

mation. "Theology has to draw its authentic contents from the books of the New Testament, and from no other source." But this is not the old Protestant principle of the Bible, the Rule of Faith, of inspired scripture possessed of normative authority. Its real and full meaning lies in the Ritschlian canon, that in the original documents of an historical movement is to be found the true significance of the movement. There is no inspiration, there is no need of any. Enough that we have here the original documents, "a perfect monument of the teachings of Christianity." We see here what Christianity is.

The books of the New Testament are proved to be canonical, that is, to be genuine productions of the first age, by their accord with the religious conceptions of the Old Testament. Thus the Old Testament has its indispensable place, but it is not that of source. "The theological importance of the Old Testament rests in this, that from it the historical presuppositions of the New are rightly understood." Ritschl freely accepts, on this ground, most of the books of the Old Testament as genuine. But he now applies his second historical canon to determine the worth of any particular passage, namely, that there is order and harmony in the representations of the first consciousness of any movement, and that the coming in of in-harmonious elements infers a later stage. In the use of criticism, consequently, he is most free. In this way, for example, the virgin-birth is given up; the eschatological discourses and the post-resurrection sayings of Jesus are rejected, as are also the Logos doctrine, and Paul's views on the law and on retribution.

What is it, then, that gives normative value to the original consciousness of the community, as recorded in these primary witnesses? We have seen that, as Founder of the community, Jesus stands over against his disciples. Jesus stands unique among men in his relation to God. Here is found the positive principle of Christianity. God has revealed himself in Christ. The universal experience of believers, in which, as condition of his work, the theologian shares, is,