

gospel against the law! Do the Chronicles in I. Chronicles xxi, 1, impugn the author of Samuel in II. Samuel xxiv, 1, because he puts Satan in place of God as the tempter of David? No doubt he does, but he magnifies the character of God, which is far more important. So, by reading the Scriptures have I sought to vindicate the character of the Father. To find the infallible in the progressive at every stage of its progress is an impossibility. Christ is the Infallible, the Teacher sent from God above all other teachers. To Moses and his successors in the prophetic office, the Holy Spirit was given by measure, but to Jesus Christ without measure. To place the teachings of Moses on a par with those of Christ, is to dishonor Him who reveals the Father. Principal Caven, who is always careful in his utterances, once said in public: "No doubt the Old Testament had a provisional element in its morality. The Lord suffered the Jews to put away their wives owing to the hardness of their hearts, though from the beginning it was not so. We must remember their imperfect spiritual condition at the time. The world was not yet prepared for the higher morality of the New Testament on this and on some other points."—The King's Kindness, p. 39.

Have I gone beyond this in spirit? Christ said, as Principal Caven allows, that the law of divorce, which is part and parcel of Old Testament Scriptures, is not infallible but wrong, a thing allowed for the hardness of men's hearts, a thing God winked at, an error conceded to fallible human freedom, and because I expounded this you charge me with heresy. Our subordinate standards call God the unchangeable God, and no doubt, however much He may himself limit His power, glory and blessedness, His moral nature undergoes no change. The God of Moses is the God of Jesus; but the former God allowed easy divorce, the latter does not. God does not change, but man does. Prophets were never straitened in God, but in themselves. It is not the divine, but the human in revelation that makes the difference between Moses and Christ, the law and the Gospel. "I have yet many things to say unto you," said our Lord to His disciples, "but ye cannot bear them now." Mark, the Evangelist, says: "And with many such parables spake he the word unto them as they were able to hear it." Paul tells the Corinthians, "I have fed you with milk and not with meat, for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able." The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews uses similar language, and mirrors the passage in Psalm xlviii: "With the pure thou wilt show thyself pure, and with the froward thou wilt show thyself froward." There have been froward prophets, like Jonah, and froward apostles, like Peter; but such a characteristic has no place in a deductive theory of verbal inspiration which refuses to recognize human subjectivity in the divine process. Against such a theory I emphatically protest as un-Scriptural and irrational; yet the Scriptures still remain, to my mind, in their entirety, the infallible source of religious truth.

To every passage of Holy Writ, adduced by the prosecuting committee and approved by the majority of the Presbytery, as if contradictory to the doctrine of my address, I readily and cheerfully assent. It is in vain to tell me that, according to the Word of God, (1) Jesus Christ uniformly spoke with approval of the Scriptures that were then written, and appealed to them as authoritative on religious questions because I know this and have taught it consistently, and believe it as firmly as any member of the committee. On the other hand our blessed Saviour nowhere asserts or hints at the inerrancy of the Old Testament, but, on the contrary, in Matthew v. distinctly repeals certain Mosaic enactments by substituting for them the higher and antagonistic law of love. The words of the Apostles Paul, Peter and James quoted against me are not relevant, because they all assert the inspiration of the Old Testament which I have never called in question, and do not even hint at inerrancy, which I am compelled to deny. Moreover, the passage II. Timothy, iii, 16: "All Scripture is given," etc., is disputed and no disputed passage is valid in such an argument. The Scriptures which are the supreme standard of the Church, nowhere assert the inerrancy of either the Old Testament or the New, as the work of the prosecuting committee plainly shows, so that by the Word of God I am not condemned.

In regard to the subordinate standards, which those who prepared them refused to be bound by, and which belonged to an age of labourious study and most unscientific and scholastic research, there may be a difference of opinion as to their bearing on the question of inerrancy. Sections 2, 4, 5 of chapter I. are adduced against me. Of these the first simply asserts inspiration, which I have never called in question. The second asserts that God is the sole authority for the Word's reception. I agree, and find God in our Lord Jesus Christ, who perfectly revealed the Father. The third, setting forth subordinate arguments for accepting the Scriptures as the Word of God, to a statement I have never denied, but which I have dwelt upon and illustrated at length in my lectures on the evidences of Christianity. As for the fourth, to the effect that the Old Testament in Hebrew and the New Testament in Greek, "being immediately inspired by God and by His singular care and providence kept pure in all ages, are, therefore, authentic," I must confess that it exhibits utter ignorance of Biblical criticism and a view of mechanical inspiration such as no scholar of the present day will accept. To impute the Greek Apocalypse and the Hebrew of Amos to the Holy Ghost is to lose sight of the earthen vessel altogether, and to regard the heavenly treasure as Peter's shoe let down from heaven, yet filled with strange inhabitants. This section of the confession has no warrant from the Scriptures, which are the supreme standard to which appeal may be made, and to which I have already appealed in the premises. Wherefore, I hold that the prosecuting committee has made out no case in the first count of the indictment.

The second count is that I have presented a view of God which sets Him forth as one who does not smite, either in the way of punishment or discipline, and who has nothing to do with the judging or punishing of the wicked. When the first draft of the libel was presented I protested against this statement, asking the prosecuting committee to insert the word "immediately" after "smite," and demurring to the language of the second clause, "who has nothing to

do with the judging, or punishment of the wicked." Thereupon the *ipsissima verba* of the lecture was forced upon me. Now, I do not desire to take shelter under the facts that I was unable to correct the proofs of my lecture, and that the original manuscript has passed out of my possession; but I consider that I have a right to be judged by my own fair interpretation of its utterances. The rhetorical figure of exaggerated contrast, common in the Scriptures, and even in the language of our Saviour, is continually employed in popular discourse to emphasize a special truth. My address was a popular one, written to set forth Jesus Christ as the true revelation of the Father, not a scholastic thesis to be guarded on every point. My contention was, and is, that God the Father is the antipodes of God the Son in scholastic theology; that He is regarded as arbitrary emperor and judge, and as a being totally different from His revelation, Jesus Christ, in his relations with our fallen humanity. Stated more logically, my thesis is this, that sin and all evil, moral and physical, are no part of God's nature nor God's plan. No theologian dare affirm that God decrees sin or any evil; they are not of God; God gave freedom to fallible angels and men, and doubtless foresaw the evil that would arise from the liberty of choice granted to a being of finite knowledge. Yet, in so doing, God was not and is not responsible for evil of any kind. While this is generally allowed in the case of moral evil or sin, the Church has not recognized it in the sphere of physical evil. But as a teacher of apologetics the problem has met me in the region of natural theology and in connection with the argument from design. This argument seeks to prove the existence of God as a wise, powerful and beneficent Creator from the evidences of beneficent design in the works of nature. But nature, as the poet tells us, is red in tooth and claw, abounding in devices of torture and death. Well, the famous master of Trinity, discoursing upon this subject in its Philosophy of Discovery, says: In other words, he being a Platonist, we believe that every good thing in nature and man who is its dawn must have its archetype in the Divine mind, but what shall we say of monstrosities, beasts and birds of prey, parasites and all natural implements of torture and suffering? To which he answers that these are no part of the Divine plan, but frustrations, deviations and negations of it.

Of the origin of evil I am not called upon to speak; but this is clear that it did not originate with man. There is, therefore, a judgment of evil which precedes the judgment of man. Romans v. 12. Sin came into man's work, and death by sin, not by God. So far from this crowning evil being an act of God I. Cor. xv., 26, it is called the last enemy to be destroyed. Christ is said (II. Timothy, 1, 10) to have abolished death, and John, in Rev. xx. sees in a vision that death and hell were cast into a lake of fire. Moreover, the author of the Hebrews (11, 14), expressly states that Jesus Christ took part of human nature that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil. Christ is continually represented as victor over death, and certainly as such he was no victor over the Father's will and act. Taking, therefore, the extremest form of physical evil, or, as the libel calls it, smiting, it is not the act of God, but the result of departure from Him, and the immediate act of the devil.

That the infliction of physical evil is the work of the devil is manifest from the story of the Patriarch Job, whom Satan smote. Jesus Christ came and said concerning himself through his beloved disciple (I. John. iii.) "For this purpose the Son of God was manifested that he might destroy the works of the devil." When he cured the impotent man at Bethesda he said to the mourning Jews (John v. 17): "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work," in consonance with God's revelation to Moses at Marah (Exodus xv. 26), "I am the Lord that heal thee." God is not a house divided against itself. His Son was not manifested to destroy the Father's work. We read the petition, "Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven," all wrong when we make it an ejaculation of pious resignation to divinely inflicted evils. Christ never told the sick, the bereaved, the afflicted to go home and be resigned; but he listened to the cry of God's afflicted ones, and cast the devil out. If I can find one word of Christ's on this point, it is worth more than all apparently contrary Scripture. It is in Luke xiii. 16. The story of a woman with the spirit of infirmity, against whom the ruler of the synagogue had indignation, "The Lord then answered him and said, Man, hypocrite, doth not each one of you on the Sabbath loose his ox or his ass from the stall, and lead him away to watering? And ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan hath bound those eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the Sabbath day?" There is smiting in the world, but not of God. Our Saviour sums it all up in John x. 10, where He says: "The thief cometh not but for to steal and to kill and to destroy; I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." Smiting is one of the dark things of this world. I. John (i. 5), "God is light, and in him there is no darkness at all."

It may be said that God does smite; but even this mediately, I believe to be too strong; rather, God permits men to be smitten. He is the source of all power and goodness, so that all minor power and activities are delegated to their owners by Him. In this sense, He may say, "I form the light and create darkness. I make peace and create evil." The prophet (Amos iii, 6) may also add: "Shall there be evil in the city, and the Lord hath not done it?" God is the source of all power; His holy nature is the source of all law; He maketh the wrath of man to praise Him. When Christ told His disciples to fear the Master of hell, He said, "A sparrow shall not fall to the ground without your Father." I suppose God allowed the daughter of Abraham to remain physically bound for eighteen years; but it was not His act. So likewise we read Paul's words: "There was given to me a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan, to buffet me." There was chastening, no doubt, from God; but in the smiting or the chastisement, God was not the actor.

I dare not say that God does not smite other beings than men;