

the New Testament. The style, in the treatment of this branch of the subject, is trenchant, and the use of sarcasm and ridicule is unsparing. Altogether it is well calculated to make an impression upon the popular mind, especially upon such as have not read or thought very profoundly upon the subject. But those who have even a tolerable understanding of it will, however, probably find it difficult to rid themselves of the conviction that if our author is not tilting at windmills, he is often fighting with shadows. In the loose and popular sense in which he seems to apply this phrase to the Bible, probably even the most radical of the "Liberals" would not object very strongly to its use. The Rev. R. H. Haweis is generally supposed to represent this class; and yet in a sermon preached in the spring of 1888, in exposition and defence of the views of the Broad Church party in the Church of England, he is reported to have spoken on this subject in substance as follows: "We believe that the Word of God is in the Bible rather than that the Bible is the Word of God; but the Bible is so immeasurably superior to everything else as a disclosure of the character and will of God, that we do not hesitate even to call it the Word of God, though not in such a sense as to exclude the idea of possible defect or error in it."

Now, it is probable that both Mr. Horton and Prof. Bennett, neither of whom has the reputation of being quite so radical as the gifted incumbent of St. James', Marylebone, would heartily accept the position taken in the sentence which has just been quoted. And how does this differ from the view held by Dr. Parker himself? He says: "When we speak of the Bible as 'the Word of God,' we may be using a symbolic idiom, an idiom that represents the supreme purpose of the book—its vital contents and soul—a sense and measure which no merely literary definition can fully express. . . . To describe it as the 'Word of God' is, in my view, to describe the book by its supreme purpose. . . . I know the penmanship is human; I know what is human is imperfect, yet that does not affect the Divine purpose, except in the sense that the limited instrument necessarily modifies the illimitable music. . . . Eternity is incommoded when endeavoring to typify itself on the dial space of time. It is the culmination of irony. The Bible is the revelation of God—ineffable—in the only setting or framework possible in the present condition of life. To bring God into language is to bring Him within limitations."

Now, all this is highly poetical and beautiful, but when translated into plain prose such as Mr. Haweis is reported to have used, and such as we may suppose Mr. Horton or Prof. Bennett would be disposed to use, what does it mean? An idiom is a peculiarity of phraseology or expression; and a symbolic idiom may be understood to mean, a phrase or expression the peculiarity of which consists in the fact that it uses one thing as an emblem or representation of something else. In short, it is a peculiar and highly figurative phrase in which the book is employed as an emblem of the Divine idea or purpose concerning it. And this phrase applies not to the body of the book as it lies open to criticism, but to its soul, the spiritual essence which pervades it—to the jewel, and not its "framework and setting," which *ex necessitate*, in the very nature of things, being human must be defective. Surely neither Mr. Horton nor Prof. Bennett, nor indeed any Christian critic would be disposed to quarrel with the application of the phrase "the Word of God" to the Bible when understood in this idiomatic and symbolic sense, though for the purpose of scientific definition, when applied to the body of the book, and not to its soul, they might object to it as inexact and misleading.

Dr. Parker objects to the Bible being described as containing the record of a Divine revelation. He holds that it is both a record and a revelation. Probably neither Mr. Horton nor Prof. Bennett would be disposed to