a profound reverence for the Scriptures and always regarded them as the Word of God.

The Bible claims inspiration—"For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man, but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." "All scripture is given by inspiration of God." The Bible was written in different times and in a great variety of circumstances, still it is one whole; there may be apparent discrepancies, yet no real contradictions. This shews that it has had one author—that it is the Word of God.

Josephus says, "Every one is not permitted of his own account to become a writer, nor is there any disagreement in what is written—they being only prophets that have written the original and earliest account of things as they learned them of God Himself by inspiration."

The early Christians regarded the Old and New Testaments as of equal authority. Polycarp places Paul and David on the same platform. Justin Martyr assures us that Christians believe in the voice of God declared by the apostles of Christ and promulgated by the prophets. Irenaeus says: "We, following the only true God as our Teacher and esteeming His Word the rule of faith, always say the same thing respecting the same matters." In short, one and all of the early Christians believed in inspiration.

Is the Bible the only inspired document and consequently the only rule of faith? This Protestants affirm and Romanists deny. "We admit," says Rome, "that the Scriptures are infallible, and so is the Church, therefore whatever the Church declares through her official organ must form a part of the rule of faith—the infallibility of Scripture rests upon the authority of the Church." One party holds that the bishops in their collective capacity are infallible. Be it so—therefore all their decrees must harmonize. However, it may be shewn that this is far from being the case. The Council of Nice, A.D. 325, and of Ephesus, A.D. 431, decree that no new article forever shall be added to the creed of Nice; but the Council of Trent added twelve new articles. The Council of Constantinople, A.D. 754, condemned image worship, and ordered the immediate removal of images from all churches; but the Second Council of Nice, A.D. 787, decreed the re-establishment of image worship.

The predominant party holds that the Pope acting *ex cathedra* is infallible. Be it so—then his teaching must agree with the Word of God. John XXII. maintained that the soul is mortal and perishes with the body; the Bible teaches that the soul is immortal. Innocent III. decreed that every one is bound to confess his sins to a priest; the Bible teaches that we are to make confession to God.

The great Lord Bacon being asked by King James whether he thought the Pope was Antichrist? replied that "It a hue and cry should be raised against Antichrist which should describe him by the character deciphered in the Bible he would certainly apprehend the Pope for him."

Is the Apocrypha of equal authority with the Bible? The Jews drew a rigid line between the Old Testament and the Apocrypha. "It is," says Josephus, "true our history has been written since Artaxerxes very particularly, but has not been esteemed of the like authority with the former by our forefathers, because there has not been a like succession of prophets since that time."

Christ and His apostles, while they quoted from almost every book in the Old Testament, never once quoted from the Apocrypha. The Bible stands alone as the will of God revealed to man. Every statement must be believed, not because we can comprehend or fathom its depths, but simply on the ground that it is the Word of God. The true Church, externally is divided into many branches, yet there is a unity in

the midst of multiplicity, they all agree on this fundamental point, that the Scriptures are given by inspiration of God to be the rule of faith and life, the only rule to direct us how we may glorify and enjoy God. On the other hand Rome regards Scripture as incomplete and obscure, and therefore requiring to be supplemented. The Bible is not the only rule of her faith, but with daring boldness she has put on a level with the sacred oracles many human productions. "We assert," says Bellarmine "that the whole necessary doctrine either concerning faith or manners is not contained explicitly in the Scriptures, and that consequently beyond the written Word of God is required the unwritten word of God, which is the divine and apostolical traditions." Rome has always been the enemy of the Bible. It is often said that Rome is now quite different from what she was during the dark ages; what is the teaching of Rome on the spread of the Bible during the present century? Pope Pius VII., in a Bull published in 1816, speaking of the Bible Society, declares "We have been truly shocked at the most crafty device by which the very foundations of religion are undermined." Pope Leo XIII. rails against the Bible Society as his great enemy—characterizes that Society "as strolling with effrontery throughout the world," as supplying the people with "poisonous pastures." Yes, Mr. Editor, give the Bible pure and simple to Romanists, give them the right of private judgment, and then Rome would have received a wound from which she could never recover. Dagon fell before the Ark of God, so will Rome fall before the Word of God which is the only rule of faith and practice. D. K.

Feb., 1880.

### PRINCETON.

This small town, the population of which is six or seven hundred less in the summer than in the winter, has a world-wide fame because of its great educational institutions. The impression one receives when observing a town with so many grand college and seminary buildings scattered over a few acres of land is so strange to an ordinary traveller that it assumes from the first an air of dignity. The following is an estimate of the buildings, etc.:

Number of buildings—not including the houses of the professors, of which there are a great many in connection with the colleges and seminaries—twenty four.

Value of each, from \$6,000 to \$150,000. Two at \$150,000 each; one of which is the "Stuart Hall," erected in 1878, by the late R. L. Stuart, of New York, and presented. Five at \$100,000 each.

The Seminary library contains 34,000 volumes and 8,000 pamphlets. The College library contains 44,000 volumes.

Annual expenses of Seminary, \$50,000. Annual expenses of College, \$110,000.

Real estate value of Seminary, \$1,020,000. Real estate value of College, \$2,000,000.

College was established in 1746, and Seminary in 1811. Only three older colleges in America, viz.: Harvard, established 1636, "William and Mary," 1696; Yale, 1701.

It commenced with one professor, Dr. Alexander, and its first graduating class was three. Since then over 5,000 students have graduated at the College and over 3,000 at the Seminary, and the Seminary now stands second only to Union (N.Y.) in America, in regard to the number of students attending, viz., 135.

Dr. McCosh is the eleventh President in the College, and since 1868 he has collected over \$1,000,000.

Number of Professors and Tutors in the College 31.

Number of Professors and Tutors in the Seminary, 7.

A STUDENT.

### REV. MR. MACKAY HOMEWARD BOUND.

MR. EDITOR,—We came on board this steamer at Hong Kong, 14th inst., and set sail on the morning of the following day; and after a fine run of four days we were lying in the Singapore harbour at the southern extremity of the Malay Peninsula.

Before daybreak of the 21st we were again gliding through the deep blue waters up the Malacca Straits and at midday on the 22nd we hove in sight of the beautiful island "Penang" and soon cast anchor in a lovely bay. On the evening of the same day we steamed out and struck a westward course bound for Point De Galle, where we will ride at anchor to-night for the magnificent coast of Ceylon has been in sight

for several hours. We leave this ship there and wait for another bound for Madras and Calcutta, so I will post this letter as soon as I step ashore on Ceylon's Isle. The name of this steamer means "Empress of India" and she was built two years ago at Greenock. She is the largest in the Peninsular & Oriental fleet, being 412 feet in length; 50 feet in breadth, and upwards of 20 feet in depth. She is a mail steamer and makes thirteen and fourteen knots easily. Her captain is commodore of the fleet.

She has forty Europeans; thirty negroes from Zanzibar; one hundred Mohammedans from Bombay; and six Cantonese from China, making up her crew. The Europeans are the officers, quarter-masters, boatswains, wheelmen, bakers, stewards, also purser, butcher and doctor. The negroes are the stokers and are called "seedy boys." The Mohammedans are the sailors and are called "lascars." The Chinese are the carpenters and are called "Johns."

The "lascars" are lazy, dirty and worthless. They eat rice and curry with their black, greasy hands and are no comparison to the Chinese passengers on board for cleanliness in eating and cooking. There were three hundred of the latter to Penang.

The European passengers are few indeed, one is a namesake of my own from Java, but was born in the north of dear old Scotia.

Those on board don't seem to care about the judgment to come. One swore at me and called me everything vile, but inside of an hour he called me to his cabin, begged of me in tears to forgive him, and asked me to pray there and then for him.

O what we have to endure for Christ, even from our own countrymen. Indeed, I won't conceal it, I have not a bit more regard for a European than an African, provided the latter trusts *solely* in the Lord Jesus. The contempt some Englishmen out in the east shew to all natives is *contemptible*. The Great and Almighty Creator of all nations makes no distinctions.

It seems long since we left dear Formosa, beloved converts, and my noble fellow-worker, Mr. Junor. O pray for him and the work of Jesus in North Formosa.

Wishing your paper and all your work great success, I am, etc.

G. L. MACKAY.

Indian Ocean, Peninsular & Oriental Steamship "Kai-sar-I-Hind," Jan. 26th, 1880.

### HOME AMUSEMENTS.

MR. EDITOR, A considerable number of letters have appeared in the columns of THE PRESBYTERIAN lately, anent the question of Home Amusements, which I have read with no small degree of interest. In your last issue one appears signed by "A Layman" which I regard as being both unmanly and unfair, and I cannot refrain from saying a few words in reply to it. The inferences sought to be drawn by "A Layman" I consider both misleading and pernicious. He seemingly assumes that the force of example and the placing of temptation in the way, have little power in leading young people astray; but on the contrary he assumes that when persons fall into sin it all proceeds from an inherent disposition to evil in the individual. I think few will accept this doctrine *in toto*. "A Layman" goes on to say that "If we were all disposed to draw long faces and shut pleasures of a rational kind forever from our social circle, moon about and speak scriptural phrases, we should become a community characterized by miserable cast, and our manliness itself would droop and die, our strength, both mental and physical, would slowly vanish away, and we should become objects of pity indeed." The force of the above sentence lies in the words "rational amusements." "A Layman," however, seems to take it for granted that if card-playing and dancing were banished from our midst we would be literally stripped of "rational amusements." His inference, carried out to the conclusion he seeks to place upon it, would constitute a direct thrust at the ministerial body—they being the highest representative type of the influence and power of Christianity among men. A very good method of arriving at a correct conclusion in regard to any matter is to compare results from known *data*, and I would ask "A Layman" where he will find a class of men that will compare with the ministerial body as regards social culture, refined taste, genial and cheerful demeanour and intellectual powers, in short where will he find so many of those qualities which are necessary to constitute our