

*BIBLE-CLASS ESSAY.**THE EVIL EFFECTS OF RATIONALISM.*

OUR first parents permitted Satan to deceive them by heeding his denial of God's Word, telling them that they would become wiser by disobeying, and it has ever been one of his devices to have man think that his own ways are better than God's ways. Self-sufficiency is one of the great infirmities of our mortal nature.

But God saith "Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, for without Me ye can do nothing." He is the source of all wisdom, and a God of justice, and will frustrate the designs of all who will not accept Him as their strength and Guide, even as he did of those who after the flood trusted to their own ways, and undertook to build a city and a tower, and of Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, who led Israel into the sin of schism. Throughout the history of the church of the Patriarchs, and of the Jews we find that heavy judgments were inflicted upon all who forsook the Lord and followed after other gods, that all succeeding generations might take warning by their example. Although the members of the Christian Church may esteem themselves free from the sin of idolatry, yet Rationalism has led many to resist the power of God, and to worship the creature instead of the Creator.

The Rationalist will not acknowledge God in all his ways and let Him direct his paths, but chooses ways of his own devising, believing that all knowledge of Divine things may be gained by reason alone. He disregards God's Word, that "No prophecy of the scripture is of any private

interpretation," and by trying to explain away the mysteries of the Bible, he wrests scripture to his own destruction. He will not acknowledge the authority of the Church, but refuses the means of grace which God offers and commands through her, believing them unnecessary, and thinking that whatever a man sincerely believes must be right, thus making reason his sole authority. Christ founded His church, and entrusted her with the keeping and teaching of the Bible. He has promised to be always with her, and it is our duty as her children to accept all that she teaches, just as a dutiful child trusts to the understanding and submits to the reproofs of a loving parent, knowing it is for his good, although he may not see how.

The Rationalist deems himself so wise that he will not submit to the government and ordinances God ordained for His Church, and thinking he knows a better way, he (like Jeroboam) rends assunder the unity of God's people, building up what he calls a new religion on no better foundation than his own fancies. He rejoices in great freedom of thought, but lets his own perverted reason lead him to believe only what he can understand. Thus, Rationalism leads man to substitute reason for faith, without which it is impossible to please God. "Faith is the substance of things hoped for the evidence of things not seen."

It accepts all that God has revealed, and does not question his ways, but trusts in his infinite wisdom and goodness, believing that He is His own interpreter and will make all things plain to us in His own good time. "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge