

simply the natural expression of sincerity and conviction. The voice of heaven which spoke to them was addressed to their own consciences. No prophet intended to intimate that he had heard the articulate utterances of the Eternal, but every true prophet believed that he had spoken in accordance with that which the spirit of the Eternal had revealed."

#### LITERAL INSPIRATION IRRATIONAL AND UNCRITICAL.

On the question of verbal inspiration Canon Farrar distinctly says: "Such views we reject. *They are disproved by history, philosophy and criticism*; they are burdensome to the reason and repugnant to the conscience." Indeed, considering the many utter absurdities into which this dogma naturally leads, one can only wonder that men outside a lunatic asylum should for so many ages have continued to fight for a doctrine which is not supported by even a pretence on the part of the book itself that it is inspired; but which is contradicted by the fact that special portions of the book are put forward as being the veritable words of deity, thus necessarily implying that the other portions are not of that divine character. A glimpse of the truer view has come to Dr. Farrar, who proceeds to lay down these

#### CANONS OF INTERPRETATION.

"But we may lay down two rules: First—That there can be no deadlier desecration and perversion of the true purpose and meaning of the Bible than when it is used to justify slavery, or religious persecution or intolerant bigotry, or any form of false religion and false morality. Second—That it is always rightly used when its teachings are applied to make men more noble and more happy."

We need hardly stop to point out the utter fallacy of the methods thus laid down. One could not reasonably expect that, however firmly disposed towards a strictly logical method of criticism, an elderly and devoted clergyman could arrive at a conclusion similar to that of a perfectly free and impartial inquirer. Bibliolatry in its coarser form is abandoned by the Canon; but he still holds to it in a certain milder form, which leads him to modify his rationalism to preserve his Bible, instead of testing his Bible entirely by his reason. If the Bible sanctions slavery, etc., which undoubtedly it does, then our reason should compel us to reject it to that extent as "repugnant to our consciences," and not to make an attempt to twist it to suit our ideas, or in order to "make men noble and happy."

#### EVOLUTIONARY REVELATION.

This is how the Canon treats the orthodox doctrine of inspiration:

"It might seem incredible that, in the nineteenth century, any one could still profess a theory so crude and so unscriptural [infallibility]. It is in opposition to all the evidence of facts which show that it was God's will to reveal Himself in the Old Testament, not immediately and completely, but mediately, indirectly, progressively, partially, as we could alone receive the manifestation of His will. Yet this theory will find maintainers until men get rid of that heresy