

great physical danger. Such errors and sins as those referred to in the text are big with threatening danger to our race, as the clouds of Heaven are big with rain. The same causes invariably produce the same results; and if the effects of the first temptation were so appalling, as we know they were, what may we not fear from those of the second? Is it too much to anticipate that they may be attended with even more disastrous results, and may provoke the introduction of that great tribulation which is to mark the closing days of the present dispensation, and usher in the Second Advent of the Son of Man?

Does any one say he cannot subscribe to this? It is not possible that eminently godly men could, consciously or unconsciously, become the agents of the Evil One.

How, then, was it that that godly woman Eve—the most godly that ever trod the dust of earth—consented to become his agent, and do his nefarious work? Eve was guilty of this, and we cannot deny it, unless we become ourselves guilty of the same sin which she committed. If, then, the sinless Eve was taken in this snare, how much more are her sinful offspring liable to the same?

Is there, then, it may be said, no room for criticism? For legitimate criticism there is; not for illegitimate. Was there no fruit for our first parents in Eden? Plenty of fruit; but not the forbidden fruit. Criticism has its proper place in the science of theology, but not the criticism which destroys what it ought to preserve. There can be no vigorous or fruitful theology apart from criticism; and even practical religion perishes under its decay. It is a sacred duty to prove all things, and hold fast that which is good. We encourage criticism and invoke its aid in defence of the bulwarks of our time. But it must be legitimate. It must adhere to obvious fundamental and indispensable principles, such as that God cannot deny Himself, and men of holiness cannot willingly deceive. It must not be that Satanic criticism, which contradicts what God has revealed, and says, "Ye shall not die," when He says, "Ye shall."

I can only give one or two illustrations of this kind of criticism, which may serve as types of the rest. We are asked e.g. to believe that the Pentateuch is of much later date than it has been reputed to be. Why? Because it is full of wonderful stories, and stories of poetical ideal; and poetry is of much later date than myth. Because it reveals a knowledge of post Mosaic times; and such knowledge, it is said, of the distant future is not comprehensible. Because the dispersion of the people among the heathen is threatened therein, and no one could have foreseen such an event. We are asked to believe that the Priest Code (as it is called), found in Leviticus, was subsequent to that found in Deuteronomy, and came into existence between Ezekiel and Ezra. We are asked to believe that the