

tains ; but if, on that account, those having it in charge should think it of so little consequence as to have its hoops loosened and its seams opened, they, in the simplicity of their hearts, may exclaim, " It is only the cask that we are throwing away, but not the wine ; we would not waste a drop of that ;" but all their professions would hardly convince us of their discretion. The writings of the New Testament are not of themselves the revelation of God in Jesus Christ ; but they contain that revelation, and we cannot seriously impair *their* trust-worthiness without also impairing *its* authority. It is only through them that we can know of it as a revelation from God. If, therefore, we reject them as unworthy of credit, we, at the same time, reject it as a divine revelation.

When, therefore, we receive Christianity as a revelation from God, we must at the same time admit the authority of the New Testament writings as faithful records ; for it is only through those records that we can know either what Christianity would teach, or whether it is a revelation from God. We receive then these writings as truthful records. What they plainly declare that Jesus said and did, that we receive as said and done by him.

We bow before the authority of Christ and his religion, as we find them in the writings of the New Testament. Here, then, in this direction, are the limits of our Christian liberty. What Christ, in the Gospels, has taught for truth, or enjoined as duty, that we, as Christians, hold ourselves bound to accept and obey. Our Christian liberty, while it allows us to walk with perfect freedom through the wide domain of Christian truth and Christian duty, and through the whole realm of thought and life that does not interfere with them, here establishes its bounds and forbids us to go one step beyond. We know nothing of Christianity as a revelation from God, except what we learn from the Gospels. The Christianity that we have in them is the only Christianity, as a Divine revelation, that we can have. As far as that goes, so far our Chris-