

ever since the time when the early Christian Fathers began to use it for apologetic purposes. The apostles used it, we have noticed, with believers; but the Fathers used it with unbelievers. Theologians, in like manner with the latter, have too generally done the same. Christ's own example furnishes the proper method of applying the argument from prophecy. After his disciples had accepted him as the Messiah, then he explained to them the things in Scripture concerning himself. "Even in the case of the few who believed in him," as Prof. Bruce remarks, "faith was not the effect of the proof from prophecy. Believers did not first study the prophecies, and then come to Jesus as disciples; they first came to Jesus, and then learnt how to interpret the prophecies. The proper interpretation of prophecy was not the cause, but the effect, of their faith. And the same thing holds good in the experience of Christians generally."*

It is only when a man has grasped the spiritual significance of Christianity that he can appreciate the presence of the Spirit in all Christian experience, or the agency of the Spirit in every historic age. On this principle Christ dealt with the people in his day in using or applying prophecy. As wise defenders of his Gospel, we should learn to do the same. To the believer prophecy attests a revelation resulting from the influence of the Divine Spirit. To such a person prophecy is not a *credential*, but an *evidence*, of revelation. It furnishes a proof that God has revealed himself to his servants under the old dispensation, which, as has been stated, was preparatory to the new. As Christ was the end of the law, so also, in a significant sense, he was the end of prophecy, "to every one that believeth." Christ was the end of prophecy, that is, the prophetic work of Christ was final, in the sense that Christian prophecy is the unfolding and explaining of the truths which he revealed. His prophecy was also final, in the sense that no other revelation will be made to man that will supersede the system of religious truth which constitutes the basis of historic Christianity.

The fundamental idea of both Old and New Testament theology is that God is a Being who reveals himself to men. Prophecy, as

* "The Chief End of Revelation," p. 233.