

there is to Christianity in maintaining a theory of plenary inspiration which sets God in conflict with His holiest attributes. The cold-blooded slaughter of a hundred thousand Midianite women and male children by Israel at Moses' command (Numbers xxxi. 14, *seq.*), were we to read the account of it in any other history, would fill our souls with the liveliest indignation ; and no words would be too strong to condemn the base treachery of Jael, the wife of Heber the Kenite, whom the inspired Deborah called "blessed above women" (Judges v. 24). In Ezekiel xiv. 9 we read, "If the prophet be deceived when he hath spoken a thing, I the Lord have deceived that prophet and I will stretch out my hand upon him and will destroy him from the midst of my people Israel." This is very strange justice, yet similar is the language of II. Thess. ii. 11. "For this cause God shall send them strong delusion that they shall believe a lie." In I. Kings xxii. 23 it is written, "Behold the Lord hath put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these thy prophets." When we read the word of James i. 13, "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God ; for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth He any man," and those of Paul, "Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey," we understand the mystery, namely : that when men choose the paths of falsehood and error, God permits them to fall under the sway of the father of lies. Did Ezekiel and the author of the Book of Kings know this ? We cannot tell, but their language plainly imputes to God directly such deception as cannot possibly pertain to the character of Him who is the Truth.

I may sum up these objections in the words of the Rev. W. Hetherington in the *Christian World Pulpit* of Nov. 22, 1893. He says, after citing cases similar to those I have adduced, "With respect to these statements let me ask : Can God deceive ? Can the Holy One express His