

of a royal highness or a noble lord, prayer and the simplicity of the gospel was banished from its counsels; and the purity of truth ceased to be its aim. Allied with the fashionable and popular at home, it sought to strengthen itself by corresponding alliances abroad. Upon the continent of Europe the friends of Evangelical truth, such as Felix Neff, Pyt, were among the poor and despised of the earth, and they were ignored; and the Bible Society sought correspondents and agents among the semi-infidels of the established churches, who severally concealed their contempt of the Bible. These continental correspondents and agents had, by the connivance of the Secretaries and Managers of the Society at home, circulated Bibles containing the Apocryphal books as part of the canon, with infidel notes and criticisms; and in one instance, with a preface, in which the early history of the Jews is compared to the fables of the heroic age of Rome; and the rest of revelation is treated with corresponding freedom.

The gross corruption of the management of the Bible Society, originated what some of our readers doubtless will remember, as the "Apocryphal Controversy;" in which Robert Haldane, Esq., and the late Dr. Andrew Thomson, appeared prominent, as the defenders of a pure Bible.

An apology for the infidel preface above mentioned, by Dr. Pye Smith, led to an important discussion concerning the inspiration of the Scriptures, which, doubtless, did much to open the eyes of many Christians to the insidious aggressions of Neological or Rationalist views in Britain; and served to confirm multitudes in their confidence in the word of God. In particular we are indebted to the agitation of this question, for the masterly productions of Robert Haldane and Alexander Carson, on Inspiration. We are glad to quote for the honour of all the parties, a statement in the Memoirs of the Haldanes: "Dr. Chalmers, as Professor of Theology, was wont to use, as Class-books, the Treatises, both of Mr Haldane and Dr. Carson."

We fear, that in our day and on this continent, there is great need of some effective instrumentality to check the progress of lax and erroneous views on this all-important subject. We even hazard the opinion, that a vast majority of professing Christians, and not a few ministers of the gospel, have no express or well-formed conviction on the subject. A large portion of those who have thought and enquired on the subject have been inconsiderately led astray by the plausible and ingenious theories to which good men, such as Doddridge, Wilson, and Dick, have lent their names. While a large number, and amongst these the students who are about to issue from our theological seminaries to give tone to the piety of the next generation, are deeply imbued with

the daring speculations and profane criticism of the German school and their American imitators.

If this be even a bare approximation to the truth, it is time that the friends of truth should bestir themselves. In every case, it is of vast importance that every Christian and every Bible-reader, should arrive at a fixed and firm faith, instead of resting satisfied with a vague opinion or a human theory regarding the inspiration of the word of God. To further this, and we know of no human instrumentality more promising than the writings of Haldane and Carson, already mentioned.

The latter is now before us, in a volume published by Fletcher of New York, in his valuable series of Carson's Works. The volume contains a number of Tracts, not arranged, as we believe, in the order of their original publication, and certainly not in the order in which they would make the most complete impression on the mind of the reader. Taking them as they stand, we have—First. A Review of Bishop Wilson's Theory of Inspiration, as detailed in the Thirteenth of his Lectures on the evidences of Christianity. His theory is, that the Scriptures are partly human and partly divine—human in manner, divine in matter. Inspiration itself he distinguishes, with other writers, into four kinds—the inspiration of suggestion, of direction, of elevation, of superintendency. That they are human in matter, the Bishop argues from an alleged number of phenomena which Dr. Carson, however, properly reduces to one fact, namely, "that each of the inspired writers exhibits his own characteristic style and mode of reasoning, and makes use of knowledge which could have been possessed without inspiration." Dr. Carson shews, that in as far as this is true, it is not inconsistent with the full inspiration of the Scriptures; and that the use made of it by Bishop Wilson is illogical, unscriptural, self-contradictory, and altogether fatal to the authority of the Bible. In shewing the consequences to which the learned Bishop's argument leads, our author says: "God says 'All scripture is given by inspiration of God.' Mr. Wilson says it is false: only so much of the scripture is given by inspiration as belongs to the revelation. This blasphemous doctrine teaches Christians to go through the scriptures separating what belongs to revelation from what does not belong to revelation: to distinguish what is true from what is false. Could Satan broach a worse doctrine in the school of Christ?" Dr. Carson disclaims and condemns all theorising on the subject of inspiration, which he regards as a simple question of fact, to be determined by the word of God itself. "The inmates of Bedlam are quite sane, in comparison with the metaphysical lunatics who, in the building of ingenious systems, have trampled on all

the laws of evidence, and all the fundamental principles of the human mind. And if the geological maniacs, who have indicated their paroxisms in the effusions of systems of the formation of the earth, are at all to be paralleled, it is in the ingenious but frantic labours of those divines who have employed themselves in theories about the manner of the formation of the word of God."

The second tract in the volume, is a notice of a review of Bishop Wilson's Theory, in the *Christian Observer*. The high reputation of Daniel Wilson, as a devoted evangelical minister, and the orthodox character of the *Christian Observer*, which expressed a substantial concurrence in his theory, presented in an alarming light, the extent to which the faith of Christians, in the full inspiration of scripture, was sapped. And Dr. Carson returns with increasing earnestness to shew that the evident fact that the scriptures are written as if each of the writers were communicating his own thought, does not in the least militate against their claim to be, in the fullest sense, given by inspiration of God. With fidelity and earnestness, he urges a consideration of the guilt of exerting ingenuity to deprive God of any part of the scripture, if he be in very deed the author of them.

The third Tract is a notice of an article in the *Eclectic Review*, on Dr. Schleiermacher's Critical Essay on the Gospel by Luke. The essay is an audacious theological discussion of the four gospels, in which they are treated as mere human compilations of facts derived from a variety of sources; and a fanciful attempt to trace them to their origin. The reviewers, while they censure his boldness virtually accept his suggestions, as explanatory of alleged errors in the evangelists; and support his conclusions by reference to the sentiments of English theologians. Dr. Carson, holding fast by his original position, that "all scripture is given by inspiration of God," shews that the explanations offered, overturn the inspiration of the scriptures in every sense, and are useless for the purposes for which they are designed. He takes occasion to point out the extent to which the German neologians had even then influenced the evangelical press of England:

The fourth Tract, which ought to have been the first, and which ought to have been published entire, is entitled "Remarks on Dr. Pye Smith's Theory of Inspiration." Here the positive truth of inspiration is strongly maintained. Theories and supposition, however ingenious, are rejected. And it is maintained that the nature and extent of inspiration is to be ascertained only from the scriptures themselves. "I turn," says Dr. Carson, "to 2 Tim. iii. 16, and it immediately gives me full and perfectly satisfactory information. It declares that "all scripture is given by inspiration