

puerile; and in this very reticence on points that pamper the pride, or give license to the irreverence of man, there is proof in the strong words of *Whately*, that "no impostor *would*, and that no enthusiast *could* have written them, and that, therefore, they are not of man's devising but from God."

The silence of Scripture should teach us reverence. The Bible, like the ark, needs no presumptuous Uzzah. If God had chosen it would have been easy for him to have spoken a reconciling word which should have silenced cavil and casuistry for ever. He has not so chosen, and it is for us to submit. Let infidelity be abashed and humbled as she is told that it is not for us "to know the times and the seasons which the Father hath put in his own power." Let *superstition* hold back her credence from the traditions which have so often "made the word of God of none effect"—of course we are to use all lawful means to understand what God hath written, and we may assure ourselves that nothing from his lips will contradict Himself, or impugn either the mercifulness of His character, or the veracity of His word, but in mere matters of speculation or conjecture the highest wisdom is confession of ignorance, or at least in the words of the esteemed author of the "Eclipse of Faith," "It may be so or it may be otherwise. It is a point on which I know only that I do not know." If on points on which Scripture seems to speak doubtfully, we are to speak modestly and regard them as inferior matters—how much more on points where Scripture has not spoken at all. If it be a sound maxim that the frequency with which a matter is spoken of in the Bible should determine its importance—then woe unto us if we impose "a yoke upon our fellows which neither they nor their fathers were able to bear." Fearless in our advocacy of Bible truth, let us be at least tolerant when the Bible is silent. Scripture is silent on the origin of evil, or the day of the Lord's coming, on the comparative merits of Italian and Gothic architecture, or the details of the posture master's art. It will profit us to remember that most errors are exaggerated truths, as Infidelity is the base-born brother of inquiry, and extreme Ritualism is simply reverence gone mad.

For my part, I thank God for the silence of the Scripture, and yet more abundantly for its speech, for it maketh wise unto salvation.

What follows is a mere outline of the conclusion of this masterly address.

It appears—he continued—on historical review, that national greatness depends upon Christian influence permeating the social edifice. If we venture to advert to the chronological coincidence between the introduction of the Bible amongst the people of the English nation and the awakening of that nation into intellectual life, and its first impulse on its career of intellectual progress, modern wittlings will laugh; and there is an undercurrent of depreciation on the part of "science falsely so called," when the claims of the Bible as an intellectual educator are urged. It is well enough as a preceptor for the feminine instincts of the race, but as a guide for men full grown in their intellectual strength not to be thought of. It will be enough in answer to the insolence of these objectors to merely mention the names of NEWTON, of BOYLE, and of SIR WILLIAM JONES. Sir William—who is no mean authority—says of God's Word:—"I have regularly and attentively perused the Holy Scriptures, and am of opinion that this volume (independently of its divine origin) contains more true sublimity, more exquisite beauty, more pure morality, more important history, and finer strains of poetry and eloquence, than can be collected from all other books, in whatever age or language they may have been written. The unrestrained application of them to events which took place long after their publication, is a solemn ground for belief that they are genuine productions, and consequently inspired." If these found intellectual and spiritual food in the pages of the Bible, we may well wait without fear until its revilers can show men of half their stature who believe otherwise. I had intended to speak with reference to what the Bible has done for us in our social life. Take England—I take that because I know most about it, you know—and to what does England