

beginning to discern such a truth to say that they should at once carry it to its legitimate conclusion. The limitations of the human mind, inherited tendencies, and early training seldom permit sudden conversions, especially to unpalatable or unpopular truths. We must look upon it as a very acceptable "small mercy" when we see a long step taken towards the goal we all aim at—the clearing away of all obstructions to the perfectly free discussion of all subjects, the admission of the principle that no subject is too "sacred" to be freely discussed. We need not fear for the result when this is once an acknowledged principle. The editor of the *Tribune* will cease then to imagine that anything like a "divine and immutable cargo" can possibly be put in jeopardy because some Christians are mentally slower than others. He will see then that, if "Christianity does change from age to age," and if a more rapid rate of change causes a portion of its cargo to be jeopardized, it may only be a question of time as to when the whole cargo may be in peril. Then he may ask himself if he thinks it possible for any "divine and immutable" cargo to be jeopardized? and if he has not been guilty of a gross *petitio* in his assumption? It is possible that he has not yet very carefully examined the "divine and immutable cargo," and we strongly recommend him to do so; and then he may be able to expound unto us the meaning of those terms "divine truth" and "central truth" which he appears to think can be dissociated from the transient dogmas which have been built up into the "structure of theology" he speaks of. There is hope for him if he will do this thing, and his readers will benefit thereby.

Another New York paper, the *Times*, of Dec. 21, '98, contained the following article, which exhibits another phase of the same mental development. The writer is cautious and indefinite, but his words have a ring of sincerity that augurs well for him when he can place himself upon a broader philosophical platform:

#### "BIBLE CRITICISM.

"If all men and all women had the contented, unquestioning faith of the Rev. Dr. A. J. F. Behrends there would be no scepticism in the world, there never would have been any Tübingen School, and Robertson Smith, Bruno Bauer, and Charles F. Briggs would have been celebrated only as pious men devoutly upholding the standards of supernaturalism and Scriptural inerrancy.

"Dr. Behrends is supposed to have had Dr. Lyman Abbott in mind when he made this profession of his beliefs at the Lenox Lyceum on Monday night:

"Now, my friends, let those critics who delve into the mysteries of the Bible do their abominable worst. They have been 225 years at it, and are now in a bigger muddle than ever before. I am going to be a prophet for once—just once. Let me tell you, my friends, the problems of modern Biblical criticism are insoluble. I won't bother my poor head about them any more. It has ached enough. I am going to follow in the footsteps of the Lord Jesus Christ. I will use the old book just as he used it. It is safe to use the Bible as he used it and to leave criticism alone. Criticisms are not religions. They are literary matters. They are modern fads. The essential truths have never lost their power; they are simple things."

"This short and easy way out of all trouble would make everybody as happy as Dr. Behrends if everybody would follow it. But some minds are by nature inquiring. They experience doubt, and sow its seeds in other minds—honest doubt, and all the harder to overcome because it is