

at length be propounded, which will command the respect and homage of universal Christendom.

Very learned men are engaged in this work, and high hopes are ever and anon expressed, both by the students themselves and their admirers, that complete success will attend their labors.

This movement had its real commencement in Germany, but has extended to England and America, and is really a very noticeable fact in the theological world.

Personally we rejoice in the work being done by this class of laborious students of Christianity and its great Founder, and can see that it is making itself felt in the churches generally as a movement that must be reckoned with by all who would rank as theologians to-day.

Already it has given rise to a vast deal of writing, both in book and pamphlet form, and the end is not yet.

Amongst other things, its tendency will be, and is, to broaden men's minds, and to take the keen edge off narrow denominational controversy. For, whilst sectics have been engaged in the petty battle of theologies, this movement threatens to destroy the very foundation of their pettisms, and so they are being awakened to the fact that some day in the near future they will have to meet this common foe successfully, or go down before it.

To go behind *The Church* to study Christ independently, and then behind the Bible itself, is to awaken the suspicion that the authority of both may be weakened by the effort. The very determination expressed to so study the life of Christ is to cast a doubt on the doctrine of the church's or the Bible's infallibility.

But can such an effort as that at present put forth eventuate in the discovery of the basal truth of Christ's teaching? By no means, at present conducted. It is after all a legalistic effort. That is to say, it is an effort to discover the *presumed* legal-

ism of Jesus—the real, original article—in order to formulate it after a legalistic sort, that men may admire and copy, just as the church now copies, or tries to copy, Paulism.

What if modern research could formulate a string of doctrines which would more nearly describe the life of Christ in its outward or inward aspect than do modern mediæval or even apostolic writings! Would that make it more possible for men to represent Christ in the world? Certainly not.

If Jesus, himself, had written many books, and had elaborated all his views and teachings, with even more care than that exhibited in his sermon on the mount, and did we have those writings without the slightest admixture of errors from copyists or interpolators, even then it would be absolutely impossible to reproduce his life in the world by the study of these institutes of Jesus, and the effort to carry them out in practice in life. Nay, the man so furnished would not be in the slightest degree better prepared for the work than the man with the present Bible in his hands.

Let two men start from New York to reach Philadelphia, but both take the direction to Boston, and it matters not if one is trundled along in a wheel-barrow and the other in a fifty-mile-an-hour express, one is as well furnished as the other for reaching his destination; just so Jesus, as a teacher of doctrines and rules of life, is as impossible to be imitated in the one case as the other.

But Jesus, as illustrating absolute, universal obedience to the living, omnipresent God, can be as well imitated when this fact comes to us through the Bible as a simple ray of light flashed out from a heap of rubbish, as if it should be seen as a kohinoor amidst the splendid setting of spotless and valued surroundings.

Clearness and accuracy of knowledge concerning the inner and outward life of